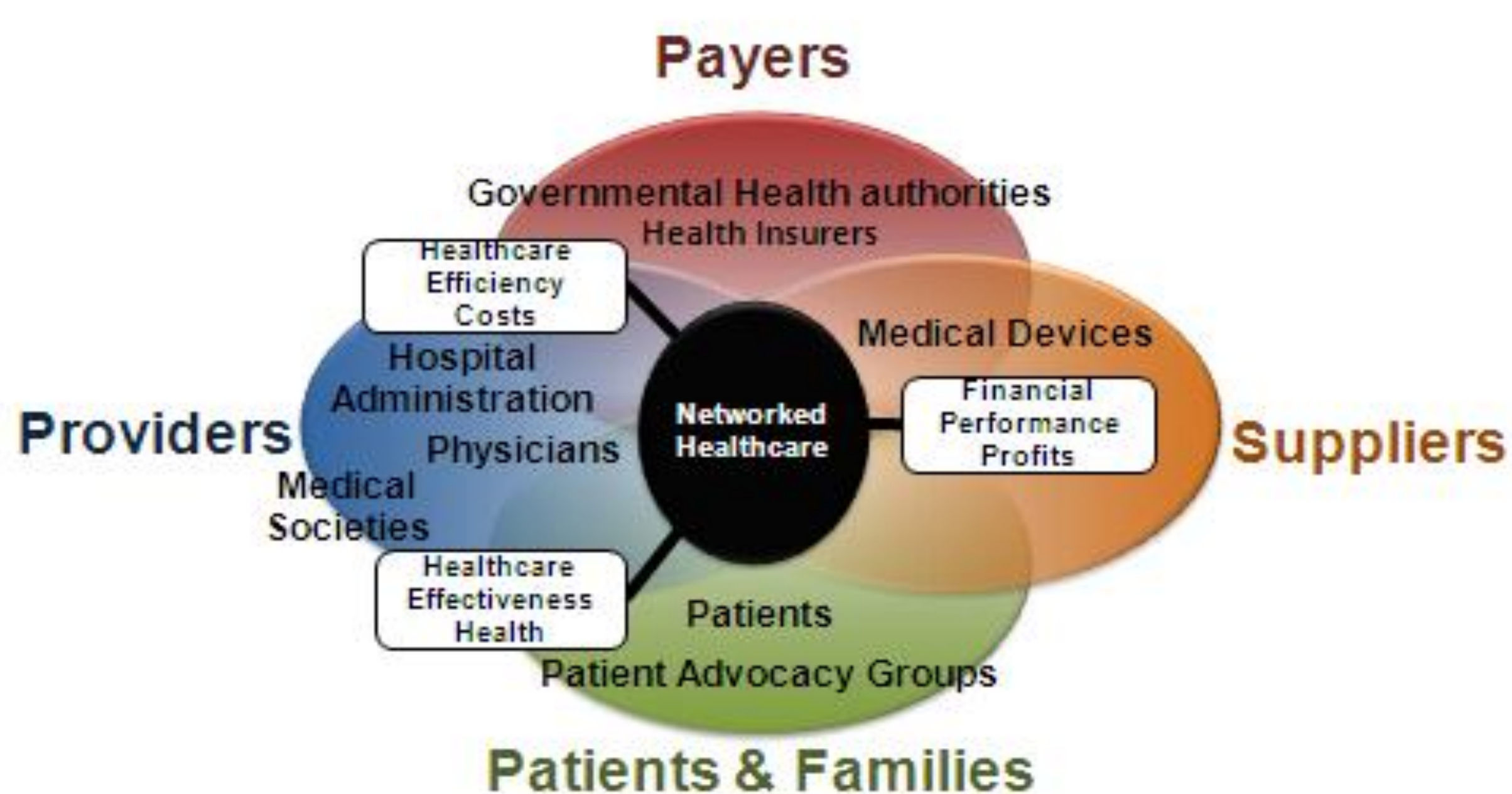


The process of gaining international market acceptance in the medical technology sector through actors, resources and activities

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Background

Focus in the business network theory has mainly been on inter-firm relationships while relationships with non-market actors like political or academic ones have received far less attention (Jansson, 2007; Welch and Wilkinson, 2004). The same tendency is found in other network studies which have mainly focused on social and business networks. Hence, studies that take an institutional or non-market based view on networks are scarce. But, what happens when one of the key actors is a public organization e.g. a national health care organization and what implications does this bring to the process of gaining international market acceptance for medical technology innovations?



Source: based on Sobrio and Keller, 2007:105

Research question

How can different kinds of interactions be described and analysed through various actor bonds, resource ties and activity links during the process of gaining international market acceptance?

Method

- Longitudinal and multicase study
- Two case firms that represent international new ventures (INVs), defined as “business organisations that from inception seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the sale of outputs in multiple countries” (Oviatt and McDougall, 1994:46)
- Personal interviews with individuals within and outside the companies, telephone conversations and observations, complemented with secondary data



Preliminary results

| Actor bonds with | Nature of resources and material (tangible and intangible) | Activity links | Value propositions |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Non-profit organisations | Contacts | Non-commercial | Opinion |
| Hospitals and clinicians | Knowledge through scientific data; clinical trials; guidelines | Scientific | Legitimacy |
| Distributors | Knowledge and contacts | Commercial | Adoption of innovation in different countries |
| Other medical technology firms | Reputation and product development | Commercial | Competitiveness |
| Government (both payer and regulator) | Procurement, health economics data Accreditation (market access through FDA clearances and CE marking) | Institutional | “Value for public money” Security |
| Journalists | Opinion | Mostly non-commercial | News |
| Notified bodies | Standards | Institutional | Security |
| Insurance companies | Guidelines through health economics | Mostly commercial | Finance |
| Private and public financiers | Money, knowledge, contacts, business strategies, business plans | Commercial | Finance |

Conclusions/Implications

- Different types of actors are driven by various logics
- The understanding of the different incentives for co-operation is crucial in order to co-create value with these actors
- The importance of valuing different activities with commercial/non-commercial, institutional and academic actors
- Science is “global” but how it is adopted and translated into everyday practice differs – country-region and/or clinic-wise
- Different institutions act as influencers for market choices-internationally, regionally, locally