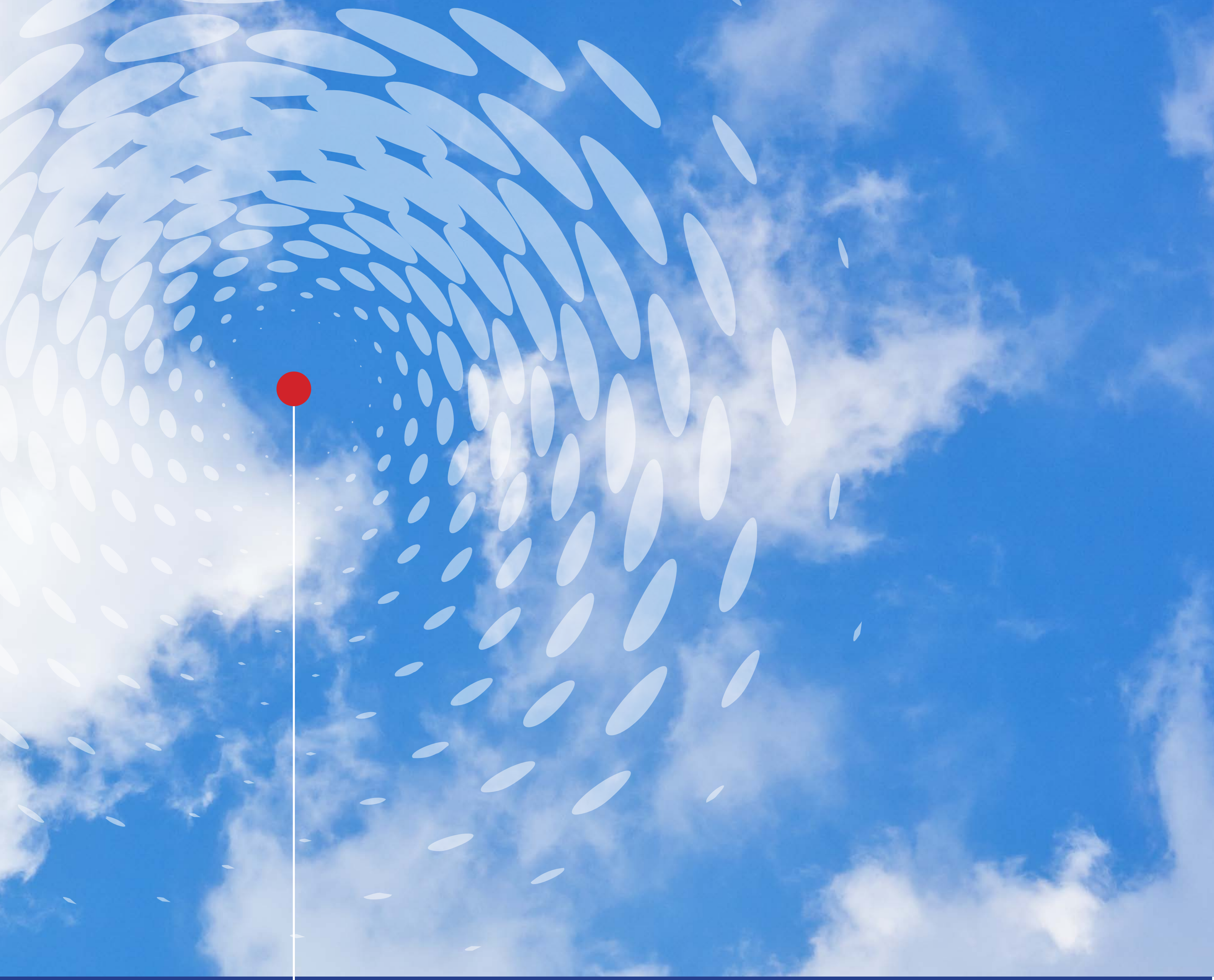

Nordic Conference on Higher Education and Research

Academic Work in a Recession – who should pay?

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

CHERIF
Korkeakoulututkimuksen seura ry.
Consortium of Higher Education Researchers in Finland

HANASAARI HANAHOLMEN

9–10th February 2012
Hanasaari – the Swedish-Finnish Cultural Centre
Finland

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The Different Worlds of Academia: A Horizontal Analysis of Gender Equality in Swedish Higher Education

Leif Lindberg
Ulrika Haake
Charlotte Silander

In advanced positions in higher education in Europe, women are underrepresented. Several years of policies on gender equality has not changed the situation. In order to manage Higher Education and provide changes to the underrepresentation of women, it is vital to, besides focusing on vertical aspects, consider horizontal differences in gender equality. This study approaches gender equality from a horizontal perspective by focusing on the relationship between gender and academic disciplines to combine research on gender in higher education with theories on disciplinary differences in academic cultures. The study points out substantial differences between disciplines in gender composition, specifically, the probability of a person leaving academia after earning a doctor's degree and various attitudes towards gender equality work. Our approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, has yielded a more complex and contradictory picture of gender equality in higher education compared to vertical cross-sectional studies. ●

Keywords: gender equality, horizontal analysis, academia, higher education, discipline

The academic researcher role – increasing diversity and enhancing expectations

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Introduction

Many would argue that research is the core function of universities and that for most academic staff, research is the most appreciated work task. Given this background, it is surprising that there does not exist any comprehensive analysis of the various functions that are related to the researcher role. The purpose of this paper is to attempt to fill this gap, and to provide empirical evidence of change and continuity in this role over the past three decades by using Norwegian universities as a case.

We may distinguish between ten tasks related to the academic researcher role: (1) networking with colleagues; (2) collaboration with colleagues; (3) financing research; (4) supervision of research students; (5) doing basic and applied research; (6) publishing research; (7) popularisation of research; (8) commercialisation of research; (9) managing research; and (10) evaluation of research. These categories have been developed by splitting up activities normally regarded as inherent parts of the research process, as well as by including related activities as separate sub-roles.

Data

Norway is used as a case. Over the past three decades, academic staff at Norwegian universities have been exposed to important changes in the higher education system, the relationship between this system and state authorities, and in the demands from society at large. The most notable changes can be categorized under four headings: (a) the massification of universities; (b) the marketization of universities; (c) the internationalisation and globalisation wave; and (d) the accountability and quality wave. These changes and the new challenges to Norwegian universities and their staff do not differ much from what their counterparts in other countries have been exposed to, and the present data on changes in the researcher role should be of general applicability.

The data are drawn from four mail surveys among academic staff of the rank of full professor, associate professor and assistant professor at Norwegian universities. The first three surveys were undertaken in 1982 (n=1,585), 1992 (n=1,815), and 2001 (n=1,967) in order to provide information about various aspects of academic work at these institutions. Response rates have declined over time, from 79 percent in 1982 to 69 percent in 1992, and to 60 percent in 2001. This tendency probably reflects the general increase in the number of surveys and forms of different kinds which staff are requested to respond to. These three data sets make it possible to study changes in academic work over the period 1980-2000 because identical questions were posed in these surveys. Furthermore, data are drawn from a mail-survey undertaken in 2008 among a sample of academic staff in the same universities (n= 612, 41 % response rate) as part of the international Changing Academic Profession project.

Results

Governmental and societal expectations towards universities and their staff have undoubtedly changed over the past three decades. The researcher role has become more demanding with respect to all sub-roles. Academic staff are expected to bring in an increasing share of their institution's research funding from external sources through developing closer links to industry and social needs. They are expected to enhance networking and collaboration with fellow colleagues across institutions, disciplines and national borders. Academics must now undertake world-class basic research, publish more and better research primarily in international journals, as well as engage in applied research and commercialization activities. Academics are expected to put more emphasis on the popularisation of research and the supervision of research students, and to contribute in the increasing amount of evaluation and assessment tasks. The changes in the research funding system have also created new challenges for academic staff. External contracts increasingly presuppose collaboration with other researchers; across institutions, disciplines, and countries. The application process in itself requires much work related to finding collaboration partners, negotiating a joint application, and negotiating the contract with research funding bodies. Moreover, collaborative research involving several institutions and many researchers entails transaction costs related to travels, meetings and correspondence.

The present analysis of the researcher role in Norwegian universities indicates that the research practice of academic staff, by and large, has changed in line with governmental and societal expectations. University staff have become increasingly involved in externally funded contract and programme research, they have become more active in science publishing and science popularisation. Academic staff collaborate more in research, have more intense research networks, supervise more research students, use more time on the evaluation of research, and manage an increasing number of externally funded projects and programmes. In all sub-roles, staff have increased their efforts and achievements. ●

Ordinary academics – key players in the renewal of higher education

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The currently dominant political wisdom assumes that money, politicians and university managers are the key sources of change in academic research and higher education. This wisdom has induced many higher education researchers to do policy-reactive research. This paper problematizes this view and suggests that the major source of development is, after all, the ordinary academic. This alternative view can be elaborated and supported by discussing the internal logic and motives of academic work, the nature of academic development activities, and the role of intellectual and social movements in the renewal of academic practices. In particular, this paper presents an interpretation of 'autonomous development work' in academia as a particular, often ignored but usual approach to academic development. The account is based on a practice-theoretical frame for articulating and describing academic and other forms of work, and this frame has been developed through participatory research by the MERI researcher group. ●

Teaching Scholarship and Gender: Organizational Change and Individual Outcomes in German Universities

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Postmodern university is characterized by changing organizational features and growing complexity. In the situation of traditionally specific status of women in academia (Krais 2000), these changes may reinforce cumulative effects on careers of female academics. In the paper, main factors are identified and the structure and first results of the empirical analysis are presented.

Firstly, university teaching becomes more demanded and standardized, as a consequence of Bologna process, resulting into specialization of academic labour. The development of teaching academics is increasingly seen as a target of planned and institutionalized policies as a part of university empowerment policies on national and regional levels (Müller-Böling, 2005).

Secondly, these trends are embedded into the context of historically rooted organizational and professional values favoring research over teaching and established professorship-oriented career paths (Schimank 2001, p. 148).

Thirdly, the cost-cutting and marketization policies trigger the expansion of flexible employment modes and precarious work in the university, which affects junior faculty (Bloch, Burckhard, 2010).

The main question addressed in the paper is whether these factors form the locus of deprivation of female academics by reproducing certain professional values and career strategies. The theoretical model proposed allows exploring the available labour market opportunities for career development of female academics with specific focus on the impact of the university teaching scholarship on them. Individual agency and behavioral types analyzed from the perspective of career transitions are linked to the infrastructural characteristics of internal and exteranal labour markets, which are considered under the general perspective of the transitional labour

markets theory (Schmid 2006). Labour market as a self-reinforcing form of economic and social order (Granovetter 1985) is embedded into institutions and social relations. Thus, the infrastructure analysis incorporates such elements as recruitment mechanisms, promotion criteria, statues and niches, network-based reputations and mechanisms of establishing trust. Market defined as institutionalized opportunity structures is a concept which links internal (organizational) and external labour market characteristics and allows exploration of professional development opportunities for women with teaching expertise in the broader context of academic labour market, inside and outside the university.

Qualitative problem-centred interviews (Witzel 1985) were carried out with the teaching academics with different disciplinary backgrounds. Categorization analysis was be used to analyse the data.

It is expected, that the identification of behavioral types will give more light to the issues of freedom (empowerment) and responsibilization (Goodin 1998), as well as cultural constraints (corporatist traditions confronted with principles embodied in the new organizational policies (the idea of agentic actorhood, i.e. individual empowerment, autonomy) (Meyer, Jepperson 2000, p. 109). ●

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Gender and the managerial turn in higher education: accounts from female academics in England and Sweden

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In this paper we report findings from a long-term collaborative research project, which has been examining the implications of the turn to managerialism in higher education in England and Sweden. The managerial turn, associated by a number of authors with the 'New' Public Management or NPM, has been characterised as an aspect of government initiated reforms designed to render public services more effective whilst simultaneously driving down the cost of provision. These reforms, which include the encouragement of marketisation and the introduction of private sector managerial techniques, have been seen as sweeping through Europe and embedding structures and processes of managerialism in public sectors worldwide. England and Sweden are in the forefront of this managerial reform movement for change (Hood et al 1999: 189-190; see also Hood 1995; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004), and making them interesting test cases for the 'success' or otherwise of the reforms and their gendered impact.

A number of authors have focused their attention on the passage of the new managerialism in the public sector (cf Hood et al op cit; and Pollitt and Bouckaert op cit), with published work pointing to such issues as the attempted restriction of professional autonomy (Dent 2003) and the intended and unintended consequences of managerial techniques like performance management Jones 2003). Some authors have examined higher education (cf Farnham 1999 and Barry, Chandler and Clark 2001 for England and Askling 1999 and Berg 2001; 2010 for Sweden), with published research warning of the dangers of the McDonaldisation of academe (Parker and Jary 1995), as well as the high levels of stress engendered by intensified and pressurised work regimes (Berg 2000; Chandler, Barry and Clark 2002; Barry, Berg and Chandler 2010). Yet there is little, beyond some fascinating pioneering work on gender and higher education (cf Fogelberg, Hearn, Husu and Mankkinen 1999), which has explored the gendered implications of the managerial turn in detail.

By drawing on a research investigation, this paper seeks to address this gap in the literature. The interviewees are long-serving members of the academic profession, with considerable experience of academe, between 15 -25 years. All eight of them had reached the age where their children had moved out and they worked full-time as academics. In examining their personal accounts in some detail their experiences are drawn upon in an attempt to understand the gendered processes through their eyes. In exploring the implications attention is drawn to obstacles that affect career paths, research opportunities and the work/life balance, pointing to the difficulties, both new and old, that beset female academics in two European countries at the forefront of the new managerial reforms. ●

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The academic profession and its views on leadership in universities in transition

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Finnish universities are facing strong pressures to change in the 21st century. There has been a push from the government towards structural change of the Finnish higher education institutions through mergers and internal re-structuring. There is also a more informal pressure on the universities both to co-operate and compete internationally. For instance, the massification of universities in the late 20th century and the internationalisation of academic work through institutional and personal networks with new modes of governance for publicly funded activities have changed the administration of universities. The content of academic work is also changing. The universities have seen a diversification of research areas with an increase in interdisciplinary activities and applied research during the recent decades. New types of priority setting in research work are taking place and new hybrid teaching modes are emerging. There is both a rapid, but sometimes incoherent legislative-structural change and a slower, but also more continuous change of content of academic work.

An interesting question is the leadership of this change in the universities. In many cases it is leaders with an academic mandate, for instance rectors and deans, who have to direct the change in content and have to introduce new modes of governance. They mainly carry this responsibility even if there is an increase of administrative staff and managerial professionals. How does the academic profession, that is the research and teaching staff of the Finnish universities, view this academic leadership? Is it successful? What kind of problems occur in this work and how could they be solved? These questions are answered by a Finnish research team participating in a European study on conditions for the academic profession in changing European societies.

This paper approaches the above mentioned issues by analysing the views expressed by the Finnish academic profession in research interviews focusing on the following questions: collegiality vs. managerialism; the mistrust between the academic profession and administration; the increase in administrative workload and asymmetries of information to the staff in case of structural reforms, for instance in mergers of universities or departments.

Findings from the analysis at hand indicate that the profession appreciates traditional collegial decision-making, albeit it is found too slow by some interviewees. However, the profession does not totally disapprove the managerial power, but managerialism increases the risk of arbitrary rule according to the interviewees. The profession expresses mistrust especially towards the central administration of higher education institutions and centralised or outsourced support services. Both junior and senior academics are worried about the concentration of the administrative workload on certain senior scholars. This is partly an unnecessary burden on them, but also the source of information asymmetries between juniors and seniors. This is a hindrance according to the juniors, and also seniors without formal power, especially in the case of structural mergers of departments or entire institutions. ●

The "fourth way" of managing universities

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In partial contrast to recent research that has argued that "new managerialism" is a way to dictate how management happens in universities (e.g. Deem and Brehony 2005), this paper will argue that universities have long involved highly sophisticated systems of knowledge management so that management in universities will always to come in interaction with knowledge that has been historically accumulated (Niiniluoto 2011; Maassen & Olsen 2007; Wittrock 2004; Huff 1993, von Wright 1987). Thus, to understand contemporary university management, this paper takes a look backwards and reviews how have universities been managed in the past. The review shows how three distinct ways of managing a university can be found when looking at the historical past. The first of these ways of managing a university rose in tandem with the rise of the university into an institution distinct from religious beliefs. Science and scholarship were at the nexus. The second way marked the fusing of universities and emerging nation-states into allies and, in most countries, was one of public management. The third one is based on the market-economy and its rise coincides with rise of neoliberalism. This paper argues that a way of management that is intelligent and wise will take into account all of the above three historical sediments related to university management, as well as the dynamics related of their contemporary and future interaction and coevolution. Implications for Swedish-Finnish research collaboration are provided. ●

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Policy within the development of university funding and funding model during 1995–2010

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Performance agreements form a central method used by the government to steer and administrate the universities in Finland. Agreements are negotiated between each university and the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), agreement term lasts for three years and in the agreement the operational targets for the university and the resources needed to achieve them are set. The distribution of financial resources is controlled by the funding model, the structure of which is decided by MEC. The performance agreements are the most important method and the funding model is a key technique of steering of universities by MEC (Rekilä 2006). The funding model has been evaluated and revised every 3 years, as an initial step for each new performance agreement term. Revision of the model has been central part of the development of steering. Therefore it is a bit surprising how little there's been research on funding model and its development, an issue this paper aims to contribute to.

In this paper the development of university funding and the funding model is conceptualized by using the concept of policy and the approach of policy research (Rizvi & Lingard 2010, Olssen, Codd & O'Neill 2004, Varjo 2007). Policy here refers to a process of interaction between texts and discourses (Ball 1993, Fairclough 1995). Policy is a space for production of governance and it has material consequences. The construction and interpretation of policy is both made possible and limited by other policies and discourses.

The material of this study consists of documents produced by the MEC during 1995–2009: the memorandums of groups nominated to develop the performance agreement system, and the background material for the Universities Act 558/2009. The analysis is 'theoretically guided' (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009), and methodological approach is (critical) discourse analysis. By using the discourse analysis the goal is to both reveal and construct the discourses present in the research material and inspect their use as broader frameworks in the development of funding as a method of steering. The aim of this study is to build an understanding on how the funding as policy and especially the funding model as a technique have been developed during the decades observed. The results are then reflected against the material changes in university funding. Finally the discussion relates the results to other, more general results on university policy published lately. ●

Towards Multicultural University: International Master Programs as a form of internationalization

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The internationalization of higher education is associated with expectations of increased efficiency and competitiveness of the universities, as well as cultural benefits for students and staff. My study is focused on the International Master Programs in Social Sciences as a specific form of internationalization in higher education. The rationale for focusing on the International Master Programs in my research is that they are an integral part of the university practices and require stable administrative efforts, such as the services for international student and the staff teaching in English, in order to make possible the work of the program. In contrast to the workshops, conferences and guest lectures, which usually take place once and are not a structured part of the university activities, hence, not that strategically planned, International Master Programs represent a long term commitment to internationalization.

The research is structured as a comparison of multiple cases, several international master programs in Russia and in Finland. I study the organizational efforts to start and run these programs, the goals of the administration and the outcomes achieved. I employ the analysis of the university policies, international agreements on the internationalization of higher education and collect the statistics on the formal indicators of the master programs. The guiding question of my study is: do the international master programs really advance the desired internationalization? Together with the analytic review of the university's internationalization documents, I will compare the specific approaches employed by the international master programs in terms of organizing studies. The analysis consists of the splitting master program's performance into several indicators and comparing them with the help of formal QCA procedures (Ragin, 2008) in order to determine which combination of factors ensures positive educational and institutional outcomes.

The relevance of such study can be explained by the need of expertise in different internationalization strategies and its' usefulness in understanding the performance of higher education system, as well as in practical dimension - for carrying out the joint projects: exchange programs, double degree programs, and so on. The major objective of this comparison is to uncover the different types of internationalization and to track the differences, possibly explaining them by different political and administrative choices. ●

Unequal access to Higher Education in Denmark - educational strategies and class identities among Danish university students

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This paper deals with access to Higher Education (HE), more specifically with social differentiation within field of studies and institutions in Danish university education. We report from a research council funded project on widening participation in Higher Education consisting of a quantitative and a qualitative part. Firstly, we use Danish register data to investigate choice of field of study and choice of university institution while controlling for a range of student background variables. Theoretically we draw on notions of forms of capital and of channelling, diversion and effectively maintained inequality in the educational system. We find that it is important to differentiate not only between fields of studies, but also between university institutions, in explaining the processes of inequality and differentiation in the Danish University system. Here, two dimensions are important: the university institutions degree of social selectivity and whether it is has a 'classic' university profile (liberal arts) or a more 'modern' applied-oriented profile.

Secondly, we ask: how and to what extend are Danish students' choice of HE, their educational strategies and sense of belonging 'classed'? Qualitative studies show that working class students tend to be more risk aversive when it comes to job security and the economic costs of studying. They lack a sense of belonging to HE, and they identify with their working class heritage. We investigate these differences in Denmark; an interesting case because HE students receive government grants, have no tuition fees, and because of the historical dominant discourse of a social democratic welfare regime where the notion of equality in the education system holds a central place. We interviewed 60 students from six different HE programs, focusing on students' with different class backgrounds. We find that the rather explicit accounts of class identity apparent in many studies are given more subtle expressions in the case of the Danish working class students. Further, risk assessments addressed only the utilitaristic value of the programs studied, and if they lead to secure and well-defined job positions – economic obstacles (either in upbringing or in the present situation), did not seem to play any role for HE choice for any of the student profiles – working class or academic. An important part of this study has also been to point to the importance of differing between HE programs. Education strategies vary significantly between programs, and it is of central importance to analyze how different class background intersects with choice of specific HE programs in unique ways. Differing not only between class backgrounds, but also between HE programs, allows us to see how class reproductive strategies work in a Danish context, and it allows us to see what characterizes the programs that appeals to working class students – ultimately pointing to policy initiatives for widening participation in HE. ●

Opening the Pandoras box – implementing the European Qualifications Framework in Finland and Norway

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It is widely known that the European Commission does not have a legal basis to entering higher education policy in its member countries. Other intergovernmental processes such as the Bologna process have however provided an entrance point for the Commission to legitimise its own initiatives. Still being constrained by the lack of overall legal capacity, these activities are usually formed around processes focusing on the specific areas the Commission already has a competence in, or come in a form of projects and other non-legal measures.

Recognition of qualifications has been a competence of the European Commission from the very beginning leading to the existence of directives in this area, however – the tendency now is to move to a soft law approach, focusing on policy recommendations rather than directives, in general marking a shift in thinking in European supranational policymaking. As innovation, employability and mobility are becoming increasingly high on the political agenda due to the current economic situation in Europe, higher education is increasingly becoming a part of general European policy agenda in becoming a successful knowledge economy – marked by the initiatives and arguments presented in the Europe2020 strategy.

This would imply a certain importance of introducing the European Qualifications Framework. The recommendation was formally issued in 2008, arguably as a translation tool to facilitate better and easier cross-border recognition of qualifications. Various European countries are now in the process of implementation, and thus far Ireland, Malta, UK and France have submitted their national referencing reports.

Both Norway and Finland are still in the process and are somewhat behind schedule. As an initiative, the EQF was introduced to get more clarity and transparency in terms of qualifications. However, one could also argue that the process has opened the Pandoras box – where there were implicit agreements within the system, they now have to be formalised, leading to a process of negotiation of positions within the system. Considering the implicit assumptions of non-formal and informal learning built into the EQF, it can also lead to important debates on the very nature of higher education in these countries.

This paper will examine this implementation process in these two countries. Both being Nordic countries, the policy environment in both of the countries has also some important differences – for example, the status of EU membership, and a difference in the general policymaking tradition (political vs academic) in the two countries in terms of inclusion of various actors and potential barriers for implementation. By comparing two countries that in the rest of Europe are often lumped together as Nordic countries (and thus termed 'similar'), this paper will attempt to highlight some of the aspects that lead to important divergences in how policy is being implemented in these two countries.

As such, this paper will examine the specificics of this process – examining the implementation process through identifying advocates and barriers for implementation, and putting focus on the boundary and decision rules in the process. Who have been involved in the process and who have not, what sets the inclusion in the process, which actors have had influence (formal and informal) in how the process has taken place in these two countries? The analysis will rely on document analysis and a preliminary set of semi-structured interviews with individuals who have been closely involved in the process. ●

Between rhetoric and evidence – prolonged studies as the perpetual headache of Finnish higher education policy

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Governments nowadays are eagerly claiming that their policies are or should be evidence based. We might even speak about the evidence based policy (EBP) movement. In Finland, in the field of higher education, the idea of evidence based policy was written out in the Development Plan for Education and Research for 2007–2012. According to the plan, to enable the efficient implementation, monitoring and impact assessment of the objectives set for the education system, it is important to have sufficiently well analysed evidence on the education system and environmental factors. Basing educational policies and reforms on research and evidence is of course no novel idea – and who would want them not to be based on evidence? What is new is the strong rhetoric of evidence basedness, and the determined machinery i.e. measures, initiatives, networks, organizations etc. in creation in order to enhance knowledge transmission in the name of EBP.

Knowledge here means the 'knowledge triangle' of education-research-innovation, and the objective whose realization calls for better evidence is set in the Lisbon agenda urging Europe to become the most competitive knowledge economy. The special role reserved for higher education in this brave new Europe can be red, for instance, in the EU's modernization agenda: European universities have enormous potential, but this potential is not fully harnessed and put to work effectively to underpin Europe's drive for more growth and more jobs.

The problems of European higher education are manifold. In my presentation I will look at the connections of research and policy in the context of one enduring policy problem, prolonged studies in Finnish universities. What used to be a mere feature of elite higher education where students were 'sponsored', staying 'in residence', and studying until degree, if we use Martin Trow's vocabulary, became a problem and coded in the emerging policy regulation mechanism in the 1960s. Since then university intake has doubled, and the problems have been intensified regardless of constant reforms. Is there lack of evidence, lack of understanding of the evidence, lack of suitable measures, or are the objectives themselves flawed or unrealistic?

By looking at proposed and implemented reforms and their rationale, and the research on students and studies, I'll try to assess the effectiveness of the current policies of speeding up studies and decreasing dropout, and shed some light on the blind spots of evidence based policy making. ●

From policy to strategy: consequences of fragmented national governance

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As the institutions in Nordic higher education are largely owned and governed by the state, traditionally they have played a central role in the realization of welfare state policies. In Norway, the sectors role in this respect very clearly revealed itself in the framework of the further development of the HE system in the 1960 and 1970, where the goals of equal rights to higher education as well as geographical cohesion was central. In that sense the sectors role was part of the social democratic nation building project. Types of education offered and number of study places was neatly planned by central authorities. Higher education policy was even suffered in regional policy and an important reason that Norway, population taken into account, has many, sometimes quite small institutions of HE. In the last two decades however we have witnessed a gradual decoupling from state control. Such developments are generally believed to be related to various processes at various levels, such as blurring boundaries between private and public spheres of HE, between higher education as a national responsibility and the increasing influence of internationalization and globalization, and between research and administration. Against this backdrop, this paper investigate the increasing autonomy and room for strategic maneuvering of the institutions in HE and its impact on education and research priorities and strategies of universities and colleges. Data is based on interviews with a representative sample of institutional leaders and stakeholders in Norwegian HE conducted during 2011. The investigation is conducted within the framework of the ongoing research project Structures in Strategising (Norwegian Research Council). ●

The Swedish Field of Higher Education

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Swedish higher education has been subject to major transformation during the last three decades. One of the most important features is the vast expansion of the system. From the beginning of the 1990's and some ten years onward, the number of students has doubled. The expansion is related to an increased complexity of the system, where, for example, the students have faced rapid growing numbers of programmes and courses to choose.

In order to analyse this new complexity of the higher education system, we have deployed a correspondence analysis on the relation between educational programmes and courses and the social groups that populated them. The results show that the field has two principal dimensions. The first and most important dimension is gendered, separating sons from daughters. The second dimension is social hierarchical. Social groups with large amounts of resources, especially educational capital, are opposed to groups with small quantities of economic, social and cultural assets.

The educational programmes and courses as well as the seats of higher education are not randomly distributed in the space. Along the gender axis, engineering programmes (male pole) are opposed to programmes in education, nursing and social care (female pole). Programmes in economy, law and medicine are positioned in the middles, indicating a balance of male and female students. The social hierarchical dimension differentiates the traditional universities, such as the universities in Uppsala and Lund, and traditional professional schools (for instance Stockholm School of Education, Karolinska institutet, and Royal Institute of Technology) from university colleges and colleges of health science. Also the educational programmes follow certain logic. Long and selective programmes leading to traditional professions, such as doctors, lawyers and engineers, are situated at the social dominant pole, clearly contrasted by the shorter programmes in nursing, education and engineering at the other pole.

The two primary dimensions combined form a two-dimensional space, within which the educational programmes and courses are positioned in a triangular shape. The uneven distribution between the sexes is most evident at the base, dominated by students of working class background. Sons and daughters of the social elites meet at some of the most prestigious educational programmes, especially the medical programme. ●

Management-by-results and performance indicators in Finnish universities – The viewpoint of work motivation

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The managerial doctrine behind measuring performance in organizations is commonly known as management-by-results (MBR). The basic idea MBR is to implement the organizational strategy all the way down to the grass-roots level through measuring individual-level performance. MBR is typically promoted through performance-related pay, which gives employees the incentive to pursue the objectives set by the organization.

The essence of the MBR doctrine is to develop evaluation and feedback systems that encourage the staff to focus their work output according to the organization's strategy. When performance-related pay is added as a backup, a person who performs well in line with the designated indicators is rewarded in the form of higher monetary compensation or other benefits. Thus MBR not only encourages employees to work effectively and in accordance with the organization's strategy, it also increases motivation at work when an individual's performance affects his or her pay – at least in theory. In practice – in the public sector in general and in certain knowledge-intensive areas in particular – it may be highly problematic to apply MBR successfully, as suggested in this paper.

This paper focuses on the evaluation system of MBR in Finnish universities. A special attention is paid on the qualitative and quantitative evaluation forms undertaken in universities and their effects on the work motivation of university employees. The study is based on extensive survey data (n=900) collected from employees at three Finnish multidisciplinary universities. The empirical data of the study was gathered by an Internet-based survey-questionnaire.

