

MANAGING CROSS-CUTTING POLICIES WITHIN THE SPANISH NETWORK OF EDUCATING CITIES

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Abstract

This study analyses cross-cutting policies in the framework of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities. The paper presents an analysis of the situation of a set of City Councils included in the working group of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities: this qualitative study shows a number of important organizational problems such as the lack of coordination, communication difficulties, absence of leadership or the existence of lobbies among other issues. In addition, the study approaches two concepts related to cross-cutting management on the basis of the Theory of the Firm: the decentralization and the coordination of units. Finally, the paper sets a management model that leads to a cross-cutting approach of the organizational structure of local administrations. In a nutshell, the proposed model implies formal and informal changes: on the one hand, it is intended to establish new structures and links, and on the other it is set to spread the cross-cutting culture and philosophy across the organization.

Keywords — *cross-cutting policies, local governments, education, public management, theory of the firm*

1 Introduction

This study has been developed in the framework of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities, which is integrated in the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) founded in Bologna in 1994 and run by the Charter of Educating Cities. This Charter pursues a cultural and educational project that is efficient and interactive and aims to “unify all these factors so that we can create, city by city, a true knowledge society that does not exclude anyone”. More precisely, the Charter focuses on a “broad and

integrated education policy intended to include all the modalities of formal, non-formal and informal education”; furthermore, in order to encourage citizen participation “local governments must provide people with the information they need and foster, from an integrated perspective, orientation, and educational activities in ethical and civic values”.

All the Spanish City Councils that belong to the IAEC integrate the Spanish Network of Educating Cities; therefore, cities are grouped in area networks that address issues of common interest. More precisely, in 2004 the City Council of Gijón (Principality of Asturias) was appointed as the coordinator of a working group on “Cross-cutting Issues and Education in Municipal Services”; this team was made of more than twenty Spanish municipalities and relied on the support of the University of Oviedo; the task was later on undertaken by the City Councils of Donosti and Granollers. This collaboration led to the current study, which is intended to analyse the starting point of the municipalities by underlining the main organizational problems arising from cross-cutting issues and planning a suitable management model.

The paper is structured as follows: first, the concept of cross-cutting issues is defined within the framework of educating cities. Afterwards, the article analyses, from a qualitative perspective, the initial situation of the City Councils involved in the working group of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities. Next, the study presents a theoretical approach to two concepts embedded in the definition of cross-cutting issues relying on the Theory of the Firm: the decentralization and the coordination of units. Finally, on the basis of the observed difficulties and the theoretical grounds, a management model is proposed in order to achieve a cross-cutting nature in the organizational structure of local administrations.

2 Cross-Cutting Issues in the Context of Education Cities

Education is a cross issue in our society (Riba, 2004). The educating city regards the public sector as an educative factor and a meeting point where private interests are created and developed. Thus, this is the environment where initiatives of the public, private and third sector melt together. The educative value of the public areas of the city goes beyond the scope of education. Therefore, fields such as labour, housing, urban planning, leisure time and culture are also educative areas as they shape the setting where individuals live and grow (Martinell & Caninas, 2002).

In order to meet the social demands of our society, education has gone through many changes regarding *time* (pre-school and adult education), *setting* (workshops, museums, etc.) and *scope* (non-regulated, occupational and health education, social integration, etc.). This is an ever more complex and diversified scenario where cities assume education criteria that are not always strictly functional. In other words, the educating city will go a step further as long as the municipal institutions undertake education tasks when performing their public duties. In this context, Education City Projects regard education as a collective project that goes beyond education institutions and requires the commitment of citizens, education authorities and experts in the field.

Therefore, the growing development of interaction mechanisms that promote the participation of the citizens, the optimization and implementation of IT services and the evaluation on municipal action quality can turn into real educational agents for the whole society. Indeed, quality implies the capacity to address the particular demands of society (that tend to be more and more heterogeneous) in a flexible, comprehensive and cross-cutting manner.

