

# Higher education as development policy

*A study on the focus on higher education as  
a tool for development in Norwegian policy  
documents*

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# Abstract

This study analyzes Norwegian policy documents concerning development aid, with the aim of identifying differences between the Norwegian policy development and the international trends on the area of higher education as a tool for development. 13 Norwegian policy documents have been analyzed using a analysis framework from the work of Gornitzka (Gornitzka 1999), focusing of the following five points: policy problems, policy objectives, normative base, policy instruments and policy linkage. This framework has been used to analyze the 50 years of Norwegian policy on the area of higher education as a tool for development, to see if any major changes have taken place. This has then been compared to the major trends in international thinking on the same area, as identified by literary review.

This study's major findings is that the Norwegian policy documents on development aid can be separated into three phases, distinct in their view on higher education. At the same time there can be found general trends in the thinking outside of Norway, as well as in the international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF. These are in large part similar to the pattern found in the Norwegian policy documents. There have been a return to a focus on higher education in the last ten years, in coherence with a focus on knowledge as a part of economic development.

# Preface

This thesis is written for the master programme Master of Philosophy in Higher Education. During my two years in the programme I have had the privilege of studying higher education in several different countries, experiencing more than I had ever expected. My M.Phil and HEEM classmates and colleagues have contributed heavily to this being an interesting and exciting two years, through discussions and fun experiences. My knowledgeable professors have been wonderful in giving me insight into the field, and I leave this programme with an increase in my own knowledge of higher education and a higher interest for the issues higher education face world wide.

During the writing period, my supervisor Mari Elken has been an invaluable source of knowledge and inspiration, and has always been eager to help. Your guidance and presence have been much appreciated.

Last but not least I would like to thank my family for their encouragement through this process. Your suggestions, corrections and positive attitude have been of immense help, and I could not have done this without you.

You have all helped improve this work.

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Inga Dalin

# List of abbreviations

GP - Green Paper

HEI - Higher education institutions

IFI - International financial institutions

IMF - International Monetary Fund

NORAD - Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

SAL - Structural Adjustment Loan

SSA - Sub-Saharan Africa

WB - World Bank

WP - White Paper



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# 1 Introduction

Sixty years ago higher education was an institution educating a narrow segment of society. In the last sixty years the world as a whole has seen immense increases in the participation rates of higher education, and higher education is in many countries no longer only for the elite. Latin America has seen these increases starting as early as the 1960's, and parts of Asia have seen large increases in participation rates during the last two decades (Kapur and Crowley 2008: 5).

There are however countries that have not been taking part in this development on level with the rest. Many of the countries that are lagging behind in terms of higher education enrolment rates are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the countries classified as low-income countries are also in this part of the world, and the level of higher education participation is on average lower here than anywhere else (*ibid*). In a world that is increasingly mentioning knowledge in connection with the words "society" and "economy", it seems that part of the world is not keeping the pace in the race for gaining this knowledge.

The development of countries is an issue that engages a number of individuals, organizations and nations around the world. Norway has since 1962 had white papers specifically dedicated to the issue of development and development aid, and organizations such as the UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are all allocating large resources to different forms of aid aimed at increased development in the developing countries. There are a number of factors seen as contributing to development, and one of these factors is education. Organizations and Western states have views on how the factor of higher education contributes to development, and these views can be found in the official documents they release. Academic views on the issue are manifested through theories and ideas on the factors contributing to development, education included.

## 1.1 Research problems and questions

The topic outlined in 1.1 is very broad. Higher education and development in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are both topics that contain a vast number of ideas, theories and disciplines. The combination of the two that has been the aim of this thesis from the very start lends itself to a

number of areas, problems and issues that could be discussed and researched upon. To best be able to build a thesis around the topic in the limited time and space that was available for this work, I have found it necessary to limit myself. The perspective of this work will therefore lie with the developed nations, and how they through the discussion of development aid and development programs have expressed certain views and beliefs on the topic of higher education and development in general, and on higher education and development in SSA in particular. Has Norway displayed thinking that stands independently from the general world community in this matter? My general research problem is as follows:

- Have there been differences in how international trends and Norwegian policy documents treat the topic of higher education as a tool for development in Sub-Saharan Africa?

To answer this I have constructed three research questions that together will provide a basis for research upon the area. They are as follows:

1. How has the thinking around development aid changed over the last 50 years?
2. In what way has higher education been argued to be of benefit to development, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa?
3. How has higher education as a tool for development been viewed in Norwegian policy documents?

Question number one will put development thinking into a historic perspective, which will form the basis for later analysis of the Norwegian documents. By giving a general frame of the change that has taken place it will be easier to see how changes in the general thinking on the area corresponds with changes in the specific area of higher education. Question number two will provide a view of some of the most prevalent arguments used to justify the use of higher education as a tool of development. In what way is higher education considered beneficial to development? Question number three will by analysis of official documents on the field of development provide an overview of how higher education has been seen by Norwegian policy makers on the field of development aid. These three questions will form the framework for answering if there have been displayed differences between the international point of view and the Norwegian point of view during the last 50 years. In order to critically examine the actual potential use of development aid, it is important to analyse the Western

perspective in a critical manner. What is meant by development and how this has changed can thus provide interesting insight. These questions can however not answer to the level or even existence of causality between these points of view. The time limit, lack of data and resources puts constraints on this, and the thesis will therefore not attempt to provide an answer to why there are differences or similarities, or if the two points of view may have some level of causality between them.

## **1.2 Relevance of the study**

As mentioned in 1.1 and 1.2 the general topic of higher education and development is large and rich in variation. Both higher education and development are separately given sizable attention both on national levels and by international organizations. There has also been quite a lot of attention given to the connection between basic education and development, evident amongst other things in the Millennium Goals of the UN. The connection between higher education and development have in contrast not been as researched and focused upon. There is research done in the field, but not much on the level of the connection between higher education and development. As the division in living standards and education level seems to increase between the developed and the developing world, and SSA is the region falling furthest behind, there is a need to further explore the connection between higher education and development.

To understand the current context of the topic, an historic view and discussion of the changes that has led to this point is of high importance. By providing an overview of the changes in development thinking and contrasting this with an overview of the changes in the discussion of Norwegian policy making on the field of higher education, it will be possible to get a dual view on the process of higher education in the area of development aid. This can serve as a base for others who wish to further analyze the topic, and connect higher education closer to the general idea of development aid, development thinking and improvement of living standards in the developing world. It will also facilitate an understanding of the degree to which the national policy documents of Norway can be said to be similar or different from general theories on the topic.

This thesis deals with a topic that includes a vast number of theories, opinions, individuals and geographical areas. There are a number of people involved in decisions, the decisions are

based on a number of theories and political considerations, and the results have effects in different institutions in many parts of the world. It is impossible to conduct a study, especially within the limited frame of a master's thesis that would include all the aspects and areas of the topic. The thesis does therefore have limitations. There is no differentiation made between the countries of SSA, even though there are regional differences with respect to the topic that could have been explored. There is no exploration of how the large developed nations such as the United States, Great Britain and France are treating the field. All of these issues are relevant for the topic of this thesis, but have not been explored due to the mentioned limitations of time and space. Implications of causality will not be attempted, as this thesis does not contain the data material for that type of research.

### **1.3 Overview of the thesis**

To answer the research problem outlined in 1.2, this thesis will include 7 chapters. The second chapter will provide the contextual background needed to understand the rest of the thesis, including a brief discussion on the term "development". This chapter also contains the main historic lines of SSA higher education, as well as information about the present day higher education situation in SSA. The context of the Norwegian contribution will also be provided here, to better understand the later analysis of Norway's view on higher education and development in SSA. The third chapter will provide the theoretical framework that the analysis will be based on. This theoretical framework is Gornitzka's framework for policy analysis (Gornitzka 1999), which consists of a five points analysis. Each point will be described and in case of any modification be explained. Chapter number four will be the methodology chapter. Research design and limitations of the study will be covered, as well as an explanation of the method used for the study and the validity issue of this method. Chapters five and six will consist of the analysis. Chapter five is a literary review that aims to provide the answers to the first two research questions, concerning the historical lines of development thinking as well as how higher education has been said to be connected to development. General development thinking will be discussed in addition to the actions of the World Bank and the IMF. Chapter six will by use of the theoretical framework from chapter three analyze official government documents to answer the question of how higher education has been viewed in development aid, and how this has changed over the last sixty years. By

thorough work on these chapters I will be able to form a conclusion in chapter seven, as well as provide suggestions for further research on the topic.

## 2 Contextual background

This chapter will provide the context and background needed to see long lines in history and to realize how the past has influenced the current situation in Sub-Saharan Africa and its institutions of higher education. In order to understand the role development aid can have in building up higher education systems in SSA, it is important to have an understanding of the historic legacies of the area and its higher education institutions.

### 2.1 Development

The history of development aid is closely linked to the idea of development. In the later years, the term has come to embody a number of different understandings and interpretations, and it is useful to look at the history of the term. This is to understand the evolution of later theories on development and the implementation of these.

Potter et. al. (2008: 4-5) writes that the terms "developed" and "developing" in respect to nations is often understood to involve stages of advancement and evolution. Even though the term development was not mentioned in the context of development aid until the middle of the 20th century, the idea can be traced back to the 18th century (*ibid*). The Enlightenment period had its belief that rational thinking and scientific thought could progress societies from what was considered the barbarian to the civilized, European model (Potter et. al. 2008: 6). This Euro-centric view of development of societies did amongst other things contribute to the justification of the imperialistic nations' rule of the African region, as they did the African peoples a favor by bringing them closer to civilization (Simensen 2006: 223-225).

The term development the way it is used today is by many considered to have emerged in a speech made by President Truman in 1949 (Potter et. al. 2008: 6). His definition of "underdeveloped areas" described what was to be known as The Third World. The terms "developed" and "underdeveloped" was first used in this speech, with the term "underdeveloped" later changed to the more positively charged "developing" (*ibid*).



During the 1950's and 1960's, the term was synonymous with the terms modernization and Westernization (Coleman and Court 1993: 4), showing a strong historical and philosophical tie with the early, 19th century thinking about the subject. Where the term underdeveloped was considered too negative, one can argue that the term developing is strengthening this same euro-centric way of thinking, as it alludes to the developed world having arrived and the developing world in need to follow.

Part of the justifications of the colonization period came from the idea that the European presence in Africa would civilize the barbarian locals. The term civilization was interchangeable with what was later to be known as development (Simensen 2006: 224). Many of the aspects that were understood to be included in the term civilization can be found in the various interpretations of development: technical and industrial progress, the building of infrastructure and basic schooling. The idea of development has therefore been around for a longer time than the term itself. The criticism of this mindset comes when the term "developing" is associated with dependency of the poorer nations on the richer nations. It embodies a sense of economic, political and cultural subordination of the poorer nations (Potter et. al. 2008: 4-5).

"Development" is in other words a term that is difficult to define, as it contains a number of aspects and has often been criticized as being too Euro-centric. It is especially difficult to analyze the term in a thesis dealing with material and ideas that span over a fifty year period. The definition of the term has changed over the period, and many of the documents used in this thesis do not provide a definition of their own understanding of the term. Unless specified this thesis will therefore use a very open and broad definition of development, allowing it to encompass the different views of different times and organizations.

## **2.2 The African context**

The developing world contains more than 80% of the world's population. Half of the world's students live in the developing world, and the enrolment rates are growing faster than the countries' populations (World Bank 2000: 9, 26-27). If this trend continues, a majority of the world's students will soon live in the developing world.

SSA has the world's lowest higher education enrolment rates, at an average of 5% (Materu 2007: 13). Even though it is an increase from the 1% that was enrolled in higher education

around the time of independence, it is still low compared to the rest of the world (see table 1). Maybe even more worrisome than the low level of enrollment is the fact that the increase in this enrollment has been so small compared to the rest of the world. When looking at the developing world as a whole SSA is lagging behind, with current enrollment rates at the level the rest of the developing world saw 40 years ago (Bloom, Channing and Chan 2005: 5-6). There is also the factor of large regional disparities hidden in the 5% average, and some of the SSA regions are seeing enrollment rates as low as 1 % (*ibid*).

Table 1. Gross Enrollment Ratio (%), Tertiary Education

	1980	1997	2004
High income countries	36,2	51,6	66,7
Least developed countries	1,8	3,2	8,7
Sub-Saharan Africa	1,7	3,9	5
Arab States	9,6	14,9	22,6
Latin America and the Caribbean	13,7	19,4	28,6
East Asia and Oceania	3,8	10,8	19,6
South Asia	4,3	7,2	9,7

Source: World Bank EduStats

a: The gross enrollment ratio is the total enrollment at a given educational level, regardless of age, divided by the population of the age group that typically corresponds to that level of education. The specification of age groups varies by country. (in Kapur and Crowley: 6)

### 2.2.1 History of Sub-Saharan African higher education institutions

Most of the countries in SSA are former colonies and it is impossible to separate the early years of SSA higher education from the ideologies of the colonial powers. As expressed by Juhani Koponen: "Colonialism and development are so inextricably intertwined that neither can be understood without a reference to the other." (Koponen 1997: 164). This is might be true when it comes to the institutions of higher education, as these in their present form are a European export to the Sub-Saharan continent. The institutions of higher education were established under the colonial rule and modelled after the colonial, metropolitan university (Cloete and Muller 1998: 2). The higher education institutions (HEIs) were not intended to build up the African societies, but rather to supply the colonial rulers with an elite that could assist in governing the colony. They needed individuals to build infrastructure and individuals

to administer this, and to achieve this, the colony masters created both a working class and an educated elite (Simensen 2006: 299). Higher education on a larger scale was neglected (Tägil and Simensen 2005: 283). The colony masters feared the political effect of a large, higher educated local population, and kept the numbers who were allowed to get such education at a minimum. Again there are disparities within SSA, and a colony like Belgian Congo (present day Democratic Republic of the Congo) did not have any possibilities for higher education until the 1950's (Simensen 2006: 269).

