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Street level bureaucrats' role perceptions and decisions in preventive welfare policies. A case study from Denmark.

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A case study from Denmark

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Abstract

Within recent decades, and widespread throughout both Europe and the United States, welfare policies and interventions fighting social inequality have seen an increasing use of preventive measures. Prevention, the argument goes, especially if it is done at a very early stage, has the benefit of solving problems efficiently, since such problems have not yet been allowed to grow big. However, since preventive measures are also characterized by an inherently fuzzy logic of having to identify problems before they become problems, the task of deciding when to intervene preventively entails a large discretionary power for street-level bureaucrats (SLBs). Furthermore, since many preventive measures and interventions are directed at the daily lives and practices of families and children, the task of deciding when to intervene may very well come to depend on the perceptions of “normal practices”, values, virtues and perceptions of justice among SLBs. In a previous paper, I showed how this is actually the case for teachers, childcare workers and community health nurses, as they tend to define possible problems of early intervention in both a professional language of diagnosis and a “common sense language” of norms and intuitions (Harrits and Møller 2014).

Also, SLBs perception of their own roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the families may prove important for understanding decisions on when to make early interventions, as well as for understanding the possible (in)effectiveness of prevention for fighting social inequality. In the present paper, I therefore explore the way in which SLBs describe their own role and responsibilities and the way in which such role perceptions may impact or shape SLB “discretionary reasoning” when deciding on early intervention. To complete this task I draw on both theories on street-level bureaucracy and professionalism (including in particular Maynard-Moody and Mushenos distinction between citizen agency and state agency), as well as sociological theories on identity and reasoning (including in particular Bourdieus notion on habitus). Data comes from a qualitative research project from Denmark, with 58 interviews among schoolteachers, childcare workers and community health nurses. This gives me the opportunity of exploring the possible link between role perception, discretionary reasoning and decisions both within and across cases, using both a narrative and interpretive logic of analysis and comparative analysis.

On the basis of the analysis, the paper finally discuses some normative issues, focusing on the ways in which SLB role perception and decisions within preventive policies may facilitate and hinder interventions empowering citizens and families, and helping to fight problems of social inequality.
Introduction

Across welfare models, a strong trend within welfare policies has been widening the conception inequality, and the kind of policy measures taken up to fight it. Following the transformation from “first to second modernity” (Beck 2002), including a different and more complex order of stratification and inequality and new types of social risks (Bourdieu 1984; Taylor-Gooby, 2004; Bonoli 2005, 2006; Armingeon & Bonoli, 2006), welfare policies have expanded from transfers to services, and from social protection to investments in health, child care and education (e.g. Esping-Andersen 2002, Morel et al. 2009). Also social investments has been accompanied by a focus on early interventions and prevention. This change have many reasons, among them that investments in early childhood, as shown by Heckman and others (Cunha et al. 2010; Esping-Andersen et al. 2012) will produce a higher return compared to investments in later years.

However, preventive welfare policies also present welfare professionals and street-level bureaucrats with new and more ‘fuzzy’ tasks, namely to identify and intervene in situations with reference only to possible future problems. This also means that street-level bureaucrats are left in a situation with wide discretionary powers and no clear guidelines (Harrits & Møller 2012; Møller & Harrits 2013).

Unfortunately however, we do not have very much systematic knowledge on how such new preventive tasks and such wide discretion are handled by SLBs. In this paper, I therefore explore how discretion is carried out in preventive welfare policies, focusing in particular on what kind of logics, SLBs draw on in their discretionary practices, and the ways in which such logics may depend on or interact with SLB’s perceptions of their role. First, I describe more closely the policy context of preventive welfare policies and explain how this context raises questions for the SLB literature that has not been widely empirically explored. Then, I turn to SLB theory, theories on professionalism and professional discretion and sociological theory on reasoning in practice, to construct a

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1 This paper is the result of a research project financed The Danish Council for Independent Research | Social Sciences. The author wishes to thank XXX
theoretical frame for the empirical analysis. After briefly describing the design and method of the study, I then turn to the analysis of first the logic of discretion in preventive policies, and second the way in which this logic depend on SLBs role perceptions. Finally, I discuss the results, relating this discussion also to normative issues related to the roles and responsibilities of SLBs in the “new welfare state”.