All the administrations and departments of the education city have to be at the service of a common

project. As it has been pointed out, the complexity of education requires efficient responses and the commitment of different institutions and services; in this context, coordination and cross-cutting issues are key elements in order to give sense to education initiatives. The cross nature of education in the local public administration suggests that all actions should be coordinated and designed with an educational scope; in addition, new strategies have to be planned in a comprehensive and interdepartmental way. Furthermore, cross-culture approaches imply important consequences for the organizational structure of City Councils whose bureaucracy can be a burden for the achievement of municipal projects that are flexible and open and which rely on the active participation of citizens, politicians and professionals. Indeed, the new education policies are not only an outstanding opportunity for promoting participation but also for the organizational and managerial innovation (Brugué & Gomá, 2002; Subirats, 2002).

3 Situational Study

On the basis of the Education City Projects, which are set to develop a city strategic plan where education is a cross axis and a common denominator in all community actions, there is a need to contrast different approaches and points of view on the starting point and the main problematic in the field. In this sense, the City Councils that integrate the Spanish Network of Educating Cities took part in a working group in 2004 and 2005: this initiative was intended to find out the real situation these cities were into and propose and develop activities and strategies in order to achieve a cross-cutting nature on their services.

Fig 1. City Councils integrated in the working groups of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities

PERIOD 2004-2005	PERIOD 2005-2007	PERIOD 2007-2009
Gijón	Donosti	Granollers
A Coruña	Albacete	Adeje
Adeje	Alcobendas	Alcobendas
Albacete	Aranjuez	Algete
Alcalá de Guadaíra	Burgos	Aranjuez
Alcobendas	Ciudadella de Menorca	Ciudadella Menorca
Alzira	Donostia-San Sebastián	Donostia-San Sebastián
Avilés	Gijón	Gandía
Barcelona	Mislata	Gavá ^(A)
Cartaya	Punta Umbría	Gijón
Córdoba	Sagunto	Granollers
Corvera de Asturias	Tomelloso	Mislata
Cuenca	Vitoria-Gasteiz	Punta Umbría
Donostia-San Sebastián	Zaragoza	Quart de Poblet
Gijón		Santcugat del Vallés

Granollers		Torrent
Lleida		Vitoria-Gasteiz
Majadahonda		
Mislata		
Murcia		
Oviedo		
Punta Umbría		
Rivas-Vaciamadrid		
Sabadell		
Sagunto		
Salamanca		
San Sebastián de los Reyes		
SantQuirze del Vallès		
Santurtzi		
Tarancón		
Tomelloso		
Vila-Real		
Vinalesa		
Vitoria-Gasteiz		
Zaragoza		

Next, we present a summary of the results obtained in the analysis carried out in the first stage of the network group. The strengths and the weaknesses of the organization on cross-cutting issues are studied by means of a SWOT analysis. In addition we can get to know the main threatens and opportunities of the environment in order to develop real cross-cutting policies. More precisely, the participant cities -the ones that provide the information for the analysis- are the following: Alcobendas, Alzira, Avilés, Donostia, Getafe, Gijón, Zaragoza, Mistala, Murcia, Sabadell, Sagunto, Tomelloso, La Coruña, Lleida, Punta Umbría, Santurtzi, Cuenca and Rivas Vaciamadrid. Figure 2 shows the main conclusions that can be drawn from the SWOT analysis.

Fig 2. SWOT Analysis (Summary)

WEAKNESSES	STRENGTHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflicts of competence among administrations - Partial actions - Rigid vertical organisation - Too bureaucratic procedures - Cross-cutting elements are regarded as non-priority issues - Non existence or inadequate evaluation culture - Motivation problems among technicians - Lack of political leadership - Internal communication problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enough human and economic resources - Rapid and efficient response to citizen demands - Plenty of proposals - Orientation towards networking - Strategic position of the City Councils as network coordinators - Positive experiences in cross-cutting projects
THREATS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assumption of the educative-cultural leadership by the agents - Lack of financing and support from other levels of the Administration - Citizens are not aware of the information - Difficulty to integrate young people, women and disabled in the labour market - Limitation of the associative network - Citizens are regarded as segmented by the administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capable associative network - Prospects of networking with other cities - EU strategies in line with municipal objectives - Interest of the University world on the cities - New technologies allow for the optimization in intercommunication

In order to turn Education City Projects into real turning points where education is integrated in every community action, it is needed to be aware of the difficulties resulting from the starting models. The analysis of the information voluntarily provided by the City Councils integrated in the Spanish Network of Educating Cities can shed some light on the main problems embedded in the starting situation:

- Lack of unit coordination (resulting in overlapping of efforts and conflict of competences)

between departments and administrations).

- Difficulties to measure the unit performance as evaluation is focused on vertical elements rather than on cross issues.
- Internal and external communication problems leading to a lack of knowledge of experiences and ineffective dissemination strategies.
- Lack of commitment on the political scenario and absence of leadership in the initiatives to be developed; in addition, educative projects are used as promotional tools.
- Power of the professionals that might try to have some influence on the project in order to justify their survival.
- Low participation of citizens due to the poor or inadequate development and implementation of initiatives.
- Lack of an organizational culture that spreads cross-cutting issues across the whole organization beyond the willingness of the parties.

Nevertheless, we have to take into account the resources available for City Councils when carrying out administration optimization projects in the area of education which are based on multilevel and horizontal cross-cutting strategies:

- Diversity of the educational offer. Motivation and commitment of technicians. Existence of formal and informal participation channels of a capable associative network.
- Existing level of decentralization of the services and the offer.
- Strategic position of City Councils to organize the networks.
- Cross-cutting work experiences.
- Highly qualified technicians in organization and management systems.
- Experience of other cities and networking prospects.

3.1 Objectives and Principles

On the basis of the situation analysis, the working group of cross-cutting issues of the educating cities agrees on the following points for the 2007-2009 period:

1. Progress on the development and the analysis of the local educative maps by enlarging the study to the third sector and regulated education.
2. Go deeper in the conceptual development of the organizational conditions of cross-cutting issues in the field of education from the local sphere.
3. Develop a catalogue of best practices and an inventory of cross projects.
4. Establish pilot projects as an element of analysis of both, processes and results.

City Councils participating in the thematic network keep on working in the achievement of the established objectives. Regarding the second goal -a core issue in this paper- in the meeting of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities, held in May 2009, the following conditions were regarded as basic elements for any cross project or action:

- Decentralization: separating finance, management and production.

- Participation and transparency regarding shared responsibility.
- Open model that allows for the connection between the local and the global areas.
- Comprehensive vision of the addressees (the citizens) as parts of a whole.
- Strategic management. Political commitment to leadership.
- Horizontal coordination.
- Team work. Coexistence of inter disciplinarity and specialization.
- Existence of bodies and resources that enable cross-cutting issues on a permanent or a temporary basis for the development of different projects.

4 Theoretical Basis for Cross-Cutting Management

The political system has faced important barriers when addressing the management of cross-cutting issues as these elements present the following features:

- They lie beyond the competence of any department (Boyle, 1999).
- They are complex and uncertain issues to be found in the boundary between different administrative jurisdictions (Department for Transport, 1999).
- They require organizational support that goes beyond institutionally defined policy fields (OECD, 1996a).

From an organizational approach it can be stated that cross-cutting issues imply a reaction against the bureaucratic imperative that is characterized by: (a) searching for connections among cities without climbing the hierarchy; (b) showing a real commitment to the coexistence between specialization and inter disciplinarity; and (c) being applicable within organizations and among different institutions (Etxebarria, 1998). Summing up, cross-cutting issues imply the strengthening of the horizontal coordination as opposed to the limits and restrictions of vertical coordination.

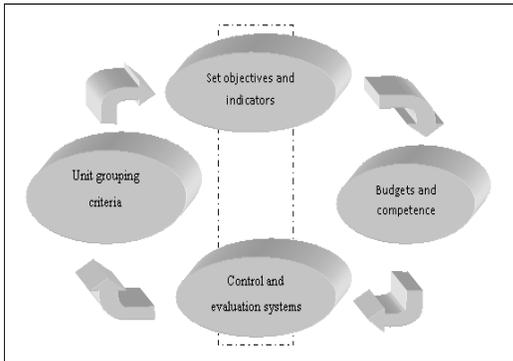
If we want to progress in the management of cross-cutting issues it is compulsory to shed some light on two key concepts: decentralization and the coordination of the decentralized units. The term decentralization is usually applied in several contexts and in different ways leading to confuse interpretations. According to the Theory of the Firm, decentralization is related to the decision taking power within the organizations. In this context, Mintzberg points out that when the decision power is focused in a single point within the organization –essentially, in the hands of an individual- we consider the structure to be centralized; on the other hand, if the power is shared by many individuals the structure is regarded to be decentralized (Mintzberg, 1990a). This author suggests that decentralization is the most accurate way of coordinating the decisions taken in an organization; however, why are organizations decentralized? The answer to this question is to be found in the problems concerning information processes: if all the decisions were taken in a single point, the decision centre would have to process huge amounts of information (which might be irrelevant and require lots of human and material resources in order to be collected).

