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Editorial Introduction: Business Under Crises: Organizational Adaptations

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1.1 Book Context and Theoretical Foundations

In the past few decades, businesses have maintained the continuity of their operations in the face of a series of crises (Afthonidis & Tsiotras, 2014), from global financial crisis (2007–2008) (Martinez et al., 2019) to natural disasters like the Christchurch earthquake (2011), Harvey (2017) and Irma (2017) (Wenzel et al., 2020); acts of terrorism such as

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the 9/11 in 2001 (Hurley-Hanson, 2006) and epidemics like Ebola and Avian Flu, (Enderwick, 2009). For the most part, they have recovered quickly (Papaoikonomou et al., 2012). These and other crises may differ in their volume (Enderwick, 2009), nature (Liu et al., 2017) and impact (Cerrato et al., 2016). Yet, what they have in common is their omnibus effects (Williams et al., 2017) and potentially devastating individual (Ratten, 2020), societal and political (Mehta et al., 2020; Efthymiou & Michael, 2016), economic and natural outcomes (Sarkar & Osiyevskyy, 2018; Efthymiou & Michael, 2013). Some commentators were already predicting a similar outcome (Bryce et al., 2020) for the current pandemic, COVID-19, suggesting that worries were exaggerated (Mehta et al., 2020) and that we should carry on as normal (Salanova, 2020).

While global epidemics aren't new in the history (Głodziński & Marciniak, 2016), COVID-19 may have even more disruptive impacts (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020) as it is still ongoing (Kuckertz et al., 2020) and there is great deal of uncertainty (Bryce et al., 2020) about future economic and social conditions. These kinds of extraterritorial crises present a significant challenge for organizations (Liu et al., 2020), including businesses and public institutions (Pedersen et al., 2020). Existing crisis management responses can be ineffective (Cortez & Johnston, 2020) and business continuity can be severely disrupted (Ahn et al., 2018) as

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problems arise out of multiple domains (Nenonen & Storbacka, 2020) and manifest in unfamiliar ways (Shakina & Barajas, 2020). How then should organizations respond effectively to a crisis? Can organizations adapt their critical business functions, maintaining the continuity of their operations in the face of an ever-increasing global pandemic and survive?

In the spirit of the above questions, this book brings together descriptive and prescriptive research studies that shed light on the above questions and contribute to knowledge through solid empirical and/or conceptual scientific theorization. The chapters cover topics such as managerial and strategic adaptation in different sectors like health and tourism and hospitality, multiform organizational adaptations, investments in research, development and innovations, sectoral transformations in different countries, the main problems and prospects that digital transformation opens up under the crisis, leadership inventions during crisis times and the impact of current health crisis on SMEs.

1.2 Business as Usual?

While crises have become usual to some extent, business in the context of a crisis is not so much 'business as usual' (Liu et al., 2020), as it is 'unexpected' (Afthonidis & Tsiotras, 2014), 'unusual' (Cerrato et al., 2016) or represents a new kind of usual (Cortez & Johnston, 2020), requiring a different approach towards doing business (Martinez et al., 2019). However, in an environment of uncertainty, it is more important than ever (Breier et al., 2021) to carry on as close as possible (Liu et al., 2020) to business as usual. In order to do so, Martinez et al. (2019) reported that the underpinning processes have to be able to resist disruption. In this vein, adapting the organizational structure to the environmental changes (Pramanik et al., 2015) that influence the functioning of the organization (Ahn et al., 2018) is essential. Companies and enterprises that have not adapted well (Nenonen & Storbacka, 2020), or adapted fast enough (Schakel & Wolbers, 2021), have suffered serious consequences (Pedersen et al., 2020). Many companies that adapted quickly are still viable (Nenonen & Storbacka, 2020), but will need to reinvent (Schakel &

Wolbers, 2021) and reconfigure (Wenzel et al., 2020) to sustain their viability over the long term (Liu et al., 2017). However, organizations that have adapted in meaningful ways (Schulze & Pinkow, 2020) prove caring are doing more than just surviving (Ratten, 2020). Once the crisis hits, businesses must be empathetic to their stakeholders (Leonidou et al., 2018), need to think fast (Schakel & Wolbers, 2021), respond quickly (Wenzel et al., 2020) and implement strategic movements (Kuckertz et al., 2020), involving communication (Enderwick, 2009), actions and behaviors (Hurley-Hanson, 2006) in order to adapt quickly. Firms need to take stable actions (Kuckertz et al., 2020) to adapt every level of their operating model (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020) if they are to survive; finding new ways of reaching their customers (Schakel & Wolbers, 2021).