In the case of non-profit expert work, such as scientific research, it is extremely difficult to evaluate the value, let alone the quality of production: for example, one top-level study could easily be more valuable than a hundred mediocre research papers. In the case of basic research in particular, when the value of the work may only be appreciated after several years, the construction of reasonable MBR evaluation systems is extremely challenging.

A person is said to be intrinsically motivated when s/he performs an activity that offers no apparent reward except the activity itself. In the case of university employees the drivers of intrinsic motivation typically include academic freedom and the desire to work as a scholar. Several studies indicate that the addition of an extrinsic reward or a certain kind of pressure to an intrinsically motivated action may undermine both motivation and creativity. There is thus the possibility that if the MBR system undermines the academic freedom of university employees, or requires them to pursue something they consider secondary if not irrelevant, it might effectively lower the intrinsic motivation as well as the creative output of expert workers.

Contrary to common practice in applying NPM reforms, the Finnish Ministry of Education has adopted MBR rather explicitly. It was first introduced in Finnish universities in 1994, and has been used regularly in budgetary negotiations between the Ministry and each university since 1997. The negotiations determine the objectives and the consequential amounts of financing for each university, and the performance agreements set out detailed objectives covering the target number of degrees in each field of study, for example.

Although the execution of MBR on behalf of the Finnish Ministry of Education has been highly structured, its further application in individual universities within their own internal management and strategies is not controlled from outside. As a consequence, individual universities, and in many cases also the individual faculties have developed their own internal MBR variations. When it comes to individual universities' freedom to design their own internal MBR practices, the major exception is the adoption of the nation-wide, highly structured performance-related pay system that was introduced in 2006.

One of the main problems in the application of performance-related pay is that public organizations are very limited in their capacity to reward good results. Rewarding good work performance is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of the challenges involved in using MBR in the public sector, however. Indeed, public-sector and private-sector organizations often differ substantially in terms of business logic and in their job descriptions. The core of the problem lies in the differences between the political and administrative system characteristics of the public sector compared to those of the corporate world. The logic of a non-profit public organization operating outside of open competition is simply alien to the private sector.

Although there are variations within as well as between individual universities in terms of how the MBR doctrine is applied in practice, one thing seems clear: compared to the time before MBR, the pressure to publish more articles and produce more degrees has increased significantly. This is positive in opening up a route to success, but also has negative connotations. Accordingly, if the personnel consider the objectives appropriate, the evaluation sufficiently transparent, and the reward system fair, MBR could produce good results. However, quite often it turns out that the above-mentioned conditions are not met.

The adoption of MBR and performance-related pay in Finnish universities seem to have provoked heavy criticism among scholars, often manifested in fervent writings in newspapers and other expressions of indignation. However, although there have been organizational and institutional-level studies on the effects of MBR in universities, thus far few explicit scientific inquiries into the effects of the adoption of MBR from the perspective of individual expert workers have been reported.

The empirical results of this study show that the current performance measurement systems in Finnish universities are based on quantitative rather than qualitative measures, and that the current MBR system in higher education seems to have had a negative effect on work motivation among experts. However, the degree of satisfaction towards the current system varies among faculties.

The motivation to engage in creative, knowledge-intensive work, such as the work carried out at universities, is typically intrinsic. In the light of the empirical findings of the study it seems that MBR is in conflict with intrinsic motivation and the very essence of the expert work undertaken in universities. ●

KEYWORDS: Management-by-results, Management-by-quantity, Intrinsic motivation, Expert work, Universities, Performance measurement, Creativity, New Public Management

A Comparative Study of the Formal Organization Structures of Universities in Europe

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According to institutional theory of Higher Education, the universities and their organizations are nowadays often seen to "converge" (isomorphism) both nationally and internationally as a response to the growing international pressures related to funding sources, research and education, and the competition for best staff and students in the age of New Public Management (NPM), ranking lists and global higher education markets. At the same time also the opposite is claimed: universities and their organizations are seen to diversify, profile themselves and adapt to local conditions as a reaction to similar pressures.

To give an example, recent studies comparing international research and educational policies in several European countries (and also the Nordic countries especially) claim that in those countries, that have done structural reforms for their institutions of Higher Education, the average size of organizational units within those institutions has grown while the number of units has decreased (mainly through fusions), and the autonomy of the institutions has increased. However, despite of increased autonomy and traditional and/or specific national features, an even stronger international and global institutional convergence is seen to appear in the HE institutions of these countries.

Regardless of these often-referred and discussed theories and policies, there is only a very limited amount of comparative empiric research available on the question what is actually really happening to the structural organizations of universities?

The work at hand is a doctoral thesis under preparation linked to institutional research that aims to study these phenomena empirically, by comparing some of the actual changes that have occurred in the formal organization structures of European universities. This is done by studying the organization structures of universities as organizational configurations, using methods related to Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). Starting from different types of traditional and historical university models (like Anglo-Saxon, French, German/Humboldian, Russian), that are formalized as organizational configurations, the objective is to use existing comprehensive database data (utilizing time series analysis) to measure (and possibly even to explain) some of the most typical actual organizational changes and development patterns that have de facto occurred in the formal organization structures of European universities under recent years. Hopefully this will shed some empirical light on the much-debated institutional theories and policies concerning the contemporary organizations of Higher Education institutions and their development. ●

State-oriented Governance of Procedural Autonomy in Higher Education Systems: guidelines to compare the stratification of Brazilian's Institutions and the differentiation of the Finnish ones

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This paper will address autonomy issues of Brazilian HEIs as part of a larger research that aims to compare it to the Finnish ones. Even though Brazil has a large private sector in its HE system, which is responsible for more than 70% of its student enrollments, the system's governance is considerably state-oriented. Besides, in Brazil most of the research activities and doctoral training is restricted to public institutions, with some exceptions. The differences between equally state-regulated models of HE systems will be considered at the end of the paper in order to construct guidelines for further comparative analysis. At this phase of the research I will discuss the Brazilian HE system's institutional autonomy by analyzing its laws, decrees and written regulations.

With the recent global trend towards a market-oriented governance of higher education institutions (HEIs) there has grown a significant debate concerning these institutions' autonomy. On one side, a shift from sole dependence on state funds and regulations towards a more market-oriented model is seen as a gain of autonomy for HEIs. On the other, there are concerns as to whether market-oriented models couldn't be offering their own constraints to the autonomy of HEIs. This debate has brought the necessity of more precise conceptual tools. Whether to understand one country's HE system or to compare them, the autonomy issues of HEIs has been unfolded in at least three different aspects: procedural autonomy, substantive autonomy, and academic freedom. The distinction between institutional autonomy (first two aspects) and academic freedom is an important analytical tool, though interdependent when it comes to empirical research.

It is worth noting that the Brazilian HE system is an example of how a state-oriented governance model can live along an extended private sector. By analyzing the empirical material, it was possible to grasp procedural aspects of Brazilian HEIs autonomy that have strong state regulations and seem to be responsible for the system's stratification. It is interesting how this combines with an academic collegial model of regulation that is strong mostly in the graduation level (or post-graduation as stated by Brazilian institutions). According to the laws that were analyzed, the Brazilian state grants procedural autonomy only for institutions that have graduation levels, and after submitting them to evaluation processes during which the state controls many aspects of their procedural autonomy. When autonomy is acquired by HEIs, these are relieved from some of the evaluation and regulation process, which becomes the responsibility of collegial bodies, to which are submitted private and public HEIs. HEIs that acquire this autonomy status can then be labeled Universities. This creates stratification where Universities hold the top status of Brazilian HE system, and faculties and university centers (as are labeled those HEIs that have not acquired University's autonomy) the lower ones. Further empirical research to know whether and how much this procedural control, by pushing the system towards stratification, interferes in aspects of substantive autonomy and academic freedom are suggested. One thing that already appears in this phase of the research is that the collegial bodies have a significant role in regulating substantive autonomy of Universities. Those governance bodies define institutional goals and quality criteria by which HEIs will be collegially evaluated. So even if faculties and university centers are not directly evaluated by those collegial bodies, the criteria defined by the latter seem to define what is and how to be at the top of the pyramid of Brazilian HE system. In what respects the aim of comparing Brazilian HE system with the Finnish one, it is interesting that the latter, according to some authors, also state-oriented model has led towards more differentiated HEIs, composed by Universities, Universities of Technology and Polytechnics. Even though it can't be said, in advance, that there is no stratification in the Finnish HE system, it is worth investigating what aspects of state regulation produces these differences towards a more differentiated rather than stratified system. ●

Key-words: Higher Education Governance; Institutional Autonomy; Higher Education Systems

University autonomy in Nordic countries

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The higher education landscape in the Nordic countries has changed considerably in the past decade. Norway went through a series of reform changing the higher education to comply with the Bologna Process structures and unifying the legislation and accreditation procedures for the Norwegian higher education sector. The structural development of higher education sectors in Finland and Denmark saw several mergers between higher education institutions and/or research institutes, consolidating the sector into large units, and changing the governance structures of universities. The Nordic model of free higher education has shifted to a more marked oriented model, as Finland, Sweden and Denmark have all introduced various forms of tuition fees for non-EU students, in order to take advantage of the bourgeoning higher education markets. The Icelandic higher education sector is still characterised by the dominance of the University of Iceland. Increasing the university autonomy has been central to the recent policy discussion and/or changes in university legislation in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. These changes have been responses to the contemporary trends in the global context of higher education: globalisation and competition, accelerating international student flows, the emergence of the European higher education and research area, and technological change.

The Nordic countries share common history, similar language and culture, and long traditions in political collaboration. The Nordic societal model has also traditionally been very consistent across the countries: strong welfare state, relatively flat societal hierarchies, high literacy and extensive education system have characterised the Nordic countries. Almost by default, that brings along an expectation that the operational context of the universities will be similar as well.

Policy and research literature regularly argues for the autonomy of higher education institutions as the key to creating stronger, better, higher quality and more competitive universities, able to respond rapidly to the changing demands of their operational environment. Two recent studies (De Boer et al 2010; Jongbloed et al 2010) commissioned by the European Commission, and addressing the link between policy changes in higher education governance and funding and the performance of national higher education systems in 33 European countries, noted a link between university performance and institutional autonomy.

