Ecosystem creating experiences: a case from pediatric health care

Purpose – Recent discussion on reformation of healthcare systems to tackle rising healthcare costs has increased interest towards applying ecosystem thinking in healthcare. Despite the increased interest, little is known about the ecosystem that co-creates the healthcare services and importantly customer experiences in healthcare, namely patient experiences. As there has been no detailed investigations of the composition of ecosystem actors and actors’ roles in the healthcare ecosystem, this paper will map and provide an overview to the healthcare ecosystem in a pediatric healthcare context.

Design/Methodology/Approach – Study draws on selected literature from the fields of customer experience research and service ecosystem and explores actors participating to experience co-creation in a pediatric healthcare context. Study is based on qualitative interviews with 23 healthcare professionals and with 6 ecosystem actors. From this data, we map the ecosystem actors and their roles in the ecosystem.

Findings – Key findings show that pediatric healthcare service ecosystem is complex and comprises heterogeneous set of actors that participate to children’s patient experience co-creation. We identify four actor categories participating to experience co-creation, namely 1) healthcare actors, 2) social and welfare services actors, 3) family, friends and other social group actors and 4) ecosystem supportive actors. These categories include total of 11 different sub-categories for actors from hospital and social settings having effect and role in customer experience co-creation of patients.

Research implications – The paper builds contribution by increasing understanding on ecosystems co-creating customer experiences particularly in health care context. Our findings imply that customer experience and service management research should extend their view from only examining customer experiences in a service setting to a broader view that includes also customer’s social settings.

Originality/value – This paper contributes by providing a detailed mapping on the ecosystem co-creating customer experiences in healthcare settings – the aspect that has been missing from the earlier customer experience research.