In the midst of current uncertainty, a number of companies have already responded to the COVID-19 challenge (Liu et al., 2020) and distinguished themselves (Ratten, 2020) by shifting their services (Sharma et al., 2020) and product lines (Martinez et al., 2019) to meet the highest priority needs of their consumers (Mehta et al., 2020), employees (Shakina & Barajas, 2020) and communities (Cortez & Johnston, 2020). Of course, depending on the type of crisis, the organization might take different forms of action (Lee et al., 2020). To highlight some examples, alcohol distilleries have started to produce hand sanitizers, major beauty and health companies have been producing masks and face shields, and sporting apparel companies have started producing gowns (Sharma et al., 2020). Walk-in food outlets have also shifted their operation models to grocery delivery services (Sharma et al., 2020). In addition, remote working has become business as usual where employees can be just as productive working outside an office (Ratten, 2020). These are just a few examples of companies that recognized change as a need (Priyono et al., 2020) by companies, both internally and externally (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020), and used their mastership to adapt in creative ways (Thrassou et al., 2018a). As a result, these organizations are not only more likely to survive from this current crisis (Salanova, 2020), but will also reinforce their reputations (Bryce et al., 2020) and increase their competitive advantage going forward (Breier et al., 2021).

1.3 Crisis as a Catalyst to Change

Crises are transformative, evolutionary, even revolutionary (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020) in the development of organizations, industries and markets (Enderwick, 2009). And as such they need to be viewed as conduits to change (Sarkar & Osiyevskyy, 2018), accelerators of evolution (Wenzel et al., 2020) and catalysts of innovation (Thrassou et al., 2018b) in organizations. Moreover, crises reform the context in which organizations operate, including consumers and their behavior as individuals (Mehta et al., 2020), collective buyers' market structures and attitudes (Pedersen et al., 2020), and macro-environmental forces such as technology, culture and values (Głodziński & Marciniak, 2016; Efthymiou, 2018; Efthymiou et al., 2020).

One of the greatest challenges for organizations (Liu et al., 2020) and their management (Schulze & Pinkow, 2020) has always been to cope with unexpected changes in their environments (Breier et al., 2021). Although crises are inevitable (Cerrato et al., 2016), not every business is sufficiently equipped for when things don't go according to plan (Afthonidis & Tsiotras, 2014). Most organizations respond to a crisis in the same way (Enderwick, 2009). However, why are there always organizations that not only survive the crisis (Ahn et al., 2018) but also benefit from it (Kuckertz et al., 2020) while others cannot? Although a crisis interrogates the survival of a system (Martinez et al., 2019), it can give rise to either positive or negative organizational outcomes (Salanova, 2020). However, whether positive or negative, developmental outcomes (Salanova, 2020) follow a crisis depending on the nature of the business model (Breier et al., 2021) and organizational behavior during a crisis (Pramanik et al., 2015). In particular, these behaviors shape how resources are allocated (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020), transformed (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020) and acquired (Priyono et al., 2020). In light of the COVID-19 crisis, a lot of firms are starting to realize (Liu et al., 2020) that their business model is not as solid as they had thought (Breier et al., 2021). Consequently, a crisis can often give rise to new business models (Breier et al., 2021) that encompass new capabilities (Ahn et al., 2018),

new value propositions (Lee et al., 2020) and new value demonstrations (Liu et al., 2017), which address new customer needs (Mehta et al., 2020).

Furthermore, it is believed that digital technology (Priyono et al., 2020) enables firms to transform business models quickly (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020; Batiz-Lazo & Efthymiou, 2016a), and not in traditional or linear ways (Breier et al., 2021). Digital transformation is defined as the venture of firms to use new capabilities (Priyono et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020) by leveraging digital technologies (Breier et al., 2021) in order to transform organizational strategies (Pramanik et al., 2015) and operations (Batiz-Lazo & Efthymiou, 2016b; Afthonidis & Tsiotras, 2014). The transformation of the business model, supported by digital technology (Thrassou et al., 2020), has been documented in the literature as one of the strategies (Papaoikonomou et al., 2012) used to respond to disruptive environmental changes (Pramanik et al., 2015); in particular, technologies that support firms (Priyono et al., 2020) in the determination of new business practices (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020).