The fact that the SSA HEIs were built on the model of its Western counterparts left much to be desired. The models used had developed with the Western world and were now models of an industrial society. The environment and societal context of the colonies where the universities were established during the 19th and 20th century was vastly different from the Western nations the university model was taken from. This led to the universities not being able to offer any real guidelines in the task of building the African nations (Sherman in Cloete and Muller 1998: 2).

Another problem connected to this is the maintenance of the models. The Western university models have been developing in coordination with the Western society. The model used to create the African universities has now often been discarded in the "mother country" due to the development of new models perceived to be better suited for the current national context (Cloete and Muller 1998: 6). This has not always taken place in the African nations, and they are therefore fixated on a system that not only was not relevant for the country when it was established, but has not been reformed in line with the changes that have taken place in the community (Cloete and Muller 1998: 5).

As the colonial powers fell and the African nations gained independence during the 1960's and 1970's, the establishment of higher education was seen as an important factor in the building of the independent countries (World Bank 2000: 16). The African universities were expected to be engines in this development, and were "cast in the role of savior" (Cloete and Muller 1998: 2). This is not unusual for newly independent nations, and the universities are often an important part of the national building (Sawyer 2002: 3). Even in recent times the leaders of Africa have high hopes for the resource the African universities can be, as expressed by Kofi Annan:

The university must become a primary tool for Africa's development in the new century. Universities can help develop African expertise; they can enhance the

analysis of African problems; strengthen domestic institutions; serve as a model environment for the practice of good governance, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, and enable African academics to play an active part in the global community of scholars.(UN Information Service, 2000)

One cannot look at the system of higher education in a country without looking at the surrounding context. The nations in Africa after the independence experienced growing economies. Due to the newly gained independence, the need for public officials and professionals increased. The enrollment into higher education saw an immense increase, and due to the very low starting point, some areas saw a tenfold increase in enrolment rates. The enrollment into primary education tripled in some areas (Colclough et. al 2003: 25). But just as the surrounding environment led to an increase in enrolment rates, it had an effect on the funding of the HEIs.

After the African nations gained their independence during the late 60s and early 70s, the economic situation did not look overly pessimistic. Many African nations have substantial natural resources, and from 1965 to 1980, SSA experienced a GDP per capita growth of 1.5% pr year (Reader 1998: 658). During the same period, the GDP pr capita growth in India was 1.3% (*ibid*). However, during the 80's and 90's, SSA faced severe economic problems. The GDP pr capita grew in the 1960's, stagnated in the 1970's, and had a steep decrease of 20 % to 25 % in the 1980's (Tagil and Simensen 2005: 284). This had a profound effect on all parts of SSA, including the system of higher education.

Part of the problems experienced by the SSA HEIs can be explained by problems in the surrounding context. SSA after independence was a disrupted society, plagued by ever-shifting governments, military coups and general unrest. In the 30 years after independence alone, SSA saw no less than 70 coups (Reader 1998: 657). Arguably this is no ideal environment for developing strong institutions of learning and research, especially as most of the HEIs at this time were public, and thereby completely dependent on the government, no matter how unstable it turned out to be.

Within the system of higher education, the unfit model used for establishing the SSA universities made it difficult for the universities to fulfill their potential of being a contributor on the scale that was wanted. In addition to this came the problems of the 1980's, where a number of factors worked together and gave SSA HEIs substantial financial troubles.

The student numbers increased during this period (see table 1). Though they did not increase as much as was the case in other parts of the world, and in fact not even enough to get SSA out of Trow's definition of "elite higher education", it still put a massive strain on the HEIs (Trow 2007: 244). Larger student body and less funding from organizations such as the World Bank, in combination with the deteriorating economic situation of SSA, led to a decrease in the spending per student. As an example, from the US\$ 6800 SSA countries spent in 1980 the funding went down to US\$ 1200 spent in 2002 (Materu 2007: 14).

### **2.2.2 Present day higher education in the Sub-Saharan region**

More students are now receiving higher education in SSA than was the case before, but there is reason to ask how much the constant cuts in costs has affected the quality of the education that is provided. Kapur and Crowley argue that even more important than the enrolment gap between developed and developing countries is the quality gap (Kapur and Crowley 2008: 9).

According to a study by the World Bank, teaching methods are often outmoded (World Bank 2000: 23). In addition to this spending per student has decreased and the faculty is affected by brain drain (Materu 2007: 14). The brain drain out of Africa has led to deep-seated issues in the African system. The increase in enrolment in combination with the brain drain, retirements and the factor of HIV/AIDS has led to a severe lack of faculty at many SSA HEIs (*ibid*). The faculty is not being replaced at the same speed they retire, and in some universities the teaching positions are being given to individuals with no higher degree than a bachelor's (Walshe 2008). In addition to this many professors at the SSA universities are being paid such a low sum that they are forced to take on assignments outside of the institution of higher education where they are hired as professors (*ibid*). Sawyer also points out that the tendency of donors to fund individual research grants or commissioned projects without the university or institution being involved contributes to this trend, where the HEIs are not involved in the knowledge production at the level that could be desired (*ibid*).

Coleman and Court (1993) claim that the African universities are in much larger part than their European or American counterparts centers of knowledge. In Europe, much of the research that takes place is not taking place in universities, but in other centers for research (Coleman and Court 1993: 2). In SSA the knowledge building is often more concentrated at the universities, and they are therefore in many ways more important for the building of a knowledge society than the universities in the West (*ibid*). The development of the

universities is therefore an important task when trying to improve the conditions for SSA. One could argue that due to the role SSA HEIs have as centers of knowledge production, the development of these institutions are even more important for the national development than what is the case in the West.

As a means to improve their standing as institutions of higher education, many SSA HE tries to copy what the Western institutions do. This could be unfortunate for two reasons- Firstly the context is different. What present day Britain needs to develop as a society might be different from what present day Kenya needs to develop. Secondly, the models in developed countries are often old and in need of reform themselves (World Bank 2000: 94). The developing countries do here have an opportunity to learn from the mistakes of others. SSA universities should not draw closer to the Western model, but rather draw closer to the concerns, values and the local environment in which they reside (Cloete and Muller 1998: 3).

This way they can aim to create a higher education system for the African future, not for the European past.

## 2.3 The Norwegian context

To facilitate a better understanding of the later analysis of the Norwegian documents, it is necessary to provide an explanation of the Norwegian context both concerning higher education and development aid.

"Norway has as a nation of knowledge a great need for persons with high competence within a broad specter of disciplines. (...) To be attractive partners for cooperation and equal competitors internationally, there is a strong focus put on the quality of the education."

This quote is taken from the Norwegian Ministry of Education's website, and is specifically aimed at higher education (Ministry of Education 2010). Norway is a small country with right under 5 million inhabitants. These inhabitants are catered to by 7 universities, 27 university colleges and 5 technical colleges, in addition to a number of private institutions, 25 of which receive some amount of state funding (*ibid*). The state run HEIs do not charge tuition fees, and the Norwegian State Education Loan Fund provides students with a loan to cover living expenses and tuition fees for the institutions that do charge them. This loan is available to nearly all students enrolled in a Norwegian HEI, and it is partly changed to a grant when the students pass their exams. Norwegians place a great deal of importance on higher education,

the principle that this should be free of charge and the importance this education has in the economic and social development of the country.

Norway has during the last sixty years gone from being a relatively poor country on the outskirts of a Europe trying to rebuild itself after a war, to becoming one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Along with this economic transformation there has been steady increases in how much money the Norwegian State donates to development aid in different forms. In 2009 the number was 1,06 % of the BNP, which amounted to NOK 25,7 billion. Between 2006 and 2009, seven of the ten countries that received most development aid from Norway were located in SSA (NORAD 2010).

Norway places importance on the role higher education plays in the further development of the country. Norway also donates a large sum of the national budget to development aid, particularly to SSA. Chapter six will analyze how Norwegian policy makers have seen higher education as a tool for development, and how this has been affected by general views on development in the international society.

## **2.4 Summary**

This section has shown that both the term development and the higher education system Sub-Saharan Africa has today has been heavily influenced by the colonial past of the region. The universities were not originally meant to build strong, independent nations in an African context, but rather provide European education for a small elite that would assist the Europeans in running the colonies. This history of the higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa means that the institutions were not as capable of dealing with the problems that rose in Africa after the independence. In addition to this the funding for higher education saw a severe decrease from the 1970's, as the national economies in SSA had a decline in combination with the World Bank's focus on the lower levels of education. This happened at a time when the region saw an increase in higher education enrolment, and as a result, the funding pr student declined, and one could argue that the quality did as well.

In the background of development aid for higher education, one can see a shift from a focus on basic education and few higher educated individuals, to a belief that to build a nation's economy and reduce poverty one needs a higher educated population and strong institutions

of research and learning. This shift can be seen in many parts of development aid policy, as will be explored in chapters five and six.



# 3 Theoretical framework

## 3.1 Use of the theoretical framework

To be able to analyze how higher education as development aid has been viewed in Norway during the last 50 years, there is a need for a consistent framework to be used. This thesis will use the framework for policy analysis presented in Gornitzka's article "Governmental policies and organizational change in higher education" (Gornitzka 1999). The framework consists of five points, the policy **problems**, the policy **objectives**, the **normative base**, the policy **instruments** and the policy **linkage**. Analyzing the official government papers on development from the last 50 years using these five points will facilitate a comparison that can be used in stating how the policy makers have discussed higher education and development over the period, as well as looking at the changes that have occurred. The unit of analysis will be the government documents, though the only part of the documents that will be analyzed are the areas connected to higher education. The exception to this is the point of analysis concerning the normative base of the documents. I have chosen not to separate the value placed on higher education from the general normative base of the documents. This is because values and beliefs permeate the documents in a way that makes it unfruitful to separate the values of higher education from the values of the document as an entity. In addition to this there is very little mention of values in the context of higher education, and the data basis for analyzing this would thereby be too narrow. One could argue that this in itself is a sign of a normative base, but I have chosen to look at the value and belief underlying the whole document in order to create a more substantial basis for analysis and comparison.

### 3.1.1 Policy problems

By analyzing the documents and the definition of policy problems, it will be possible to look at whether the formulation of the perceived problems have changed over time, and how the Norwegian documents compare against the international trends in this aspect. What is generally seen as a "problem" can provide insight into how development has been viewed in the specific time period and by the specific individuals creating the documents. It will also

answer an important part of the question concerning how higher education has been viewed as a tool for development in Norwegian policy documents. What are the conditions that have been identified as the main policy issues?

There can be a separation between policies, some are solution driven and others are problem driven. The solution driven policies are the ones where there is a stable solution to the problems, but the problems can vary. Gornitzka uses the example of life-long learning policies that can be addressing either the issue of empowering under-privileged groups or establishing manpower attuned to the labor market. The solution (i.e. life-long learning policies) can be stable for a rather long time, but the problem the solution is aimed at attending is nonetheless changing. The example of life-long learning policies shares the same characteristics as higher education aid, where it sometimes is aimed at attending unequal social standings and on other occasions aimed at attending the needed increase in qualified manpower in a region. There are also examples of the problem being perceived as a combination of the two.

### **3.1.2 Policy objectives**

Policy objectives are connected to policy problems, and will cover the same areas of the research questions as point 3.1.1. By analyzing the documents in effort to find the policy objectives, one can later find similarities and differences not only within the Norwegian documents, but also when comparing the Norwegian documents with the thinking that has taken place outside of Norway, thus moving closer to finding if there are differences between the Norwegian documents and the international trends in thinking upon this area.

The policy objectives are the statement of outcome that should be found in the policy. These objectives can be explicit or implicit, and the policy tends to be more likely to succeed if they are explicit, meaning clear and focused (Gornitzka 1999: 18). Even so, policy objectives are often implicit, meaning that they consist of intentions that are conflicting and vague. This "unclearness" of the policy objectives can be argued to create leeway for the institutions to transform the policies, and thereby making them more adaptable (*ibid*). It does however make it more difficult to gather information on whether or not the goal has been attained, due to the fact that there are no clear goals, or very few of them.

### **3.1.3 The normative base**

According to institutional theory, policies and programs are based on values and beliefs. To discover what these are one can look at both the problems and objectives of a policy, as explored through the two previous points. In addition to this the language and discourse of a policy can uncover the normative base of the policy, especially when the material allows to show whether there has been a change over time.

By juxtaposing these two aspects of the normative policy base with the change in general theories on development thinking explored earlier in this chapter, it will be possible to deduct whether or not there is a difference between the general thinking in the area and the specific Norwegian policies.

### **3.1.4 Policy instruments**

For the analysis of instruments found in policy documents this thesis will base itself upon the work of Deborah Stone and Thomas A. Birkland. Gornitzka's article relies upon the NATO-scheme developed by Hood for defining the policy instrument (Gornitzka 1999), but this thesis will apply other ways of defining and analysing instruments of a policy. This is due to the fact that while it is important to view what instruments have been used and how these have changed, it is equally important to find theories that are suitable for the documents in question. As the documents analyzed for this paper are discussions of future policy and does not really mention the implementation that will occur, the analysis benefits from use of the categories found in Deborah Stone's work.

Thomas A. Birkland states that policy tools are inextricably linked to policy implementation (Birkland 2005: 179). This is what makes it difficult to find clear signs of instruments in the policy documents used for this thesis, there is no implementation of the policy discussed. One must therefore look for signs of wanted implementation and the instruments mentioned in this context.

Deborah Stone lists five types of strategies or policy instruments: Inducement, Rules, Facts, Rights and Powers (Stone 2002: 262). Inducement is a strategy that uses the motivation of humans to change their behaviour with the use of rewards or punishment (Stone 2002: 261). It is a strategy well known from behavioural psychology, and is in public debate often referred to as using "carrot or stick". The Rules commands us to act a certain way and Stone claims

that policy making relies heavily on official rules, generally referred to as laws (Stone 2002: 285). Facts are the strategies that rely on persuasion, trying to change people's behaviour through changing their perceptions of the world through information. Persuasion can be negative, as propaganda or indoctrination, or positive as information or knowledge. This leads this particular policy instrument to be both revered and feared, as it has "two faces" (Stone 2002: 305-306). Rights are the relationships, either between people, or between people and organizations that the government is willing to uphold (Stone 2002: 262). The last strategy, that is defined as Powers, are ways of restructuring political power, shifting it to different people.

All of these policy instruments or tools are ways of exerting power. They aim at changing people's minds and actions, getting them to do what they would otherwise not do. As mentioned in several places, no policy strategy is purely one type of these instruments (Stone 2002, Gornitzka 1999). There can however be seen signs of dominant instruments. Doing a thorough analysis of all the policy instruments in the documents used, and their change over 50 years is a project too large for a work of this size. The focus will therefore be on identifying the main dominant instrument from the ones defined by Stone, and see if there has been a change in this over the 50 years the study is covering. In addition to this, there is another issue concerning the analysis of policy instruments in the documents. The policy instruments that are mentioned concerns the Norwegian part of policy implementation, meaning it is focuses on the Norwegian administration of the aid programmes as well as the justification of using parts of the BNP on development aid by having support in the Norwegian public. There is hardly any mentioning of implementation in the developing countries at all, and the analysis will therefore focus on the Norwegian side of the policy.

### **3.1.5 Policy linkage**

To what extent is the content of the policy in question in line with other government policies? Some argue that the only way reforms can be successful is if the way institutions are changed is in line with the long-term trends in society (Gornitzka 1999: 21,22). If the change follows the broader trend in society it will be more successful. In this thesis, the view on higher education as a tool for development will be analyzed comparing it to the general topic of development aid found in the documents. Can the view on higher education be linked to the general view of development in these documents?

This thesis will not only look at the link of the specific topic of higher education to the general topic of development aid in the documents. Part of the thesis is focused on comparing the view on higher education as a tool for development in the Norwegian documents to the view on this topic in the international thinking. The content of the Norwegian documents will in chapter six be compared to the international trends found and discussed in chapter five. This will enable a view of whether there are signs of differences, and to what degree these have changed over the years.

# 4 Methodology

## 4.1 Research design

This thesis is based on qualitative research. The reason for choosing qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research was the nature of the inquiry itself. Qualitative research does, as stated by Bryman (2008: 366) deal with words rather than numbers. In this thesis, where the aim is to understand what change has taken place in the Norwegian view on higher education in development, qualitative research will be of most use. There are three main areas one can use for this type of research, interviews, documents and observation (Bryman 2008). The research material will be derived from literary review and document analysis. The reason for this choice of material is the nature of the research questions. To answer an inquiry concerning the changes in policy documents, as well as changes in international theories on a particular topic, analyzing the national policy documents in question and combining this with a literary review on the international theories facilitates a thorough view of the topic. A topic of this size will inevitably contain numerous materials that could be used for analysis. By going as directly to the material involved in the research questions as possible, the results will reflect the research topic and questions without the involvement of other sources.

The documents used in this thesis are official government documents. They are all publicly available, obtained from the government web pages and the public libraries. When dealing with documents as a source of material for research, it is important to assess the quality of the documents. Scott lists four aspects of this assessment, authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Scott 1990: 6).

The authenticity of a document refers to whether the document is genuine. If the document used for analysis is a copy of the original, has typing mistakes or is in general too corrupted not to be close enough to the original it does not contain the authenticity it needs to be used in analysis (*ibid*). In the case of this study, the documents are obtained directly from official websites and public libraries and can therefore not be expected to be corrupted in this sense.

The credibility of the document handles the question of bias and the value of the author's statements. One needs to keep in mind the point of view of the author(s) of the document.

According to Atkinson and Coffey (2008: 56) documents are always written to convey an impression. This impression will be favorable to the authors or those whom the authors represent. The question of bias in documents is one that is extremely important when it comes to using these documents in research. The quality of the research will be significantly deteriorated if the bias in the documents goes unnoticed. However, a biased source is not to be considered as a useless source. The bias itself can offer valuable information, as it can inform us of things that the text does not (Bryman 2008: 521). When dealing with documents that can be suspected of inhabiting bias, it is important to show caution towards this, and not viewing the documents as an unbiased source of knowledge and data. Knowing and recognizing the values and agendas of the authors is useful when assessing the level and type of bias in documents. In this thesis, part of the interesting information lies in the bias expressed in the documents. What values are conveyed through the documents? How has the Norwegian government viewed higher education in development aid, and how has this changed? The information that can be read from the bias in the documents can be of assistance in answering these questions. By knowing and being aware of the bias in the official documents used, it will be possible to use it to the benefit of the research, but it does demand a conscious relationship with the issue.

The third criteria are representativeness, whether the documents used are typical for its kind (Scott 1990: 24, Bryman 2008: 516). If the documents are not typical they can still be of use, but this is dependent on the researcher being aware of the untypicality. The documents used in this thesis, official government documents, are typical for their genre.

The last criterion Scott uses is meaning. Are the meaning and the evidence clear to the researcher? As the government documents are used to inform the Parliament of issues important to the government, they are in their nature clear in their meaning.

## **4.2 Qualitative methodology**

Qualitative research indicates an inductive view of theory and research, and a methodology that is interpretive and constructionist. However, all research methods have weaknesses as well as strengths, and there are critiques against the qualitative method. It is seen as being too subjective, difficult to replicate, there are problems of generalization and critics claim the studies often display a lack of transparency (Bryman 2008: 391-392). For this specific thesis,

which uses document analysis as the unit of analysis, some of these points of critique can be discarded. Due to the public nature of both the literature and the official documents used, the research can be replicated. There is however the question of subjectivity. As document analysis will have to include a certain amount of interpretation, the personal bias of the researcher can affect the result of the research. This is difficult to avoid due to argument of inherent bias in all individuals, but by being aware of the problem one is more likely to reduce the amount to which it affects the end result. Doing qualitative research the researcher has to keep this in mind, and keeping a conscious relationship with one's own bias can help this cause.

### **4.3 Document analysis**

The use of documents makes this data analysis secondary data analysis. (Neuman 2007: 239) The data was not collected especially for this thesis, and as a researcher one needs to be especially careful when analyzing material one did not contribute in collecting. To make sure the documents used for this thesis are appropriate for the topic and the study, it was necessary to view the aspects of the documents that are not always apparent in the text. Aspects such as the time and place of data collection and the specific topics covered influences the way a document can be used (*ibid*), and for this thesis the surrounding aspects of the documents have been evaluated before the documents were used in analysis.

In addition to this, the use of secondary data has a possible negative factor that needs to be considered by the researcher. The fact that secondary data analysis is usually easily accessible opens up the possibility for researchers to do research on topics on which they do not have substantial knowledge (*ibid*). All of the documents in this study are available to the public, and without gathering other information on the subject before using these documents in analysis it would be easy for the researcher to make false interpretations and assumptions. There has therefore been used other types of background information for this study, such as the books and articles on the historic lines of the field, economic theory on higher education and development, as well as research on the big organizations in the field of development. This will contribute to eliminate the possibility of erroneous assumptions due to a lack of knowledge.



The documents analyzed will mainly be white papers and when found necessary, other official documents relevant to the topic. These documents are recommendations, green papers and recommendations, and have been used for analysis when one of two following issues have occurred. First, the white papers for the specific period could provide a small amount of information compared to what is necessary to have a basis for comparison with later white papers. This is the case for the first white paper analyzed, which only contained 11 pages. Second, the white papers sometimes cite green papers or other documents as being the foundation upon which they were formed, and refer to the other document quite frequently. This is the case for white paper number 19 of 1995-1996, in which the green paper of 1995 constitutes an important frame of reference for the white paper (WP nr. 19, 1995-1996: 5). When situations like these have occurred, it has been considered beneficial to include the official documents in question in the analysis.

The unit of analysis in this thesis is documents on development aid written over a 50-year period. The analysis has been conducted on 9 white papers from 1961 to 2009. The white papers are orientations from the government to the Parliament about an issue the government wishes to have discussed in the Parliament. The white papers are aimed at informing as well as suggesting new policy.

In addition to the white papers there have as mentioned on occasion been taken use of other documents for clarification and complementary purposes. All documents used are available to the public either on line or through public libraries. There are all in all 13 documents analyzed.

Only the part of the documents that concern higher education will be subjected to analysis. There will however be made an exception to this when it comes to the part of the analysis concerning the normative value behind the policy, as mentioned in 3.1.3. In addition to this, the nature of 3.1.5, the analysis of policy linkage, naturally includes an analysis of the policy as a whole.

## **4.4 Validity**

Any research project deals with the notion of validity. Validity concerns the integrity of the conclusions one can draw from a research project, whether the researcher is "observing, identifying or "measuring" " what he or she claims (Bryman 2008: 376). Bryman lists four

types of validity; measurement validity, internal validity, external validity and ecological validity (Bryman 2008: 32). Measurement validity is mainly relevant for research of a quantitative nature, and will therefore not be explored here. Ecological validity is concerned with whether the tools of the researcher have intervened with the outcome of the research. In a study as this one, which is based on document analysis, this is not going to be as relevant as it is in other types of research. The two types of validity that are left, internal validity and external validity, are however relevant for this research and will be examined further.

#### **4.4.1 Internal validity**

Internal validity concerns the causal relationship of the variables used. If the research suggests that *a* causes *b*, can the researcher be sure that *a* is responsible for *b*? Another factor not explored by the research could cause *b*. In other words, could there be unknown variables affecting the research outcome? This thesis aims to say something about the change that has taken place over the last 50 years in the field of higher education and development. Following the change in view that has occurred and the general thinking on the field does not automatically give the ability to conclude as to what variables has led to this change. This type of conclusion will therefore not be attempted.

#### **4.4.2 External validity**

External validity relates to the generability of the results of the study. Can the results of the research be generalized to the larger population? In quantitative studies, where the samples are often very small and the study is a case study, this can be a problem (Bryman 2008: 376).

The documents are all obtained from official sources and can be generalized as being the official view of the government and the organizations. The documents can however contain a bias. They should not be interpreted as holding the representative view of any other governments or organizations than the ones specifically mentioned at the specific time.

### **4.5 Limitations**

The methods chosen have strengths, but there are also limitations to them and awareness of these limitations is a necessary component of the research. The main limitation for this thesis, is that there is no attempt at explaining the causality between the national Norwegian finds,

and those of the international community. The data material used in this study does not lend itself to that type of linkage, and it is impossible to conclude whether there is a link between the two.

In addition to this the only sources of data material are the policy documents. There are no interviews conducted with the people behind the documents, or people who work in the field. The documents are only one type of representation of policy processes, and are only representative for the specific time and context in which they were written. By talking to individuals involved in the making of the policy processes one would achieve a more nuanced picture of the development described here.

# 5 Development thinking and higher education

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter will through literary review discuss the questions of how the thinking around development aid has changed over the last sixty years, as well as discuss the main arguments and theories concerning the area of higher education and development.

The first discussion will concern different theories of development, and how these have changed over a time period of sixty years. I will base this mainly on the work of Potter, Binns, Elliott and Smith (2008). The reason for the extended use of this work is the comprehensive nature of the book. It contains an overview of the history and development of the theories in question, and will serve as the basis for the discussion of the theories of development. This work has been supplemented by other books and articles when considered necessary for the depth of the discussion. By exploring four main approaches of development I will be able to draw the historic lines of development theories and by this acquire a general overview over the change in development thinking. There will also be a discussion of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund with respect to higher education as development, as well as a short overview of the history of the World Bank and SSA concerning this topic.

To answer the question of in what way higher education has been said to be of benefit to development this thesis will look at two main aspects. The first aspect is the contribution of higher education on economic development and/or poverty reduction. The second aspect is a discussion of the term "the knowledge society". The term has not been in use for the whole time frame this thesis is analyzing, but has emerged and become important during the last decade. In a thesis on higher education and development it is crucial to at least discuss the term, even though the limited size of the thesis will lead to this being a rather brief explanation of this complex topic.

