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### **Values, Rationales and Logics within the educational subfield for adolescents with learning disabilities**

#### **- A reconstruction of the field's understanding of the 'good life' and well-being in Germany and Denmark**

I will give a concise summary of my research plan, research questions, problem areas and the theoretical development for my doctoral thesis. This is mainly in the phase of theory development at the present, where Alain Badiou's *mathematical ontology* (Badiou, 2004; Badiou, 2003) and Gaston Bachelard's *relational epistemology* (Bachelard, [1938] 2002; Bachelard, 1984) is brought together to strengthen and become the ground, of which the *capability approach* and Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theory will be brought together at. Even though the main empirical material is not gathered until now, I will swiftly move on and present an example, within the presented theoretical framework, using secondary public data from Germany and Denmark. One of the pragmatic features in the work with the capability approach is the use of different existing data sources, which Amartya Sen is advocating for, indeed: "*theory has to be combined with the practical need to make do with whatever information we can feasibly obtain for our actual empirical analysis. The Scylla of empirical overambitiousness threatens us as much as the Charybdis of misdirected theory*" (Sen, 1999, p. 32).

#### **The doctoral thesis in short**

One of the aims of the study is to combine philosophy of justice and the capability approach with Pierre Bourdieu's social theory and conception of symbolic violence in the educational system. Seen through this lens it is obvious that: "*the right perspective from which to judge a person's well-being is functionings [praxis], and not necessarily mental attitudes*" (Saito, 2003), though this is not enough, we will have to get a level deeper and evaluate the valuation of the capability sets that are behind the *doings* and *beings* (Sen, 1992, pp. 56-57). At this point there are struggles among professionals to state *doxa* – which capabilities are to value and of most importance for adolescents with learning disabilities. This is the focal point where it becomes empirically problematic, because the capability sets are not at all congruent to the bundle of chosen *functionings* (vector) due to the different possible combinations from the set of capabilities. Choices that at the same are structural influenced by adaptive preferences and in a large extend distributed through education. In chorus there is a struggle between different professionals on the question which capabilities is of most importance for the adolescents possibility to live a "good life" with the highest degree of well-being. My provisional research questions are consequently;  
How does struggles in the educational subfield for adolescents with learning disabilities, between teachers and social pedagogues (social educators) influence on the adolescents' possibility to

become self-confident and to choose among different possibilities for a “good life” – a life that are valuable for them?

Do the struggle, symbolic power and capital form different formal as well as non-formal educational structures and professionally supplied opportunity sets if it is seen comparatively between Denmark and Germany?

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