Decentralization processes are also produced because they allow the organizations to immediately react against the changes in their environment: the transfer of information to the centre and its response to the origin is a time consuming process that can be streamlined and optimized by means of a decentralized

structure. Nevertheless, it is widely accepted that decentralized systems are more flexible and fit to the heterogeneity of the demand in a natural way. Finally, decentralization also has a motivational component for the staff as it is frequently used to attract and keep the most capable and creative people. In this context, it is necessary that organizations choose between transmitting information from the periphery and delegating the decision rights (Arruñada, 1990).

Decisions on decentralization must seek a suitable combination between the flexibility of the units in charge of the management of the public activities and the level of commitment needed to achieve a finance performance in tune with the values of the budgetary discipline (Onrubia, 1995). In order to do so it is necessary to follow a series of stages as it is summarized in Figure 3: (a) determine grouping criteria that categorize the units by homogeneous groups; (b) set clear objectives for each unit (defined by measurable indicators); provide the units with competence and re-allocate the budget resources; (d) design evaluation and control systems.

Fig 3. Stages in the coordination of decentralization



4.1 Stages in the coordination of decentralization

Units are grouped according to different categories and parameters (Mintzberg, 1990a): (a) knowledge and skills of the employees; (b) work processes and functions; (c) moment in which the activity is carried out, (d) product; (e) customers; (f) geographical area. However, these criteria are subject to criticism as the designed groups can be perceived in different ways. In the case of services, for instance, it is quite frequent that the categorization by processes, skills and customers coincides. Therefore, reducing the classification categories to two groups seems to be a practical strategy: (a) *functional*, including knowledge, processes and working criteria; and (b) *market dependent*, that covers the basis of the product, the customer and the place. Finally, the temporary criterion could be included in both categories.

Secondly, the *setting of clear and quantifiable objectives* will be needed. The problem lies in the lack of clarity on the goals of the administration. As it is pointed out by Pliatzky, while companies operating in the free market are set to get profits, governments have not primary goals although they aim to achieve particular objectives that might be opposed (Pliatzky, 1995). Therefore, the tendency is towards setting intermediate activity indicators that allow for the control and the evaluation of the actions in the decentralized units. On the other hand, the size and the organizational complexity of the public sector hinder the creation of a corporate image -an *organizational culture*- that gives sense to the working of the organization and leads participants to the achievement of common goals; in other words, it avoids them

undertaking a role within an organization with clear objectives and limited resources.

Once the units have been designed and the objectives are set, *the corresponding budget will be allocated to every division*, resulting in a further decentralization of competences and responsibilities. Finally, another issue regarding decentralization is to control that the agents in charge of every unit effectively meet the established objectives. In the last decades, the concept of control has evolved from the simple checking of the compliance with the set regulations to the study of the deviations and their causes as well as the definition of the possible correcting measures (Giró, 1995). As it has been mentioned, the *ex ante evaluation systems* relying on the setting of indicators do have an important role in this context. Likewise, relevant progress has been made in the implementation of *ex post control techniques* by means of audits. Nevertheless, in order to optimize the performance of the managers, the control system is usually complemented by a set of incentives that reduce the conflict of interests between the parties and provides the people in charge of the divisions with more freedom and autonomy (Onrubia, 1995; Ackroyd, 2005).