## 5.2 Theories of development thinking

Over the years there have been a number of theories on development. I will look at the period from 1950, as Norway became involved in development aid from this decade. Before the 1950's, Norwegian development aid had a religious focus and was concentrated around missionary work. The historical lines behind the theories that have been developed from the 1950's have been explored in the background chapter of this thesis. Potter et. al. separates between development theories, development strategies and development ideologies. (Potter et. al. 2008: 80) The term development thinking embodies all these three aspects, and he comes up with four approaches to development thinking using the framework of Potter and Lloyd (Potter et. al 2008: 80). Development thinking is highly political, and the change between development ideologies can be classified as evolutionary rather than revolutionary (*ibid*).

### **5.2.1 The classical-traditional approaches**

This approach to development thinking has been one of the most, if not the most, dominating approach. It carries strong ties to the earlier stages of development thinking, and what Piketty calls a standard view of development: innovation first benefits a few individuals before trickling down to the masses (Piketty 2006: 64).

It sees underdevelopment as an initial stage that can be passed, and that has been passed by the West (Potter et. al 2008: 83). Walt Whitman Rostow authored the classic work "The Stages of Economic Growth" and identified five stages all countries pass through in the development process. From the traditional society they go through preconditions to the take-off phase, the take-off phase, the drive to maturity before ending up in the age of mass consumption (Potter et. al. 2008: 80). This model envisions a faith in the capitalist system, which has been evident in much of the work on this approach. Being the defining thinking from 1945 to 1955, it kept it's popularity until the 70's and focused in large part on capitalism and Western democracy (Potter et. al. 2008: 83, Kanbur and Vines 2000: 88,89). The markets should be the deciding force, and the governments should not intervene in eliminating inequality. Modernization would breed modernization, and the reason for underdevelopment was a lack of ability to start that circle (Kanbur and Vines 2000: 88,89). The typical neo-liberal view can be seen as exemplified with Hirschman, who claimed that polarization should be viewed as an inevitable characteristic of early stages of economic development. According to Hirschman, the balanced growth at an advanced stage of economic development is produced by the unbalanced growth of the past stages (Hirschman 1958: 93). Development,

preferably through industrialization, in one area, would trickle down and eventually develop the surrounding areas as well (Potter et. al. 2008: 90). The West could, through the sharing of capital and know-how, help bring the underdeveloped countries up to the "Western" level of development.

Even though this approach did, as shown, exhibit a large skew towards neo-liberalism, there were exceptions. Potter et. al. (2008: 92) lists four models for this approach, and they range from the liberal model to the Soviet model inspired by Stalin's five year mandatory economic development plan. Models and approaches to development are as mentioned highly political, and will have strong ties to the leading ideology in the aid-providing country. When it comes to the rather glaring euro-centrism of these early theories, Potter et. al (2008: 92) point out that they were developed almost exclusively by men of Anglo-Saxon origin. This can be seen as another argument as to why it is important to develop good research facilities in the developing countries themselves, as well as ensure a good gender balance in academia around the world.

### **5.2.2 The historical-empirical approaches**

Towards the end of the 1950's there was a questioning of the trickle down approach that had been popular during the last decade (Kanbur and Vines 2000: 88,89).

Myrdal argued in 1957 that once differential growth has occurred, the pattern would be served by internal and external economies of scale. This cumulative causation will create and foster increasing regional inequalities, and to avoid this, the state must intervene (Potter et. el. 2008: 97). This was directly opposite of the leading approach at the time, but towards the end of the 60's and into the 70's, more works of this nature was based on empirical studies and gained more supporters and credibility. Rather than a developed center developing the rest of the region by a trickle down effect as seen in 5.2.2, the developed centre feeds of the rest of the region and creates an elite in the area that is developed (*ibid*). In the core-periphery theory of John Friedman, this disequilibrium will stabilize and lead to a process of national equilibrium. However, when looking at the historical evidence, Friedman himself recognized that this did not happen. He claimed that in transitional societies disequilibrium has been built in from the start, and that state intervention is required for the national equilibrium to occur (Potter et. al. 2008: 98,99).

There is a clear advocacy for state intervention in the development stages. The free market and capitalism will indeed develop some centers in the underdeveloped countries, but this development has not transferred to other areas, and has therefore lead to more inequality.

This approach is based on empirical, real world observations through time. It primarily deals with the colonial and pre-independence periods, but can be used to form theories about the current situation as well (Potter et. al. 2008: 97).

### **5.2.3 The radical-political economy-dependency approaches**

Where the traditional approach and to some extent also the historical approach are based on European experiences and ideas, the 1970's saw a turn towards a more Third World oriented approach (Potter et. al. 2008: 110). One can in many cases see a clear neo-Marxist influence, as was the case in many areas of public debate in this period. Though this did increase the focus on the Third World perspective, one should keep in mind that Marx was European and his theories were built on European experiences.

The dependency theory grew strong in the 70's. Frank claimed that development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin and that they both are the outcome of the capitalist system (Potter et. al. 2008:110). The fact that some regions of the world are underdeveloped is a direct result of other regions being developed. Some theorists who are supporters of the dependency theory claims that the ruling economic powers of the world has transformed the economic and political structures of developing countries to better suit the interests of the developed nations (Potter et. al. 2008: 112).

Rather than suggesting stronger government control as a means to improve inequality, the radical dependency approach suggests a delinking from the capitalistic system (*ibid*), and through means such as increasing the use of trade barriers (Potter et. al. 2008: 106).

### **5.2.4 Alternative and bottom-up approaches**

It is visible from the radical dependency approaches that there were some segments of society that were critical against the top-down policies of the past development strategies. During the mid 70's the term "another development" was introduced, and this has characterized the period since. It was argued that there should be more focus on the internal forces of change rather than the external forces, and the argument that economic growth was synonymous with

development and poverty reduction was challenged. There are examples of economic growth taking place without a decrease in poverty, and in some cases with an increase in poverty (Potter et. al. 2008: 97). There was not, as in the previous approaches, viewed to be one path towards development, but rather several.

There was a focus on creating employment over creating economic growth, and there was a strong focus on basic needs. The earlier development attempts had seen an increase in relative poverty, and improvements for the poorest in society was now considered to be of great importance.

According to these approaches, self-sufficiency and self-reliance should be increased in the developing countries, as dependence on the developed countries leads to an unequal exchange. Each developing country and region should relate their development policies closely to their specific culture, economy and political landscape. There is not one policy that will work, even though that has been tried implemented with the top-down approach from the developed countries. The bottom-up strategies of these approaches are more varied and considerate of each nation's strengths and weaknesses. The late 80's and early 90's also saw an increase in the focus on environmental consciousness in development thinking.

### **5.2.5 Changes over the last 50 years**

There has been a clear change in development thinking as evident by the text above. From the early 1950's there was a focus on economic growth, and underdevelopment was seen as a stage that could be passed, and that the West had passed. The free market was ideal, and the state should not intervene in this. Development was seen as something that would eventually trickle down to the masses, and initial inequality was a necessary part of that. As with most dominant theories, other ideas did eventually surface conflicting with this view. Already in the late 1950's did other theories develop, claiming that differential growth would only create and keep stable inequalities, and that state intervention was necessary to keep this from happening. Approaches contesting the euro-centric and economic growth focus of the past theories followed, asking for a more Third World oriented view and a recognition of the fact that economic growth and poverty reduction were not synonyms.



Even though one can see the outline of a timeline when presenting these different approaches, they are all still being used by different actors and interest groups within the community (Potter et. al. 2008: 83). There are no clear cut time frames for these theories, but rather general trends in thinking. As will be apparent later in the thesis, the approaches explored here all share similarities with the Norwegian policy on higher education in development aid.

These approaches are in many ways academic in their nature; they have been formed and explored by economists, anthropologists and others within academia. There are also other societal arenas that have influenced the development thinking over time, as well as the Norwegian thinking on higher education in development aid: The international organizations for development and aid. There are many of these, and for the thesis the World Bank and the IMF have been deemed to be the most important. The reason for this is both their general standing in the international community, as well as the fact that the World Bank on several occasions is specifically mentioned in the official Norwegian documents used for later analysis. It is useful to have a general understanding of these organizations and how they have treated higher education as a tool for development, as they are on occasion mentioned in the Norwegian policy. It is especially interesting to view the actions of the international financial institutions (the IFIs) in the 1980's, a decade that has often been described as the lost decade for SSA. The constraints of the thesis will however not allow for a more thorough look at the IFIs during all the decades analyzed in this thesis.

### **5.3 The World Bank and the IMF**

International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have been involved in the development aid of SSA for decades. Two of the largest ones, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), will be briefly explored here.

The International Monetary Fund was established in 1944, as a framework for international economic cooperation in an attempt to build stronger economic policies than the ones that had contributed to the Great Depression (IMF 2010). At the current time it consists of 187 countries and works to "foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty around the world." (*ibid*). The organization offers loans, oversees financial

and economic policies and technical assistance to low and middle income countries in managing their economies (*ibid*).

The World Bank was established in 1944, and is owned by 187 member countries. It is necessary to be a member of the IMF to become a member of the WB. It is "a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world." (WB 2010). The Bank was originally intended to financially contribute to the rebuilding of Europe after the second World War, and as this was achieved, the Bank started focusing on the Third World.

The IMF and the WB are no longer playing the role they were envisioned to have at the time of their establishment. As the Western world was rebuilt after the Second World War and the Western economies grew stronger, the focus was shifted to the developing countries. In the later years this has also included transition countries. The organizations are dominant influences for policy formation in the economically vulnerable parts of the world, and the organizations are now more important there than in the countries they were originally intended to assist. The organizations have been criticized for being too narrowly constrained within their own orthodoxies, and for not considering the professional voices of the developing world to a sufficient degree (Helleiner in Buira 2005: xii). Helleiner writes:

"Critiques emanating from the developing countries, most often registered at the level of individual borrowing countries, rarely percolate up to the global financial community or media, and if they do, they are assigned very little relative weight by key IFI or other decision makers. Yet developing (and transition) economies are where the IFIs now do the bulk of their work and carry the greatest influence." (Helleiner in Buira: xii).

In addition to this general criticism of how the IMF and the WB operates, there has been criticism against the IFI's strategy towards the developing countries, including SSA, in the 1980's. The strategy, which is referred to as "structural adjustment" has been described as the IFI's response to the balance of payments disequilibria that was set in motion by the oil price shocks of the 1970's. The first structural adjustment loan (SAL) was launched in February of 1980, and continued through the decade. In short, the developing countries had to adopt certain reforms to be eligible for a loan from the IFI's, and the reforms were focused on areas such as property rights, the boundaries between private and public sectors, trade policy, institutional efficiency, management policies and developing and regulating financial systems. This amounted to a strong focus on free markets and cuts in public spending. The policy reforms were aimed at increasing economic efficiency and improving resource allocation. However, the IFI's did not analyze the effect this would have on income

distribution in the countries, and the SALs could have significant negative effects on both income distribution and poverty (Ferreira and Keely 2000). These cuts in public spending in countries that already struggled with a poor financial situation, had severe consequences for areas such as health and education.

The WB had had a focus on poverty reduction during the years of Robert McNamara's presidency from 1976 to 1981. During the 1980's and the conservative presidency of Clausen this focus gave room for a more neo-liberal free market focus. After the 1980's the focus on poverty reduction returned, and there is a currently more nuanced view on development, in that poverty reduction is not achieved simply by market liberalization alone, but rather by a more comprehensive framework of development (Kanbur and Vines 2000).

The World Bank did for many decades largely focus on primary education and to some extent secondary education (Bloom, Canning and Chan 2005: 6). The belief was that it was primary and secondary education led to an economic development on a level that higher education did not. There are two reasons behind this belief; the first one is the repeated studies used by the World Bank that showed that returns to investment in the lower levels of education were higher than returns to higher education (*ibid*). The other reason is that due to the inherent elite system of the SSA higher education, equity aspects favored a focus on good access to basic education (*ibid*). The belief that support to higher education is contributing to already existing social differences can be found in many articles on higher education. The World Bank reduced its spending on higher education from the 1980's to the end of the 1990's, and in 1999, only 7% of the education-sector spending from the Bank was allocated to higher education (Bloom, Channing and Chan 2005: 5). These cuts in funding from donors combined with the deteriorating economy at a time when the demand for higher education increased dramatically in SSA had severe effects on the HEIs and the whole system.

The World Bank's policy of downplaying higher education in SSA led to more of the donor funds flowing into other parts of the educational system, with the higher education mostly left to fend mostly for itself.

## **5.4 The contribution of higher education to economic development and/or poverty reduction**

There are many theories and opinions on how to best develop economies. One of the areas there is agreement on is that higher education plays a role in this. Higher education has a part in developing individuals, societies and economies, but the challenge lies in measuring how this happens.

The World Bank lists four factors that contribute to knowledge-driven development (World Bank 2002: *xxi*). A country's macro-economic incentive and the institutional regime, its ICT infrastructure, its national innovation system and the development of human resources (*ibid*). Higher education is necessary for the development of human resources, and can be argued to be important to the national innovation system (*ibid*). In a knowledge society and a knowledge economy higher education is therefore one of the great drivers of economy.