In the existing literature, digital technologies are viewed as a suitable response (Priyono et al., 2020) to the disruptive changes caused by the COVID-19 crisis (Liu et al., 2020). The COVID-19 crisis provided a sudden and rapid glimpse into a future world (Liu et al., 2020), one in which digital has centralized in every interaction (Priyono et al., 2020), forcing both organizations (Shakina & Barajas, 2020) and individuals (Ratten, 2020) further up the adoption almost overnight (Bryce et al., 2020). Stay-at-home measures imposed around the world (Mehta et al., 2020) have forced many organizations to function remotely (Kuckertz et al., 2020), and make adjustments that were previously thought not possible to achieve (Ratten, 2020) particularly in a short space of time. A world in which digital channels become the primary (Kuckertz et al., 2020)—and, in some cases, sole (Priyono et al., 2020)—customer engagement model (Mehta et al., 2020). In the health care sector, for example, online consultations (Kuckertz et al., 2020) instead of physical doctor visits have become a reality.

1.4 Never Let a Crisis Go to Waste

While the crisis might have put a failure on business plans (Martinez et al., 2019), it also creates new opportunities (Liu et al., 2020). Businesses can benefit from crises by giving weight to the more minor weaknesses of their organization (Martinez et al., 2019) to be rapidly fixed (Pedersen et al., 2020) and to make more conspicuous changes to their business model (Breier et al., 2021). Some organizations will learn from a crisis (Lee et al., 2020), develop reactive resilience (Bryce et al., 2020) and emerge stronger from the period of turbulence (Dengleri et al., 2019). Managers and scholars (Schulze & Pinkow, 2020), who are now encountered with COVID-19 and its wider consequences (Sharma et al., 2020), look into how to make organizations more resilient (Salanova, 2020) or even antifragile (Bryce et al., 2020). However, it is proposed by Liu et al. (2020) that the current crisis offers opportunities that go beyond improving the condition of an organization. This period of turbulence can also be used to advance business networks (Pedersen et al., 2020) and ultimately the market (Nenonen & Storbacka, 2020). Moreover, the impacts of a crisis can reflect over time (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020). Decisions taken (Enderwick, 2009) and choices made today (Schulze & Pinkow, 2020) may have long-term implications for the future of businesses (Liu et al., 2017).

When an organization—notwithstanding all preventive measures (Williams et al., 2017)—experience a crisis (Shakina & Barajas, 2020), it is important to learn from the situation (Lee et al., 2020). Nothing helps an organization to gain focus (Afthonidis & Tsiotras, 2014) like a crisis. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to learn from previous experiences (Lee et al., 2020), whether they are positive or negative (Salanova, 2020), to cope better with the subsequent crisis (Sharma et al., 2020). Learning from previous crises (Lee et al., 2020) often means to reshape (Nenonen & Storbacka, 2020) or transform the operations and business model into a sustainable one (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020). The ways they learn from and adjust to today's crisis (Lee et al., 2020) will deeply influence organizational performance (Pramanik et al., 2015) in tomorrow's changed world (Novalia & Malekpour, 2020), providing the

opportunity (Bryce et al., 2020) to retain greater agility as well as closer ties (Salanova, 2020) with customers (Mehta et al., 2020), employees and suppliers (Pramanik et al., 2015). Those that are successfully able to make long-lasting gains (Lee et al., 2020) will likely be more successful (Martinez et al., 2019) during recovery and beyond. Consequently, a crisis also offers many treasured lessons (Lee et al., 2020). The global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is no different (Mehta et al., 2020).

Though the notion of the changes that crises bring about are understood, their mechanism, characteristics, effects and underlying motivators are less so, and vary across the organizational, industry and market typology. Of course, it also depends on the nature of the crisis, its severity, its length, its timeframe, its geographic spread and other factors. This book, thus, brings together incorporate scientific works (chapters) on contextual transformations and reciprocal organizational adaptations that will help delineate the above forces and factors, as well as their interrelationship in differing settings.

1.5 Book Content and Structure

The book presents an additional (to this) 11 works, which have been selected considering their quality, their relatedness to the book theme, and the significance of their contribution to knowledge through solid empirical and/or conceptual scientific theorization. The result is a collection of works that provide a balanced presentation across disciplines (management, strategy, marketing, economics/finance, etc.), geographic regions, market types and industries, and business field foci applications.

Chapter 2 is titled ‘Losing Your Main Trade Partner: Adapting Trade Networks Amid Commercial Blockages’. Globalization coexists with crises and the rise and fall of trade blocs seem to be the new normal in trade relations worldwide, for reasons such as protectionism or political conflict. Hence, entire industries have had to adapt to the constant creation and destruction of trade barriers as countries reach the extreme of losing their main trade partner. This chapter examines how industries adapt to such shocking commercial blockages by analyzing the extreme case of the Colombia-Venezuela broken trade relationship. The authors (Luis Miguel

Bolivar and Francisco Javier Maza-Avila) use longitudinal social network analysis to depict the transformation of the countries' egocentric trade network through the snapshot approach and review the manufacturing industries' response from the Colombian side to reconfigure the country's trade network. They then provide a set of lessons learnt.

