

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE POVERTY STUDIES IN TURKEY
WITH A FRAMEWORK OF CAPABILITY APPROACH: THE
CASE OF GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE
AND SOLIDARITY

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M. ONUR ARUN

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Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Ayşe Saktanber
Head of Department

This is to certify that I have read this thesis and that in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ecevit
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ecevit (METU, SOC)

Prof. Dr. Nadir Suğur (AU, SOC)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Şen (METU, SOC)

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: M. Onur, Arun

Signature:

ABSTRACT

A Contribution to the Poverty Studies in Turkey with a Framework of Capability
Approach: The Case of General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity

Arun, M. Onur

M.Sc., Department of Sociology

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ecevit

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This study aims to contribute to the poverty studies in Turkey in terms of the capability approach introduced to the scientific literature by Nobel Laureate thinker Amartya Sen. The approach is closely connected with the idea of justice and particularly with the Rawls's model of social justice. This study's perception of justice is based on the idea that justice is the virtue of the institutions, but not that of individuals. Although the Rawls's justice analysis is approved in terms of making institutional analysis, his perception regarding to the rights are criticized since these are perceived as "ends" but not the "means" of individuals' welfare. Therefore, it is claimed in this study that holding certain sets of rights are not significant by themselves, but how they can be converted into personal wellbeing is crucial as well. In this framework, poverty is considered as capability deprivation and it is claimed that poverty analyses based on commodity ownership are not satisfactory. As the case of this study, General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity organized as the main state institution so as to alleviate the poverty in Turkey has been chosen and the question of whether the relief programs of the institution are designed to alleviate poverty by enhancing individuals' capabilities is raised. It has been concluded in this study that (1) income centred poverty perception of the institution does not take into account the variations in needs, (2) the reliefs are designed to increase economic productivity of individuals but not the valuable capabilities and (3) the operational logic of the institution is based on managing poverty, but not alleviating it.

Keywords: Social Justice, Capability Approach, Poverty, Poverty Alleviation Strategies, General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity.

ÖZ

Türkiye’de Yoksulluk Çalışmalarına Yapabilirlik Yaklaşımı Çerçevesinde Bir Katkı:
Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü Örneği

Arun, M. Onur

Yüksek Lisans, Sosyoloji Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ecevit

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Bu çalışma, Nobel Ödüllü düşünür Amartya Sen’in bilimsel literatüre kazandırdığı yapabilirlik yaklaşımı çerçevesinde Türkiye’deki yoksulluk çalışmalarına bir katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Yapabilirlik yaklaşımı adalet düşüncesiyle ve Rawls’un sosyal adalet modeli ile yakından ilişkilidir. Bu çalışmadaki adalet algısı adaletin bireylere değil, kurumlara ilişkin bir erdem olduğu fikri üzerine kuruludur. Rawls kurumsal bir adalet analiz yapması açısından onaylandığı halde, hakları kişilerin refahı için bir “araç” olarak değil, bir “amaç” olarak algıladığından dolayı eleştirilmektedir. Bu sebeple, belirli bir takım haklara sahip olmanın tek başına anlamlı olmadığı, aynı zamanda bu hakların kişisel faydaya nasıl dönüştürülebileceğinin de önemli olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Bu çerçevede, yoksulluk ‘*yapabilirlik yoksunluğu*’ olarak algılanmakta ve emtia sahipliğine dayalı yoksulluk analizlerinin tatmin edici olmadığı söylenmektedir. Örnek olarak, Türkiye’de yoksulluğu azaltmak için temel devlet kurumu olarak örgütlenmiş olan Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü seçilmiş ve kurumun yardım programlarının kişilerin yapabilirliklerini zenginleştirerek yoksulluğu azaltmak üzere tasarlanıp tasarlanmadığı sorusu ortaya atılmıştır. Çalışma sonunda (1) kurumun gelire dayalı yoksulluk algısının ihtiyaçlardaki çeşitlilikleri dikkate almadığı, (2) sosyal yardımların yapabilirlikleri geliştirmek üzere değil, kişilere ekonomik verimlilik kazandırmak üzere tasarlandığı ve (3) kurumun işleyiş mantığının yoksulluğu azaltmak üzere değil, onu yönetmek üzerine kurulu olduğu sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Adalet, Yapabilirlik yaklaşımı, Yoksulluk, Yoksulluğu azaltma stratejileri, Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü.

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To all children of the world who pay the heavy costs of our mistakes...

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Introduction

Social injustice is the ultimate basis of social conflict¹.

Mills, in his influential book, *Sociological Imagination* (1959), takes the attraction to the point referring the strong connections between private troubles of individuals and their ties with public questions. According to his methodological view, every scientific attempt has an inevitable subjective dimension, which is called sometimes “personal curiosity” and; in this regard, according to him, being value-free, in other words, objectivity is impossible. This study, obviously, has its own subjectivity or personal background as well and the roots of such subjectivity are based on one of my own private troubles.

In the beginning, let me tell you this personal trouble as a story, a banana story. It was a time as Marx said *alles ständische und stehende verdampft; alles heilige wird entweiht*² (Marx 2005 [1848]: 19) and I just started the elementary school. One day, during the break time in the school, I was eating a banana, a fruit that was not affordable for every parent in Turkey at those times. One of my classmates, who had just came to our class after his family had migrated somewhere from the east, came close to me and seized the banana from my hand with violence. I complained about him to my teacher and expected that she would punish him severely. Contrary to my expectations, she did not do anything and tried to settle my cry, caressing my hair and telling that I was a wise, smart kid “who should not complain without thinking twice”. I could not realize why she did not punish him and; complained to my mother about her and my classmate. Mum did not say anything either and even did not caress my hairs. After that event, my mother did not put banana to my backpack and I could never eat again that fruit throughout my elementary studies. It might well be that, contrary to my teacher’s words, I was not a kid enough wise and smart to realize why anyone did not punish this emigrant boy. Time passed by and it was my Bachelor days that I

¹ Inspired idea from the Thomas Nixon Carver (1915: 35).

² All that is solid melts into air; all that is holy is profaned.

started to realize some results of social injustice when we were listening a strong and deep voice, still in my ears tonight, from a cassette player in a family meeting. The anonymous ballad was saying “listen friends/we have a saying/hell rises/when one is stuffed/and the other starved watches”. It was that moment when I started to realize the emigrant boy was innocent since social injustice is the ultimate basis of social conflict.

I neither forget this emigrant boy, nor the ballad. If every study, every discussion or thesis has a personal or subjective dimension, the emigrant boy is the first and the sole one letting to emerge this study.

In terms of the public dimension of this study, my reason is simple but this does not mean it is inessential or secondary. Michel Foucault, in one of his interviews, was saying that “the game is worthwhile insofar as we do not know what will be the end” in 1982. Today, the game being played by millions is neither worthwhile nor enjoyable since the rules of it are not equal under the current socio-economic conditions and structural relations. Therefore, the life in which we play that game is not worthwhile too for those who are not starting the life equally because of deprived conditions in which they live. Rules are different and people are equipped differently in that game, that is the reason why it is easy to predict what will be the end: Millions continues to suffer for the benefits of others and this is neither worthwhile, nor logical at all.

So, if every study, every discussion or thesis in social sciences should have a public or objective reason, such fallacy is the second and sole one letting to emerge this study.

Due to these personal and public reasons, this study assumes that there is a social justice question in relation with poverty in Turkey. Based on this assumption, I ask the question that does the main social assistance institution of Turkey, namely the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity (GDSAS), serve to institutionalize social justice and to solve the problem of poverty when it is

considered in terms of capability approach? To answer this question, this study continues the following way below.

The first chapter, starts with a presentation consisting from mainstream social justice theories around the question of how it has been perceived from different points of views up to now. In order to actualize this objective, the first chapter is established on the justice theories in ancient world and approaches toward social justice in the enlightenment and contemporary ages. The presentation regarding to social justice is submitted as a form of chronological order with connections to its historical context in which these theories have been flourished. During the first part of this chapter, the ancient perception toward the concept of justice is presented with references to writings of the Plato and Aristotle and the written laws of the Roman Empire. During the second part of this chapter, attitudes of enlightenment thinkers and contemporary discussions regarding to the concept of social justice are introduced. Because of the reason that we do not observe any significant written contribution to the social justice theories during the early middle age, it is not opened an independent headline regarding to this period. For the enlightenment age, Hobbes and Hume can be interpreted as the cornerstones in the field of social justice discussions. The contributions of these thinkers to the conceptualization of social justice are presented by references to their classical works, namely Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) and Hume's remarkable work *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1751). Up to that point, approaches toward social justice are discussed by mainly focusing on the philosophers themselves. This means that, during the ancient and early enlightenment ages, social justice was being discussed as a part of ground theories, as can be understood also by the name of Hume's book above. However, after Hume and Hobbes, we observe that social justice started to become a subject by itself. Therefore, the following parts of the chapter discuss on the social justice by referring to the different models, instead of particularly focusing on the philosophers. In this context, three mainstream social justice models are open for the discussion. These are libertarian, utilitarian and rawlsian models of social justice. Libertarian model is

discussed around the contributions of Hayek, Nozick and Miller and the utilitarian model is assessed under the light of contributions belong to Jeremy Bentham, J. S. Mill, A. Smith and A. Tocqueville. The claims of these two models are presented with reference to the thesis of libertarian and utilitarian ideas. The last model, namely rawlsian model of social justice, is elaborated more comprehensively at the end of this chapter since it seems that Rawls's claims and suggestions try to combine both libertarian and utilitarian models. By this discussion on the definitions and perspectives in the field of social justice, not only historical developments in the related field, but also the inadequacies of the social justice theories are illustrated. Accordingly, although, the initial question is answered at the end of the first chapter, another question is being emerged. This question is associated with how these inadequacies of social justice theories can be completed. In addition to this question, there is another problem regarding to how social justice can be institutionalized within the practical life itself.

The second chapter is introduced to answer these two questions emerged at the end of the first chapter. During this chapter, as a promising idea, the capability approach is open for the discussion in order to answer such questions. Obviously, at that point, the question is that why the capability approach, but not another paradigm or perspective, has been chosen to answer these questions. Although, the scientific reasons of this preference will table itself clearly in the second chapter, I can briefly mention five reasons in here. The first one is that capability approach takes the attraction to the "substantive freedom" which refers to the gap between the theoretical claims of social justice models and realization possibilities of these claims. In this regard, it presents itself as a practical guide to actualize the social justice in a society. The second reason is about institutionalizing social justice. By inspiring from the Rawlsian model of social justice, capability approach emphasizes that social justice is the virtue of the institutions, but not that of a man. That means capability approach makes an institutional analysis for the question of how the social justice can be enhanced in a society. The third reason is that capability approach considers the question of poverty in relation with social

justice, but not as a problem by itself. The fourth reason is that capability approach focuses on the question of poverty as a part of developmental questions regarding to the enhancement of individuals' opportunities, functionings and capabilities, which means it is a new developmental paradigm in this field. Last reason is about the absence of analysis based on the capability deprivation of individuals in the scientific literature of Turkey. Although, there are many independent and institutional researches on the poverty in Turkey, but very few used the capability approach in their analysis of poverty. To make contribution for the further researches that are designed so as to fill this gap in the academic literature of Turkey is another reason of why capability approach is chosen. Based on these reasons, the second chapter is constituted from six parts. The first two parts are arranged according to the objective that is to clearly embody the initial points and main ideas of the approach. By this way, it is being tried to present a ground that is necessary in order to justify further claims of the approach both in the second and following chapters. The third chapter of the approach is based on the approach's own conceptualization. In this regard, the concept of capability, basic capabilities, functionings, diversity, freedom, agency aspects are presented. Firstly, since these concepts are used differently than their daily connotations in the approach, this presentation is crucial to understand further points in the approach. Secondly, these concepts altogether constitutes a new conceptualization regarding to the logical basis of the approach. Accordingly, it is expected that the first three parts of the chapter draws a clear framework concerning to the main claims of the approach and its perspective to the issues questioned in this study. However, to present the approach merely on the theoretical base is not obviously satisfactory. Therefore, the fourth part of the chapter tries to present a refined knowledge about the points to take into consideration during the process of implementing the perspective of the capability approach. The fifth part of the chapter is on the critics toward capability approach and its respond to them. To show the capability approach is not a completed paradigm and has still some deficient points, this part was a requirement. As a most important critique, it can be seen that question of operationalization comes to the forefront. Lastly, the sixth

part of the second chapter can be read as an attempt for the question of how the approach can be operationalize in the practical life. To answer this question, the part presents information on the previous empirical researches based on the capability approach and, in this regard, three core assertions of the capability approach which are needed to be into account in the process of operationalization. These assertions can be briefly summarized in here as (1) to avoid making generalization on valuable and reasoned capabilities, (2) context dependant research and analysis, (3) determination of valuable and reasoned capabilities in a democratic participation process.

The third chapter of this study is based on to draw a concrete framework or a ground for the case introduced in the last chapter. In this regard, it is aimed to demark the field in which the case of this study is placed. Therefore, chapter three is organized so as to answer the questions of ‘how the poverty is perceived in the scientific literature’ and ‘what the common poverty alleviation strategies generally are’. To answer these questions, first of all, an outline for the definition and measurement of poverty is presented. Traditional and contemporary approaches regarding to the poverty perception are tabled under the first headline of this chapter. The second part of the chapter three is arranged as the presentation of poverty alleviation strategies and its examples implemented in different localities. To be able to evaluate the case of this study in terms of the capability approach, the chapter three is essential since the field in which the case performs and its characteristic emerges in this chapter. Based on the classifications on the poverty definitions and alleviation strategies that are done in this chapter, assessing the case of this study in terms of the capability approach become more satisfactory and concrete. Therefore, this chapter can be considered as a complementary body of the case of this study.

The last chapter of this study is based on the GDSAS in Turkey. In this chapter, the aim is to theoretically assess the institution according to the claims and perspective of capability approach. Therefore, the chapter starts with an introductory presentation that aims to indicate the fact that there has not been any

institutionalized social assistance system since 1980s in Turkey. In addition to this aim, this presentation can be read also to understand the conditions coercing the emergence of GDSAS. At the end of this presentation, the reason about why the GDSAS is exemplified in this study instead of choosing another institution serving in the field of social assistance is enlightened as well. The first part of this chapter is designed to explain the legal bases of the institution in relation with the laws numbered 3294 and 5263 specifically as well as some legislative regulations. This part is crucial since the legal bases of the institution play decreative role in the operational system of GDSAS and logic regarding to how the social assistance is understood at the institutional stage. While the first part is focusing on the legal bases, the second part of the chapter is specifically concentrating on the question of how GDSAS performs in the practice. Therefore, this part is constituted by the discussion on the operational structure of the institution, its branches and departments. These two parts provides all necessary knowledge that is necessitated for the all justifications of the thesis claimed during the evaluation of the institution in terms of the capability approach. This evaluation is comprehensively made in the last part of this study. Such evaluation follows two dimensions that are complementary with each other. The first one is constituted by the assessment of every relief programme of the institution one by one in terms of the capability approach. The second evaluation is based on the discussion in which all criticized and approved implementations of the institution are elaborated in six assertions. To follow that kind of dual way during the evaluation of the institution makes easier both to understand the deficiencies of the relief programmes and to suggest solutions on how these deficiencies can be overcome when they are considered in terms of the capability approach.

Lastly, in addition to a summarize of the main arguments raised by the capability approach, some suggestions are proposed in order to overcome the deficiencies in the operational and legal bases of GDSAS.

Chapter I: Social Justice Theories in a Historical Context

In this chapter, I will try to present a compact and refined discussion regarding to the historical development the term of social justice and its contemporary forms. Following this aim, I will start with ancient roots of justice. This basis will be continued with the classical ages and lastly, I will present the most recent discussions in the social justice theories. By this way, I am planning to draw a general framework in which this study arises.

As is well known, social justice is a multi-dimensional idea. Such multi-dimensionality can be categorized under two pillars, justice as criminal and justice as social (Newman and Yeates 2008: 13). The discussion on the justice in this study does, obviously, not focus specifically on juridical or criminal context, rather than that, it is considered in the realm of social welfare which refers to concepts of well-being, inequalities, differences³, poverty, health, education, housing, employment, social services, social harm, social cohesion and inclusion in an extensive field. In this context, the discussion ongoing in here is on the justice outside of the legal domains, in other words, “justice beyond the courtroom” (Cochrane and Walters 2008: 157)⁴.

³ I want to clarify one point in here. Sometimes it is possible to observe a misconception regarding to the distinctions between what is called inequality and what is called differences. Differences are naturally constructed such as being female or male, African-American, Caucasian, tall or short, although inequalities are socially constructed and related with how a society is organised (Clarke 2008: 31). There are mainly three distinctions between difference and inequality. First one is that differences are horizontal and they are naturally exist while inequalities, vice versa, are vertical and emerge socially. The second, differences are related with tastes and/or categorizations in personal choices, on the other hand, inequalities are not only categorizations; but they are something causing harms of moral norm of equality among human beings. Thirdly, inequalities are abolishable while differences are not (Therborn 2009: 1). However, if differences create inequalities, they should be considered in the realm of the social justice as well. To illustrate, if being an African-American or female is culminated in having less chance to be employed in a society, these differences should be considered also in the realm of the social justice.

⁴ However, it would not be a wise approach to ignore the mobilization between these two contexts. To illustrate, the question of poverty may well be intensified through the discriminative acts towards some different groups in school acceptances, employment process or in the relation processes with governments and other institutions (Newman and Yeates 2008: 166). Therefore, to keep the criminal dimensions of justice in mind can be enlightening in advance.

1. Justice Perception in the Ancient World

Beyond the debate, both what social justice is and the content of it are apparently controversial from the time of the ancient Greeks. It has been the question that “what is right thing to do” asked up to now since the time of ancient Greeks by all philosophers studied partly or at large the social justice. In this part of the chapter, I will follow the mainstream answers for the question and their basic critics towards each other, briefly.

Generally, in Ancient Greek, the term justice was thought as one of the virtues of human. The best example of this can be seen in the well-known work of Plato, the *Republic* in which the central issue in the main subject is the justice or, generally, virtue. First dialogues arranged in a Socratic discussion method between the characters of the book are prolonged in micro level and justice is discussed according to the actions of individuals. In this micro level, it is granted as one of the human excellences, which means that justice is a virtue of individual (Forde 1997: 659 and Demos 1964: 396). However, the aim of the Plato is to reach the justice at the macro level that is *society*. According to him, in a well-ordered society, each groups and individuals play roles to meet the needs of the whole (Campbell 2010: 7). The two most important assumptions used to reveal the basis of societal justice are that individual cannot keep living by herself and life is less difficult and more comfortable by living together as a society. Therefore, human needs the help of others, which requires the societal synergy that refer to division of labour. In this sense, he thought the justice in society as a situation in which everyone performs a function suit her own natural abilities and needed by others, which constitutes the meaning of being a society (Brighouse 2004: 1). This perception is illustrated one of his characters’ word: “Well, my friend, it somehow happens to have turned out that this business of doing your own job is justice” (Raphael 2001: 42). Such definition illustrates that justice is connoted in the sense that individuals benefit what they deserve in return doing their own job. According to Aristotle, the distinction between legal justice and moral or distributive one comes to the surface (Campbell 2010: 18, Miller 1976: 22,

Raphael, 2001: 44). Legal justice, as it can be understood, is characterized with the word of lawful, that what we call today as criminal justice. By emphasizing the distributive justice, Aristotle refers to the distribution the things such as societal goods, moneys and products. By the way of his conceptualization, it is the first time that we observe the term equality comes into agenda, although it does not mean what we understand from it today. Aristotle's distributive justice is formulated as "equal shares to equals, unequal shares to unequals" (Raphael 2001: 44). However, the notion of equal, in his perception, refers to equal individuals who are equal in terms of their status in the society. Citizens are equal with citizens, non-citizens with non-citizens, slaves with slaves and women with women. Moreover, it can be said that he did not consider the idea that justice should include the notion of "equal rights", but what he underlined was the "right proportion" which does not mean always equality (Russell 2004: 169). In this context, it can be interpreted that Aristotle thought the distributive justice in the notion of desert or what the individuals deserve according to their societal status. However, for the interpretation of justice in terms of rights, we had to wait seven century more after Aristotle. In the corpus of Roman law, it is the first time that justice is defined in terms of rights. The law includes a dictum that "justice is the constant and permanent will to render to each person what is his right"⁵. This definition is followed by two further principles in the Justinian Code named with Emperor Justinian (A.D. 483-565): "The precepts of what are rights are these: to live uprightly, to do no harm to others, to render to each person what is his"⁶ (Raphael 2001: 56 and see Scott 2001: 211). It is worth to mention that the dictums above are obviously too ambiguous; however, they are still remarkable to see the interpretation of what justice is in an ancient constitutional law.

2. Social Justice in the Enlightenment and Contemporary Ages

In the early and late enlightenment ages and in the contemporary times, we observe the term social justice being considered more sophisticatedly. Since it

⁵ Latin: "Iustitia est constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuendi."

⁶ Latin: "Iuris praecepta sunt haec: honeste vivere, alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere".

cannot be mentioned about a sharp disengagement between social justice theories of enlightenment and contemporary ages, I will elaborate all of these theories together under the same headline below in consistency with the chronologic order.

Firstly, according to Hobbes, justice is to obey the rules of covenant. Instead of directly define what justice is, he mentions in the *Leviathan* about the injustice and says “injustice is no other than the not performance of covenant. And whatsoever is not unjust is just” (Hobbes 2009 [1651]: 124). In the logic of Hobbes, where there is no commonwealth, there is no propriety, because “all men having right to all things”, which means there is nothing unjust (Ibid. 125). Therefore, where there is commonwealth, the only condition to establish the justice is to keep the covenant valid. However, what is just in Hobbes does not mean what is called as fair since to obey the rules of a valid covenant can be just, however the covenant itself may be unfair. Therefore, justice is discussed in Hobbes within the realm of contractual order. Such absence of moral dimension of Hobbes’s justice perception was noticed by Hume who broadened the understanding of Hobbes in the book called *A Treatise of Human Nature*. He claims that the promise that was seen as the basis of justice by Hobbes would be intelligible, and even if it is intelligible, it would not be attended with any moral obligation (Hume 1966 [1751]: 219). So, Hume takes the attraction to the moral dimension of a covenant, which means he emphasizes what is fair. This was the first time that we observe the perception of fairness introduced to the theory of justice. According to the Hume, justice is a device to ensure the sustainability of social order since incompatible claims of individuals on relatively abundant but generally scarce resources. In this context, justice, according to Hume, is concerned at first with the system of property and injustice in a given society may be associated with the circumstances in which some group of people acquires more than others (Campbell 2010: 14-15). Therefore, Hume considers on the possibility of an egalitarian society into two forms. First one is the society without property. This can accomplished under two conditions: (a) An abundance of goods satisfy to human demands and (b) Unlimited generosity that everyone is

freely given what they need. However, because of human selfishness, diversified wishes, new tastes, and luxuries, Hume believes that the first societal organization cannot be accomplished. Therefore, he asserts a second system in which he supports the continuity of private property that is protected by legal order, but distributes it equally. However, in this system, it will be impossible to prevent inequalities that very possibly exist because of humans' unequal capacities, talents or conditions. If the private property is prevented, the incentive to work will be lost and society will fall into extreme poverty (Miller 1976: 168). This second societal system of Hume would apparently not be egalitarian at all, but at the essence of Hume second system, the idea that instead of whole society fallen into extreme indigence, some degree of inequality within it is acceptable. Therefore, in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principle of Morals* he says, "public utility is the sole origin of justice" (Hume 1998 [1751]: 13). Just before Hume, the right to property and justice guaranteeing this right had been introduced to the political philosophy by Locke. Till Hume, justice has been discussed as an independent subject. However, after Hume, we see that the issue has begun to be discussed under different approaches as a part of the debates. One of them is the libertarian model of justice.

2.1. Libertarian Model of Social Justice

Justice in libertarian model is thought in terms rights and is associated strictly with liberal ideology. Actually, it should be firstly noted that libertarian right denies there is social justice worthwhile to be mentioned, which does not mean there is nothing as justice. Their perception on justice is constrained generally with the issues regarding to law, crime, punishment etc. (The Commission on Social Justice 1998: 37) since the adjective of "social" in front of the conception of justice presupposes regulations in a free market, which is against to the liberal acceptances therefore "in a society of free man, the concept of social justice is strictly empty or meaningless" (Hayek 1976: 68). However, despite this deny, libertarians could not keep themselves out of the discussion. Some of them have discussed on the issue of social justice and believed that it is not impossible to

install social justice inside the market economy under the condition of the rights towards private property⁷ assured (Morvaridi 2008: 40). In the consciousness of early liberal theorist, justice is thought as respect to individual rights that is shaped around civil and political rights referring to the freedom. In this regard, it can be said that they were less concerned with economic and distributive justice. In accordance with liberal thoughts, according to some of leading libertarian philosophers, the distribution is naturally made according to what people deserve in the market societies (Miller 1976: 293-4). This approach refers to the concept of “merit” or “rewarding”. However, these concepts are companied one another concept as “entitlement” introduced to the discussion by Nozick. He uses the term as the key determinant in order to specify the action of “holding”. In Nozick’s conceptualization of holding is based on three principles: (1) If a person acquires a holding in accordance with the justice, then this person is entitled to this holding. (2) If a holding transferred⁸ to a person from someone else entitled this holding before and thus acquired by this person in accordance with justice, then this person is entitled to this holding. (3) Anyone is entitled to a holding unless the implications of principle one and two⁹ (Nozick 1974: 151). The first principle illustrates direct acquisition while the second one indicates justice in voluntary transfers, which both of them secure the private property. Securing private property with law and establishing social justice altogether can be accomplished only giving the precedence to the formula that “from each according to what he chooses to do, to each according to what he makes for himself (...) and what others choose to do for him and choose to give him” (Ibid, 160). Nozick’s formula gives an obvious definition for the libertarian view of social justice. If a person choses to do something, the justice is that s/he should be entitled the outcomes of

⁷ Beyond the debate, libertarians do not claim that people should be allowed to do what they absolutely want. Having a house does not mean that the owner can keep crocodiles inside it or possessing a rifle does not mean that the keeper can shoot wherever she wants (See, Brighthouse 2004: 85-8). The ownership and the utilization of the possession should be experienced under rules of law.

⁸ What is important about the second principle is that transfer should be by the way of voluntary action(s) of transferor(s), which refuses any institutional intervention beforehand.

⁹ The action of holding, of course, should be appropriate to the rule of laws. Unjust holdings are not accepted as entitlements in Nozick (See, Nozick 2004 [1974]: 87).

her/his actions regardless they are harmful or profitable. In this sense, it can be said that libertarian model of justice highlights the importance of *free choice* and *individual responsibility* as clearly referred by some pioneer voice of it: “Capitalism can make a society rich and keep it free. Don’t ask it to make you happy as well. Capitalism can make you well off. And it also leaves you free to be as unhappy as you choose. To ask any more of it would be asking too much” (*The Economist* 2006: 1). In this sense, for instance, under the condition of poverty, a poor is not perceived as a “victim” but rather that as a “rational actor” who deserves his particular condition as a consequence of his individual responsibility (Lister 2004: 127-8). To sum up, the libertarian view puts forward its own conceptualization on social justice around individual responsibility, free choice, entitlement, rights towards private property or the holding, which all of them illustrate a consideration of social justice in terms of what a person deserves.

2.2. Utilitarian Model of Social Justice

The second mainstream model of social justice is the utilitarian perspective. Utilitarian perspective is discussed sometimes as “majoritarian” since it suggests the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people (Campbell 2010: 116), meaning that it focus to chose the available option which are able to produce the greatest sum of happiness and/or satisfaction for all and perform this action. In this sense, what is right to do in utilitarian perspective is shaped according to the expectations regarding to overall amount of happiness. Jeremy Bentham is seen as the father¹⁰ of the utilitarian perspective. Bentham, by the principle of utility, emphasizes the principle “which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party¹¹ whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness” (Bentham

¹⁰ There are some disputes about this issue that some scholars consider Mills was the founder of the utilitarian theory. These disputes enlighten to make clear the difference between Bentham’s consideration on justice and Mills’s utilitarianism as well. For details: (See, Kelly 1990: 245-46).

¹¹ The word used by Bentham, party, can be thought as society, community or individual as he implies in the following sentence of the quotation. However, the word is often thought in utilitarian tradition as majority.

2005 [1789]: 11-12). In this regard, if the question is society's itself, the action, or in our case justice, should be judged in accordance with the aggregative interest of the society instead of considering individuals' interests one by one. In this context, utilitarian perspective is thought generally as aggregative theory of justice (Miller 1976: 32). Needless to say, such perspective seems in contradiction with the model of libertarian justice since the former highlights the importance of aggregative interest of society, the latter takes the rights of individual into consideration. Now, what Bentham says is seen in contradiction with "rights of a man" of liberal thought since the very possibility of conflict between interests of individuals and that of society. However, this contradiction has been overcome by the contribution of J. S. Mill successor of Bentham. Mill as a bridge between the advocator of libertarianism and that of utilitarianism was aware of common view that maximizing the utility of society might be conflictive with the liberal ideals of justice (Ryan 1987: 52). According to him, it is not impossible to increase general expediency while "rights of a man" are secured. In order to solve the conflict between the two, Mill defines six different sets of action that help to identify what just or unjust is and which need to be taken into account in the process of securing justice. First sets are legal rights that everyone should respect since it is just and should not violate since it is unjust. However, justice is not only derived from legal rights written since some legal rights are not given to people since they can be utilized to undermine the others' interests, which is constitutive logic of moral rights as second set. The third set refers to a libertarian perception of justice I mentioned above as desert. Each person should obtain whether good or evil what she deserves, which is claimed by Mill "unjust that he should obtain a good, or be made to undergo an evil, which he does not deserve" (Mill 2007 [1863]: 41). The fourth set is more or less same with what Hobbes had said in the *Leviathan* that keeping the promises in the covenant. It is unjust to break the rules of a covenant or to violate an agreement. The fifth set is about impartiality or objectivity. To show favour or preference to one person over another is inconsistent with justice. The last set is about equal rights allied by the fifth set and given to everyone. He considers the utility as the criterion of just or unjust