#### **5.4.1 Returns to investment in higher education**

Measuring the outcome of education is difficult. It is difficult to measure the effect on individuals and on societies, and it is difficult to separate the individuals' inherent qualities from the qualities gained through higher education. Whether a person has a higher income level due to the years of education, or due to family background, inherent intelligence or other factors is difficult to prove. Measuring the effect of education on development is therefore not an easy task, and one should keep in mind the fact that an individual who achieves a degree from an HEI was not a blank slate to begin with, and that the effects of higher education on both individuals and societies can differ. However, there is agreement on the fact that higher education is a contributing factor in economic growth and development. Since the 1950's estimates has been done of the returns of investment in higher education (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos 2002: 5). There can be found a classic pattern of falling returns to education by level of economic development and by level of education (*ibid*). This means that according to the research mentioned in Psacharopoulos and Patrins higher education will give lower returns than primary education, and this has been one of the main reasonings behind the WB policy of not offering support to higher education. There is however a need for a context aware relationship with this research. The World Bank is an economic institution, and Psacharopoulos and Patrinos are economists. The focus on economy is not necessarily a wrong focus, but it is a specific focus that might not cover all the different aspects of higher education that can be present when dealing with the question of higher education as a tool for development. Development is, as seen in 2.1. a term that includes a number of definitions and

areas, and it is also a term that has changed through the decades, as was explored in the earlier parts of this chapter. Simply reducing the question of higher education and development to a question of economic return does not give a complete picture of the complicated topic, and other variables will be discussed in the following part of the thesis.

#### **5.4.2 Benefits of higher education**

Benefits of higher education can be divided into two categories, private benefits and external benefits (Santiago et. al 2008: 30). Private benefits contain the monetary and non-monetary benefits, the external benefits are also called the non-private benefits or the education externalities (*ibid*).

The private benefits of higher education are the benefits the individual gets from the education. These benefits can be monetary or non-monetary, and it is not unreasonable to assume that this is what motivates the vast majority of students worldwide to embark on the years of study needed to achieve a degree.

The monetary benefit of higher education is simply put the increase in wages that a person with higher education experiences over a person without this education. There is strong empirical evidence that individuals with higher education are less likely to be unemployed and on average to have a higher salary (Santiago et. al. 2008: 30).

There is a clear trend that individuals with higher education have higher wage levels than people without higher education, but as already mentioned, one should not attribute all of this to the factor of higher education automatically. Higher education is disproportionately attended by children of the wealthy, and many of these would have been more likely to achieve relatively high wages independently of education level.

The non-monetary benefit of higher education is other benefits higher education will bring to a person. This includes aspects such as better working conditions and better knowledge about nutrition and exercise which are contributing factors in higher educated people having a longer lifespan than the individuals without this type of education (Santiago et. al. 2008: 35-36).

Where the private benefits can increase an individual's income and quality of life, the benefits of higher education most connected to development are the external benefits or the education

externalities. The main reasoning behind the term external benefits or externalities is that the individual does not capture all the benefits from his or her higher education (World Bank 2002: 21). Externalities are also called spillover benefits, as they spill over into the rest of society. These effects can be hard to identify, and according to Psacharopolous and Patrinos, even harder to measure (Psacharopolous and Patrinos 2002: 7). As mentioned in 5.4.1, the economic view of these researchers should be kept in mind. There could be different ways of measuring the effects, making them less obvious to individuals trained in the academic discipline of economics. There might still be ways of measuring these benefits, even though it will not be the quantitative research measurements used in the articles of Psacharopoulos and Patrinos. The World Bank (2002: 21) gives two examples of these types of benefits, namely the technological innovations of higher education and the nation building facilitated by the values promoted in the system of higher education. Here we can see a clear connection to Tomusk's argument of knowledge not only contributing to the economic development of a society, but also to the civil part of society, through influencing values and identities (Tomusk 2007: 8).

Technological progress is often built on research that takes place in HEIs (World Bank 2002: 21). It is the foundation for progress in agriculture, health and environment (*ibid*). These areas are important for all areas of the world, but when one looks at the specific characteristics of the Sub-Saharan region, it is clear that this is extremely important for the continued growth. A large part of Sub Saharan Africa is rural, there are enormous health issues, especially connected to HIV/AIDS and the connected diseases, and the regions eco-system has shown to be very fragile and easily influenced by the environmental changes (Oxfam 2009: 8).

Development of technology to deal with either of these areas will have a great importance on the lives of all the people living in the region, not solely on those who have access and ability to participate in higher education. In addition to the research and discoveries that can be achieved through an extensive higher education system, the increase of skilled workers who can apply new techniques will also be of great importance to the productivity of the area (World Bank 2002: 21).

Higher education has the opportunity to promote values important to a modern democracy, such as democratic participation, open debate, appreciation of diversity and greater social cohesion (World Bank 2002: 21). It is however important to remember that while this is the case most of the time, universities and other HEIs can also be used as the opposite, to impose

the values of the ruling government on the people. To simply conclude that a well developed system of higher education automatically leads to greater democratic values and appreciation of diversity can be dangerous, as it ignores the possibilities for manipulation that are inherent in education systems at all levels.

### **5.4.3 The effects of higher education on development**

For the individual student it is most likely the private benefits that are the main reason behind participating in higher education. The monetary and non-monetary benefits contain a promise of a life that will be different if one succeeds in attaining higher education. The massification process that has taken place over the last decades shows the clear importance many segments of society puts on education and the sacrifices students are willing to make to achieve it. However, the effects higher education has on development can be argued mainly to be attributed to the external effects of higher education.

The spillover effects of higher education contribute to the development of societies through the building of knowledge and research, which has become increasingly important in the knowledge society. Innovation, technical progress and nation building are all important factors in developing steady economies as well as robust, democratic societies. The possibilities for the developing nations to carry out research that is specifically suited for their needs, as well as teach what they need their future workforce to have knowledge of are the greatest arguments for developing the systems of higher education in each specific country. The idea that the Western world can lend its capital and know-how to develop the Third World has seen less and less followers over the last decades, as it is now clear that the developing nations themselves need to expand on their own know-how. For this the system of higher education can be extremely well suited, as long as both the nations themselves and the international community recognizes that the centers of expertise needs to be within the developing countries, and that know-how can not be exported in the same way capital can.

## **5.5 The knowledge society**

The term "knowledge society" is often used interchangeably with the term "knowledge economy". Though it is often referred to as a "buzzword" and criticized for being too vague, it is still used in nearly every publication on the subject of the future and development of higher

education, especially concerning the developing economies. It has come to embody some of the changes the global economy and some of the national labor markets have experienced in the last 50 years. The term originated in the 1970's and it has seen an increase in use over the last decade. The Norwegian documents on higher education and development aid mentions the term as part of the reasoning behind the increase in focus on higher education during the 2000's. As the knowledge society or the knowledge economy is stated as being more important, higher education is seen as having a larger role in the development of countries.

### **5.5.1 Origin and explanation of the term**

Daniel Bell wrote about knowledge societies in his publication from 1974, titled "The Coming of Post-Industrial Society". He lists two aspects of a knowledge society. First, research and development are increasingly the sources of innovation. Second, "The weight of the society - measured by a larger proportion of Gross National Product and a larger share of employment - is increasingly in the knowledge field." (Bell 1976: 212). These aspects of the knowledge society are still valid. There is an increasing focus on the connection between economic growth and knowledge, and the accumulation of knowledge is as important to economic growth as the accumulation of capital (World Bank 2002: 40). This encourages the relationship between actors such as researchers, governments and the commercial interests that are present in all systems of higher education to varying degrees. New alliances on the field of knowledge are by this increasingly recognized (World Bank 2000: 76).

Though the term is often used to explain economic factors and economic growth in societies, there is another aspect as well. Not only the economies of today's nations are driven by knowledge, but knowledge also increasingly drives the identity of our modern society (Stehr 1994: 6). Tomusk (Tomusk 2007: 8) writes that knowledge not only influences the economic growth of a nation, but also the values and the identity of the participating individuals. Knowledge changes many aspects of society, not only the economic growth and innovation. At the same time, knowledge is being increasingly held accountable; the multiple stakeholders involved in the creation of knowledge have put pressure on the existence of a practical value of the knowledge (*ibid*). As knowledge has become a driving factor in growth it has also become less abstract, and as Bernstein puts it: "Knowledge is not like money, it *is* money" (Tomusk 2007: 8). One could argue that the increased focus on knowledge as the



main driver for growth has had a self-reinforcing effect, where knowledge now is expected to directly contribute to economic growth.

The term "knowledge society" is often used interchangeably with the term "knowledge economy". Both are signs that the world has changed over the last 50 years, and knowledge is now playing an important role in how employment is created, economies grow and societies develop. The effect of this is a clear focus on the importance of education, and especially higher education. It is no longer a country's natural resources that are seen as the foremost resource, but the potential for intellectual development in its people. It is often argued that innovation is created through research and knowledge building, and even though one could argue that innovation can take place in an environment with a low level of research, it still requires making use of other people's research and there is a need for a labor force with the capacity to utilize this. In other words, the need for quality education is still present. Countries aim to strengthen their institutions of learning to strengthen their economies in the longer perspective. This has led to a focus both nationally and internationally on the role higher education has in the development of Third World economies, and the importance of developing strong institutions of higher education to provide the quality research and teaching that constitute the backbone of a knowledge society.

### **5.5.2 The knowledge society and the developing world**

As the world has become a knowledge society and the term "knowledge economy" is getting more common, the World Bank claims that the wealth or poverty of nations depend on the quality of education, even more than what has been the case in the past (Bloom, Channing and Chan 2005: 15). The developed countries are acting on this, with increased focus on the resource contained in an educated population. As an example, the US considers the human capital of the country to be worth three times as much as the physical capital (*ibid*). The developed countries have 3300 researchers per million inhabitants, whereas the developing countries have 4,5 researchers per million inhabitants (NORAD 2010). Even though SSA has seen growth in enrolment rates since the 1960's, this growth has been dwarfed by the rapid gains in other regions of the world (Bloom, Canning and Chan 2005: 6). SSA has therefore, despite the increase in students, not been able to catch up with the rest of the world when it comes to higher education. They are rather lagging further behind than they were, due to the immense enrolment increase seen in large parts of the world. Countries not connected to, or

weakly connected to the emerging global knowledge system will find themselves increasingly at a disadvantage (Bloom, Canning and Chan 2005: 34). The need for the developing world to catch up with the developed world when it comes to both quantity and quality of higher education is eminent, and will be vital to the future development of these nations.

## 5.6 Summary

Theories of development thinking are like other theories, in that they tend to create and follow paradigms connected to the surrounding political and cultural discourse. A paradigm can be defined as a broad set of ideas that dominate groups of scholars and disciplines, and can also be called a supra-model (Potter et. al 2008: 81). In the field of development thinking the paradigms are often connected to economic theory (*ibid*). The changes of these paradigms are therefore often a result of changing paradigms in economic theory.

From the earlier theories concentrated around an ethnocentric view of development based on a trickle-down view of economic expansion, there has been a shift towards a more Third World oriented theory. The main goal of the 50's and 60's was to achieve economic growth in the underdeveloped economies. This has during the later years been changed to contain a focus on poverty reduction, as one noticed that economic growth did not automatically lead to this. The radical theories of the 70's with their focus on neo-Marxism and dependency theory were perhaps a bit too radical to be followed by the major aid agencies, but it has helped shift the focus from the view of the Western countries, to the participation of the receiving countries. The structural adjustment programs the World Bank initiated in the early 1980's aimed at increasing the economic efficiency led to cuts in the public budgets and have later been heavily criticized for not taking into consideration the effects this would have on income inequalities and poverty levels. The idea of the importance knowledge has regarding the development of a country has in the last decade led to an increased focus on education.

During the last 50 years, the Western world has developed and explored numerous theories on how a society can achieve economic development. These theories have varied in empirical evidence, underlying ideologies, regional focus and political discourse. There have been euro-centric theories where inequality was seen as a condition for further economic development, and there have been theories influenced by neo-Marxism calling for stronger trade barriers and a dis-attachment from the world community and the capitalist system, as well as a belief

in neo-liberal budget reforms. Even with such vastly different theories having been presented, one would not exaggerate by claiming that Sub-Saharan Africa is not yet at a satisfying level of development. The region has in fact decreased its GDP overall since the years of independence. The solution to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and robust societies has not yet been discovered.

The problem with benefits of education is that these can not necessarily be clearly defined or measured. There is however clear evidence that higher education has external effects that lead to increased development. In addition to this there is a need for more institutions of research and learning that are located in the developing countries themselves. This is in line with the bottom-up development thinking of the later decades.

The focus on the knowledge society and the knowledge economy has lead to increased interest for higher education all over the world, including the developing parts. By building up strong systems of higher education the developing nations can aim for further developing their economies and societies using knowledge specifically suited for their issues, as well as making them increasingly competitive in the global community of knowledge societies.

## 6 Document analysis

Having looked at how the thinking around development aid has changed during the last 50 years and how the view on higher education in development aid has changed, the thesis will now focus on the Norwegian aspect of this question. The theories of development previously presented will form the background for framing the changes in Norwegian policy documents with the general trends in the international community. This will facilitate an understanding of the similarities and differences between the Norwegian policy documents and the international trends in the area of higher education as a tool for development. As much of the policy concerning the support of higher education as a tool for development is decided on national levels and nations are large donors in the area of development aid, it is necessary to try to achieve an understanding of to what degree there is a coherence between large, international trends in development thinking and the policy of nations. Such an understanding will facilitate possibilities of a more predictable aid policy in this field. This analysis will serve as a first step in this process, by aiming to discover if there are differences between the general development thinking and the Norwegian policy documents concerning the topic of higher education as a tool for development.