**Early intervention policies and the task of identifying future problems**

Within the last fifteen years, educational immobility and the emergence of new social risks has been addressed in Danish policy discussions as a problem of “negative social heritage”, and a growing consensus on the need for targeted early intervention has formed. Different reforms and policy revisions have included the fight against negative social heritage as a policy goal in different polices regulating health services towards families and children, child care and education (LBK 913, LBK nr. 314 and LBK 998). Much of the policy revisions have focused on an increasing awareness on reporting problems early in a child’s life, in order to make early interventions possible. However, as shown elsewhere (Harrits & Møller 2012; Møller & Harrits 2013), policy revisions has also resulted in an increasing focus on identifying and “correcting” smaller problems in the lives and behavior of children and families, and in that way preventing future problems. Also, larger and systematic interventions carried out in evidence based programs such as parent education or social training programs for children, hinges upon the identification and visitation of children with problems “large enough” to substantiate intervention.

Consequently, the task of identifying (or detecting) problems has been formulated as a key task for street level bureaucrats and frontline professionals in key welfare institutions. As stated for example in a guidance act on child care:

*Due to their special knowledge on the child or the young person, the staff are key resource persons in relation to detecting a need for support according to the law on daycare at an early stage (VEJ 31, 2009: par. 6.2).*

However, detecting or identifying problems among children installs a professional role and a type of discretion, that is not necessarily in line with the traditional role and identity of frontline professionals, or with the knowledge
traditionally held by these professionals, i.e. with teaching and caring for children. This is underlined by the fact that policy regulations show no clear guidelines regarding the task of identifying problems, and that no solid research based knowledge exists either (Mehlby 2013). In 2010 the National Board of Social Services (an independent subdivision of The Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration) made a development project regarding the task of early identification of problems among children with the participation of four municipalities and the development of clear guidelines and tools for this task. However, this project has not (yet) been widely implemented.

In relation to research on street-level bureaucrats, this poses an interesting research problem. Traditionally, discretionary powers are considered constitutive for the SLB role policy is seen as inherently made at the street-level or front line of organizations (Brodkin 2012, Maynard-Moody & Portillo 2010; Meyers & Nielsen 2012). Within this broad conception, SLB research has focused much on the impact of structural and organizational mechanisms in relation to discretion (e.g. organization routines, coping strategies or professional norms), and on the importance of policy preferences among SLBs (Winter & Nielsen 2008; Nielsen 2007; Evans & Harris 2004; Evans 2011; Hupe and Hill 2007; Ellis 2011; Prior and Barnes 2011). Also, much research has focused on SLBs working with benefit eligibility and regulation, whereas welfare services delivery (e.g. health, care and education), and in particularly tasks related to prevention, have been much less researched. Thus, in discussing the status of SLB research, Maynard-Moody & Portillo calls for more focus on the agency of SLBs whereas Meyers and Nielsen suggest a systematic focus on different contexts for policy implementation and street level work.

Taking a point of departure in the SLB literature, I follow both these recommendations, suggesting a framework for analyzing discretion in preventive welfare policies, focusing on the specific importance of a context of no clear guidelines and lack of solid knowledge base. This, I suggest, calls for closer attention to the ways in which the discretionary space is filled by the SLB and the ways in which discretions may be informed by both policy and professional knowledge, but also by the personal context of the SLB herself, i.e.
her personal values, norms and perceptions of “what normal parents do” (cf. above; see also Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; Soss, Fording and Scram 2011; Mik-Meyer 2002, 2004; Carstens 2002; Møller 2009). To do this, I supplement traditional SLB theories with theories on professionalism and sociological theories on reasoning in practice.

**Discretion and discretionary logics in context**

Discretion, as Lipsky (2010) explains, is key to understanding the work of street-level bureaucracy for three reasons: first, street-level bureaucrats work in complicated situations that impedes detailed regulation; second street-level bureaucrats has to respond to “the human dimension of the situation” (Lipsky 2010: 15); and third their tasks includes interacting with citizens, giving them a power of the situation. However, for Lipsky, as well as for many other SLB scholars, main issues are distributions of power, legitimacy, authority, rules, delegation of decisions and policy compliance within an organizational chain of commands, i.e. within the bureaucracy. This leads to what has elsewhere been called a structural or even juridical conception of discretion, conceiving discretion as that free space that cannot be regulated by formal rules (Dworkin 2013: 48; Hawkins 1992; Hupe 2013).