situation (Ibid. 38) that, according to him, needs to be thought in the realms of the sets above and overall utility or happiness, both of them are drawn from the idea of justice, are consistent with these sets of action. Thus, the objective dictation of justice by society will be concluded with increasing general expediency and so the common conflict between justice and utility will not become a question anymore. Although, Mill's conceptualization suffers from the absence of no clearly apparent feature shared by all six sets (Raphael 2001: 128), it still allows the interpretation that justice is to treat people in accordance with their rights that the society in which they live should protect and so overall fundamental interest enhances (Campbell 2010: 30). The contribution of Mill is similar with what we call today as liberal utilitarianism in some respects and liberal utilitarianism has some similar roots with what Adam Smith had written in his eminent work, *An Inquiry into the Nature and the Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, around the well-quoted concept of "invisible hand". Smith had pointed out that by pursuing their own interests, everyone frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when they really intend to promote them (Smith 2009 [1776]: 264). Liberal utilitarianism repeats approximately same content illustrated by the Smith's assumption. It claims that, in a just society, every person has a suitable liberal character which is committed to the quantitative and qualitative judgements associated with liberal utilitarianism in which every person is a liberal "moral guardian" who correctly judges gains or losses of different kind of utility by respecting libertarian rights of every other person (Riley 1988: 102). It is obvious that such assumption pre-accepts a sort of "enlightened self-interest" (See, Tocqueville 2004 [1835]: 610-3) referring to if a person act to enhance others' self-interests, then ultimately serve for her own interests, which renders taking the totalitarian or authoritarian measures unnecessary for the sake of majority.

2.3. Rawlsian Model of Social Justice

As libertarian social justice draws the attention to desert, merit, and entitlements at the one side and utilitarian model, addition to desert and rights which are particularly in Mills' conceptualization, takes the attraction to the "greatest

happiness of majority” at the other side, what about the needs and differences of people? Can different needs and particular conditions of people be placed out of discussion or be neglected? These questions have been asked by John Rawls who could be regarded as the most influential social justice theorist of our era. John Rawls, for the possibility of social justice in a capitalist society defined two main criteria: *guaranteed basic liberties for everyone* at first and, *recognizing the distinctions of individuals* secondly. Rawlsian theory of justice is based on these simple principles explained elaborately in the book called *A Theory of Justice* (1971). To understand these principles, first of all, it is crucial to look at what Rawls says with the concept of “veil of ignorance” being a hypothetical state of nature. By this term, the aim of Rawls is “to use the notion of pure procedural justice as a basis of theory” (Rawls 2005 [1971]: 136). The word “pure” has a crucial role in this objective. By the way of veil of ignorance, he defines an “original position” in which representatives of every part of the society take place with their purest existences. In this original position, every representative is independent from their social and economic background i.e. class, identity, culture, gender, religion and thus from their biases and partialities too, that is why they are pure, and this impartial, rational representatives are asked to choose a general social justice schema ordering the society. Rawls assumes that as this schema is asked them, all of them will agree to lexically introduce some principles that should be taken into account in order to establish a fair social justice system. The “lexically” means in here that some principles must be satisfied before deploying other principles in the schema. That is, the second principle, for instance, only can into play insofar as the first principle is satisfied (Pogge 2007: 79). Accordingly, lexicographical introduction of the principles assumes priority of previous principles over the posteriors (See, Rawls 2005 [1971]: 42). In this lexical ordering, according to Rawls, representatives who are in the original positions or behind of the veil of ignorance will demand following two criteria for all members of the society: “(1) Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all” (Ibid. 250). So, in lexical ordering, equal liberty for all has first

priority and accordingly, equal distribution of the rights or basic liberties has priority over that of goods. These basic liberties in Rawls are constituted by political liberties, liberty of conscience and freedom of association, freedom and integrity of the person and rights covered by the rule of law¹² (Pogge 2007: 82-3). The second principle is constituted by two demands in which the proviso of the demand “b” is lexically prior to the demand “a”. The second principle says that “social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under condition of fair equality of opportunity” (Rawls 2005 [1971]: 302). The second principle’s first demand, as can easily be observed, includes difference among individuals. What is claimed by libertarian justice model was to take the merit and/or deserve into account in the distribution. However, social inequalities and natural differences among people, i.e. being disable or able-bodies, to come from an under-class or an aristocratic family or being female and male, that they do not exist under the control of people themselves have very possibility to influence their merits, talents and thus what they deserve. Accordingly, to reward different people in accordance with what their merits are or how much they contribute to a particular work is not fair perspicuously, meaning differences should be taken into account and distribution should be done as “the greatest benefits of the least advantaged”. This is called “difference principle” which briefly claims that economic opportunities should be benefited by everyone but particularly by the marginal and worse off groups in the society since “inequality is justified only to the extent that it benefits the worse off in society” (Morvaridi 2008: 85). The

¹² The content of these liberties are “freedom of thought and of political speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and the right to vote and to hold public office” as political liberties. Liberty of conscience and freedom of association include also freedom of religion. Freedom and integrity of the person refer to “incompatible with slavery and serfdom” and “include freedom from psychological oppression, physical injury and abuse, as well as freedom of movement and right to hold personal property (not including rights to inheritance, right to hold personal property in means of production and natural resources, or rights to share collective control of means of production and natural resources)”. Lastly, the rights covered by the rule of law includes “protection from arbitrary arrest and seizure, habeas corpus, the right to a speedy trial, due process and uniform procedures conducted according to publicized rules” (See, Pogge 2007: 82-105).

second demand of the second principle refers to the fair equality of the opportunities. By this principle, it is assumed that opportunities in order to be attached any office or position should be distributed equally for all, irrespective of their differences. To illustrate, any firms or government office cannot give priority to women for a position or any university cannot reserve certain amount of places for African-American students. All citizens should not be only entitled to apply for a position but they should be entitled to compete under the rule of equal terms. It is obvious that this demand does not care differences among people into account. However, the gap possibly occurring after the implementation of demand “b”, i.e. gap between male or female, able-bodied or disable, can be diminished by implementing the demand “a”, to illustrate providing them more affluent provisions by the state. But the injustice existing because of the absence of demand “b” cannot be diminished by implementing demand “a”. To illustrate, if someone wants to be doctor and this position is locked to white male because of some morally arbitrary reason, i.e. the medical school’s policy which reserves some place for female and African-American applicant, this is injustice since fair equal opportunities of being attached to some positions or offices might not be compensated by redistributing income or wealth (Brighthouse 2004: 51). However, such an affirmative action cannot be justified in rawlsian model of social justice, Rawls believes that these morally arbitrary actions can temporarily be implemented to compensate unjust past actions (Pogge 2007: 121), for instance, temporary reservation of some seats in the government offices for females because of inequalities between genders for centuries. So, under the condition of a social contract in which every member of the society recognizes these principles, Rawls considered that justice can be introduced to the society. Addition to what I summarized above, it should be noted one more vital difference in Rawls theory of justice. As I mentioned before, justice was seen as the virtue of individual in the studies of ancient Greeks and some early modern philosophers. However, in Rawls, justice is seen as the virtue of social institutions (Rawls 2005 [1971]: 586). His first claim is that moral assessment of a person or an action, like the perception of justice as the virtue of a person, cannot cope with complexities of