The question that will be answered in the following analysis is: How has higher education as a tool for development been viewed in Norwegian policy documents? When reading official documents over the last 50 years on the topic of development aid there are three phases that stand out. They differ from each other with respect to the different emphasis on higher education present in the documents. There have been changes in this emphasis from the 1960's to the present time, and these changes form the background of the separation of the documents into phases. The three phases will serve as a base for the analysis and will be analyzed using the five points of analysis from Gornitzka's article as presented in Chapter 4. The five points are as follows:

**-Problems**

**-Objectives**

**-Normative base**

## **-Instruments**

## **-Policy linkage**

Each phase will be analysed to find the answer to whether these points have changed over the 50 years.

Phase number one covers the years from 1961 to 1971. It is the smallest phase in terms of analyzed documents, two documents have been analyzed. One of these documents is the white paper nr. 23 of 1961-1962, consisting of eleven pages. The other document is a Recommendation from the same year that serves as a supplement for analysis due to the limited information that can be found in the short white paper.

The second phase covers almost 30 years, from the early 1970's to the end of the 1990's. It consists of white papers nr. 29 of 1971-1972, white paper nr. 94 of 1974-1975, white paper nr. 36 of 1984-1985, white paper nr. 51 of 1991-1992 and white paper nr. 19 of 1995-1996. In addition to this the Resolution nr. 189 of 1982-1983 is included, as well as the green paper of 1995-1996.

Phase number three covers the last decade, the year 2000 to the year 2010. This phase consists of white paper nr. 19 of 2002-2003, white paper nr. 35 of 2003-2004 and white paper nr. 13 of 2008-2009. In addition to this there are one additional document analyzed, Resolution 1 of 2009 - 2010. The resolution is added due to its status as the most current material on the topic, and gives an important view of the present.

The organization of the phases is only valid for the topic of higher education as a development strategy, not other subjects and topics discussed in the documents. All quotes from the documents are translated from Norwegian by myself.

## **6.1 Phase One**

This phase contains the first white paper (WP) specifically dealing with development aid. Written in 1961-62, it is a small document of only 11 pages, and set the policy for the decade. It might be considered too small to base the whole phase only on one White Paper, but as it was the first white paper on the subject and it was the only one for a decade, it is an important documentation of the political landscape in the early years of Norwegian development aid. It

sets a policy in higher education that is sufficiently different from the following documents to justify its separation into a phase.

### 6.1.1 Analysis of Phase One

When describing the general situation of the developing countries, the document shows a clear focus on higher education:

"...the average level of knowledge had been low, just as there had been a lack of people with higher education. (...) For these reasons the developing countries have had difficulties starting the process of creating capital that is a necessary prerequisite for fast economic growth." (WP nr. 23, 1961-1962: 2)

The focus is upon there not being enough higher educated people to start a process of creating capital. The lack of higher education in the population is considered a problem that slows down the potential economic growth, and as is stated on the first page of the document:

"It is important that all forces today are focused on increasing the economic growth in the developing countries." (WP nr. 23, 1961-1962: 1).

In this view higher education becomes an instrument of development. It is seen as a necessity for economic growth and what was considered to be the automatically following development.

The focus on higher education is even clearer in the Recommendation of 1961 where a number of new aid projects are suggested. They include a nursing education in Gaza, as well as numerous suggestions for higher education in SSA, including the establishment and running of a university in an unspecified African country (Rec. 1961: 23). There were also suggestions put forth concerning the education of individuals from SSA in the North, such as systems for scholarships and support from the State (*ibid*). Increasing higher education was seen as a goal, and the way to achieve it included both educating individuals and establishing structures for higher education in the developing countries. The objective is to increase the level of education in general, and this includes a specific focus on the higher levels of education. Due to the new nature of the policy area there is a clear innovative part to this policy objective of higher education. It is aimed at innovation as the policy field is new, and there is no option of maintaining the prior policy. The intention is to strengthen the higher education situation in the nations in question, both using the education of individuals from the

developing world in Western countries, as well as developing structures for higher education in the developing countries (Rec 61-62: 23).

Compared to the later documents on the subject, there is not much focus on the solidarity aspect of development aid expressed during the first decade. It is stated that helping the developing countries is an important part of the peace policy that the countries of the world has committed to through the United Nations (Rec 61-62: 5), and that it is important that all forces should focus on promoting the economic growth in the developing countries (WP nr. 23, 61-62: 1). The document contains one sentence that focuses on the equality of humans and the solidarity behind the ideal motives of development aid (Rec 61-62: 7). The bigger bulk of the white paper is reserved for mentioning the political and economic motives behind development aid.

On the second page of white paper nr. 23 of 1961-62, it is the following is stated:

"The majority of the Norwegian people has a strong concern over (the economic development in the developing countries) and it is extremely gratifying that one in this work has the support of an interested and positive public."

Part of the reason for having this "interested and positive public" can perhaps be found in the fact that the government started educating the public about the developing countries already in 1952, through the Fund for Aid to the Underdeveloped Countries (Rec 61-62: 24). This document does also suggest a merging of several different organisations that have participated in aid, so that the coordinating, planning and consulting business will be gathered in one organisations. It is stressed that this should not constrain any future initiative that is expected to arise from several different directions (Rec 61-62: 27). Examining the instruments, there is in other words suggestions of use of Power and signs of prior use of the strategy of Facts, in which the Norwegian public have already been exposed to information and education about the situation in the developing countries.

As the quote "It is important that all forces today are focused on increasing the economic growth in the developing countries" (WP nr. 23, 1961-1962: 1) indicates, the main focus of the period was on the economic growth. Higher education benefited from the view that development starts in a few places and then trickles down, in that it justified the strategy of educating a smaller part of the population. Higher education is dependent on individuals that have received elementary and secondary education. In developing countries this leads it to be an elite phenomenon, as the broad layers of society simply are not qualified to participate.

Higher education cannot be aimed at the masses of the developing countries until the level of elementary and secondary schooling is available to them first. If one goes by the theory that development will start at the top and trickle down, as expressed in 5.2.1, it is reasonable to support and encourage higher education for the wealthy individuals that are in fact qualified to participate, in the belief that this will eventually lead to a bettering of the conditions for all layers of the population.

Table 2. Analysis of Phase One

Problems	Few people have higher education. This slows down the creation of capital.
Objectives	There is a need for more higher education
Normative base	International responsibility to promote economic growth.
Instruments	Facts and Power are both mentioned.
Policy linkage	Higher education is treated in compliance with a general focus on economic growth.

## 6.2 Phase Two

This phase consists of nearly 30 years of development policies, from the early 1970's to the late 1990's. One could argue that this period of time is too large and too chaotic to be classified as one phase. The reason for doing so stems from the fact that even though the period is longer than the other two, the view of higher education in the Norwegian development white papers stayed quite stable, and is clearly distinct both from the phase before it and the phase that would follow it. Even so the phase is significantly longer than the two other phases, and I have therefore on occasion separated the three decades to more clearly explain their characteristics. It is a flowing transition between the phases, and there is therefore a tendency for the first and the last white paper of the period to be more influenced and similar to the prior or following phase than what is the case for the phase as a whole.

This period contained a massive increase in the funds allocated to development aid through the government. At the start of the 1990's, the development aid had tripled its funds compared to the early 1970's. From 0,33% of the BNP in the early 70's, 1,14% of BNP is in the 90's



channeled into development aid (WP nr. 51, 91-92: 18). During the period the documents also start to include an evaluation of the development aid history up until that point, which can be seen as an effort to learn from past decisions and policies.

### 6.2.1 Analysis of Phase Two

"During the last decade, the distribution and welfare point of view has fallen in the shadow of the consideration of economic growth. Acknowledging that economic conditions alone will not improve the conditions for the broad layers of the population in the developing countries, the social sides of the development cooperation will be assigned increasing importance in the coming years." (WP nr. 29, 1971-1972: 1)

This quote, found on the first page of the document, expresses a self-distancing from the economic growth orientation of the past decade. There has been recognition of the fact that the economic focus from the 1960's would not automatically better the living conditions of the broader layers of the population. The focus is on the social aspects of development, as the prior policy has not reached the poorest in society. The term "qualitative minimums standard" is introduced, when it comes to education, living conditions, health, food and water (WP nr. 29 1971-1972: 2). There is a focus on vocational education, as well as education personnel from SSA at Norwegian businesses when that is appropriate. The White Paper states "education is incredibly important, *especially* elementary and vocational education" (WP nr. 29 1971-1972: 20, my cursive).

In the document of the mid-eighties, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is quoted on the individuals right to basic education (WP nr. 36, 1984-1985: 96). Both in the sector of health and education the documents specify the need to focus on the basic levels, as expressed in the following quote:

"The Government sees it as important to focus our aid toward the poor groups of the population in the developing countries and increase their ability to cover their basic needs such as food, health, employment. The government is of the opinion that increased effort within agriculture, water supply, health and education, where especially primary health care and basic education are important elements of such a strategy." (WP nr 36, 1984-1985:8).

What constitutes "basic education" for an individual can be seen as an issue of interpretation, but it is usually not interpreted as higher education. The focus is on elementary education as this is seen to reach the poorest segments of society to a larger degree than what higher education is capable of, as the individuals who are eligible for higher education usually belongs to the higher socio-economic levels in the developing societies.

The mid-eighties is also when the term "poverty orientation" is introduced, and the strategy from the early 70's concerning bettering the conditions for the general and poor segments of society is continued, expressed in the following manner:

"Education, health and social welfare have been those areas focused upon by private organizations. These are sectors that harmonize well with the goal of covering the basic needs for poor people." (WP nr. 36 1984-1985: 83).

There is a clearly stated will to support education, as this harmonizes with the goal of covering basic needs for the poorest people.

The economic crisis in Africa led to severe cuts in public budgets (WP nr. 36, 1984-1985: 15, see also section 5.3.). Research has shown that when poor countries increase their budgets during economic booms and are forced to cut the budgets when the financial situation gets more difficult, it is common to see cuts in the basic services, not in the areas that were actually increased during the boom (Collier 2007: 40). This can lead to a situation where a country that already had a poorly funded sector for primary health care and basic education end up cutting these budgets during economic hardships, rather than cutting in newly enlarged areas like the diplomatic sector. It is stated in the white papers that the cuts in the public sector creates a situation where Norway needs to focus on the poor countries' primary needs, especially basic education and primary health care (WP nr. 36, 1984-1985: 15). Higher education is here linked to the rest of the policy.

The focus on basic education and poverty orientation in combination with the cuts in public budgets in the SSA region led to a wish to support the lower levels of education. Between the 1970's and the 1990's there was a significant expansion in the secondary and tertiary levels of education, but there is still a significant difference in technology, researchers and students between the developed and developing countries (WP nr. 51 1991-1992: 83). There is a focus on higher education on a larger scale than what was the case in the two decades prior, but it is still followed by a recommendation of focusing on lower levels of education, as expressed in this quote from the white paper number 51 of 1991-1992:

"The quality of the basic knowledge acquired through basic education is decisive for all later education. The UNDP claims in their 1991-report about human development that the economic effect of an investment in basic education is in many countries almost the double of an investment in higher education. At the same time all levels of education is important, and the priority of the effort must be adapted to the context in each country." (WP nr. 51 1991-1992: 84).

There is a tendency that the developing countries are focusing "relatively more" on higher education, and the need for Norway to focus on lower education is therefore strong (WP nr. 51, 1991-1992: 204). When higher education is mentioned, it is in the context of vocational education and teacher education, not the "traditional" academic higher education (*ibid*).

There is however a strong focus on research and technology during this last part of the phase. Research is being said to be important for the technology transfer and subsequent development (WP nr. 51, 1991-1992: 227). The Norwegian development aid is aimed at research institutions, not individual researchers, to help build institutes of research in the nations that are lacking them the most, such as SSA (*ibid*). There is attention brought to the uneven balance of research funds between developing and developed countries leading to an unbalance in the areas that are being researched, with the issues of the developed countries coming out on top (*ibid*).

The problem of the period as a whole can be stated as a realization that the prior policy had not reached the poorest in society. There was an effort made to change this, as is visible in the focus on poverty orientation and basic education. The objective of supporting basic education was seen important to this goal.

The white paper of 71-72 does not contain much in the area of stated values behind development aid, but quotes the UN in that there is a general objective of a fairer and more rational world where equal opportunities are a right nationally and individually (WP nr. 29, 1971-1972: 4). The white paper of 1984-85 draws a similarity between the support for the developing countries and the building of the Norwegian welfare state after WWII (WP nr. 36, 1984-1985: 19). There is a mention of human rights as well as a reference to the Christian tradition, and the idea of solidarity (*ibid*).

The white paper of 1991-92 makes the first notice of the inherent value of education, in that it creates both personal and social progress (WP nr 51, 1991-1992: 82). This is however not limited to any single level of education, and can therefore be seen as an argument for both basic education and higher levels of education. Even so it is a sign that the narrow economic focus on education benefits from the 60's have disappeared and given room for a more complex and holistic view on the benefits and returns of education, and how this can contribute to development.

The white paper of 95-96 is heavily based on the green paper of 1995. The green paper mentions compassion, justice and solidarity as key words that are underlying the Norwegian development policy (GP 1995: 99-100). The white paper states that solidarity and humanistic values are underlying the Norwegian society and that the Norwegian development policy is based in a wish to realize international solidarity (WP nr. 19, 1995-1996: 11).

