

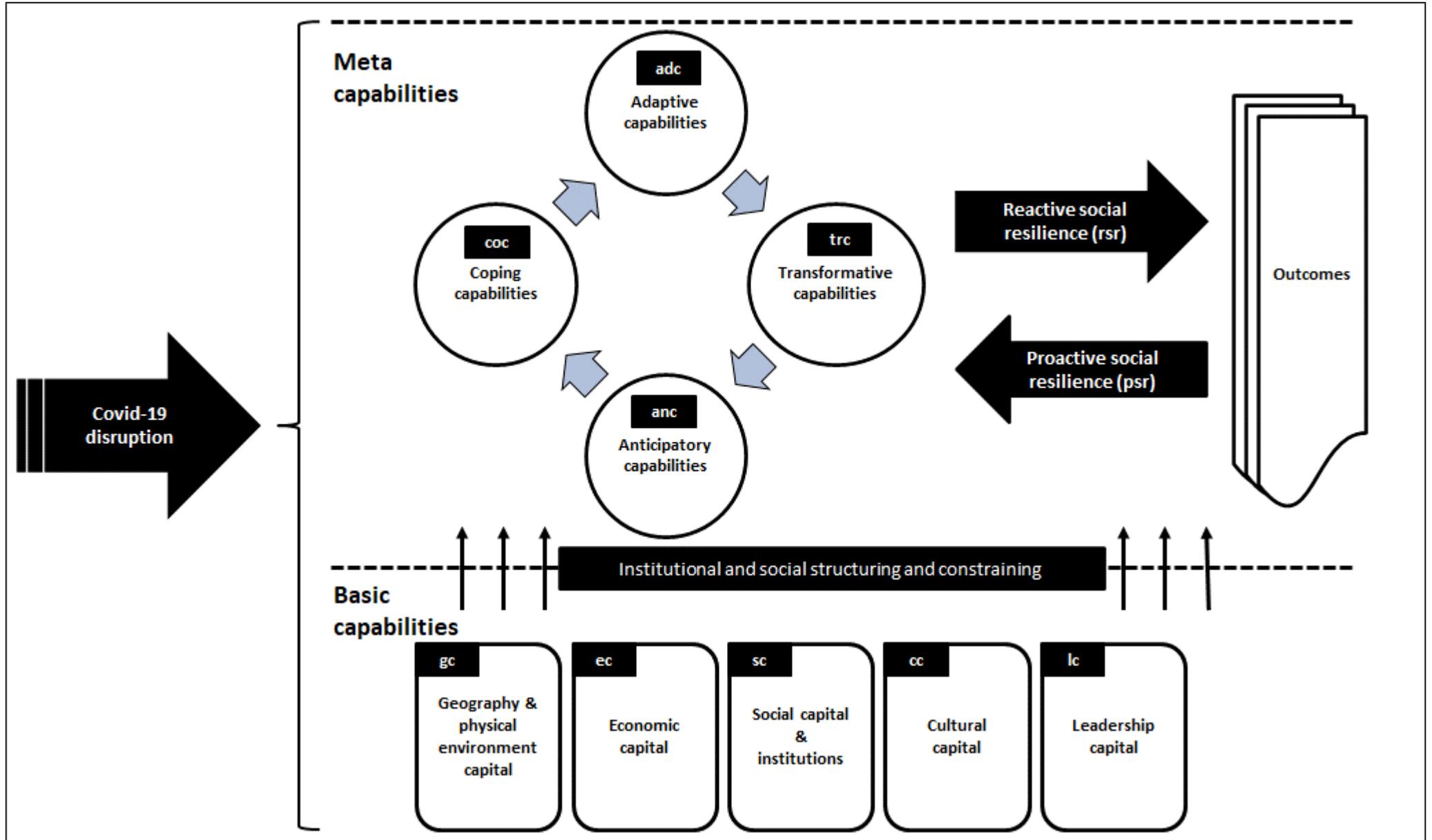
Concluding management issues, associated learnings and social resilience

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The Covid-19 pandemic has been seen as a wicked problem, which creates unique policy and governance challenges (Sahin et al., 2020). Besides being associated with uncertainty and a wide range of consequences for an extensive range of stakeholders, a defining characteristic of a wicked problem is the difficulty in framing and formulating the essence of the very problem at hand. Therefore, wicked problems are considered ill-structured (Simon, 1973; Baskerville, 2008). For the purpose of this book, we framed the Covid-19 pandemic problem by introducing three distinctive sets of dichotomies. The first is around proximity and distance, a key feature of the NZ geographical and economic position in its regional and global networks. The second dichotomy relates to centralisation and decentralisation in decision making. The third dichotomy is associated with collective versus individual learning.

To look back at the chapters that comprise the present book, we now reflect on them in a structured way by drawing on the meta-capability policy framework developed by Menzies and Raskovic (2020). We depict this framework in Figure 1 and then connect the chapters and their stories to basic resilience dimensions.

Figure 1: Meta-capability social resilience framework to mitigate Covid-19 disruption (adapted from Menzies and Raskovic, 2020)



Resilience is here seen as a capability to address adverse effects and recover from these through positive adaptation (i.e., bouncing back) or even emerge stronger and thus bounce beyond adversity (Hoegl and Hartmann, 2020). Underpinning fundamental resilience dimensions as in Menzies and Raskovic (2020) framework and building on the conceptual work of Saja, Goonetilleke, Teo, and Ziyath (2019) as well as Obrist, Pfeiffer, and Henley (2010), we posit that bouncing back and beyond Covid-19 is a function of basic capabilities and developing meta-capabilities. Basic capabilities can be categorized into geography and physical environment capital (gc), economic capital (ec), social capital and institutions (sc), cultural capital (cc), and leadership capital (lc).

The 14 chapters in this book address key management issues from a unique NZ perspective. Table 1 provides a detailed overview of these key issues and the specific learnings derived both for the domestic NZ and the wider international context (see the “learnings” column). Each chapter further elucidates how individuals and members of companies/organisations have responded to fundamental resilience challenges. In the table, we build connections between the various chapters in the book and how these relate to specific NZ characteristics. For instance, three chapters - by El-Jahel and MacCulloch, by Maani, and by Fiedler et al. - refer to geographical and physical capital. The particular way NZ has quickly shielded its population against the novel external threat by isolating the island nation thoroughly through a swiftly implemented early travel ban from China signifies how the country's geographical and political location was instrumental in the slowdown of negative health implications. The chapters by El-Jahel and MacCulloch, by Dimes and DeVilliers, by Lee, and by Metson and Roy connect the NZ economic environment to its ability to recover quickly and provide platforms for swift economic redevelopment. Despite a long-standing productivity gap in NZ, which is also referred to in the chapter by El-Jahel and MacCulloch, NZ's entrepreneurial and innovation-friendly environment provided the government with confidence that with support of a wage subsidy scheme, and a reasonably flexible workforce, the economy would be able to recover from a national strict and demanding lockdown.

Almost all book chapters refer to social capital and institutions, which can be explained by the fact that NZ has a strong focus on health and well-being and features prominently in the Better Life Index (OECD, 2019). Furthermore, the “team of 5 million” spirit invoked by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and permeated throughout the country with a well-

functioning civil service and supportive workforce, enacted and reinforced a widely lauded community spirit, buttressed by Māori values.

The chapters by Plester, by Jindal and Boxall, and by Wolfgramm, Houkamau and Love in part II of the book expand on the social capital and institutions theme by addressing issues of cultural capital around themes as diverse as humour, job crafting and Māori cultural values and practices respectively. These chapters also provide fascinating insights into how cultural capital as an important dimension of basic capabilities translates into meta capabilities that help to mitigate Covid-19 disruption through social resilience.

Nine out of the 14 chapters relate to and/or address leadership capital. The chapter by Carroll looks into that issue from a meso/macro level perspective, highlighting the view that expert leadership in NZ is widely recognized through a frame that goes beyond the technical and rational aspects of expert knowledge; it is rather invoked through relational and distributed and collaborative leadership. The chapter by Ott and Michailova picks up this theme through the lens of talent management, where NZ is now in the enviable position to have reversed its human capital and leadership drain into a terrain that is highly attractive to both domestic and international talent. Fiedler et al. demonstrate in their empirical study how the export managers have swiftly moved on to learning about export markets through digital technologies. Benson-Rea, Erakovic and Watson relate their chapter to the leadership capital issue through the lens of boards and board governance, which provides learnings in terms of more fuzzy boundaries between senior management and board members and the ensuing ability to facilitate emergency strategies and economic contagion effects. In part III of the book, three out of the four chapters take this basic capability up as well. The chapter by Metson and Roy focuses on the higher education sector, where the disruption has supported a much more federated decision making than ever before, and many observers hope that the top-down fiat structures may be a fad of the past. Brache, Norgrove and Husted show how leadership capital enables R&D collaboration to adjust to and experiment with new practices.

Table 1 also enumerates how the various chapters in the book connect to the development of meta-capabilities. This follows the logic of institutional theory (e.g., Kostova, Roth, and Dacin, 2008) or how social mechanisms of institutional and social structures guide and constrain actors' behaviour, in our case NZ firms and organisations, managers or workers. For instance, NZ's recent experience with disasters has strengthened its anticipatory capabilities. In addition, high levels of trust have strengthened social compliance related to wearing face

masks and thus limited the spread of illness, which in other countries proved to be more difficult (Menzies and Raskovic, 2020).

Table 1: Key management issues of the book chapters, associated learnings and their relationship to the meta-capability of social resilience

			Relationship to basic capabilities					Relationship to Meta-capability development					
			gc	ec	sc	cc	lc	anc	coc	adc	trc	rsc	psc
Part I	Key issues addressed	Learnings											
Haworth	Adoption of ‘go hard, go fast’ approach, coupled with emphasis on community engagement, effective national communication and generous economic interventions No stipulation of a ‘best response’ to Covid-19, but emergence of ‘just in time’ response	Flexibility in the government response, built on institutional trust and national policy leadership with consistent communication Potential to leverage expert recognition internationally regarding expert leadership and trade (especially APEC)			●		●	●	●				
El-Jahel and MacCulloch	NZ implemented one of the world’s strictest lockdown regimes Approach of ‘gross national happiness’ to the pandemic	Significant success regarding the stringent lockdown and prioritization of health and well-being outcomes in the short term. Challenges to realise long-term economic growth under continuing lock-down regime and tightened border controls.	●	●	●				●	●			
Maani	Shifts in operations, sectors and workforce due to restrictions Designation of essential work, technology-facilitated remote work, contactless retail and wage subsidies	Relative swift return to ‘normality’ due to stringent government response Role and value of ‘essential’ work with ramifications for future living wages	●		●				●	●			●
Carroll	NZ pandemic experts understood themselves as leaders rather than policy makers/advisers Experts hold constructive relationship with science	Expert leadership can be recognized through leadership frame beyond the technical and rational knowledge Relational, distributed and collaborative leadership is vital for crises response			●		●	●	●		●	●	●
Part II	Key issues addressed	Learnings	gc	ec	sc	cc	lc	anc	coc	adc	trc	rsc	psc
Ott and Michailova	Covid-19 has unexpectedly transformed brain drain issues into (domestic) brain gain.	NZ national culture and organizational culture supported through trust and unity			●		●				●		●
Fiedler, Fath, Sinkovics and Sinkovics	Physical distance to export markets shielded NZ early on in the crisis As the pandemic unfolded, building new market knowledge, new networks became more important	Digital technologies and connectivity improve operations and business model reconfiguration New forms of learning are required to offset disadvantages due to physical distance and closed borders	●		●		●		●	●		●	●
Plester	Boundaries between work and home became porous due to Covid-19. Humour supports coping under lockdown conditions	Informality of workplace interactions and kindness, source of strength in turbulent times. Humour as positive coping strategy			●	●			●	●		●	●
Jindal and Boxall	Covid-19 triggered new forms of job crafting, i.e. ways in which employees shape and transform their jobs, to make them meaningful. Collegiate NZ workplace culture makes job crafting more likely	Due to pandemic turbulence, it is sensible to support flexible, hybrid model of working Job crafting leads to higher levels of satisfaction and commitment				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Benson-Rea, Eraković and Watson	The disruptive nature of the pandemic challenged CEOs, board chairs and directors in handling the crisis	Blurring of internal boundaries between boards and senior management to enable emergent strategy implementation			●		●	●	●	●	●		