modern society. Individual moral analysis of an action assesses the individual's herself and, for instance, the deprivation of a person is explained in terms of her morally faulty conduct while in institutional moral analysis subject of question is the institutions as the agent to cause a person or a group's unjust conditions, which means Rawls focuses on basic social structures of the society (Fleurbaey *et al* 2008: 4-5). Obviously, there are some individual conducts which cause sorrows for others and they are no doubt morally faulty conducts like throw the garbage on the road or contamination of air and public water. Moral judgement of these actions might illustrate unjust conducts of some individuals, however these individualistic moral judgements do not enlighten our way in large-scale investigations for, let say, poverty and unemployment. These large-scale unjust circumstances require institutional analysis (Pogge 2007: 31) that Rawls claims. Therefore, his view on justice is not a comprehensive moral doctrine but a political conception to apply basic structure of the society that is its social and political institutions (Rawls 2001: 12). His emphasis on the necessity of institutional moral analysis brings a hypothetical state of society, in Rawls's words "well-ordered society", into agenda. In such a society, the public criteria of justice are accepted by everyone; its main political and social institutions, that is its basic structure, and how they are working compatibly with each other are known by public; and its citizens have normally effective sense of justice and by this way they can live compatibly with these basic institutions (Rawls 2005 [1993]: 35). It seems that Rawls's conceptualization on justice is somewhere between egalitarian and libertarian understandings and gives importance to both of them. He draws on the one hand the importance of protecting the basic liberal rights of individuals while he claims on the other hand unequal distribution in support of most disadvantageous strata of the society and equal distribution of opportunities among all individuals.

So, what is right thing to do?

In other words, which theory of social justice gives the most comprehensive and satisfied responds to the needs and questions of contemporary world? I will try to follow the answers of these questions during next chapter.

Chapter II: The Capability Approach as a Promising Paradigm for Social Justice

In this chapter, I will follow the question of which theory of justice has a most proper answer toward the questions and contradictions of contemporary world. Despite various questions and criticism towards all approaches on social justice models mentioned above, no doubt that all of them have some contribution to the issue. So, let me remind you the question again, what is right thing to do in the chaos of all these social justice models?

It is now obvious that the answers differ. What is right thing to do is answered by respecting to liberties, merit and entitlement by libertarians while utilitarian model is going over by drawing the attention to the majority's advantage. A criticism to these two models is surely that utilitarianism attaches intrinsic importance to the utilities of individuals involved but not illustrates sufficient interest to the abuses or fulfilment of rights while libertarian point of view concentrates on fulfilment or violation of rights and not enough importance to the level of utilities or economic advantages (Sen 2007: 61-2). At the other side, rawlsian model qualifies the importance of liberties like how libertarians evaluate the justice and; it adds an inseparable part to this idea as well, namely, the difference principle. In this context, Rawls model is a combination of both libertarian and egalitarian concerns. However, despite the fact that rawlsian model sees the importance to take the differences of people into account, it does not include any answer for the question as how can the equal basic rights be converted as basic fair opportunities? Accordingly, in the process of conversion of the equal basic rights to basic opportunities which can be varied from person to person, rawlsian model does not give a satisfactory answer concerning to how the benefits of people can be justified. To illustrate, Rawls theory of justice is blind to severe mental and physical disabilities (Pogge 2007: 39), so the question is that how can people, who are not able-bodied, convert their basic rights like free basic education, political engagement or employment into opportunities under the circumstances in which their personal conditions do not allow them to experience these rights? That

question refers another criticism that, in Rawlsian model of justice, basic liberties are seen as ends but not as means that allow the people to pursue their own ends. Addition to these questions towards rawlsian model, one another criticisms rises around the ranking or lexical ordering between basic rights and basic goods. As mentioned earlier, Rawls in his two principles gives the priority to the first principle regarding to basic liberties. If, let say, voting right as an end is one of the basic liberties for a citizen who is disable to walk and not able to go for voting, how this political right will be experienced with the absence of a crucial primary good, say, wheel-chair, by this disable citizen. Therefore, ranking order between basic liberties and primary goods seems arguable. This critic also refers to that libertarian rights are seen as ends in Rawls's model of justice, but not as means that allow people to pursue their own ends. Therefore, the justice conceptualization of Rawls needs to be accompanied what is emphasized by the capability approach as substantive freedom which draws a framework to actualize people's rights.

It is obvious that the rawlsian model of social justice that overcomes some major limitations of utilitarian and libertarian models faces with some constraints as well. All models mentioned above produce somehow inequalities, or injustice¹³ among people. How their constraints can be overcome, in other words, the capability approach will be the subject of my discussion later on in this chapter.

1. Details of the Approach in the Abstractive Level

Equality is not merely associated with the redistribution of wealth, income, rights or liberties, but it should be considered whether this redistribution allows citizens

¹³ Beyond the debate, being just or unjust has generally two connotations. In first, they are issues for individual moral assessments and in the second for social and institutional analysis. They have been used by ancient Greeks and early modern political philosophers in the connotation of individual moral assessment. However, in my discussion, the terms justice and injustice are the subjects of social and institutional analysis as what they are in the model of Rawls as well. Since, after the first part of the chapter, the discussion will continue over not individual moral assessments but institutional and social assessment, the term injustice and/or justice will be replaced with inequality and/or equality during the following discussion.

For detailed discussion on differences and similarities between such concepts: (See, Miller 1999: 230-44).

to satisfy their own ends as well. In this context, the ends are not redistributions of these elements, but what people can do and can be after such redistribution. Therefore, equality can be defined as to recognizing diversified needs of people, different situations in which such needs are embedded and; removing barriers in front of what people can do and can be (Department for Communities and Local Government 2007: 126).

The demand for equality can be varied. To illustrate, income equality may be major equality demand for some while equality in the realm of libertarian rights may be main request for some others. Moreover, equality can be in contradiction with what we call as freedom. It is possible to observe, for example, equal rights in terms of freedom of enterprise or establishing a commercial association can be resulted with income or earning gaps among entrepreneurs according to their different talents used during the process of running their own companies and individual successes. Because of extensive human diversity, namely all people are not exactly similar; equality in one space, e.g. equality in the space of income, would tend to produce inequality in another space, e.g. inequality in the space of wellbeing, health and happiness. Thus, as a formula, equality in one space may take us in a very different place from equality in the space of other variables (Sen 1992: 20). This formula can be associated with social justice theories mentioned above.

Let's, for example, consider the perspective of Nozick, justice as entitlements. Demanding equal entitlements or requesting equal libertarian rights as the basis of social order would be concluded with the results undermining the basis of equality of incomes, wealth or utility (Ibid. 131). If equality in the space of income is being demanded, there is no space anymore to demand equality in the space of liberty or, vice versa.

In this discussion, Sen points out that instead of requesting equality in terms of one variable or one single space, the question "equality of what" should firstly be asked. Equality of what: Equality of income, equality of resources, equality of

happiness level, equality of well-being or equality of rights and basic liberties? The spaces can be multiplied.

In this regard, it is highly possible that choosing one space above would not be a right and satisfied selection. However, choosing the multiple spaces all together is not possible as well since they have contradictive natures with each other, e.g. equality of liberties and equality of utilities. So, the demand for equality, then, should be established on a different context. The answer for this question is the central in this part of the study.

Now, I will continue in the following writings of this chapter with some main concepts of my focus, namely, with the concepts of substantive freedom and capability.