Then, Chap. 3, 'Public Hospitals in Crisis: Managerial and Strategic Adaptation', looks at the health sector. The authors Lior Naamati-Schneider and Ofer Zaks argue that health systems worldwide function in turbulent local and global ecosystems, affected by economic, demographic, technological and other changes. Recent reforms of Israel's public health services that have led to increased competition—together with chronic under-funding, pressure to reduce per capita costs and increased demand caused by greater health awareness—have created budgetary pressures. The overstressed public hospitals started adopting a strategic and managerial approach, but they are a part of a highly regulated and centralized market with little leeway. The COVID-19 pandemic in Israel—which caused a nationwide emergency—exacerbated the need to find solutions, under conditions of great uncertainty. Consequently, this chapter reviews business and marketing strategies that Israeli hospitals adopted and adapted to an environment that is constantly changing, especially in a medical crisis.

Subsequently, Chap. 4, examines the 'Impact of COVID-19 Crisis, Global Transformation Approaches and Emerging Organisational Adaptations: Towards a Restructured Evolutionary Perspective'. The pandemic crisis of COVID-19, despite its unexpected and explosive spread, constitutes, at the same time, a structural disturbance of global socio-economic balances. Through the fourth industrial revolution and amid the unexpected and profound recessionary economic pressures on a global scale, our world is heading towards a 'new globalisation'. Looking at the economic and social implications of the COVID-19 crisis through several theoretical tools for interpreting the current global transformation, Charis Vlado and Dimos Chatzinikolaou conclude that the global economy is facing a severe threat. A renewed evolutionary theoretical interpretation seems imperative, and any perseverance to simplify and strictly fragment past approaches can only be ineffective. In this context, the long-term and sustainable exit of this crisis seems to require

multiform organizational adaptations, at all levels of operation and by all actors, which seems that this can only come with the joint dynamics of innovation and effective change management.

Within the research and development and innovations (R&D&I) context, Chap. 5 ('Impact of COVID-19 on Investments by Companies in Research, Development and Innovation: The Case of Lithuania' by Erika Vaiginiene, Rasa Pauliene, Reda Nausedaite, and Daiva Mazeikaite) analyses motivational factors which foster Lithuanian companies' intentions to invest in R&D&I under conditions of COVID-19 disease, which caused a pandemic and economical lockdown. Economic lockdown caused by COVID-19 revealed capacities of some innovation-driven companies to demonstrate growth instead of decline. National and supra-national governments focused their efforts on increasing the numbers of companies resistant to the pandemic. The results of the research demonstrate the relationship between propensity to innovation, investment into research and partnership with research institutions. A representative Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey of Lithuanian companies (N=510) was done for an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on Lithuanian companies' investments to research, development and innovations. Also, research results disclosed differences, between the whole sample and companies which invest in innovations consistently, in motivational factors.

Moreover, the next two chapters in the book concentrate on sectoral transformations in India and Canada, respectively. Chapter 6, 'Transformations in the Social Sector During the Covid-19 Crisis in India—A Perspective, focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on social organizations, their resilience in meeting and mitigating new challenges, and the changes transpired within this sector as a result of the pandemic. With India crossing the three million mark of COVID-19 cases, there has been tremendous crisis in the Indian economy, leading to industry-wide disruption. Within this framework, the chapter delves into the social sector in India, which has been at the forefront in handling the socio-economic impact of the pandemic. The authors Ambika Kulshrestha and Sandeep Kulshrestha also highlight the COVID-19 affected internal/external environmental variables that have caused an imbalance in the social value creation and proposition from the beneficiary/other

stakeholder's context and the strategic maneuvers for innovation in various spheres of this sector, towards a paradigm shift.

Chapter 7, 'Business Adaptation in Canada: Contextual Sectoral Transformations and Cross-Fertilisation in the Garment and IT sectors', determines what strategies could be the best for various industrial sectors. The authors Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay and Amina Yagoubi have studied various sectors including the garment and textile industry, and the IT sector; over the years we have come to look at possible combinations and innovations between the two sectors. The idea here is to highlight the challenges businesses will be confronted with in the coming years and to identify measures for future development. In their view, innovative organizational adaptations will be crucial for firms to adapt to the post-pandemic context and it appears that cross-fertilization can contribute to innovation.