In contrast to this juridical view, however, some scholars within the SLB literature have moved in the direction of a sociological understanding of how the ‘free space’ of discretion is actually filled out, i.e. how SLBs ‘make arrangements’ in the performance of their work (Dubois 2010: 150). For Dubois, this means taking serious the social setting of street level work, including SLB and client identities as well as interactions and conflicts of the everyday life in street level organizations (Dubois 2010:XX). And in line with this view, Maynard-Moody and Musheno insists on taking a point of departure in the judgments and “meaning-making” performed by SLBs in their work and interaction with clients (Maynard-Moody & Musheno 2003, 2012).

None of these scholars, however, take professionalism much into account, and when they do (e.g. Lipsky 2010: 189), it happens mainly as a reference to professional norms rather than knowledge and expertise. The role of knowledge,
however, is key to understanding professional discretion in the sociology of professions. Freidson (e.g. 1970; 2001) points out how the institutionalization of expertise and formalized, abstract and esoteric knowledge is the basis for society granting autonomy to professions, and he contrasts this form of organization with a bureaucracy based on delegation. But the use of knowledge, he claims, also contains discretion, when abstract knowledge is to be applied to concrete situations (Freidson 2001: 35; see also Brante 2010, 2011). Thus, as pointed out by Grimen and Molander, discretion can be seen as not only a free space (i.e. the juridical view), but also as a way of reasoning and applying knowledge in circumstances of indeterminacy (Grimen and Molander 2008).

In sum, whereas Lipsky tends to underline the formal and organizational aspects of discretion, understanding it as a void to be filled by some kind of decision (by delegation); and Dubois, Maynard-Moody and Musheno underlies the broader social context and interactions of SLBs and clients, professional sociology insists on the epistemic aspects of discretion, i.e. that professional discretion includes a specific way of reasoning about problems and solutions, that cannot be regulated in advance, but needs to be based on sources of professional knowledge and expertise.

Drawing on these three different conceptions of discretion and determinants of discretion, I suggest that if we want to understand SLBs work and policy making, we need to focus more consistently on how discretion is performed, i.e. on the discretionary practices that SLB engage and construct in their work, and the logics or rationales they use within these practices. Further, this means that we must broaden our conception of the contexts and institutions that frame and impact discretionary practices. To be more specific: The logic of discretion is not only political or juridical, and the context of discretion is not only political mandates and rules, or even organizational structures. In stead we need to consider other possible logics and contexts relevant for different types of street level work, e.g. the social context of SLBs and clients the professional context of knowledge, expertise and experience. In our case of preventive welfare polices, the formal and legal aspects expectedly will not play a very large role, since they are so vague (Harrits and Møller 2012; Møller and Harrits 2013). This makes it
even more relevant to consider other logics of discretion and other contexts or sources of discretion, and below I therefore specify further theoretical conceptions with regards to the social and the professional context.

**The social and the professional context**

As pointed out by Dubois, what he calls bureaucratic encounters, i.e. the meeting of SLBs and clients, cannot be described as solely a political enterprise. They are about also social identities and personal meetings, and therefore we need to understand both the social setting and institution, the individuals populating the institutions, and the different contexts and backgrounds they bring with them. He thus shows, how

in their professional practices, the agents practice spontaneous sociology and judgement – on the morality of an individual, the normality of a case, etc. – which consist in activating schemes internalised during their personal experiences, much more than applying institutional standards (Dubois 2010: 92)

In a similar fashion, Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) has demonstrated how frontline professionals not only work as state agents, following rules and regulations, but also as citizen agents, focusing on the concrete and acute problems of citizens facing them, and their “identities and moral characters” (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003: 9). Thus, the logic of the citizen agent is not deciding what rule to apply, but rather "putting a fix on people“ (77) in order to decide, how to proceed, and this is an “uncertain process” (83), involving the negotiation of social relations, meanings and moral judgments.

To get a grasp of the discretionary logic drawing on such social contexts, I suggest to use the concept of habitus, put forward by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Habitus functions as a system of dispositions (e.g. motivational, cognitive, aesthetic and normative dispositions), produced by the specific social conditions of the individual (Bourdieu 1990: 53, 77, Bourdieu 1984: 170-173). With the concept of habitus Bourdieu thus suggest people form identities as well as perceptions, beliefs and values, or what he calls ”principles of vision and division“ and ”schemes of perception and appreciation”, based on the social positions, circumstances and socio-cultural communities in which they engage (e.g. Bourdieu 1984, 1989, 1990; Jenkins 2008; Harrits & Møller 2011).
A discretionary logic building on habitus thus implies that SLBs mainly draw on their own personal experiences, values, norms, cognitive schemes (including social categories), as well as their own perceptions of normality. Furthermore, a discretionary logic building on habitus, will often be an implicit logic of practice (Bourdieu 1990), i.e. a logic that cannot easily be rationalized or even explicated, but which builds more on common sense, everyday knowledge and ‘gut’ feelings. In particular in relation to discretionary judgments on early interventions within health care for families and children, child care and education, we may expect SLBs to draw on their own conception of normal and preferable lifestyles choices and values in relation to e.g. food, family roles, physical exercise and personal hygiene.

