

Managing emergency through resilience: reinterpreting smart cities as service ecosystems view

ABSTRACT

Purpose- The study investigates the enabling factors of resilience as a key lever to address complexity in urban context, challenge technological evolution and foster growth. The goal is to explore the determinants of resilience to understand how smart cities can seize opportunities for innovation starting from disruptive event through the right combination of technology, human and social capital. Resilient smart cities can challenge environmental changes and develop proactive behaviors that encourage the attainment of social, economic and environmental well-being.

Design/methodology- Therefore, being resilient entails the redefinition of orientation, business models, technology and resource allocation to turn global crisis (such as Covid-19 pandemic) into an opportunity for development. Given the need to clarify the key determinants of resilient in contemporary cities, this article aims at exploring: 1) the main drivers for resilience to challenge global crisis; 2) how the drivers for resilience can be activated and combined to create opportunities for innovation. The empirical research is based on a content analysis that explores the case study of Italian smart cities. The goal is to identify the drivers that are helping Italian cities develop proactive and resilient attitude to challenge the current epidemic.

Findings- The results allow the introduction of a framework that identifies the determinants of resilience according to an exploratory approach, in which the smart ecosystem's enablers developed by Italian smart cities are classified to obtain some macro-dimensions and to design a framework that detects the key enabling factors for resilience, for cities transformation and for the exploitation of innovation.

Research implications- The study can show management the main enabling factors to address crises, such as the global emergency of Covid-19, and how these elements can be harmonized to attain systems continuous re-adaptation that fosters innovation and that lead, in turn, to resilience. The categorization of the new interaction modalities and main strategies to challenge the pandemic developed in smart cities can help scholars and practitioners to shed light on the key drivers to overcome social and economic crisis.

Originality/ Value- The proposal of a model that explores how technology can redefine humans' interactions and foster resilience in smart cities can address a gap in literature related to the absence of studies exploring the role of ICT in reframing traditional cities management and social innovation. The conceptual framework supports the identification of: 1) the main technology tools for smart cities to challenge the pandemic; 2) the key elements of the complex process of redefinition of actor's interactions and resources integration modalities; 3) the key determinants of resilience as a result of the ecosystem's transformation.

Keywords: service ecosystems view, smart cities, value co-creation, resilience, innovation.

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