The university autonomy has, indeed, also been discussed actively in the Nordic countries, and universities have been granted more possibilities to independently decide on their finances, organisation or academic offer. In this paper we examine the similarities and differences in the operational context of the universities in the five Nordic countries. We elaborate the autonomy of the Nordic universities along four dimensions: organisational, financial, staffing and academic autonomy.

The criteria for organisational autonomy include the following: selection procedure and criteria of the executive head, procedures for the dismissal and the term of office of the executive head, external members in governing bodies, the ability to decide on including external members in university governing bodies and their appointment, and the capacity to decide on academic structures and to create legal entities.

The criteria for the financial autonomy are: length and type of public funding, funding cycle and modalities, ability to keep surplus on main public funding, to borrow money on financial market and to own buildings. Also the ability to charge tuition fees of national/EU and non-EU students at three degree levels is discussed.

The staffing autonomy includes the capacity to decide on staff recruitment procedures, salaries and promotions, as well as the capacity to dismiss staff. Both senior academic and senior administrative staff is covered.

Finally, on academic autonomy, the criteria discussed include the capacity to decide on overall numbers of students and

to select them, capacity to introduce and terminate degree programmes and to decide on their content, the capacity to choose the language of instruction, and to select appropriate quality assurance mechanisms and providers.

We ask whether the autonomy frameworks of the universities in the Nordic countries really are as congruous as the shared history and similar societal contexts presume, or whether the different countries taken different approaches to university autonomy. The university autonomy in the five countries will also be rated along the four autonomy dimensions and the Nordic situation will be discussed in a broader context of the autonomy trends across Europe. Finally, we will discuss the challenges of increased autonomy, and the potential conflict between institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

The data presented in this paper was collected as part of the European University Association project on university autonomy. The project was conducted with the help and participation of EUA's member organisations, national rectors' conferences from 26 countries, and was aimed at developing an autonomy scorecard of the University autonomy in different European countries as a tool for governments and universities to benchmark the extent of their autonomy and to engage in a wider debate about the role of higher education institutions in society. (Estermann, Nokkala and Steinel 2011 forthcoming.) ●

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Beyond the obvious: Tensions and contradictions in University Engagement

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In one way or another, all universities contribute to the socio-economic development of their geographic surroundings. Regional scientists and higher education researchers alike have, in recent years, paid considerable attention to the role of universities in regional development (Benneworth, Coenen et al. 2009; Pinheiro in press). Although it is generally acknowledged in the literature that universities are highly complex entities (multiple and contradictory goals, loosely-coupled structures, bottom-heavy, etc.), scholars have had a tendency to understate the effects of such features when it comes to analyzing the third mission of these organizations. This is particularly the case of accounts pertaining to institutional management (Goddard and Puukka 2008; Vorley and Nelles 2008). There is a tendency to assume that universities are simple, strategic actors able to respond to a well-articulated set of regional needs (Chatterton and Goddard 2000). Coming to terms with the ways in which universities go about fulfilling their regional missions, including negotiating major tensions and dilemmas, requires a thorough understanding of the various kinds of ambiguities associated with universities as distinct organizational forms (Musselin 2007) and social institutions (Olsen 2007). This paper builds on a novel conceptual model based on five ambiguities characterizing universities (Pinheiro 2011) to explore the third mission of regional development. The authors note that strategically playing upon these ambiguities can lead to unexpected consequences and outcomes in supposedly simple and straightforward processes of change, thereby creating unexpected institutionalization processes (Maassen and Olsen 2007) and altering both the university as an organizational form/institution and the kinds of missions it performs. On the basis of recent collaborative work involving scholars from Europe, Africa, North and South America, and Asia (Pinheiro, Benneworth et al. forthcoming),

the paper illuminates a number of concrete tensions at a variety of levels, and links these tensions to the (five) ambiguities characterizing the university. In addition, the paper offers a critical analysis of existing perspectives that tend to emphasize the role of strategic management and means-ends rationality (Etzkowitz, Webster et al. 2000; Goddard and Puukka 2008) and, instead, proposes an alternative way of conceiving the third mission of regional development by shedding light on the 'black-box' of the university (Maassen and Stensaker 2005), particularly the interplay between external engagements and internal transformations (Perry and Harloe 2007) within the context of ongoing attempts at the regionalization of a universal institution (Ernste 2007). ●

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University Profiling and Adaptation Strategies

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Higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Nordic countries are increasingly faced with the pressures to produce more with less. Governments in Finland and Sweden are forced to think strategically of research and teaching activities. Features of concentration of resources and profiling of universities can be found in both countries. University profiling, including the setting of research focus areas, is an international phenomenon. The extent of profiling and the actual consequences may, however, vary considerably. Comparative empirical research is thus needed in order to find out, what profiling means for individual institutions and departments.

This paper presents results from the research project 'Priority-setting in Research Management: Organisational and Leadership Reactions to Institutional Reforms in Finnish and Swedish Universities', where we have studied the responses of leaders and managers at different organisational levels in Finnish and Swedish HEIs to profiling pressures on research.

The paper is based on data of altogether four universities in Finland and Sweden: two large, comprehensive universities (University of Helsinki and Lund University) and two smaller and newly merged universities (University of Eastern Finland and Linnaeus University). Comparisons are done at country level and at different organisational levels (central administration, faculty, departmental level). ●

Educational Leadership in HEIs in Finland - a discourse analytic perspective on the rector's leadership of today

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Research topic and aim

The focus of this paper is on the HEI (Higher Education Institution) leadership in Finland. This is a field where many changes have occurred and are still occurring. This has surely had an impact on the leadership as well. Some of the changes that apparently are of importance are: the new university law, internationalization, re-structuring and the third task the higher education institutions and everything that is going on at a transnational level.

Furthermore it is the rector's leadership that is in focus here. Rectors in both traditional universities and universities of applied sciences are included in the study. This can be seen as somewhat unusual. The researcher applies a micro perspective and it is really the rectors' view that is of interest. This is a perspective that has not maybe been widely investigated in Finland nor in the Nordic countries. Former research has often focused on the macro level (policy) (or meso: government, the educational institution as system) and has often dealt with macro issues such as policy issues. An interest for educational sociology has been visible in the field as well. However educational sociology and politics of education form a context and stepping point for the research at hand here. This paper also shows an interdisciplinary side by combining more traditional educational research with organization theory (leadership issues).

The aim is to describe the current leadership discourse in HEIs in the chosen setting. What kind of a discoursive practice is the HEI leadership of today? This I want to investigate by looking at how the rector talks about his/hers leadership (interviews), and also by looking at how the leadership is constructed and formed through the inauguration speeches held at the beginning of the academic year. The latter is discussed below in my research design. (The interviews are to be conducted this academic year.)

The research is influenced by social constructivist- and poststructivist theories. This means that a non-positivist and open-ended, multi-voiced approach is in favour here and the subject for analysis is NOT the individual rector, but what the rectors talk about when they talk about leadership. The poststructivistic and social constructivist influences will be made visible through the reflexive thinking and the abductive approach taken in the research design. A crucial idea is the thought about how things are constructed through the speech and influenced by the context, the speaker and the audience. Both the language and the context are central.

Former research on HEI leadership and related issues

Research highlighting the Finnish HEI system forms the common background and the context for this research although international and national research will both be taken into consideration. Furthermore leadership literature by authors like Bolman & Deal, Ferlie, Clarke, Maassen etc will build up the theoretical part of the report. The work is in other words building on relevant HEI leadership literature found in a broader context. This is done in order to deepen the understanding for the area of research as such.

Research design

The research is a discourse analytic study influenced by the discoursive psychology (Potter & Wetherell). The material analyzed here consists of approx. 60 inauguration speeches given by rectors during 2008-2010. Results from two readings will be discussed. The focus is on the rectors speech, how does he talk and about what. The focus is not on why. The rector as an individual is not important. It is the speech as such that form the leadership discourse in the research and parts of the speeches will together form unit for analysis. The material is analyzed in an abductive manner until no more new interesting things seem to occur (according to the researcher) in the material. Later on thematical interviews will be included and this material is being collected at the moment.

My main findings so far will be reported in the form of occurring, themes, categories identity constructions (or interpretive repertoires). The language is of great importance and my perspective on understanding the language is that it is not about something being true or false in relation to a certain reality or underlying theory. Language is a tool used when constructing the social reality even as one speaks (see Nordzell). I have been inspired by researchers like Söreide (2007, 70-71), Willman (2001) and Nordzell (in Börjesson & Palmblad ed, 2004) when constructing my own discoursive analysis. These researchers have been looking at identity constructions in way that seems to be similar to my own approach:

1st reading of the inauguration speeches (overview)

Finding themes (what rectors talk about)

Identifying categories and subject positions

Looking at metaphors, positive negative tones, variations, what comes after BUT etc (also word-counts if necessary)

Identifying important identity constructions with the help of the above mentioned steps

Verifying the identity constructions ●

Keywords: discourse analysis, HEI, rector, leadership

The Economic Landscape of Swedish Higher Education

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The numbers of students in higher studies have expanded vastly in Sweden during the last twenty years. At the same time, the economic gaps in society have increased. We now from surveys and examinations that the general student loans not are sufficient for covering all students expenses, but the knowledge of where in the educational landscape and for which groups of students the loans are particularly meagre (or superfluous) is lacking. This presentation is the first from a recently started research project ("Study loans, wage and wealth within higher education. Social groups and their study financing, 1998–2006") aimed at delineating the distribution of economic capital in higher education, and the relations between such economic resources and the educational resources formally regulating the entrance to and choices within the field of higher education. The presentation will answer questions on where in the landscape of Swedish higher education the general study loans are particularly important (at what institutions, faculties and departments do we find the students that finance their studies solely on study loans) and where the students instead depend on inherited means (wealth, parents' income) for their sustenance, and how this intersect with the distribution of high grades etc (further on in the project, we will also include the students' acquired wages from work during the studies into the analyses). The empirical data employed will be combined registers from Statistics Sweden (on educational trajectories and own and parents' financial assets) and Centrala studiestödsnämnden (on study loans). ●

International Students in the Nordic Region: Who should pay?