As I criticized above, having certain goods or certain amount of income does not necessarily solve the question of freedom to achieve certain goals of people. At this point, remembering the disabled individual who needs to be mobilized to go and vote in the elections can be explanatory. What is crucial here is to not only possessing certain rights as having right to vote in the elections for everyone including disabled individuals, but to have freedom to actualize this right for that person as well, i.e. possessing wheelchair to be mobilize herself in order for going and voting. In such example, the freedom is defined as to have a right to vote in the election while substantive freedom is being defined as being able to go for voting. Namely, there is precisely strong difference between freedom regarding to certain goals of individual and being capable to actualize this freedom. Therefore, my first emphasis is on substantive freedom.

Emphasis on substantive freedom also refers to the question of conversion or being able to convert certain means to the personal ends which individuals attribute value. To illustrate this problem, let's consider another example. A poor person's freedom to avoid being undernourishment would certainly depend on the resources that she holds as, let say, certain amount of income or primary goods. However, it is also inevitable that we have to take some personal differences of

her into account as metabolic rates, gender, state of being pregnant, exposure to parasitic diseases and climatic environment in which she lives (Ibid. 33). Accordingly, freedom to avoid from undernourishment does not only depend on primary goods of such woman holds, but her personal and external conditions to be able to convert these primary goods into personal ends. Therefore, similarly to possessing certain rights, possessing certain amount of goods is also very imperfect indicator by itself for the assessment of freedom that an individual enjoys. That means personal and social characteristic of different people can possibly lead to substantial interpersonal variations in terms of converting the resources they possess into their personal ends (Ibid. 38). In this context, let's imagine two different individuals. One of them is single, middle-aged male who is unemployed. The other one is middle-aged, disable, unemployed single mother having two kids. Rather than trying to equalize these individuals' income originated from unemployed insurance, it is more significant to focus their different capability levels to actualize their personal needs and ends that they reason to value. Because, the benefit level, in other words, well-being level of these two individuals will be dramatically influenced by their own circumstances. That is my second emphasis on the importance of substantive freedom that is determined by their *personal* and *external* conditions.

Now, it is time to turn the attention towards what the capability is in the context of my discussion. Capability is the primarily a reflection of being free and able to achieve certain personal ends which are valuable in terms of individuals' own preferences. As can be easily understood, in the capability-based assessment of justice or equality, it is not mainly concentrated on the primary goods or resources that individuals' possess. Instead of it, in capability-based judgement, substantive freedom that individuals enjoy is the main point of view. In this context, it can be easily understood now that antithetically to utility-based or resource-based considerations, individuals' advantages are assessed in the capability-based investigations by a person's capability level to do things he or she has reason to value (Sen 2009: 231). Because, a person's advantage to benefit from an

opportunity or right may be lower than another person who is able to convert this right to personal end is higher and thus, equal opportunities which are provided to both of them may cause unequal satisfaction or benefit in the end. Sen argues that social arrangements should be regulated according to the perspective widening the content of freedom of people in order for improving their objectives that they give importance. Therefore, if it is inevitable to choose a space in which equality is demanded, it should be demanded in the space of capabilities (Alkire 2005a: 4), which explains why it is insisted in this thesis that the equality of capability to function personal ends is the significant perspective.

A summarizer paragraph may be fruitful at the end of this part of the chapter. Capability approach shifts the attention from equality of commodity ownership or material equality -e.g. income- to the equality of endowments or capabilities -e.g. being able to be educated and/or being able to live a decent life. Therefore, it is claimed by the approach that the proper focus for policies should be equalization of capabilities themselves (Grusky and Kanbur 2006: 29), rather than the equalization of commodity ownerships or income.

2. Details of the Approach in the Concrete Level

I have been trying to explain the place of capability-based inquiries in the realm of social justice models up to here in order to help the reader to grasp the uniqueness of the approach. Now, let me then go forward in the approach in terms of more concrete points on which the capability-based inquiry rises.

However, I need at the beginning to note again that the capability approach is a normative theoretical framework, but not a single policy implementation. It refers to the assessment of personal wellbeing and social arrangements, the design of policies, and proposals about social change in the whole society. Because of the approach these focal points, it is being used in a wide range of fields and most prominently in the development studies, welfare economics, social policy and political philosophy. Moreover, it can also be used to evaluate several specific aspects of people's wellbeing, such as inequality, poverty, wellbeing of

individuals or the average wellbeing of the members of a particular group and community (Robeyns 2005: 94).

The question at that point, what is new about the approach in terms of these fields and aspects or why is the capability approach accepted as a new paradigm in the realms of these related fields? Starting discussion from that point of view may be helpful and make the debate easier in this study's context.

It can superficially be said that, on the one hand, development has been discussed in terms of income deprivations; in other words, it has been considered by majority of scientists in terms of Gross National Product (GNP)¹⁴ before the capability-based perspective was introduced. However, the capability approach, which takes care into account of the differential vectors of human world in terms of external and internal features, indicates multi-dimensional varieties of parameters and vectors, which determines development and, particularly, human development strategies. One of the main implications of the approach, therefore, emphasizes that differentiated characteristics of human's social, economic, environmental and constitutional aspects determined by diversified external and internal conditions of human beings do not allow us to make generalization on variables of welfare conditions, particularly, on the issues of inequality, development and poverty.

By Sen's own words,

“(…) The capability approach to a person's advantage is concerned with evaluating it in terms of his or her actual ability to achieve various valuable functionings¹⁵ as a part of living. The corresponding approach to social advantage -for aggregative appraisal as well as for the choice of institutions and policy- takes the set of individual capabilities as constituting an indispensable and central part of the relevant informational base of such evaluation” (Sen 1993: 30).

¹⁴ Obviously, discussion on, generally, development and, particularly, human development were not that simple before capability approach as well. Both of them were considered in terms of many variables and there is no rejection in this study on the importance of these studies. However, this debate is beyond the limits of my discussion in here.

¹⁵ This term, functionings, has a special usage in Sen's writings. Addition to this term, some other special terms will be tried to explain in following part of the chapter.

As I mentioned above, the emphasis on individuals' divergent capabilities and needs make obligatory for us that every assessment on inequality and poverty should take differentiated characteristics of humans into account.

Before starting to denote on the basic concepts of the approach, it can be fruitful to understand what I meant by implying on "differentiated characteristics of humans' internal and external conditions".

"The extent of capability deprivation can be quite remarkably high in the world's most affluent countries. For example, a study by McCord and Freeman (1990), presented in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, indicates that men in the Harlem region of the prosperous city of New York have less chance of reaching the age of 40 or more than Bangladeshi men have. This is not because the residents of Harlem have lower incomes than the average Bangladeshi does. The phenomenon is more connected with the problems of health care, inadequacy of medical attention, the prevalence of urban crime, and other factors that affect the basic capabilities of the Harlem resident" (Sen 1992: 114).

As mentioned above, life expectancy and quality of life do not depend merely a single variable like income or possessing some certain material, but they have multi-dimensional characteristic that consists human capabilities to achieve some valuable functionings that individuals have reason to attribute value.

Another example can be given on India, and one of its less developed region, Kerela:

"Among the Indian states, Kerala has one of the lower real incomes per head but by a long margin the highest life expectancy at birth - over 70 years (compared with around 57 years for India as a whole). Its infant mortality rate is, correspondingly, much lower than the Indian average. Kerala also has a much higher level of general literacy (91 percent, as opposed to the Indian average of 52 percent), and particularly female literacy (87 percent compared with the national average of 39 percent). Indeed, Kerala's achievements for many crucially important functionings are not only very much better than those of the rest of India, but they have an edge some fields - especially with respect to women- even over China and Sri Lanka. For example, the low female-male ratio that characterizes China as well as India as a whole (around 0.93), in contrast with substantial excess of females over males in Europe, North America, and Sub-Saharan

Africa does not apply to Kerala. The female-male ratio for Kerala is 1,04 which is very similar to the ratios around 1.05 in Europe and North America” (Sen 1992: 126-127).

