"Dynamic Capabilities"

Work on the integration of two methodological issues:
The operationalization of Capabilities on quantitative secondary data within the framework of life-course, using panel data with information on the transition to parenthood in Germany.

Prerequisites:
Capabilities cannot be observed directly, the real set of Capabilities a person has, is unknown. Life-Courses are multidimensional and self-referential and hence path-dependent.

The Model of Dynamic Capabilities:
The basic theoretical model of capability spaces (as known) is expanded by accounting for successive states over time.

Functioning bundles, determine a person’s current well-being (‘consumption’), and secondly they condition the capability space from which the functioning of the following period can be chosen.

An example:
A person at point in time has finished tertiary education and has many possibilities to choose in her capability-set. She can start a career or make a journey around the world or start a family or start volunteering in the local forest of equador.

Let us assume, she decided on having a baby and unfortunately her partnership breaks up. In this case her capability-set at t+1 is reduced. Because now she cannot choose a career, because she has no anymore the capacity for long working hours, because she has to care for the baby and to earn somehow money. So let us say, the reduced capability-set at t+1 consists of the capability to work part-time. And this status persists some time. How does this influence the functioning of the individual child-care leads to an enriched capability-set again, including e.g. full-time work.

Method and Data:
A Multiple Indicators and Multiple Causes (MIMIC) Model with Capabilities as latent Constructs and Formative Indicators

Method:
Special case of a longitudinal structural equation model, in which the influences of formative indicators on unobservable capabilities are assessed through their impact on the reflective indicators. Formative indicators (X) are built of resources and conversion factors at t. Capabilities at t are a function of these.

Data:
The empirical implementation is based on the German Family Panel (Pairfam) and is still work in progress.

"The 2008-launched German Family Panel pairfam ("Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics") is a multi-disciplinary, longitudinal study for researching partnership and family dynamics in Germany. The annually collected survey data from a nationwide random sample of more than 12,000 persons of the three birth cohorts 1971-73, 1981-83, 1991-93 and their parents, partners and children offers unique opportunities for the analysis of partner and generational relationships as they develop over the course of multiple life phases." (www.pairfam.de)

Relevant Variables:
Examples for time variant formative indicators (resources & preferences):
Household Composition; "Women should be more concerned about their family than about their career"; “Future: Importance to have children”
Examples for time variant reflective variables:
Number of Children in Household; Employment-Status;

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