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Balance in the sector



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Problem identified

COVID-19 has adverse effects on the construction industry supply chain, workers and businesses. The pandemic has caused substantial shifts in labour and material demand, workplace dynamics, operational procedures, affecting the construction industry. Previous significant events, such as the global financial crisis 2008, the Christchurch earthquake in 2011, and the Kaikoura earthquake in 2016, have also had detrimental effects on New Zealand's construction industry and causes disruptions in regular construction activities. There is a need to investigate and understand these disturbances in order to be prepared for the probable future challenges and to respond effectively.





Objectives

- 1- Investigating the impact of COVID-19 on the workforce, supply chain and businesses within the New Zealand construction industry.
- 2- Examining the adverse effects of other major disruptions (global financial crisis, Christchurch earthquake, and Kaikoura earthquake) on the construction industry in New Zealand,
- 3- Comparing the detrimental impacts of COVID-19 with those of other significant disruptions within the construction industry and provide recommendations for building a more resilient construction industry to face the future disruptions.

Methodology

The study used a two-step methodology and included a systematic literature review to investigate the construction industry status during the global financial crisis, Christchurch earthquake and Kaikoura earthquake in the first step. In the second step semi-structured interviews and content analysis with NVivo software was conducted to examine the impact of COVID-19 on the construction material supply chain, construction workers and construction businesses.





Preliminary results

The detailed analysis underscores how different crises have revealed vulnerabilities and complexities within the global construction supply chain. Reliance on international trade for materials and small market sizes led to notable disruptions during these crises. Challenges regarding the supply chain included financial constraints, decreased investments, waning consumer confidence, varying demand, damage to supply networks and infrastructure, and shipping complications.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, workforce challenges included labour shortages, job losses, financial strain, and difficulties with migrant workers' visas. The global financial crisis brought uncertainties about project continuations, resulting in higher unemployment rates. Earthquakes presented further difficulties, including building safety concerns, chemical exposure risks, and a lack of skilled labour.