In contrast to a discretionary logic of habitus, a professional discretionary logic will be characterized by referring to a professional context, most obviously a common pool of knowledge. Abbott (1988:35-58), although not using the term discretion, describes very precisely how discretion is always inherent in professional work, which consists of three elements. diagnosis, treatment and inference. Thus, professionals must identify human problems (diagnosis) and decide what to do about them (treatment), referring to a reservoir of professional (scientific) knowledge that can legitimate decisions.

This emphasis on the use of scientific or formal knowledge is also evident in Freidson (2001), who defines professional work as a “mental discretionary specialization”, which means division of labor based on specializations of primarily formal knowledge, defined as knowledge “composed of bodies of information and ideas organized by theories and abstract concepts” (33). However, professional specializations also imply some use of what Freidson calls practical knowledge, i.e. “knowledge largely free of formal concepts and theories, learned by experiences and instrumental for performing concrete tasks in concrete situation” (31). At the same time, Freidson suggests, professional work will rely very little on everyday or common sense knowledge and tacit knowledge. Other scholars, however, have suggested that professionals posses not formal knowledge but a practical and tacit, but still reflective "knowledge-in-action" (Schön 1983: 21ff).
To be sure, both everyday, common sense, tacit and practical knowledge can be
difficult to distinguish from a logic of habitus. Indeed, everyday and common
sense logic is a part of what Bourdieu refers to with the concept of habitus, but I
suggest that both tacit and practical knowledge can be seen also as something
referring specifically to a professional context. A professional discretionary logic
will thus be defined here as discretions drawing on and referring to a
professional context using professionally based formal, practical and tacit
knowledge, and even though some knowledge may not be formalized (and even
tacit), it will be possible to rationalize and explain with reference to e.g. science
or practical experience from professional work.

A discretionary logic of habitus and a professional discretionary logic is thus to
be distinguished both by the different contexts that is drawn upon, and by the
types of knowledge (and values) that are applied. With this distinction, it thus
becomes a key empirical question to explore, what kind of discretionary logic is
most evident in the implementation of preventive welfare policies.

This theoretical framework, however, does not imply that each SLB or even each
situation will draw on only one discretionary logic. Rather, it will most likely be
the case, that different logics (including also a juridical logic referring to formal
rules and regulations) will be mixed in practice. This may even be inherent in the
task performed by SLBs. Thus, as Abbott points out, diagnosis (the first part of
professional work) has a dual nature, consisting both of ‘colligation’, i.e. painting
a picture of the client, and of classification, i.e. referring this picture to a suitable
professional category that can then be handled (i.e. treated). The task of
colligation thus involves the sorting of information that is relevant for the
diagnosis from information that is irrelevant, but this distinction is seldom clear
cut. Therefore, diagnosis “begins to assign subjective properties to the objective
problems with which professions work” (Abbott 1988: 44), which means that
diagnosis may necessarily imply a mix of a discretionary logic of habitus and a
professional discretionary logic (see also Freidson 2010). Even so, it is
empirically interesting, so see what kind of discretionary logic is dominant in
preventive welfare policies.
In sum, I suggest to explore the mix and composition of discretionary logics used in different situations in the implementation of preventive policies, and suggest to distinguish between a discretionary logic of habitus, a professional discretionary logic and a juridical discretionary logic, each referring to the social, the professional and the legal (and organizational) contexts.

However, besides such situational logics, it may be possible to distinguish parallel SLB roles or identities. Dubois, referring to Berger and Luckmann, suggest to see roles as linked to institutions and a stable set of expectations that can be related to a specific set of tasks or a specific position in an institutional setting (i.e. the role of a teacher or a nurse). In relation to our present context, I suggest to focus on more narrowly defined roles or identities linked to the stabilization of the use of discretionary logics. More precisely, I will focus on the general use of discretionary logics of types of knowledge, identities (i.e. what seems to matter most for the individual SLB) and role perceptions (i.e. perception of own job, mission, or function) (Jenkins 2008: XX). This is much similar to what is suggested by Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003), referring to state agent and the citizen agent, which to me represents two identities/roles tied to the juridical discretionary logic (what Maynard Moody and Musheno refers to as law abidance), and the discretionary logic of habitus (what they refer to as cultural abidance). Supplementing this, I suggest a third identity/role, namely the professional identity tied to a professional discretionary logic and what one could call scientific or knowledge abidance.

This leads to two further empirical questions. First, it should be explored whether or not (more or less) stable identities among SLBs working with preventive welfare policies can be identified. And second, it should be explored whether or not these identities correlate with the discretionary logics applied in relation to preventive decisions and interventions.

**Data and method**

As explained, the analysis is focused on the ways in which discretions are performed, which necessitates an empirical focus on how SLBs reason and substantiate their discretions. Consequently, I draw on qualitative interview data
from semi-structured interviews, where discourses and arguments are accessible, and where practices can be represented in a narrative but also condensed form (e.g. Kvale and Brinkmann 2008, Charmaz 2006).

Interviewees have been selected theoretically in several steps. First, three professional groups are included, namely home nurses, pedagogues and primary school teachers. These professionals groups implement preventive social and health policy, and they are quite similar with regard to degree of professionalization and the way in which they perform their tasks in informal settings (the home, the day-care room and the classroom), interacting with children and families.

Second, in order to reach a minimum degree of generalizability, interviews are performed in two local areas within four municipalities (i.e. eight areas in total). The specific areas are selected with the purpose of testing a hypothesis of impact of areas homogeneity on preventive welfare polices, which is not explored further in this paper. Within local areas, institutions and interviewees have been selected by criteria of convenience and accessibility. A total number of 58 interviews (teachers: 22, pedagogues: 20, home nurses: 16) have been collected, by two interviewers, lasting between appr. 1 hour and 3 hours. 2 [NB for the purpose of this draft, only interviews (14) from one municipality have been analyzed, i.e. (teachers: 6, pedagogues: 4, home nurses: 4)].

All interviews are semi-structured, focusing on interviewees’ spontaneous discourses and reasoning. Approximately one third into in the interview, interviewees are presented with two vignettes describing the situation of a child and a family. Again, this design is intended to test a hypothesis not dealt with in this paper, namely the impact of the social distance between SLBs and clients for the tendency for SLBs to express worry (see Harrits & Møller 2014). In stead, I draw mainly on other parts of the interviews, namely the parts where SLBs explains how they in their daily practices detect and identity social problems, and where they explain their general practice and everyday work, as well as how

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2 Interviews have been collected by the author together with Marie Østergaard Møller.
they see themselves and their roles vis-a-vis both clients and society (see appendix 1 for a full interview guide).

Analyses are done by qualitative content analysis, coded systematically in Nvivo, and afterwards condensed in different displays (Larsen 2012; Miles & Huberman 1994). For the analyses in this article, the coding has focused on discretionary logics and SLB role perceptions and identities (see coding frame below). Coding for the two main codes are done in different parts of the interviews, i.e. no material is coded in both codes.

**Table 1. Coding frame**

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Subcodes</th>
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| **Discretionary logics in preventive welfare policy** | Content reference – which context? | Content reference to personal lifestyles, norms and values (habitus)  
Reference to legal authority or organizational authority (management) (juridical)  
Content reference to clearly defined problems or visible indicators (professional)  
Content reference to medical diagnoses (professional)  
Content reference to social relations (professional) |
| | Identification of problems | Identification intuitive (habitus)  
Identification qua personal relationship (habitus)  
Systematic identification procedure reference to formal knowledge (professional)  
Systematic identification procedure reference to practical knowledge (professional) |
| | Self-perception of logic in decision (direct question) | Personal logic  
Professional logic  
Personal and professional logic cannot be separated |
| **Discretionary logic in everyday work** | Everyday knowledge (habitus)  
Intuition (habitus)  
Professional/formal knowledge (professional)  
Practical/tacit knowledge and experience (professional)  
Impact of time (quick decision in practice) (professional)  
Discussion with colleagues (professional) |
| **Relationship to the law** | Relationship to the law |
| **Professional identity (what is important in work)** | Professional knowledge  
Relationship to citizens |
| **Professional role perception** | Voice of citizens (advocate)  
Expertise  
Providing welfare (teaching, caring)  
Authority  
Impact citizens  
Relationship to citizens |
Discretionary logics in preventive welfare policies

Turning, first, our attention to the discretionary logics in the implementation of preventive welfare policies (table 2 below), we see a widespread mix of both a habitus and a professional logic. Thus, among almost all SLBs references are made to both a lifestyle context, identifying deviance from social and everyday norms as worrying, and to a professional context with identifiable and clearly defined problems.

