

MASTER THESIS REVIEW

Author: Kazuma Yabe
Thesis: Aid Allocation across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: The Role of Fragility as a Donor's Motive
Reviewer: Tomáš Hoch

Content

The aim of Kazuma Yabe's thesis was to identify potentially differing role fragility plays as a donor's motive across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The primary goal was thus to investigate if and how the aid allocation is tailored to address fragility. With regard to the stated aim, the author divides his work into four main chapters. In the first one, he defines and conceptualizes the basic concepts related to the content of the thesis, then existing body of relevant literature is reviewed to establish the theoretical and empirical underpinning of the research. The third chapter focuses on the research methodology. The author explains how data are operationalised and examine several estimation methods. The final chapter is empirical and presents the results of the quantitative analysis along with a discussion on their policy implications. The author has decided to employ the random-effect Tobit method. The role of fragility as a donor's motive was econometrically analysed, while attention was paid to three groups of motives: self-interest, recipient need, and merit. The motives and approach were well chosen. The thesis is clearly structured and from the very beginning the author aims at the stated goal, which I greatly appreciate. The text is logically coherent, the theory is not self-contained, but well defines the space for the subsequent empirical part. The results of the analysis are also suitably commented. In this respect, I have no negative comments to the approach or quality of analysis.

Literature and references

The literature is chosen with respect to the stated goal. The research gap that the thesis seeks to fill, is evident from the cited sources. I would have appreciated just a little more discussion on the forms of ODA in the first and second chapters. These can take very different forms, and at least a brief discussion on this topic would have helped the thesis to fit into existing research. I believe the same would have been the case with the measurement of weak statehood. I'm not disputing the use of FSI, but at least a brief critical reflection on its construction and

use would be welcome, and again the literature offers it. However, these are minor comments that do not detract from an otherwise positive impression of the work with literature. I also appreciate the timeliness of the data.

Formal requirements

Despite its shorter scope, the manuscript meets all the requirements set for diploma thesis. Tables and graphs are constructed correctly. As far as the language is concerned, I am not a native speaker, so I cannot judge its overall quality responsibly. However, I personally found the manuscript very legible.

Topics for discussion

Could the author mention a critical reflection on the construction and use of the FSI index?

How does the author think that the relationship between humanitarian-development-peace nexus would change depending on the state of fragility if we dragged the beginning of the period under study to the mid-1990s?

Overall evaluation and proposed grade

The author convincingly demonstrated that DAC members are tailoring their ODA in reaction to fragility in recipient countries. Though, their motivation varies country from country and is significantly dependent on pillar of the nexus. Some findings, such as the role of colonial ties on the choice of where to provide aid, are intuitively obvious, but it is valuable and meaningful to confirm this empirically as well. This diploma thesis is logically well interlinked and obtains no factual inaccuracies. I would recommend its abridged version for publication in some respected journal. It would be a pity not to share its results with the wider audience.

I do recommend the thesis for defense with grade A.

Date: 14.6.2021

Signature:

