



# Schools' autonomy: mapping the tasks of leadership

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## Introduction

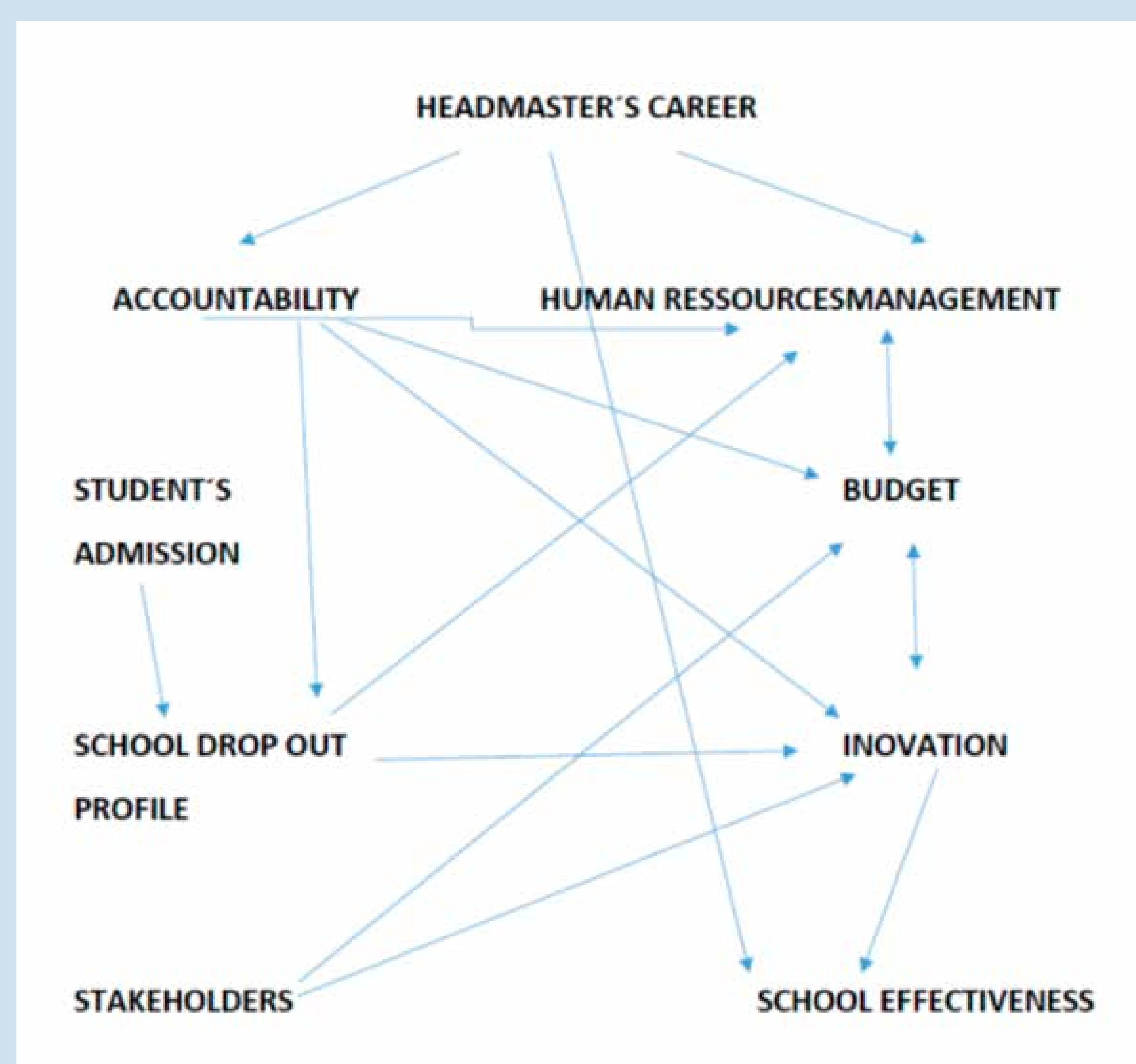
Schools' autonomy involves concepts and arguments shaped differently by international meanings and practices. Therefore, the challenge was to explore such differences as well as contexts that could be used to explain these singularities.

## Methodology

This poster presents the main results of a task performed during the first training event of M@ss project. It consists on mapping the main differences related with school autonomy among partners within M@ss project. Working in small groups, joining participants from different countries, the task consisted in pointing out the answers of some kicking off questions that introduced main concepts related with schools' autonomy. These main concepts were accountability, students' admission, school's dropout profile, stakeholders, headmaster's career, school effectiveness, human resources management, budget and innovation. Each small group chose some concepts and did notice the main differences reported by participants concerning their own management practices. Then the participants were invited to resume in a mind map the concepts and their interconnections.

## Results

Following map express these relations coming from the headmasters' concerns and related practices.



**Figura 1.** The main connections established among key-word, as participants represented themselves.

## Conclusion

Tasks related with school autonomy are not separable from the leadership concept that took place on discussions. The necessary leadership of a team (usually heterogeneous, such as that of a School) is not a simple task. It has to develop an educational project that fulfills the threefold goal of adapting to the national goals, the needs of the students and the characteristics of the people and the resources available.

Three axes were identified as they balance the essence of an autonomous educational management. They were transversality; style and learning profile. Transversality means the possibility of the educational action to translate (and deal with) and intersect the complexity that characterizes the knowledge society – as it has been called. Accordingly, educational leaderships generate different forms, levels and interests of knowledge, which makes them particularly relevant to the differentiating effects of their action on the communities they serve.

A second axis of meaning lies in the style of leadership and management. This dimension includes more or less shared forms of leadership and management, and more ecological or more technical forms of leadership. An important aspect of this axis is the visibility of the intermediate leaders.

Finally, the concept of learning schools is applicable to those that promote an expansive learning environment, improve students achievement; improve professional awareness, promote innovative teaching and learning practices that can foster student and teacher engagement, deal with the community, and do all these tasks under an open leadership.