For example, one teacher (TA04) expresses concern about rich and spoiled children (“curling children”), whereas a home nurse expresses (HA01) expresses concern about chaos and mess in a family home as being worrying. One pedagogue (PA01) stands out, with many references to lifestyle elements. However, many of them are made to very basic human needs (lack of sleep, lack of food and lack of basic hygiene), and in contrast to almost all of the other the references are not made as a demarcation between her own norms and the norms of families, but as a reference to a clearly shared minimum of basic human resources.

With regard to references to a professional context, many SLBs refers to behavioral indicators such as “children often complaining about stomach pains” or “children often skipping classes” (TA03), “children acting violently, throwing toys around”, “children craving a lot of attention” (PA02), “children not thriving especially focused on nutrition” (HA04), or more formal indicators based on e.g. tests of reading and math skills, language development or physical development. Not surprisingly, as all SLBs in the study are working with child development and learning, the data also contains very many references to observations about social relations and the ability to interact with other children, as well as the ability of parents to interact with their children (especially home nurses). Such references often has a form similar to other visible and clearly defined indicators, however for some SLBs this also includes references to a more fuzzy context of normality or deviance from social norms. This is e.g. evident with one teacher (TA01), referring to children who are “strange” and “who just makes other children bristle”.

The difference in discretionary logic is not, however, only evident in the contexts referred to by SLBs but also by the ways in which reasoning is done or described. Here the data also shows both elements of discretionary logic of habitus and a professional discretionary logic. The discretionary logic of habitus is seen when SLBs explain how they identify problems by “sensing them” or by having established a close social and personal relationship to children so that they “know” their problems. For example, TA01 describes how she has a goal of relating to each child every day:

I know it may sound a little crazy, but I like to touch all children every day, the ones who wants to be touched. And I want to shake all parents’ hands and say “hello” in a nice manner to all of them, and I want to learn all the names VERY quickly. This is step one, to begin to acquire knowledge about this and that. And I spend a lot of time talking to each of the children every day, this is a completely standard procedure in all the classes I have ever had. (TA01)

On the other hand, the professional logic of habitus is seen when SLBs refers to either the use of formal knowledge (tests, scientific language) or to practical procedures of work, i.e. what was above referred to as practical knowledge. Also, many SLBs explain how they discuss their judgments with other pedagogues in a professional dialogue, and some refer to how they reflect on and experiment with their daily routines. As PA04 explains:

You know we experiment all the time, because we also have to et to the right children. So we try different combinations and stuff like that, and that is actually what we spend a lot of time on (PA04).