4.2 The level of decentralisation

Here we will discuss some of the decisions that have to be taken regarding the coordination of decentralization on the basis that there is not such a thing as a single combination: the level of decentralization will depend on the particular circumstances of each case (OECD, 1997b). This is especially true when dealing with local governments, characterized by their specific history, culture, society and political and administrative framework (Canales, 1997). In this sense, the Theory of the Firm -regarding Transaction Costs and Agency- do have a clear application in the public sector (Ferris & Grady, 1998). In complex organizations the optimal solution does not rely on the complete decentralization of decisions or on their total centralization (Milgrom & Roberts, 1993). The former implies an agency relationship between the person who delegates and the agent in charge of a particular task. Every agency relation has to tackle the conflict of interests between the parties since the utility functions between principals and agents are not always the same. In the public sector, the agency relations are especially complex as citizens rely on politicians and they delegate on the managers. Likewise, relations among several competing agents and principals can be also observed.

Clearly, these experiences go against the guarantee principles of the state and put into question indiscriminate decentralization policies lacking a clear definition of responsibilities (Hegewich & Larsen, 1996). In the particular case of local administrations, the following problems have been detected: lack of coordination among units, overlapping of resources, fragmentation of the services provided to citizens, rivalry between divisions and conflicts of competences (Jones, 1999).

These issues demand an analysis of the power relations established within the organizations. In this sense, Mintzberg (1992b) sets two types of coalitions: the external one, integrated by the agents who have an influence on the organization -owners, associates (customers, providers and competitors), trade unions and general audience- and the internal one, composed of the management -top and middle line-, the operation centre employees, the technical structure and the support staff (Mintzberg, 1992b). On the basis of these concepts, Mintzberg builds a power structure typology where the following elements are regarded as especially relevant: (a) *Meritocracy*, characterized by a passive external coalition and an internal coalition commanded by professionals whose power relies on the control of the basic resources for the organization: the specialized knowledge. In case there is not such a thing as a power centre or a clear objective scheme, a set of political strategies will inevitably arise aiming to have some influence on the allocation of resources; on the other hand, we find (b) *The political scenario*. As long as any group of

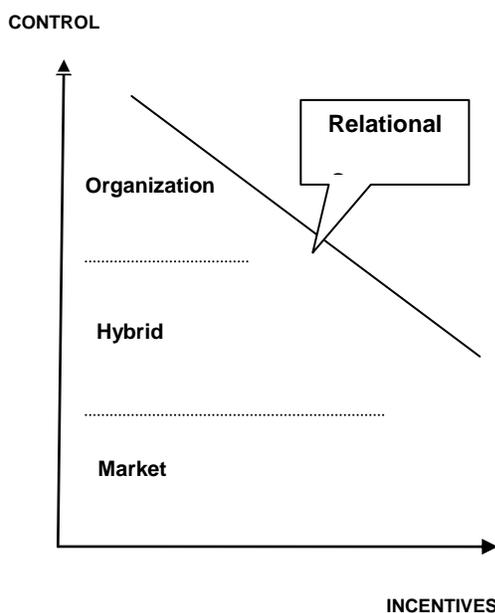
the external coalition tries to have an active influence on the behaviour of the organization it will give rise to this new configuration. Meritocracies have seen how the level of intervention of the public powers has increased in order to control the results. This strategy has built new conflicts between professionals on one side and authorities and managers on the other. This is a complex issue with a difficult solution since none of the parties will stop trying to control the situation, with each coalition seeking to enable their particular policy proposals to prevail (Dunleavy & Rhodes, 1990; Rodhes & Dunleavy, 1995; Ventura, 1997). Consequently, decentralization and centralization should not be regarded to be absolute concepts but the two poles of a continuum (Mintzberg, 1990a). If, as we have seen, both possibilities do present certain restrictions, the way to determine the optimal degree of decentralization for every organization is left open.

4.3 The contract design of decentralization

The contract design of the acting conditions of the decentralized units will depend on the coordination necessities and the difficulties to measure the performance. From the Transaction Costs view, the amount of costs will depend on the characteristics of the transactions: asset specificity, frequency of transactions and information quality (Williamson, 1975a); on the other hand, Milgrom and Roberts comment on the difficulty of evaluating performance and relationships with other transactions (Milgrom & Roberts, 1993). Thus, for instance, the management units will be preferred to expenditure units as long as there are fewer interdependencies among divisions and it is more difficult to measure and evaluate the output (Arruñada, 1990).

The high expenses presented by the poles of the continuum -hierarchy and incentives- imply the need for exploring intermediate ways of coordination. The separation of the functions of finance, management and production is a commonly accepted proposal in order to provide solutions to the problems of both mechanisms of coordination since it allows for a wide range of contract possibilities (Williamson, 1985b). The relation of negative replacement set by Rumelt among the incentives linked to the results of a unit and the coordination with other units (control) can be used to include hybrid solutions (Rumelt, 1995)

Fig 4. Coordination and incentives relationship. Based on Rumelt (1995)



Between one extreme -where the three functions are performed by a single institution- and the other -where the functions are totally independent- we find a middle point in the possibility of introducing relational contracts (Williamson, 1985b), which improve the control of a unit without demanding its integration; this contract allows for the generation of higher incentives than the ones of the organization at the same time it achieves a better coordination than the one of the market. Hybrid mechanisms of transaction governance are especially efficient when strong complementarities and cross-relations are established between the units (Pettersen, 1997). A good example can be found in the creation of collaboration networks that promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences (Escárcega & Orihuela, 2004; Diamond, 2005) or in the flourishing collaboration between the public and the non-profitable sector (Lévesque, *et al.*, 2001; Satre, 2001; Albareda, *et al.*, 2006). In the same line, Mintzberg adds that the hybrid formulas between the market and the hierarchy work especially well in customer-oriented professional services, such as health and education (Mintzberg, 1996c). The problem lies in turning a conflictive (political) system in a cooperative (rational) one, i.e. a system where individuals act in a rational way in order to achieve a common objective. From this perspective -that dates back to Barnard (Barnard, 1938)-, organizations will be useless institutions unless they can accomplish more than the individual could alone. Therefore, organizations find a balance when they meet the objectives of efficiency (or the achievement of the organizational goals) and efficacy (that is achieved when the members of an organization perceive that the incentives awarded according to their status are higher than the contributions they have to make). In this framework, where participants have a double status -organizational and individual-, the management of cross-cutting issues would consequently be the process intended to guarantee the bottom line of efficiency and effectiveness that the organization needs to survive. In addition, cross-cutting approaches allow for the coexistence of the current diversity and the coordination of actions.

Under this conception, organizations turn into cooperation systems that are consciously aimed at the achievement of certain objectives that might not be shared by their members. This way, the participating agents would not necessarily be members of the organization but they would be engaged in their environment, a larger cooperative system that includes the organization itself. The specific limitations of the Welfare State to give an answer to an ever complex and interdependent society underline the need to re-state the links in the public and private sectors, between the State and the Society: this leads to the emergence of the Relational State, which is able to create and manage complex inter-organizational networks where public and private organizations are included (Mendoza, 1996). As it has been mentioned, new local governance processes can be organized by means of networks that imply the acknowledgment of a plurality of agents and also their coordination in common organizational frameworks where they can exchange knowledge and experience on the basis of three premises (Blanco & Gomá, 2003): the non-existence of a hierarchical centre, the interdependence of the agents and a certain institutionalization in the sense of establishing stable interaction routines.

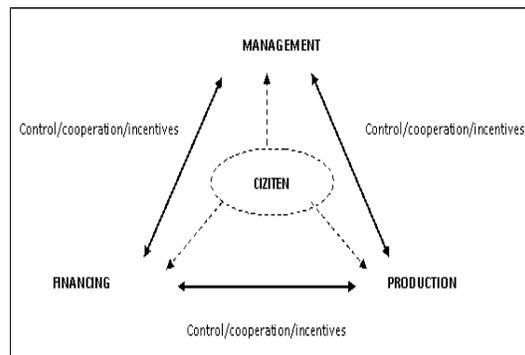
In a few words, it is necessary to reach the level and the type of decentralization that guarantees the performance of the units in an objective and transparent way, avoiding overlapping and taking profit of the coordination synergies without suffering a decrease in the response capacity. The analysis leads to the conclusion that intermediate solutions to the concerns set by cross-cutting issues can be found as long as they can take advantage from the coordination, units have to fit to the objectives of the organization in an autonomous and flexible way and the mutual need to keep cooperation between the parties (i.e. the relational contract) promotes the suitable incentives.