There has been a clear change from the economic growth oriented values of the 1960's, and during the period as a whole there are visible signs of a movement towards expressing the values of human rights and solidarity. There is also the beginning of explicitly stating the value of education, both on a personal and a social level. These trends will get even more explicit during the last period in the analysis.

The white paper nr. 29 of 1971-72 does not wish to reorganize the administration of the aid, as it is believed to be of benefit to slow down these type of changes in periods where the field is as quickly expanding as what is the case in the beginning of the 1970's (WP nr. 29 1971-72: 3). One policy tool that is however given attention is the Facts. As a significant part of the public is sceptical to the size of the Norwegian aid, and the size of the aid being increased even more in the coming years, it is necessary to streamline the information work. It is stated that the education work concerning the developing aid needs to aim for the broad layers in the population, and that the school plays a vital role in this work. The main focus should be on the common interests covered through the development aid (WP nr. 29 1971-72: 18-19).

The white paper of 1984-1985 is published one year after the establishment of the Ministry of Development Aid, and the document does therefor not suggest any large reorganizations before there have been an evaluation of the new Ministry (WP nr. 36 1984-1985: 128). The government sees it as essential to still contribute to a scientifically solid, diverse and active information process concerning the field of aid and developing countries, and has given this work a separate chapter in the white paper (*ibid*).

White paper nr. 19 of 1995-1996 states that the government wishes to continue working on informing and educating the public about aid and the North-South issue in general. The goal of this work is to increase the interest and knowledge in the people about this field (WP nr. 19 of 1995-96: 8). The responsibility for the part of this information work that concerns the multilateral aid and the Norwegian policy towards the developing countries is from 1995 transferred from NORAD to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. NORAD keeps the

responsibility for informing the public about the bilateral aid and the conditions in the developing countries (WP nr. 19 of 1995-96: 47). Both Facts and Power are here being used as instruments to sway the Norwegian public, and by this keeping the high percentage of aid allocated through the Norwegian national budget supported by the tax payers.

During the 70's there was a distinct change in the priorities of development policy. There was to be a strong focus on poverty reduction and poverty orientation, as opposed to a focus solely on economic growth. The argument was that economic growth alone would not reach the broad layers of society, and would not automatically benefit the masses. The development aspect of economic growth had been overstated. This trend was underlying the whole period, and coincided with a focus that was more heavily pointed towards the lower levels of education rather than the higher levels. The focus on poverty orientation and the goal of covering basic needs lends itself to a focus on lower levels of education due to the same mechanism that connects the theory of trickle-down development with a focus on higher education. Lower levels of education can be aimed at the broad layers of the population, including the poorest members of society in a way higher education cannot. By this logic, the increased focus on lower levels of education is connected to the general focus on poverty orientation that runs through the Norwegian documents.

Table 3. Analysis of Phase Two

Problems	The prior policy has not reached the poorest. There is a need for basic education, as it reaches the poorest.
Objectives	More lower education.
Normative base	Norway has an obligation to help others because we are rich. Solidarity, compassion and human rights. Education has an inherent value.
Instruments	Strong focus on Facts and Power, with Facts being given a separate chapter in the white paper of 1984-85.
Policy linkage	There is focus on poverty reduction through the document, and this is also found in the argument for the importance put on the lower

	levels of education.
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### 6.3 Phase Three

The third phase consists of the year 2000 to the year 2010. Where Phase Two was characterized by economic turmoil, this most recent decade has been characterized by the growth of the "knowledge economy".

#### 6.3.1 Analysis of Phase Three

"Access to knowledge and technology is a central factor both in developing countries and industrialized countries when it comes to creating growth." (WP nr. 35, 2003-2004: 67).

The documents of this phase show an increase in the focus on higher education within the developed nations, and in the way the developed nations view what is important for development. To create growth there is a need for knowledge and technology.

In addition to this there is an understanding of higher education being important in the process of reaching the Millennium goal of securing all children elementary schooling (*ibid*). The white paper nr. 19. of 2002-2003 states that the Government will prioritize education as the most important focus of the Norwegian development policy (WP nr. 19 2002-2003: 15). The technology as a driving force has increased, as well as the importance of knowledge for competitiveness (WP nr. 19 2002-2003: 30). To increase the level of education in the developing countries, the Government wishes to "develop relevant degree studies and research based education in cooperation with Norwegian higher education institutions" (WP nr. 19 2002-2003: 72). This is the first mentioning of establishing degree studies since the suggestion of establishing an African university in 1962, and it shows there is a new focus on the importance of higher education institutions being established in the countries themselves. The term "education chain" is introduced in the white paper of 2003-2004 (: 118). A comprehensive educational system includes not only elementary school, but also secondary school, vocational education and higher education (WP nr. 35, 2003-2004: 118). The Norwegian main priority should still be the elementary schooling, but there is a need to further develop the rest of the education chain (*ibid*). "While the main focus needs to be on the elementary school education, there is also a need to at the same time develop further and

strengthen a holistic system of education, where both secondary education, vocational education and higher education has its place." (WP nr. 35, 2003-2004: 118). This new understanding of the comprehensive nature of an educational system stands in contrast with the second phase, where the focus was mainly on the lower levels of education and higher education was hardly mentioned at all. When it was mentioned it was often in the context of teacher education, which can be seen to be a necessary extension of the focus on elementary education.

During this phase the values in the white papers are more clearly stated than what was the case before. The first white paper of the decade, number 19 of 2002-2003, states that poverty is our time's biggest challenge (WP nr 19, 2002-2003: 10). The white paper that follows a year later repeats the idea of poverty being the biggest challenge of our time, as well as claiming that the development policy is an agenda for justice and human rights (WP nr. 19, 2002-2003: 5). Norway has a special responsibility as one of the world's richest countries (WP nr. 19, 2002-2003: 6), and education is being seen as a human right and a prerequisite for economic and social development (WP nr. 19, 2002-2003: 116). In the latest white paper used for analysis in this thesis, it is stated:

"Norwegian development policy shall challenge the delicate division of power in and between countries that contributes to injustice, repression and discrimination. Our effort is based on solidarity" (WP nr. 13, 2008-2009: 6).

The Norwegian development policy is stated as being based on human rights, solidarity and compassion. It is yet again mentioned that the high BNP of Norway commits (WP nr. 13, 2008-2009: 15). There is also a focus on what education can do for equality and democracy, but this is again not specified to a particular level of education. (WP nr. 13, 2008-2009: 72).

In 2004 there was a slight redefinition of the term "poverty orientation" that had been introduced in the 1980's. It is now to be understood in a broader sense, meaning that it does not necessarily need to be group targeted, but rather that it is a focus that is indirect and long term oriented (WP. nr 35 2003-2004: 17).

The policy instruments of the last decade in the analysis are again focused around Facts and Power, though there is no longer as much attention given to either one as was the case in the prior phases. The focus on informing the public is no longer as explicit, and neither is the focus on administrative reforms. The white paper number 19 of 2002-2003 mentions that the government wishes to stimulate increased consciousness about values in society, especially

through the system of education. Besides from this there is very little focus in the documents of the phase on informing and educating the public, especially compared to the focus this was given in the second phase. As the documents of this last phase have become significantly larger than what was the case in the 1960's, the fact that there is no longer specific chapters or even paragraphs dedicated to the policy instrument of information, and only short paragraphs dedicated to the shift of power is telling. There is also an interesting development shown in the white paper nr. 13 of 2008-2009. The writers of the document have had an "electronic mailbox" where the public have been able to send in their suggestions and ideas (WP nr. 13 of 2008-2009: 11). There is no longer a strong focus on the government informing the public, but there are signs of the public informing the government about what they find important in the area of development aid. This shows an interest from government in keeping "in tune" with the Norwegian public, but rather than educating the public about the matter of the document, they are asking for the public's opinion.

As knowledge and research is seen as increasingly important and is given partial credit for the positive development of a nation like China, there is a growing concern about the poorest countries. These countries, many of which are in SSA, are lagging behind in the "race for knowledge". The total research investments in SSA are 0,6% of the world total (WP nr. 13 2008-2009: 39). There is in other words an optimistic view of how higher education can further development, coupled with a concern of the low level of such education in SSA.

Table 4. Analysis of Phase Three

Problems	Few people have higher education. This is especially a problem when the rest of the world is moving towards becoming a knowledge society.
Objectives	To strengthen the education chain while keeping focus on the lower levels of education.
Normative base	Norway has an obligation to help others because of the country's high GDP. Solidarity, compassion and human rights. Education is of value to democracy and equality.



Instruments	The explicit focus has dropped, with both Facts and Power present, but not being given the amount of attention as was the case in the phases earlier.
Policy linkage	There is a general focus on knowledge. Strong connection to the increased focus on higher education.

## 6.4 Summary

As explored above there have been significant changes in how development policies have dealt with higher education. The first phase had a general focus on economic growth which led to a rather strong focus on higher education, both when it came to constructing institutions in the developing countries, and educating individuals. As the second phase started, the focus was changing from a sole focus on economic growth to a focus on poverty reduction and the basic needs of the general population. The education focus shifted towards the elementary and basic levels. The last phase saw a shift towards a more holistic view of education, including all levels and forms of education, as the general policy was focused on the development of the knowledge society.

Table 5. Summary of the prior analysis.

	The first phase	The second phase	The third phase
Problems	Few people have higher education. This slows down the creation of capital.	The prior policy has not reached the poorest. There is a need for basic education, as it reaches the poorest.	Few people have higher education. This is especially a problem when the rest of the world is a knowledge society.
Objectives	There is a need for more higher education.	More lower education.	To strengthen the education chain while keeping focus on the lower levels of

			education.
Normative base	International responsibility to promote economic growth.	An obligation to help others because we are rich. Solidarity, compassion and human rights. Education has an inherent value.	We have an obligation to help others because we are rich. Solidarity, compassion and human rights. Education is of value to democracy and equality.
Instruments	Facts and Power are both mentioned.	Strong focus on Facts and Power, with Facts being given a separate chapter in the white paper of 1984-85.	The explicit focus has dropped, with both Facts and Power present, but not being given the amount of attention as was the case in the phases earlier.
Policy linkage	Higher education is treated in compliance with a general focus on economic growth.	There is focus on poverty reduction through the documents, and this is also found in the argument for the importance put on the lower levels of education.	There is a general focus on knowledge. Strong connection to the increased focus on higher education.

There has as seen in above always been a strong link between the general policy of the documents, and the "education policy". The reason for this could be that the view on education follows the general policy, i.e. education is not a "stand alone" policy. There does

not appear to be a separate ideology behind the view of education as a tool for development, it is rather fitted into the general policy and changes therefore at the same pace as the rest of the policy.

## **6.5 Norwegian policies and international thinking**

To provide an answer to the main topic of this thesis, the question of to what degree Norway has differed from the international trends in thinking on higher education as a tool of development, it is necessary to frame the findings within the general theories of development discussed in chapter 5. This will use the already separated phases of the policy documents as a basis.

### **6.5.1 Phase One**

The 1960's policy were characterized by a strong focus on economic progress, and, as we've seen a quite strong focus on higher education (6.1.). Higher education was seen as an instrument of development and economic growth, and an educated population was viewed to be the way to start the process of capital creation (6.1.1.). This can be found in the classical traditional approaches that were influential at the time, which had a strong focus on capitalism and development by industrialization. The development would then trickle down and benefit the masses (5.2.1.). The West should share capital and know-how, and thus bring the developing level up towards the Western level.

The view that development starts in a few places and then trickles down, benefit support for higher education, in that it justified the strategy of educating a smaller part of the population. Education at this level is dependent on individuals that have received elementary and secondary education. In developing countries this makes it an elite phenomenon, as the broad layers of society simply are not qualified to participate. Higher education cannot be aimed at the masses of the developing countries until the level of elementary and secondary schooling is available to them first. If one goes by the idea that development will start at the top and trickle down, it is reasonable to support and encourage higher education for the wealthy individuals that are in fact qualified to participate, in the belief that this will eventually lead to a bettering of the conditions for all layers of the population.

The encouragement of the Norwegian policy of the period to support higher education is therefore in line with the development thinking of the same time. Higher education, though not available to the masses of developing nations, was seen to be an important part of the development strategy.

## **6.5.2 Phase Two**

The years after 1970 saw a decrease in the focus on higher education in Norwegian development policy, as it was believed to be most economic to focus on lower educational levels. There was also recognition that the economic focus that had characterized the first phase did not improve the lives of the broad, poor segments of developing nations. This led to the introduction of the terms "qualitative minimums standard" and "poverty oriented" that constituted a large part of what was to be a long recommendation of focusing the aid on lower levels of education, where it was believed to be of greatest benefit for the larger layers of society (6.2.1).

The 1970's were the main introduction of the alternative and bottom up approaches to development thinking. The focus on basic needs was prevalent in this type of thinking, which is strongly mirrored in the policy of the time, as expressed in the explicit focus on basic education (6.2.1.). The focus on recipient orientation in the policies can also be found in the alternative and bottom up approaches, where there is not one correct path to development, but rather several, depending on each country's strengths and weaknesses. The poverty orientation that was introduced in the documents in this period is compatible with these theories and their focus on the inadequacy of the economic growth theories.