Weighed together (see table 2), many SLBs display a mix of a habitus and a professional discretionary logic. Especially the pedagogues seem to display a more consistent professional discretionary logic, whereas the home nurses all display a mix. This is based on the fact that all home nurses refer to both a lifestyle and a professional context and all use a mix of intuitions, relationships and professional knowledge. Among the teachers, we find both some teachers displaying mainly a professional logic, some displaying mainly a habitus logic, and some displaying a mix. Finally, when seeing solely on the discretionary logic used in preventive welfare policies, the presence of a juridical discretionary logic is very weak.
<p>| Table 2: Discretionary logics and roles (Municipality A) |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Teachers       | TA01           | TA02           | TA03           | TA04           | TA05           | TA06           |
| Content reference – which context? | Many references to both a context a habitus/lifestyles (esp. ethnic), own social norms, visible indicators and social relations (also a habitus logic in discussing social relations) | Some references to both habitus/lifestyles and visible and clearly defined indicators. Emphasis on formal school management. | Some references to habitus/lifestyles and social norms, but many references to visible and clearly defined indicators and procedures for meeting with social authorities. | Many habitus/lifestyle references, including also in the visible indicators (curling children, are children seeking attention). | Many references to lifestyles indicators (social norms) but also to visible and clearly defined indicators (mainly behavior) | Many references to visible and clearly defined indicators. Some reference to lifestyle(mainly critical of career oriented lifestyle). |
| Identification of problems | Mainly strong relationship to children (touching each child) and practical-professional procedures. | Mainly 'sensing', but also element of pedagogical skills and procedures for professional discussions. | Mix. Mentions both intuition, relationship, formal knowledge and procedures. | Mix of intuition (use emotions) and procedures for discussion. Also mentions ability to reflect on meta level. | Mix of intuition, mention of specialists and procedures for cooperation. | Mainly intuition and relationship to children. |
| Self-perception of logic | Cannot separate professional and habitus logic | Mainly professional logic | Mainly professional logic – emphasis on experience | Mainly professional logic - 'knowing' the children and their skills | Mainly professional logic, focus on 'the whole child' (pedagogical choice) | Mainly professional logic |
| Overall discretionary logic | Mainly habitus logic. | Mix of habitus and professional logic. | Mainly professional logic | Mainly habitus logic, but element of professional logic. | Mix of habitus logic and professional logic | Mix – refers mainly to professional context, but identification is intuitive. |
| Use of knowledge in everyday work | Mix of professional/formal and every day knowledge. Uses own strong personality. | Mainly professional logic, but also elements of everyday knowledge | Mainly professional logic (e.g. trained as AKT-teacher) | Mainly professional logic and emphasis on discussion with colleagues. Mentions the need for quick decisions | Mix of professional and everyday knowledge, with an element of cooperation with colleagues. | Mix of everyday knowledge and professional knowledge – uses strong personality and relations |
| Relationship to the law | Sees herself as part of municipality, not the state | Some reflection on legal framework, but is not influential on practice | - | Thinks of legal framework as an obligation. Refers to regulation in social policies. | - | Sees legal framework as limitation of autonomy. Will protect children from impact of the law. |
| Identity | Identifies herself with professional skills (special training), but much emphasis is on the relationship to the children | Identifies himself as a very professionally skilled teacher, often asked by colleagues to help them. Also important to make and support social relations among children | Identifies as a 'classroom leader' – strong professional identity. Also strong emphasis on the relationship to the children, thriving, tolerance. | Profession identity in pedagogical skills, but also in the relationship to children and parents (like the children) | Relationship to children and parents | Strong emphasis on the relationship to the children. &quot;They are my children&quot; |
| Role perception (role/job/mission) | &quot;Raising&quot; children, being their advocate. Providing education | &quot;Raising&quot; children, giving them values &quot;Love, care and pedagogy&quot; | Being a role model, making an impression, teaching | Politically active by making an impact on children values. Responsible for teaching and social relationships/thriving | Facilitating social relations and forming a relationship to the families | &quot;Raising children&quot;. Making sure that children are ready to learn. &quot;I am their third parent&quot; |
| Main agency | Mainly citizen agency | Mix of citizen and professional agency | Professional agency | Mix of professional, citizen and state agency | Mix of citizen and professional agency | Mainly citizen agency |</p>
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<th>Pedagogues</th>
<th>PA01</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content reference – which context?</td>
<td>Many references to lifestyle, but mainly very basic human needs (being clean, having clothes, eating). Many references to visible and clearly defined indicators.</td>
<td>Mainly reference to visible and clearly defined indicators. Few lifestyle indicators. Also refers to mandatory screening and management.</td>
<td>Only reference to visible and clearly identified problems and legal context.</td>
<td>Refers to lifestyles (mainly structure/chaos), and many references to visible and clearly defined indicators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of problems</td>
<td>Mix of intuition (sensing), form knowledge, cooperation and experience.</td>
<td>Mix of relationship and mentioning of specialists, but also formal procedures.</td>
<td>Mainly reference to pedagogical concepts, theories, formal tests and daily working procedures.</td>
<td>Only refers to procedures for identification and an 'experimenting' professional logic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perception of logic</td>
<td>Professional when intervening, reference to different types of knowledge on different problems. Worrying comes from emotions</td>
<td>Professional (self-labeling), but also recognition of tacit knowledge and use on empathy and own personality</td>
<td>Mainly intuition and experience (60-70%), worry will depend on your personality</td>
<td>Worry will depend on your personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall discretionary logic</strong></td>
<td>Mix of habitus and professional logic.</td>
<td>Mainly professional</td>
<td>Professional, but self-description is opposite</td>
<td>Mainly professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discretionary logics and roles in everyday practice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discretionary logic / use of knowledge in everyday work</td>
<td>Mix of formal, practical and everyday knowledge, also with emphasis on discussion with colleagues</td>
<td>Mainly professional logic, with reference to concepts and pedagogical reasoning. Small elements of tacit knowledge and intuition.</td>
<td>Professional logic (in particular in relation to children in need of special care), discussion with colleagues. Mentions the need for quick decisions</td>
<td>Mainly experience based knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to the law</td>
<td>Underlines new regulations with a shared responsibility between parents and professionals in regard to raising children.</td>
<td>Reference to legal framework, but also sense of autonomy within this framework.</td>
<td>Reference to especially legal framework within social policies</td>
<td>Very alert in relation to legal framework (e.g. public law in general)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional identity</td>
<td>Professional identity – emphasis on ability to observe relationships and being ‘reflective’.</td>
<td>Identity in relationship to children, giving care, having 'moments' with children.</td>
<td>Identity in professional-political relations and relationship to children.</td>
<td>Professional identity as one who initiates activities and who can steer projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional role perception (role/job/mission)</td>
<td>Being a guide, introducing them to a different world than what they get at home, teaching children how to interact with other people.</td>
<td>Raising children, but also having a certain knowledge and preparing children for school.</td>
<td>Being an advocate, especially for the children with special needs. Being a 'base' for children who spends less time with their parents.</td>
<td>Providing stability through relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main agency</td>
<td>Mix of citizen and professional agency</td>
<td>Mainly professional agency but elements of state agency</td>
<td>Mainly professional agency</td>
<td>Mainly professional agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Content reference – which context?