		Considering stakeholders benefits the organization itself												
Wolfgramm, Houkamau and Love	Covid-19 put spotlight on already existing health and socioeconomic disparities in the society	Māori cultural values and practices provide effective communal responses by enabling recovery and fostering resilience.			●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<i>Part III</i>	<i>Key issues addressed</i>	<i>Learnings</i>	<i>gc</i>	<i>ec</i>	<i>sc</i>	<i>cc</i>	<i>lc</i>	<i>anc</i>	<i>coc</i>	<i>adc</i>	<i>trc</i>	<i>rsc</i>	<i>psc</i>	
Dimes and de Villiers	In a crisis like Covid-19, business should focus both on short-term decision making and cash generation and long-term goals for sustainable value creation	Integrated Reporting and Integrated Thinking improve organizational communication, collaboration and trust. Firms with Integrated Reporting and Integrated Thinking are even in a crisis situation able to balance day-to-day decisions with long-term sustainability objectives		●	●		●	●	●	●	●			
Brache, Nor-grove and Husted	Covid-19 calls for collaborative R&D effort At the same time the pandemic has disrupted long-established practices for R&D collaboration	New practices also have to accommodate speed of discovery Global Covid-19 lockdowns are levelling the playing field for actors in the ecosystem			●		●		●	●				
Lee	NZ's triple helix and entrepreneurial model is resilient in the pandemic context	Following focus on health and well-being the entrepreneurial ecosystem supported adaptation and innovation towards recovery		●	●				●				●	
Metson and Roy	Near instant transition to online learning Changes to business model as the global movement of students have been curtailed	The value and use of expert knowledge has in part been rehabilitated Universities can be agile in their response		●	●		●				●			

Notes: gc=geography & physical environment capital, ec=Economic capital, sc=Social capital & institutions, cc=Cultural capital, lc=Leadership capital, anc=Anticipatory capabilities, coc=Coping capabilities, adc=Adaptive capabilities, trc=transformative capabilities, rsc=reactive social resilience, psc=proactive social resilience.

Darkow (2019) suggests that organisational resilience essentially rests around avoiding crises before they happen and containing the scope of crises once these are unfolding. Drawing on this perspective and connecting it with the meta-capability social resilience approach of Menzies and Raskovic (2020), we can pinpoint how the book's 14 chapters connect the basic capabilities to the meta-capabilities and thus proactively or reactively support the development of social resilience. Anticipatory capabilities (anc) are defined as capabilities that allow us to foresee and plan for disruptions. The chapters by Haworth, by Carroll, by Jindall and Boxall, by Benson-Rea et al., by Wolfgramm et al., and by Dimes and de Villiers lucidly describe the contexts and conditions which have fostered societal and managerial processes that allowed NZ actors to benefit from these meta-capabilities during the unfolding of Covid-19. Coping capabilities (coc), on the other hand, refer to the ability to deal effectively with adverse events and/or significant change (Duchek, 2020). 12 of the 14 chapters connect with this type of meta capability. The underpinning basic capabilities and the significant catastrophic events of the past seem to have helped develop better personal coping and resilience, as outlined in the chapters.

Adaptive capabilities (ac) refer to the ability to adapt and self-renew through innovation (Hoegl and Hartmann, 2020). NZs SME context, its unique embeddedness in the Māori indigenous culture and a relatively flexible and innovative organisational system have arguably fostered swift and uncomplicated positive adjustment under challenging conditions. Ten chapters refer to this meta-capability, supporting the notion that this particular meta-capability has been successfully leveraged at a country level. Transformative capabilities (tc), on the other hand, refer to “how we learn and transform behaviours after an initial disruptive shock by bouncing beyond adversity”. The “Kiwi let’s roll up our sleeves and just get on with it” mentality (Menzies and Raskovic, 2020, 3) is a prime example of the ability of firms and individual actors to respond by bouncing back and beyond.

As the chapters in this book illustrate, there are unique learnings from the NZ context for organisational and political economy actors outside the country and the Oceania region. As the world is still going through various experiences in policy and individual actor responses, we hope that the NZ experience of Covid-19 reduction and elimination of community transmissions offers valuable insights. This book’s ambition is to contribute to the debates about management responses to Covid-19 and improvement of preparedness and resilience regarding future shocks. These are probably not far away.

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