Also, in the field of technology, Chap. 8, 'Approaches to the Digital Transformation of High-Tech Companies in Russia Under the Crisis: Problems and New Opportunities', analyses approaches to digital transformation in high-tech industries in Russia in comparison with world practices, characterized by the main problems and prospects that digital transformation opens up under the crisis. In modern conditions of the fourth industrial revolution and the increase of digitalization, companies open up new opportunities. Digital transformation is not just automatization, but a holistic change in the company's approaches to the management of business processes, to building relationships with suppliers and consumers, to human resource management. Tatiana Kokuytseva, Oksana Ovchinnikova and Maxim Kharlamov reveal the key elements of digital strategy and present the recommendations for digital transformation, which will allow companies to build their own effective strategies of digital transformation to overcome crisis and post-crisis phenomena in the economy.

Chapter 9 continues with the challenges and organizational adaptation in the tourism and hospitality industry ('Impact of Big Data on Tourism and Hospitality: Challenges and Organisational Adaptation' by Mustafeed Zaman, Rajibul Hasan and S. M. Riad Shams). The chapter aims to underline how Big Data is shaping the tourism and hospitality industry. From a destination management perspective, this chapter illustrates (1)

the different sources of internal and external data in tourism; (2) the challenges faced by the tourism and hospitality firms in the era of Big Data, and (3) how Big Data is changing the role of the Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and their organizational structure in order to meet the need of the local stakeholders. Drawing upon studies of Li et al. (2018) and Sheehan et al. (2016), this chapter proposes a conceptual framework of destination management in the era of Big Data. This chapter also provides insightful information for tourism and hospitality professionals and directives for overcoming the challenges faced by the stakeholders of tourism destinations. It also encourages both DMOs and other stakeholders to collaborate in collecting, mining and analyzing Big Data required for the success of their businesses.

In a similar vein, Chap. 10, 'Customs Under Crisis in the New Era: Strategic Analysis of Surveillance Network Project' by Ozgur OZMEN, provides a strategic analysis of Turkey's new Artificial Intelligence based Surveillance Network Project which is being developed for identifying all potential risks of all vehicles and containers passing through customs without any traditional physical inspection. All countries are responsible for having an efficiently working customs and borders system in order to protect the state, companies and the people. Unfortunately, the system always cannot work perfectly due to many reasons such as organized crime groups, pandemics, limited economic resources and so on. Therefore, governments tend to benefit from high-tech solutions. As a big market and a geographic bridge between Europe and Asia, with a considerable number of import-export and transit transactions, Turkey is a long-term sufferer of the customs crisis.

Chapter 11, 'Structural Change with the Help of a Strategic Performance Cycle: How Can More Women Reach Top Management Positions During and After the COVID-19 Crisis?', examines companies' leadership inventions during crisis times. The COVID-19 pandemic struck unexpectedly and affected the entire world, from personal to public life to global economic activity. Companies might tend to focus on immediate concerns, but strategic objectives such as increasing diversity on boardrooms should not be forgotten. The main contribution of this

chapter is twofold: it reviews some of the most recent publications on the effects of the pandemic and it develops a model aimed at helping companies to increase the number of women in their workforce and benefit from the complementary skills of both male and female personnel. Binder Bettina suggests that it is during such crisis times that companies should build on both men's and women's leadership skills.

The final chapter of the book offers insights into the current health crisis and its impact on small businesses in Cameroon. Chapter 12, 'Post-Covid Business Transformation: Organizational Constraints and Managerial Implications for SMEs in Cameroon', pinpoints the paradox of cultural, digital and organizational readiness of small and medium businesses in Cameroon to mitigate pandemic risks and what type of government intervention could be helpful to SMEs. Authors Zhanna S. Belyaeva and Petihu Numbu Levis conducted a survey in ten regions of the country and provided the database for this study. The sample is selected from the list of small businesses having at least a total of 20 employees, with 50 respondents from each region. Analysis is carried using SPSS. ANOVA, regression analysis, linear regression and T-Test will be used in order to define the relationships that best describe the problem under study. The results show that COVID-19 has had a negative effect on SMEs in Cameroon, and government aid plays a very mild role in minimizing it.

In conclusion, the above assortment of internally and externally balanced works, in terms of science and practice, offers a valuable collection of insights on the organizational transformations and adaptations during crisis conditions. The book does not claim to offer any final solution to the contemporary issues and questions regarding crises, like COVID-19, nor a definitive model or direction for theoretical works or managerial implementation. It does, however, suggest fresh and alternative perspectives and offers equitable paradigms of contemporary theories and applications that should stimulate knowledge and provide solid foundations for further research to develop.

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