- Many references to habitus/lifestyles (chaos/order, alcohol, stress), also many references to visible indicators, in particular social relations between child and parents. Refers to the legal framework as giving different logics/contexts for professions.

### Identification of problems

- Emotionally affected, but also uses formal knowledge concepts (psychology) and procedures (discussing with families).

### Self-perception of logic

- Mainly professional logic, reference to knowledge and visible indicators.

### Overall discretionary logic

- Mix of habitus and professional logic.

### Discretionary logics and roles in everyday practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discretionary logic/use of knowledge in everyday work</th>
<th>Home nurses</th>
<th>HA01</th>
<th>HA02</th>
<th>HA03</th>
<th>HA04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mix of formal, practical and everyday knowledge/intuition (putting an ear to the ground)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of own role as being an ‘inspector’</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity in establishing a relationship to the families, being curious and giving strength</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility founded upon knowledge, having an authority/control function, establishing trust, Providing preventive healthcare and health promotion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix of citizen, professional and state agency</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SLB discretionary logics, roles and identities in everyday practices**

To be written, focus will be on:

- Discretionary logics in everyday practice among SLBs also show both elements of everyday logics and professional logics (formal and practical knowledge). All professions
- State agency – reference to law and state authority – especially evident among home nurses.
- Identity and role perception related to establishing a relationships to children and citizens among many teachers and home nurses – among some teachers and many pedagogues more focused on work.
- Role perception focused on “raising” children, being a guide and an advocate, but also providing welfare
- Seems to be a homology between discretionary logic on preventive welfare policies and the dominating agency form in everyday discretion, identity and role perceptions. Clearly this cannot be interpreted as a causal relationships, since we do not know what drives what (possibly reinforcing each other). But interesting that logic is not isolated to the preventive welfare policies alone.
- A note here also on the self-perception of SLBs which tends to be more professional than my coding.

**Concluding discussion**

To be written, will focus on discussing a dilemma:

- Preventive welfare work may introduce (or reinforce pre-existing) logics of habitus in the work. However, we also find evidence of a professional logic – this is, however, mainly practical.
- Normatively, this may be interpreted as a positive development. Surely, in the work with children we would like state representative to show empathy, compassion and establishing relationships, and making everyday practices and routines that can facilitate a good everyday life for
the children (especially teachers and pedagogues). Thus too much emphasis on formal knowledge and formal law is not an ideal.

- However, this de-emphasizes the ways in which a logic of habitus may introduce private social norms and a possible bias of class, ethnicity, as well as the ways in which implicit and intuitive logics of reasoning may be difficult for citizens to contest and resist.


LBK 913, af 13/07/2010 (Sundhedsloven/Law on Public health)

LBK nr. 314, af 11/04/11 (Dagtilbudssloven/Law on Child Care).

LBK 998, af 16/08/2010 (Folkeskoleloven/Law on Primary Education).


Mehlby, Jill (2013), Opkvalificering af den tidlige indsats – ved tidlig opsporing af børn i en socialt udsat position, KORA.


Møller, M.Ø. (2009), Solidarity and categorization: Solidarity perceptions and categorization practices among Danish social workers. Aarhus: Politica.


VEJ 31, af 06/05/2009 (Vejledning om dagtilbud, fritidshjem og klubtilbud / Guidance act on Childcare and services for Young People).