5. Proposal of a Management Model for the Cross-Cutting Policies in Educating Cities

In the field of education there are several issues that can lead to the conflict of interests between the parties resulting in opportunistic behaviours: the existence of externalities and asymmetries in information, the need to carry out specific investments, the high complexity, and the difficulties to evaluate the output separately from the process. This might provoke that the market is not the most suitable tool to coordinate certain educating transactions. This is the reason why the administration has intervened in the educative offer to guarantee a more equal and fair access to education and make up for the uncertainty and the externalities. In this sense, Lankina (2008) suggests that bureaucracies retain partial authority over education because this service requires economies of scale, standardization and a high level of technical skills and expertise (Lankina, 2008). However, as it has been stated in this study, the bureaucratic structure has resulted in important coordination and incentive problems that avoid the adaptation to an ever complex and dynamic environment. Local governments are aware of the limitations of the traditional model of public management; therefore, they are going through a change towards a decentralised model, which is open and participative (Bresser-Pereira, 2004; Coaffe & Johnston, 2005; Nyholm & Haveri, 2009; Haveri, *et al.*, 2009); these reforms are also affecting least developed countries (World Bank, 2004). Due to its cross-cutting nature, education has also been affected by this phenomenon (Gaynor, 1998). In order to settle the basis for a model, we will rely on the disintegration of the educating transactions in three scopes (Figure 5):

- Financing (public, private, mixed, multilevel administrations).
- Management (public, private, mixed, multilevel).
- Production (public, private, mixed, multilevel).

Fig 5. Separation of tasks and coordination mechanisms]



This disintegration will inevitably lead to focus the debate on different ways of separation among the financier, the manager, the producer and the citizen as the final recipients of education. This brings us to analyse the different coordination mechanisms of these relationships: hierarchy (control), hybrid (cooperation) and market (incentives).

Since the models to be achieved have been widely discussed and there is an agreement on the cross-cutting discourse among the City Councils of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities, we will try to set an organizational formula that optimizes and manages cross-cutting issues in a more effective way in economical (efficiency, effectiveness) and social terms (user satisfaction, participation) without forgetting

the transparency and the legal framework that must be present in public management.

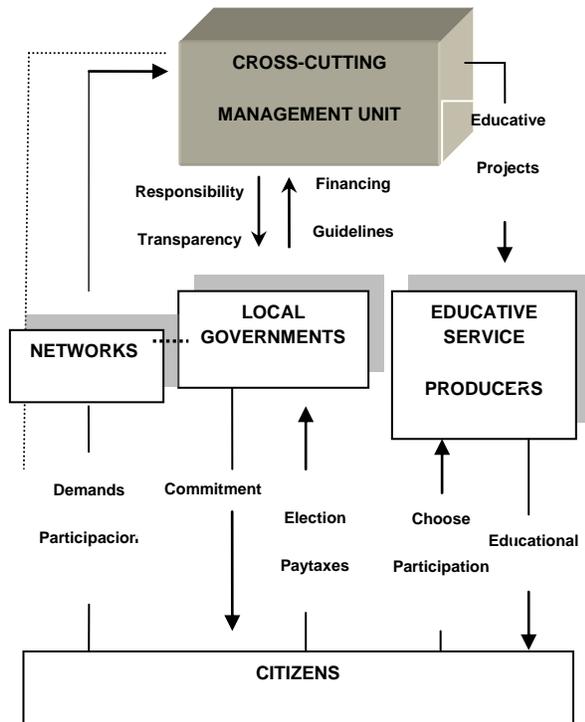
In addition, when designing the model we have to take into account the remarks of Serra in order to avoid the problems derived from the creation of a cross structure (Serra, 2005): for instance, the cross structure might not be perceived as an internal competitor, cross units may address the sector units as users of their work, and finally, a cross-cutting approach can provide vertical units with a higher action capacity since they are in charge of implementing the set policies from a cross-cutting perspective.