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The global marketplace for fees-paying international students continues to grow as the number of mobile international students increases and governments and higher education institutions compete to attract global talent and revenue. This widening market becomes more important due to decreased public funding, rising educational and research demands, and a competitive labor market. Subsequently, international education has become a business endeavor. OECD reports that in 2009, 3.3 million students studied outside their home countries, a significant increase from the 1.9 million students who studied abroad in 1999. At the same time, public funding for higher education has declined in most countries, yet the interest of nation-states in the role international students can play in economic development has grown. This has resulted in the imposition of (and increase in) tuition fees. Hence, countries that have traditionally been free of tuition, such as the Nordic countries, are responding to these demands and fiscal pressures by implementing new measures not only to recruit international students, but also to profit from the competitive fees-paying international student market.

In the past decade, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden have made significant moves towards the marketization of higher education through various higher education reforms including the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students (what many European countries define as international students). As part of a larger university reform, Denmark was the first Nordic country to implement tuition fees into their public higher education system. In 2006, the Danish government introduced tuition fees and experienced a significant decrease in the number of new non-EU/EEA students in full degree programs (Petter Myklebust, J., 2010).

Sweden passed legislation to begin collecting tuition from

non-EU/EEA students for enrollment in bachelors and masters programs in the fall of 2011 (Local, 2010). In addition to a new mandatory application fee of SEK 900 (US $140), non-European students will pay tuition fees ranging from SEK 80,000 (US $12,400) and topping out at 245,000 kroner (US $35,700) per year depending on the university and field of study. The new fees have resulted in Sweden experiencing a significant drop in the number of applications for the 2011/12 academic year, as international applications for masters programs decreased by 73% and international courses by 86% (Petter Myklebust, J., 2011). Thus, leading to a 58% decline in non-European enrollments in international masters programs in Sweden.

With the New Universities Act of 2009, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture encourages universities, the vehicle for knowledge creation and dissemination, to become more entrepreneurial and innovative. Out of this new legislation grew a 5-year pilot program allowing universities to collect tuition fees from non-EU/EEA students enrolled in specified English-taught masters programs (Dobson, 2010). Until 2010, the Finnish Constitution guaranteed a tuition-free higher education system for all students, regardless of nationality, pursuing bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees. In this new legislation, the Ministry granted 131 English-language masters programs, within nine universities and eleven polytechnics, the opportunity to take part in the experimental tuition program beginning in the fall of 2010. Although the selected programs account for only a small portion of the international education opportunities in Finland, the reform serves as a landmark in the move to offer market-oriented higher education (Cai & Kivistö, 2010). While some of the selected universities and masters programs have willingly entered the fees-paying international student market by collecting tuition fees, others have chosen not to–such as the University of Jyväskylä.

Currently, only Iceland and Norway have chosen not to introduce fees, despite their Nordic neighbors move into the fees-paying international student market.

Historically, the Nordic countries have not charged tuition for education. Free-of-charge higher education reflects the basic principles and ideals of the Nordic welfare state (e.g. universalism and equal opportunities); hence a shift towards commercializing higher education is at odds with the social and cultural history of each country. Yet, the international fees-paying market is enticing for various reasons: new revenue stream, the perceived competition that comes with fees-paying international students, and the desire to remove the financial burden for international students from the taxpayers. This paper analyzes the arguments for and against collecting tuition fees in Finland. Who should pay? ●

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Commissioning the University of Excellence: New 'strategic' research funding schemes in Sweden

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Charlotte Silander

The past decades have seen profound institutional changes in academia. A central component of science policy has been to strengthen steering and management of higher education and research. The design of funding systems for science is a typical policy arena for the changing of power structures and work modes in academia.

This article discusses recent trends and sets them in relation to the implementation of new 'strategic' and 'excellence'-driven public science funding programs in Sweden. Three such programs are examined with respect to stated ambitions and rationale for their commencement. These programs are placed in a context of broader changes in science policy and funding consisting of increased steering and emphasis on 'excellence'. The programs exemplify large scale funding of excellent research as well as the objective to encourage universities central management to prioritize research fields based on concentration of funding. We argue that the combination of excellence and managerialist trends in academia and science policy has given birth to funding schemes that are designed as a procedure of commissioning of excellent and competitive research and research institutions. ●

Who pays for university research – and with what consequences?

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The paper sets out to explore the funding patterns of university research and their impacts on research practices in Finnish higher education. In accordance with the notions of academic capitalism, post-academic science and the entrepreneurial university, academic research is increasingly carried out by external, competitive funding. In Finland the share of external funding of the total funding of university research is about 50 %, ranging from 60 % in technology to 36 % in humanities. The paper investigates the funding base of different disciplinary fields and examines how the growth of external funding shapes and moulds research practices and ideals.

Grounded on the funding base, the paper differentiates five research markets: academic, corporate, policy, professional and public market. Each market follows its own logic of action, defining what is considered as good science, what type of research (basic, applied, developmental work) is given priority and what the desired outcomes of research are. Apart from differences, the paper discusses also shared elements in current research practices, such as "projectification" of research and the increasing stratification among disciplines and personnel, which create tensions and conflicts in research work.

The empirical data were collected as part of a joint research project "Universities' structural development, academic communities and change", funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education. The data consists of an online survey to all heads of departments and separate research units in all Finnish universities (N=627), conducted in autumn 2008. In total 255 department heads responded to the questionnaire, the response rate being 41%. All disciplinary groups are relatively well represented in the data. The questionnaire included 19 sets of structured questions about the characteristics of the current research practices and their changes during the last three years. In the second stage of the study in 2009, the survey data were deepened by in-depth interviews with 31 academics working in four units at four different Finnish universities and representing different disciplinary groups: humanities, natural sciences, social sciences and technology. Both junior and senior researchers, including the heads of the units, took part in the interviews. ●

University trustees and corporations role in research funding

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Introduction

Policy makers in the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) see "autonomous" research universities as increasingly central to technology development and economic innovation. Public university leaders in various states in the US are seeking to free themselves from state control, while policy makers in some EU nations are setting up universities as public corporations or foundations (Morphew and Eckel 2009, Välimaa 2011). In the EU and the US, the tacit models for "autonomous" universities are US private (non-profit) research-intensive universities. Policy makers hope that research will lead to innovations that will culminate in broad economic development, such as the biotechnology and dot.com revolutions (National Economic Council, Council of Economic Advisors and Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2011).

However, there is not a great deal of empirical research on why private, non-profit universities are the appropriate vehicles for cutting edge research with economic development potential. The Shanghai rankings (2010) show seven of the top ten universities as private, and of the private all are US. Managerially, the defining characteristic of private US research universities is self-perpetuating boards of trustees that have legal, moral and fiduciary responsibility for these institutions. Yet there is little examination of the part trustees play with respect to shaping how research strategies of these universities intersect with innovation, despite the fact that many trustees of leading research universities are heads of Fortune 500 and/or research intensive companies and often sit on the Board of Directors of other Fortune 500 and/or research intensive corporations (Pusser, Slaughter and Thomas 2006).

Theoretical Framework

Economics (Alchian & Demsetz,1972; Fama, 1980; Ghoshal & Norhria, 1993) and sociology (DiMaggio & Powell,1983; Granovetter, 1973; Haunschild & Beckman, 1998; Mizruchi,1996; Selznick,1957; Zajac, 1988) model "interlocks," or networks of corporate boards of directors. Generally, scholars modeling interlocks argue that corporate boards of trustees exercise leadership and influence which shapes organizational structure and behavior. Attention is often focused on the director interlocks, cases where individuals serve simultaneously as directors on more than one governing board. Studies of interlocks are often based in resource dependence models (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) that suggest governing boards are a significant mechanism for pursuing and stabilizing key resources and sources of legitimacy for the organization, and that board interlocks are essential to the board's performance in those roles. Generally, the literature on corporate board interlocks suggests that board interlocks among research universities may serve many functions, ranging from information portals to creation of trust within networks. However, we are interested in strategic competition and knowledge management (Choo and Bontis 2002), with appropriate modifications for universities, located in the non-profit sector but governed by boards of directors drawn from for-profit corporations that often share overlapping research interests.

Hypothesis, Research Questions, and Data

Given that a number of trustees of US research universities sit on the boards of directors of large corporations with research interests, we hypothesized that trustees may be an important channel connecting universities to innovation and economic development. More specifically, the research questions we sought to answer were: 1) did the science fields of the corporations represented by trustees become more similar to universities' research fields over time and 2) did the trustees' corporate science fields predict research and development (R&D) funding?

To answer this question, we constructed a data set composed of the trustees of the 26 private US Association of American Universities (AAU) universities at two points in time, 1997 and 2005, the corporations that they directed as well as the corporations on which they sat as members of boards of directors. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) was used to categorize each corporation, and a crosswalk was developed between NAICS codes and National Science Foundation's (NSF) categorization of the broad fields of science at research universities, allowing us to identify the corporations' science field(s). Using the same NSF categories, universities top research fields were identified by total R&D dollars expended. We then developed a series of statistical models (3 dependent variables; total, federal, industry R&D) to explore the relationship between trustees' corporations' science fields, universities' top research fields and R&D funding over time.

Findings

The number of trustees did not significantly change but there was a significant decrease in the number of trustees connected to corporations between 1997 and 2005. However, the percentage of trustee-corporate connections to fields of science remained the same. In the 1997 models, none of the corporate-university connections variables (proportion of corporate science fields connections of total connections) were significant predictors of R&D funding. For the 2005 models though, the corporate-university connections were significant predictors in all 3 (total, federal, industry R&D funding) models.