The focus on basic needs, poverty orientation and qualitative minimums standard coincided with a lesser focus on higher education than what had been the case in the first phase. There is reason to believe that there is a connection between the two. Higher education is as already touched upon, in its nature dependent on individuals that have already participated in education for a number of years, both on the elementary and secondary level. In the developing countries where the access to education is not universal, the majority of these individuals are part of the elite level of society. The earlier belief that educating a narrow segment of society and having their knowledge trickling down would eventually benefit the large masses was now in large part discarded, and replaced by new ideas. The new ideas were partially based on the historic facts that developing small centers did not lead to increased

development for the surrounding areas (5.2.2). The focus was then shifted to the broader layers of society, and with this, the focus on higher education as part of a development strategy was severely minimized. It was not possible to offer higher education to a large level of society, due to lack of institutional structures and lack of participation in lower levels of education for the population as a whole.

The academic thinking around the question of higher education changed from the past period into this period, and one can argue that this led to a lower focus on the importance higher education plays in development. There was however another way of thinking that was influential, a theory that did not necessarily stem from the same point of view as the ones just presented. The World Bank did at the time operate from what has been described as a neo-liberal interpretation of the classical traditional theory of development (5.3.). This led to cuts in the public sector, which affected the higher education institutions. Higher education in developing countries was not seen to have the same return as lower levels of education. These factors all took place during the second phase, a period where the Norwegian policy on development did not focus as much on higher education than it did in the decade before and the decade that would follow.

The international approaches of the 1970's and the 1980's were characterized by a lesser focus on economic growth, and an increased focus on the need for the developing nations to relate their own development policies to their specific country's culture, economy and political landscape. The World Bank on the other hand operated under a neo-liberal interpretation of the classical traditional theory, and pushed for a more neo-liberal policy in the developing countries, leading to cuts in the public sector (5.3.). Criticism can be passed the WB for not looking at the specific needs of each country, and for not taking into consideration the different situations of the developing countries and the developed countries. The need for a public sector could have been very different from one to the other. While the data for this study would not allow to identify to what extent and in which ways the policymakers in Norway have been influenced by these theories and the World Bank, one can definitely see striking similarities between the approaches.

### **6.5.3 Phase Three**

The third phase is the phase in which knowledge became considered more important in all parts of the world. The historic aspect of what higher education and knowledge production

has meant for the development of the West, as well as the recent example of the rise of China is being used as background for the new focus on higher education in development policy. During the second phase there were mentions of what education means on a societal and personal level, as opposed to the solely economic focus of the 60's. As the 2000's are coming to an end, the focus is back on economic growth and development as a reason for focusing on higher education. There are mentions of how education contributes to democracy, but this is not the main focus.

There is an increased focus on knowledge. This can be seen as a result of the terms knowledge economy and knowledge society being more influential (5.5.). The terms were introduced in the 1970's, but have not been as influential in policy making until the later decades. The World Bank is now drawing strong lines between accumulation of knowledge and economic growth (World Bank 2002: 40). The Norwegian documents briefly mention how education has a self-value and promotes democracy, which is one of the ideas in Tomusk (Tomusk 2007: 8). Education is seen as an instrument for economic growth, as well as for developing values and identities for the individuals. The combination of the two leads to a knowledge society.

There are ways in which this new focus on knowledge as the base for development can be connected to the views of the first phase. The first phase was marked by a belief that higher education was important for development (6.1.). The Norwegian policy papers saw the lack of higher educated individuals as a problem for development, and even suggested establishing a university in SSA (Rec 1961-1962: 23). This belief is mirrored in the recent phase of the knowledge era, in which higher education again is given an important role in the development strategy. The documents of the 2000's justifies this by a historic view of what higher education did for the development of the Western nations. The classical traditional approaches of the 1960's that the Norwegian documents of the era were similar to have been accused of ethnocentrism in that the West expected the solutions that had proven successful in their environment to be equally as successful in the developing world. Even though the current era of development policy is more focused on recipient orientation, the argument can be made that the strong focus on higher education as an instrument of development contains a hint of ethnocentrism as well. Not necessarily in itself, but due to the justification that is used, which implies that what brought the West to their current position will be the best solution for the developing nations as well. Since the 1960's China has had massive economic

development, and their strong focus on research and higher education is used as an argument for the increase in focus on this in today's developing nations. One can see this as proof that the higher education strategy is not ethnocentric, as it is proven to have worked in nations that are not Western. While this might be true, it does still commit to the idea of all developing nations being similar enough to use similar solutions. Higher education does not necessarily work in the same way in the West or China as it does in SSA, and without specifying the need for a culture specific focus on the development of a stronger higher education sector, there is a risk of the development not being of as much benefit as what had been anticipated.

#### **6.5.4 Summary**

The Norwegian policy on higher education as a development strategy is following a path similar to the international development thinking, as discussed in the paragraphs above. There has also been mentions of ideas from the large organizations such as the World Bank, as well as current trends in the general society, such as the introduction of the term "knowledge society". Even though the development thinking as academic theories and the development thinking from the World Bank has often been quite different when it comes to the underlying ideology, there is still reason to believe that the two have had the same effect of downplaying or raising the importance of higher education at certain times during the past 50 years. The types of thinking that show similarities to Norwegian policy have a similar effect on how higher education is viewed as an instrument for development, even though the thinking may differ in ideology.

The three phases found in the documents are in coherence with the development thinking that surrounded them, both from the academic writing and from the World Bank. There is a clear similarity between the first phase and the last one, in that they both show a focus on higher education that was lacking for most of the period that separates them. This "middle phase" did not focus strongly on higher education. The focus was on lower levels of education, as this was seen to be most beneficial to the broader layers of society, as well as to poverty reduction. This is well in line with the developmental thinking of the time, and it is not in conflict with the work of the WB, even when the two differed from each other. The phase has however not shown the same signs of ethnocentrism that can be found in the two other phases. Higher education was considered important in Norway during the period. The cuts in public budgets that took place in the Western world did not have the same effect for the

education sector, as the sector was not as vulnerable as it was in the developing world. There was a focus on bottom-up development policy, as well as a focus on poverty reduction as opposed to a sole focus on economic growth. This led to higher education being given less attention than the other levels of education. The period is however almost 30 years long, and there are naturally statements in the policies that go against this general trend. Even so, the general trend both in academic theories, WB policy and Norwegian policy was to focus on lower levels of education.

The theories that influenced the first period have been criticized for being ethnocentric, and the phase itself has been criticized for being too focused on economic growth. This points to the need for a conscious relationship with these issues as the development aid again steers toward a focus on higher education. By learning from the mistakes that have been discovered in the past there can be made improvements in the present. There has been an increase in the belief that higher education will lead to economic development, not only for the developing countries, but also for nations in general. There has also been an increased understanding of the educational system as a holistic system where all the parts are dependent on each other. Combined with the increased focus in recipient orientation there is an opportunity present to avoid some of the mistakes that have been present in the last phases.



# 7 Conclusion

The conclusion of this thesis will reflect upon the original research questions presented in the introduction, and through this discuss the research problem. The reflection and discussion will be based on the information presented in the earlier chapters of the thesis, as well as the analysis in chapter five. The last part of the conclusion will be consisting of suggestions for future research on the topic as the concluding remarks.

## 7.1 Discussion of the research problem

The research problem as presented in chapter one was: Have there been differences in how international trends and Norwegian policy documents treat the topic of higher education as a tool for development in Sub-Saharan Africa? To provide an answer to this problem, three research questions were constructed. They were:

1. How has the thinking around development aid changed over the last 50 years?
2. In what way has higher education been argued to be of benefit to development, particularly in SSA?
3. How has higher education as a tool for development been viewed in Norwegian policy documents?

The first question was answered by literary review of the major trends in developmental thinking during the last 50 years. The most important findings was that the international trends' focus on what's important for development have gone through large changes. Some of the changes occurred as the previous thinking was considered to be euro-centric and not attentive enough of the need for the developing countries to have an active part in their own process of development. Some of the other changes occurred as there was a recognition that the previous theories of development did not fulfill their promise. The trickle-down theory was disproved as there was no overall clear signs that small centers of development did in fact lead to general development for the broad layers of the population. In fact, not only had SSA not attained the wanted development, but there was a decline in economic growth and GDP's, towards the end of the 1970's. The traditional approach to development thinking that is

exemplified by the trickle down tradition can be seen as being quite simple, in that it was based on one principle, and was a dominant theory for a period of time. As this did not have the expected effect and other theories and ways of thinking became prevalent, the idea of development aid became increasingly complex. The thinking around development aid has become more diverse and incorporates a larger number of theories and ideas than what was the case 50 years ago. There is now the option of a "pick and chose" attitude to development thinking, where the different aspects of several theories can be incorporated into one. This opens up for the possibility of designing the development thinking to fit the problem it is designed to solve, and can be seen to be useful as it can cater to differences in national context, historical context and the different context of each separate aid project. It can also be seen as containing possibilities for manipulation, as the complexity of development thinking has made it possible to back ideological ideas up with a development theory, and thereby justifying what may not be for the best for development. Navigating through the ideas and theories of development aid has become increasingly more complex as the field has expanded, but this complexity has also opened up possibilities for new thinking and thinking that can be tailored to fit the existing differences in the present world. This does however demand an awareness of the different ideas of development from the people working within the field, and a critical view of development thinking is a necessity.

The second question was answered by reviewing literature on the area. Much of the work on determining the contribution of higher education to economic development has been done by economists from the World Bank, and the research must be seen in that context. The pattern they have found of falling returns to education by level of education is an incentive to focus on lower levels of education. There is however a separation between personal and external benefits of higher education, where the external benefits can be seen as contributing the most to the societal development of a nation, as it includes technological innovations and values facilitating nation building. The private benefits of education are a strong motivator for the individual to participate in higher education. When studying the perceived contribution of higher education to economic development there are some issues of measurement that are necessary to keep in mind. The studies on economic rates of return give a tangible result, unlike some of the other aspects studied. It would be possible to speculate that this has influenced the way aid is given. The difficulties of measuring the effects of higher education's contribution outside of the economic aspects are difficult to measure, and by this difficult to justify when spending tax money such as the Norwegian government does.

The third question was answered by a document analysis of official Norwegian documents on the subject of development aid, where the topic of higher education was analyzed in particular detail. Here, there was the find that the view on higher education as a tool for development has gone through three phases. There are distinct similarities between the first and the third phase, in that they both show a stronger focus on higher education than does the middle and largest phase. Even so, the reason for this focus can be seen to stem from different causes, as it was tied to the trickle down tradition in the first phase, and to the development of the knowledge economy in the third phase. The second phase does not show such a strong focus on higher education, but there is a strong focus on education covered through the emphasis on the importance of lower levels of education. Looking at all the three phases there is a strong overall focus on education as a tool for development. The focus is as mentioned heavier on the higher level in the beginning and end of the time period analyzed, but even in the second phase, there are strong mentions of basic education, and towards the end of the period, even higher education. This shows that the potential that lies inherent in the local population of the developing countries is well known to the makers of the Norwegian policy documents. The view on education as a tool for development has stayed strong and consistent through the period analyzed for this thesis, with a constant focus on lower levels of education and a more varied focus on the higher levels. The current focus is on the holistic chain of the education system, in which all parts are necessary to build a strong economy and develop other areas of society.

By reviewing these three questions and the answers this thesis has provided, it is possible to attempt a conclusion to the general research problem of to what degree there are differences between Norway's policy and the international trends in thinking on higher education as a tool for development in SSA. The findings in this study shows that there are not large differences in this area. There is a clear similarity between the policy found in the Norwegian documents and the international trends on the topic of higher education as a tool for development, and there are similarities in the pace at which this has changed over the years. It is not possible to claim that there is a causal relationship between the two. One can however speculate that there is a relationship in the sense that ideas travel across borders and influence policies and thoughts. Norwegian development policy can not be claimed to be independent from the waves of the international community, and there is therefore reason to view the changes in thinking as a possible source for change in the Norwegian policies. This will however need to

be studied further to acquire empirical evidence concerning the motivation of the Norwegian policy makers.

## **7.2 Concluding remarks**

This thesis has dealt with the merging of two topics, the topic of higher education and the topic of development aid. Both of these topics consist of a number of components, and the field of higher education as a tool for development is therefore large and can appear chaotic. This thesis has as previously mentioned not come close to addressing all the different areas that should be researched upon to achieve a more conclusive picture of the relationship between higher education and development in general, and in the specific area of SSA in particular. Possible areas for future research are many, and I will aim to identify some of them as a closing of the thesis.

This thesis showed that there is a focus on higher education in Norwegian policy documents, but did not attempt to explore how this focus is carried out in the development projects of the Norwegian government. An area for future research would be to look at the actual action that is taken on the area, and whether this has changed with the intended focus change that is prevalent in the documents analyzed here. In addition to this, the thesis showed that there are similarities between the trends of international thinking on the area of development, and the focus in the Norwegian policy documents in the same area. This thesis has however not had the resources to see whether this is in fact a causal relationship or whether it is coincidental. There is in other words not possible to conclude that changes in the world will lead to changes in the Norwegian development policy on this area. A closer look at what has caused these similarities would serve as a stepping stone towards understanding how the view on higher education as a tool for development is challenged and changed, and what currents in the international community that work together to influence the Norwegian national policy on the field. It can also lead to a more general understanding of how decision making in policy processes take place. An understanding of this could lead to a policy that would be more easily predictable concerning the field of higher education in developing countries, which would allow the higher education institutions the stability needed to serve as a building factor for their communities.



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