5.1 A model of cross-cutting management

As it can be seen in Figure 6, the proposed model is in line with the new tendencies in public management:

- **A decentralised model.** With a clear separation between financing (public, private and multilevel), management (public, multilevel) and production (public or private; possibility to compete and cooperate). The local government delegates the coordination in the cross-cutting management unit in order to get more transparency and professionalism; this is done to keep the interests of the citizens as opposed to the *political scenario* (the power of the politicians) and the meritocracy (power of the professionals) -that could be using the educating policies as promotion or survival tools, respectively-. The management unit will be liable for detecting needs, looking for funds, finding partners, presenting projects, assuming responsibilities and spreading the cross-cutting culture across the organization.
- **A participative model.** The management unit works as the representative of the demands of the citizens; it evaluates the proposals and allows for the participation in the production processes by means of the non-profit sector together with public and private producers. In this context, citizen initiatives have to be promoted above other elements.
- **An Open Model.** Far from the isolation of the traditional models of public management, the local and global issues are directly linked. Therefore, the management unit will be open to the citizen demands and will interact with the different administration levels. In addition, it will share experiences and knowledge through the established networks (such as the Spanish Network of Educating Cities).

Fig 6. A proposal of cross-cutting management



6 Conclusions

The complexity of education requires organizational solutions that involve different institutions and services; in this context, decentralization, coordination and cross-cutting issues are essential elements to give sense to the actions in the field of education. However, the size and the structure of the public sector will hamper the creation of a corporate identity and an organizational culture that give sense to the working of the organization and lead its participants towards achieving common goals.

Due to the dynamic and complex nature of cross-cutting issues and the existent differences among City Councils, it is quite difficult to agree on a single organizational model valid for all the situations and circumstances. Being aware of this limitation, a permanent structural basis is proposed in order to coordinate the cross projects and policies -with a marginal weight in the current organization charts- that could be followed by *ad hoc* structures that are able to fit to the different eventualities and features. In this context, it is necessary to discuss and set the linking and coordination mechanisms between the implied structures and groups.

In this way, the cross projects will have a stronger support from the political sector and the implied departments. In addition, the cooperation among departments would be promoted as opposed to their traditional competence. On the other hand, a comprehensive educative service offer would be achieved and the use of common tools would be promoted avoiding the overlapping of resources.

Such a coordination structure of cross-cutting issues would be open to the citizen demands and to the permanent contact and interaction with the different levels of the administration; besides, it would

promote the exchange of information and experiences with other City Councils by means of the set networks. This would allow to work from the local sphere with a global vision leading to new focuses and approaches intended to enrich the projects.

In a few words, the proposed model would imply a formal and an informal change since new structures and links would be established and the cross-cutting culture would be implemented in the organization. Therefore, certain final objectives (such as efficiency, effectiveness, quality, satisfaction and participation) will be set in addition to intermediate activity goals. Implementing a cross-cutting structure will provide solutions to complex issues that demand a comprehensive response; however, some time is required in order to adapt to the organizational and cultural changes. Moreover, the cross-cutting approach -that implies the dialogue between the different groups and levels of the administration- is likely to promote and trigger the learning process.

7 Managerial Implications

Taking into account some of the pilot experiences discussed in the different Annual Meetings of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities and the results of this study, several conclusions can be drawn on the requirements of the implementation of cross-cutting in municipal services. More precisely, the needed sequence would have the following structure: (a) define the cross-cutting contents in education policies; (b) determine the objectives to be achieved; (c) schedule the goals and specify the sectors where they should be met; (d) carry out a cross-cutting planning of the objectives, what implies the previous coordination among the services and the formal and informal bodies liable to launch or promote the offer; (e) implement the planning by means of the available resources; (f) evaluate the process -according to the previously set indicators- in order to measure the established objectives.

With the aim of developing this sequence it is needed that a series of requirements are met in the organizational and behavioural fields to create a real cross-cutting culture. As far as the organizational framework is concerned, it is required to give priority to certain elements in the municipal environment: the internal communication to define cross-cutting contents; the permanent communication channels with the citizens to get a two way communication system; the internal and the external dissemination of cross-cutting policies avoiding the overlapping of efforts; and the quantification and timing of all the projects that will enable their evaluation. Regarding the behavioural requirements, the most relevant are motivation and learning. In this sense, it is necessary to promote the creation of multidisciplinary teams recognizing their participation and coordination tasks. Therefore, knowing the resources of the City Councils and promote their mobility is an essential element; on the other hand, the evaluation has to be adapted to cross-cutting projects in order to improve and avoid the current competence between departments and services.

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