Discussion & Conclusions

Our findings suggest that trustees of private AAU universities may provide an important channel between universities and industry. The persistence of trustees representing science corporations may suggest that trustees see sitting on the boards of research universities important to their businesses. Both trustees and university management may see it as advantageous to invest university's corporate science fields, trustees because an interest in science relevant to their corporations, management because they see concentrating research investments may be necessary to win federal dollars, while both wish to increase university reputation and prestige. There are many potential benefits of these channels. Among them are more research funding for universities, concentration of research funding in fields where universities and industries share interests, rapid movement of technology from universities to corporations, and economic innovation leading to job creation. However, there are numerous potential downsides to these channels. Among them are increased stratification between private and public research universities, focus on a limited area(s) of research, institutional conflict of interest, and self-dealing. Broadly speaking, similarity of research interests may point to convergence of corporate and university interests at the expense of the public interest. At a time when some European universities are changing into corporations or foundations (Välimaa 2011), these findings might be useful in understanding roles of trustees and policy development in a new era of European university governance. ●

Out-of-Study Practices and Symbolic Capital Among Swedish Students in Higher Education

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Previous research indicates that the social structure of Swedish higher education – in spite of other differences – to a large degree mirrors the oppositions exposed in French higher education by Bourdieu and others. While elite institutions oppose popular ones, the former are polarized along a cultural-economic dimension (see for example Broady, D. & Palme, M., "Le champ des institutions de l'éducation supérieur en Suède", i Monique de Saint Martin (ed): Les systèmes de l'enseignement supérieur et la formation des cadres dirigeants, Centre de sociologie européenne, Paris, 1992). Using data from a student questionnaire (n=2500) collected in 2004-06, this paper further explores social and cultural differences among Swedish university students. With a focus on students pertaining to high-positioned institutions in the field of higher education in the Stockholm-Uppsala region, the article sets out to examine differences as regards students' out-of-study practices, as well as related beliefs and attitudes. Using the statistical method, specific Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), the analysis unveils major oppositions between students who involve in intense and extended cultural activities and those characterized by abstention from such activities, between students who valorize expensive, body-oriented activities and those who rather opt for low-cost activities, and between students who display interest in traditionally legitimate practices and those who prefer less traditional and more mainstream practices. Using study program adherence, along with social origin, as structuring factors, the analysis gives a picture of the relevance of both study orientation and parental background for differences related to students' out-of-study practices. The patterns uncovered by the specific MCA are interpreted as an expression of differences related to investments in competing symbolic values, i.e. in forms of symbolic capital that to a large degree oppose each other, among students at elite higher education institutions oriented towards careers in social fields with differing mechanisms of recognition and cooptation. ●

Studying selected courses or building up an expertise? – a case of theology students

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In this presentation theology students study paths are reflected in terms of growing up to being a theologian. Are university students actually studying selected courses or building up their expertise? This question is reflected through research data in which theology students' curricular choices during their study paths were investigated. The discussion on this paper is based on investigation of the dynamics of career choice certainty and motivational underpinnings of those choices during theological studies. The focus in the data is on career choice certainty and explanations of certainty in different study phases in relation to choosing theological curriculum. The theological faculty in question offers three different curricula from which the students can choose from: 1) a general theological education, 2) the education required to become a teacher of religion, and 3) qualifications for students wishing to become pastors in the Evangelical-Lutheran church. Career choice, certainty and explanations will be reflected through theology students' motivational approaches to the study of theology in the beginning of the university studies. The data includes longitudinal survey-data from theology student-cohorts. The results to be presented will contribute to understanding the motivational dynamics during theological studies with respect to choosing a certain career and, in this respect, shed light to the challenges and possibilities among students in building up theological expertise. It seems, that for some students studying in university seems to mean studying a selection of courses, however there is also a large group of students who have certain qualifications in their mind while following a certain curriculum. Furthermore, the quality of curricula is being enhanced by the faculty, but different interest groups wish to have a say in the expertise of the graduating students. It can be interpreted that there is also an implicit question of who benefits the most, when considering the question of "who should pay". These questions are reflected in this presentation on the basis of research evidence on theological study paths and curriculum development in a theological faculty. ●

Developing an explanation for a shift towards academic capitalism: The perspective of multilevel social mechanism-based explanation

Ilkka Kauppinen
Tuukka Kaidesoja

In our presentation, we develop methodological ideas that could be fruitful in explaining a shift towards academic capitalism. On the basis of the work of Slaughter, Leslie, and Rhoades we refer by academic capitalism to a blurring of boundaries between higher education, private sector, and the state, as well as actors who blur these boundaries, or facilitate this process. These actors can be found both within and outside higher education organizations. In academic capitalism higher education organizations try to generate revenue from their core functions (education, research, and service). Constitutive elements of academic capitalism are, for instance, such circuits of knowledge, and interstitial and intermediating organizations that enhance the commercialization of research results and collaboration with industry.

Our point of departure is the model of multilevel social mechanism-based explanation. We hold that social mechanisms can be understood as processes in social systems that are capable of bringing about or preventing some change in the structure of the system. Social mechanisms of this kind are comprised of intentional actors as well as their activities and interactions. We nevertheless emphasize that not only individuals should be conceptualized as actors, but on certain conditions also integrated groups and organizations can be interpreted as intentional actors. The point of these accounts of the concepts of social mechanism and social mechanism based explanation is to avoid biases of individualist (or bottom-up) and collectivist (or top-down) explanations. On our view, multilevel explanations of the historical emergence of social phenomena should be conceived as analytical narratives, which aim to avoid the pitfalls of superficial explanations in terms of general social theories as well as theoretically vacuous historical narratives that aim to contain all of the details of the actual historical processes.

These methodological ideas will be elaborated by focusing on the case of a shift towards academic capitalism in Finland. We outline how this shift may be explained by sketching an analytical narrative that identifies the key actors and social mechanisms that brought about this phenomenon in a certain structural context. We contend that an explanation of a shift towards academic capitalism in Finland must take into consideration actors and their interactions not only on local and national but also on transnational scale. The point is not just that globalization has affected a shift towards academic capitalism in Finland, but also that in Finland a shift towards academic capitalism is tied to the partial denationalization of Finnish higher education system. In other words, we will argue that academic capitalism should be seen in the context of Finland as a multi-scalar phenomenon since a shift towards it has been tied to the transnationalization of higher education. ●

The Theory of Academic Capitalism: One or Many?

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In the wealthy countries of Europe and North America the question, "who should pay for higher education?," was once more or less settled. The state paid for higher education through (usually bloc) grants with monies acquired through tax receipts. In exchange for direct support, universities educated students for free, or for a price much below cost, and professors and other academic staff engaged in a program of teaching, research, and service generally assumed to be in the public interest (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Of course, there have always been marked differences in higher education finance, and the nature and extent of state support across national contexts is heterogeneous. Nevertheless, it is safe to assert that state supported higher education was a near universal feature of the post-war welfare state.

Beginning in the 1980s the state-financed higher education consensus began to fray. Higher education scholars asks the questions: "Who pays for higher education?;" "Who should pay?;" "Whose interests does higher education support?" In the past, each of these questions could have been answered by simply asserting: "the state." Yet, the reflexivity of that answer – "the state" – dissolved, and much more deliberation and even theorization was needed to address these questions. The causes of ambiguity in who pays, who should pay, and in whose interest are multiple, both within and between countries. Some examples include the acceptance of human capital theory which conceptualized advanced training and education as a private good, the liberalization of economic activity and ideologies (especially in the Anglo-American sphere), the development of multi-lateral coordination and to a lesser extent funding mechanisms for social policy (especially in the European Union), and the thickening and quickening of transnational social ties which made it more difficult for the state to capture the returns of higher education within national boundaries.

It is now impossible to easily answer the questions (who pays?; who should pay? In whose interest?). No single answer will suffice. In some cases "the state" remains the best answer, and in most cases "the state" is a partial answer. Increasingly, however, "the market" is an answer. Even in the Nordic countries, witch remain strongholds of the welfare state, it is not clear who will pay, who should pay, and whose interests will higher education support. Changes in student finance schemes, integration with the European research area, and legal changes towards institutional autonomy all move higher education towards the market (Slaughter & Cantwell, 2011). Describing these changes, case, by case, is an important empirical task – one that is well underway. Theorizing these changes, so that we can understand the meta-processes underpinning the shifts in higher education is an equally important task.

This paper will take up the task of un-packing the way we have theorized the shifts in higher education. Specifically, we examine "academic capitalism" as outlined in books by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Slaughter & Rhoades (2004). We focus on AC for a number of reasons. First, academic capitalism has been influential and is a widely known framework. Second, academic capitalism addresses both macro shifts in the global political economy, as well as shifts in the governance and management of universities and specific behavior on the part of academic staff. Finally, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) have specifically outlined academic capitalism as a theory. For these reasons, academic capitalism is a useful point of departure for theoretical work that seeks to understand the meta-processes involved in shifts in higher education.

The main aim of this paper is to consider what does "theory" mean in social sciences and whether academic capitalism is a theory or not, or what kind of theory it seems to be. Hence, in a sense our aim is to provide a "semantic therapy" (Abend

2008) for higher education studies and especially for those, who are interested in academic capitalism. Instead of committing the "Socratic error" by believing "that theory is an object out there that our concepts or language can track down" (Abend 2008, 176) we think that the decision over how to use the word "theory" is both a political and practical problem – at least to a certain extent. In line with this, we do not start our analysis from any a priori concept of theory that would allow us to evaluate whether academic capitalism constitutes a (good) theory or not. Instead of that we will firstly use Arto Noro´s (2004) relatively abstract distinction between general social theory, research theory and zeitgeist diagnose in suggesting how academic capitalism is located in the field of social theory. Secondly, we will also use Gabriel Abend´s (2008, 177-181) typology of the word "theory" in order to describe different meanings of "theory" as found in social scientific literature. This typology will make it possible to clarify in what sense academic capitalism seems, and does not seem, to be a theory. This kind of conceptual clarification might increase the suitability of the theory of academic capitalism for empirical research by explicating for which kind of research questions the theory of academic capitalism is particularly well suited and how one should develop it if one would like to use it also in different kinds of research settings. Finally, this will also allow researchers to think more clearly about what is meant when we ask the questions presented above ("Who pays for higher education?;" "Who should pay?;" "Whose interests does higher education support?"). ●

Because I am worth it? Perceptions of student entitlement

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The concept of student entitlement refers to students' expectations of being owed something in the educational experience without necessarily having a sense of responsibility for achieving it. Examples include stories on students complaining that courses or individual lectures are not worth the money paid for them, hot debates between students and faculty on grading and increasing number of student requests for alternate schedules, other flexible arrangements, better service or guarantees for success.

Many explanations have been offered for the increasing sense of entitlement. The concept is often connected with the alleged behavior of the Y-generation, the "Millennials", who are said to have a different approach to life than previous generations and to see the world as it would owe them success only because they are so special and unique. It is not only the campuses but also the prospective employers of the Millennials who need to change working practices in profound ways to accommodate and motivate the Millennials at work.

Another common explanation for student entitlement is that the sense of entitlement is strengthened if students are treated as customers in the HEI. This view emphasizes that in a consumer-driven society the paying customer is always right. However, the metaphor of seeing the student as a customer is not only limited to HE institutions which charge tuition from their students but all modern HEIs have to position themselves in one way or another in the discussion of student as customer and define whether or not they are manifesting this view both in their marketing and in their every-day operations.

This paper approaches student entitlement by asking Finnish students 1) whether the students are familiar with the phenomenon of student entitlement, 2) what do they think are the reasons behind the phenomenon and 3) how, in their opinion, does the sense of entitlement affect the future life of Finnish campuses? By letting the student voice be heard in the analysis of the effects on student entitlement in Finnish HE, this paper does not only fill an existing gap in the literature but also intends to analyze student entitlement in a context where tuitions are not charged.

The data for the paper will be collected by arranging focus group interviews with students representing both research universities and universities of applied sciences in the greater Helsinki area. ●

Leadership of Research Groups
The Impact of Research Group Leader's Cognitive Support and Knowledge Resources on Researchers' Perceptions of Leader-Member Exchange

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A review of the empirical literature on leadership in research and development organizations, found that leaders who establish a high-quality leader-member exchange relationship (LMX) contribute to project success (Elkins & Keller, 2003). One crucial question that arises is the influences on leadership in research groups. This paper set out to investigate to how leaders can contribute to the development of higher quality leader-member relationships LMX in research groups by providing followers with knowledge resources and cognitive support. Knowledge resources are particularly important in research, where leader and member knowledge, and domain-specific and domain-relevant expertise are pivotal (Amabile, 2006, Hemlin & Olsson, 2011; Mumford, Gaddis, Scott, & Strange, 2002; Perkins, 1988; Perkins, 1990; Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993). Moreover, there is an inherent risk of failure in research work, due to the uncertainty and the costs associated with any creative venture (Mumford et al., 2002). Leaders play a role in reducing this uncertainty by providing adequate professional support during the work process (Mumford, 2002). We hypothesized leaders' provision of knowledge resources and cognitive support, respectively, to predict the four LMX sub-dimensions affect, loyalty, contribution and professional respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). The study was conducted in biomedical and biotechnical, academic and commercial research groups.

Method

Participants were academic and industrial research group members, selected from universities and industries located in Sweden. The criteria for qualifying as research groups were that they were research-based and consisted of at least two group members and their primary scientific research leader. For the selection of the industry groups we focused on university spin-offs and start-ups. We approached research group leaders and asked them to invite two or three of their members to participate. We asked the research leaders to consider in their selection both men and women, members with diverse backgrounds, and members with varying degrees of work experience or academic seniority. We sampled 167 group members in biomedical and biotechnical, academic and industrial research groups. They were requested to fill in their ratings on three measures:

LMX-multidimensional measure (LMX-MDM). The 12 item LMX-MDM measure assesses a global score for the perceived exchanges as well as for the four sub-dimensions of exchanges (affect, loyalty, contribution, professional respect). The response format was of 7 point Likert type. Higher scores indicate higher exchange quality (Liden & Maslyn, 1998).

Leader provision of knowledge resources (knowledge). The knowledge scale measured the extent to which the leader is perceived to be an expert in realizing information needs, providing important contacts and relevant knowledge to members in all stages of the creative work process. The scale consists of 5 items which were rated on a 7 point Likert scale (Hemlin, 2008).

Leader cognitive support (cognitive support). The cognitive support scale measured the extent to which the leader is perceived to support the member in problem construction, assessing alternatives and supporting the implementation of the solution and the scale consists of 7 items which were rated on a 7 point Likert scale (Hemlin, 2008).

Descriptive and correlation analyses was conducted on all study variables. Intraclass correlations (ICC) were calculated to assess to what extent LMX sub-dimensions were individual or group level constructs. Individual principal components analyses (PCA) were conducted to test the LMX-MDM sub-dimensions as well as to verify construct independence LMX-MDM, knowledge and cognitive support. A multilevel hierarchical linear model (HLM) in MLwiN was applied to data to investigate if the LMX, knowledge and cognitive support could predict the four sub-dimensions.

Results and Discussion

We hypothesized that leader facilitation of knowledge resources would be positively related to each dimension of LMX-MDM. This was also the case for affect, contribution and professional respect, but not for loyalty. We also hypothesized leaders' cognitive support, in different stages of the creative process positively would be related to each sub-dimension. This was found for affect, contribution, and professional respect, but not for loyalty.

ICC-figures revealed little shared variance within groups in LMX-affect. This indicates that members' affective perceptions of the LMX-relationship are highly individualized. However, LMX-contribution, LMX-loyalty, and LMX-professional respect were to a certain degree group level phenomena. The shared variance within groups in these sub-dimensions ranged from 27 % to 43 %. This means that individuals within groups to some extent have a common view of how loyal they are towards their leader, how willing they are to contribute to work fulfillment and how they esteem their leader professionally.

In summary, the study provides evidence that leaders exert influence over leader-member relationships in research groups in science and industrial R&D. Leaders of research groups can increase members' feelings of liking, the professional respect for themselves and the efforts researchers provide in work by ensuring that they have access to the scientific information they need and by giving intellectual support in problem solving. However, the loyalty between research group leaders and their group members is not an important characteristic in research. The results are discussed in relation to the leadership and research performance literatures. ●

Institutionalising the third mission of regional development: A Nordic Tale

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Scholarly and policy debates with respect to the role of higher education systems in regional development are marked by the absence of a critical analysis of universities both as distinct organisational entities and unique social institutions. Such elements, we argue, pose substantial challenges in devising, implementing, and assessing formalised initiatives geared towards external engagement. This paper addresses this knowledge gap. It draws upon empirical findings from a recent study shedding light on the institutionalization of the third mission of universities located in peripheral regions across two Nordic countries; Norway and Finland. On the basis of the existing literature on the structural and institutional features of universities, a novel conceptual model for assessing the complexity of university dynamics and operations is advanced. As far as empirical insights are concerned, and in contrast to earlier investigations, the data reveal a gradual shift from conceiving of the regional mission as a 'third-leg' structurally decoupled from core activities towards that of an integral component of universities' teaching and research activities, thus suggesting a change from third function to primary mission. In addition, the paper highlights a set of key factors (macro-meso-micro levels) aiding institutionalisation processes at the local level. ●

Towards joint educational structures and practices. Experiences from the mergers of Finnish universities.

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Various global, European, and national developments have promoted reorganization within the Finnish higher education system. The purpose is to generate (inter)nationally a more competitive network of higher education institutions, enhance the quality of research and education as well as recognise strategic areas in research and education (Opetusministeriö 2008). Similar developments have also taken place in other higher education systems in Europe during the last decade (see Carney 2006; Kyvik 2004; Liefner, Schätzl & Schröder 2004; Teichler 2006). In order to achieve these educational policy goals the Finnish Ministry of Education prepared a new Universities Act and promoted mergers of Finnish universities. Both the new act and new universities came into being at the beginning of 2010.

A merger is dependent on the interaction of governmental macro-politics and institutional micro-politics (Sehoole 2005) as well as geographical distance (Dahl, Norgård & Skodvin 2002), which thus create a specific merger context. Universities often fear to lose their individuality and distinctiveness in the mergers (Temple & Whitchurch 1994). Previous studies on university mergers show that the consolidation of organizational and institutional cultures (Kezar & Eckel 2002) and management styles (Locke 2007) of the merging universities plays a crucial role. Mergers can also affect professional identities of academics either by providing better career prospects or weakening identities by changing drastically the nature of academic work (Becker et al. 2004).

The purpose of the paper is to describe how the academic staff and students of Finnish universities are reacting to mergers from the perspective of teaching and learning. Detailed research questions are:

What are the main needs and aims for cooperation between merging universities?

What are the academics' and students' experiences/perceptions of the implementation of merging?

What are the main challenges, possibilities, threats and obstacles of mergers in educational terms?

Methodology, research instruments and sources

The target group consists of four university mergers (in brackets is the number of universities involved): Aalto University (3), University of Eastern Finland (2), University Consortium of Turku (2), and University Alliance Finland (3). The last-mentioned is an exception, however, as the three universities that form the alliance will not actually merge but just enhance their cooperation and rationalize their activities.

Our focus was on the implementation phase of the mergers. The data of the study was collected in (spring) 2009 by interviewing management personnel, teachers and students from 9 merging universities. The total amount of interviews was 30 and there were 7-8 persons from each group participating in the interviews. The data was collected by semi-structured interviews and analysed by the means of content analysis.

Results and Conclusions

The merging projects face different challenges and possibilities.

Although the results indicate that the merging processes has been much of the same kind as to their starting points and aims in different universities, the issues concerning the merging aspects of their educational activity were primarily connected to their own culture and history. Therefore, the staff could have some prejudices against merging. In consequence, the unique features and strengths of each university must be taken as a basis for merging.

The new openings in education, teaching and learning have been moderate.

It has been typical for each merger that there have been only moderate new openings in education. We can hardly speak about innovations in educational terms. On one hand, this can be accounted for by renewal process of the administrative and organizational structures which has overridden the reflection of educational issues. On the other hand, radical reforms in education and teaching can easily awake resistance among teaching staff because reforms can lead to radical changes in instruction and axing some study programs at worst. However, merging can provide a promising prospect for re-evaluating and reorganizing education and teaching.

Pedagogical competence of teachers will be enhanced.

Even though the educational openings have been moderate so far, pedagogical competence of teachers was emphasized in every merger. In practice, merging universities have already started to provide pedagogical training for their researchers and teachers aiming at better instruction for students. This will create a strong basis for the improvement of the quality of education. It is essential to invest in the quality of training because it denotes the profile of the university in educational terms.

Forming a joint culture is challenging.

Previous studies (e.g. Dahl Norgård & Skodvin 2002) have confirmed the difficulties in implementing merging processes. In this study, the creation of a joint culture among institutions was found to be a very important and challenging factor. The interviewees stressed the central role of well functioning leadership and open communication also in establishing the new educational culture. Some academics and students questioned, however, the transparency of the merging process in their institutions. That is why it is important to pay more attention to the creation of the "we-spirit" and to the value of openness as the merging proceeds. ●

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