It can be given a last example in order to understand that the role of GNP on life expectancy is not always crucial, which means that there is no way for making generalization such as increased GNP describes increased life expectancy or, sometimes, quality of life:

“In terms of per capita GNP, South Africa (2.470\$), Brazil (2.540\$), Gabon (2.960\$), and Oman (5.220\$) have six or more times the per capita GNP of China (\$350) and Sri Lanka (\$430). But these relatively richer countries give their people significantly lower ability to survive premature mortality (with life expectancies varying between 53 and 66 years) than do the two lower-income countries (with life expectancies around 70 years or more). Costa Rica, which is also considerably poorer than the first four countries, offers not only much higher life expectancy than those four (and other ‘upper-middle-income countries’), but a life expectancy that is not significantly below those obtaining in the richest countries of Europe and North America (with ten or more times Costa Rica’s GNP per head). For example, the USA with a GNP per head of 20.910\$ has a life expectancy at birth of 76 years, whereas Costa Rica with a GNP per head of only \$1.780 has already achieved a life expectancy of 75 years” (Sen 1992: 125-126).

Beyond the debate, GNP of the countries mentioned just above has been changed during last two decades. However, the main emphasizes in here is not about the amount of GNPs, but rather than the comparisons among the countries. Accordingly, what is important in here is the logic of comparison that is also illustrated by the following words of Kuklys and Robeyns:

“When he started to develop the approach (*Capability Approach*) in the early 1980s, Sen found that while the (roughly equivalent) GNP per capita of Brazil and Mexico are more than seven times the GNP per capita of India, China and Sri Lanka, functioning performance in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality and child death rates most favorable in Sri Lanka, and better in China compared to India and Mexico compared to Brazil. Although Sen used only three very basic functionings, he showed that ranking of countries based on GNP per capita can be quite different from the ranking based on the selected functionings” (Kuklys and Robeyns 2005: 9).

What is mainly emphasized in these quotations is that neither one vector such as GNP nor developmental processes and growth rates of countries are much effective to measure humans' quality of life by itself. Instead of these one-variable measurements or understandings, determinants of quality of life should have multi-functional characteristics that pull the researcher making multi-variable measurement. Such multi-variability refers to the capability of human affected by both internal and external conditions.

In accordance with the maintained perspective in the examples above, by taking mainly care of human diversities and external conditions which are in relation with individuals' internal diversities, capability approach is placed in different side of welfare analysis's mainstream understanding on development which approaches according to the material ownerships of humans.

Inquiries on such multi-dimensionality is obviously crucial for poverty and inequality questions in societal life of the countries as well, since these two areas of welfare economics need to be discussed by the similar perspective in which it is insisted that understanding inequality and poverty is not possible by having only one space approach as I mentioned in the previous part of this chapter. People can demand the equality in the space of opportunities, social rights, wealth, need-fulfillment, politic or civic rights, primary goods, resources or utilities. As opposed to the other theories on justice or equality, the capability approach does not demand justice or equality in only one space. The plurality of the spaces in human life indicates that the phenomena of equality necessities not only one space inquiries, but varied realms of human lives. At that point, addition to substantive freedom, diversity is the key concept as well. I will discuss on this point comprehensively in the following parts.

As a summary and conclusion for this part of my study, it can be understood that commodity ownership, wealth or income is surely important but not the ultimate ends. Similar to what has emphasized by Adam Smith centuries ago, Sen also emphasizes that economic growth and the expansion of goods and services are

necessary for human development. But, addition to Smith's contribution, Sen also reiterates, like Aristotle's familiar argument, that "wealth is not the ultimate end that we are seeking for" in judging the quality of life. Because, it is claimed that individuals and societies typically differ in their capacity to convert income and commodities into valuable achievement (Clark 2006: 34). In one of his first manuscripts on the issue, he claims, throughout Marx's words, that economic development and accordingly human development have to be concerned with "replacing the domination circumstances and chance over individuals by the domination of individuals over chance and circumstances" (Sen 1983b: 754). To accomplish this "replacement", according to him, instead of assessing mainly on the amount of wealth and/or income that people or societies possess, concentrating on what people can or cannot do by using such wealth or income is vital.

3. Key Concepts of the Approach

To understand what capability approach tells to us, it is crucial to get the meaning of some specific concepts. These terms are obviously used in different context than daily usage in the theory and they refer to the different dimensions of human life. Besides that, terms have roots from ancient writings of Aristotle and the theoretical background of the terms goes back to the writings of some philosophers such as Adam Smith, Kant, Marx and John Stuart Mill.

Addition to this introductory information on the concepts, I should say that usage of these terms has been changed during years in the writings of Sen. He declared a couple of times in different writings that capability, for example, is not sufficient term to grasp what he meant; instead of it, freedom might have been more precise to explain the theory¹⁶.

¹⁶ It should be confessed that these kinds of changes in time make difficult to understand sometimes the core points in the writings of scholars and make necessary to check also what is meant by a specific term in another writings.

There are several terms that are presented below. However, this part of the research does not consider on what capability is as a separate headline, since it is the theory's itself and whole research is related with and established on this term. Nonetheless, addition to the logic and some empirical evidences on the capability approach that I submitted above, I need to briefly mention some important details on it in here as well.

The capability can, on the first hand, defined as a person's ability to do valuable actions or dignified states of being and (Walker and Unterhalter 2007: 2), thus it is considered as a substantive freedom of an individual to achieve or being something that she gives importance in terms of her own life choices. An individual's capability, on the second hand, refers to the alternative combinations of functionings (Mehrotra 2008: 386) which are valuable for individuals' themselves and possibly be performable in reality. More technically, it is being defined by Sen that capability is a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the individual's freedom to choose one type of life or another (Sen 1992: 40). In other words, functionings are achievements whereas capabilities are about the abilities to achieve. In this context, functionings are related with living conditions while capabilities, in contrast, are related with the notion of freedom meaning that what a person's real opportunities are (Sen 2001: 36).

The difference between these two terms can be summarized throughout an example given by Sen. Consider two persons who both do not eat sufficiently and thus are not able to enable the functioning of being well nourished. The first person is an individual from Ethiopia while the second is the one who decided to go a hunger strike in front of the Chinese embassy in Washington to protest against the foreign policy of China towards Tibet. Although, both of them lack the functioning of being well nourished, the freedom they had to avoid being hungry is quite distinct. While both of these hungry individuals lack the achieved functioning of being well nourished and hunger free, the protester in Washington has the capability to achieve this functioning (Robeyns 2003: 11).

It is also necessary to put the difference between what are called as “capabilities” and “basic capabilities”. In works of Sen, “basic capabilities” refers to a subset of all capabilities, which means that freedom to be able to satisfy some basic needs that are necessary for survival and/or avoiding poverty. Sen does not submit any definite list of valuable basic capabilities because of some considerations¹⁷, although he mentions some elementary basic capabilities that are “the ability to be well nourished and well-sheltered, the capability of escaping avoidable morbidity and premature mortality, and so forth” (Ibid. 45). According to the Alkire, basic capabilities are closely linked with basic needs with reference to absolute harm, instead of wants, needs, desires or preferences of individuals (Alkire 2002: 157). Addition to this point of view, Alkire claims that basic capabilities with reference to basic needs should be defined according to two criteria: First criterion says they need to be defined according to what is fundamental in order to avoid harm. Second criterion is associated with the generality, meaning that these capabilities should allow to be applied to different situations (Ibid. 160). Except for these two criteria, the other determinants of the basic capabilities should be defined according to the cultures’, context of the researches and societies’ particular conditions, e.g. heating-fuel may be basic needs in northern countries but, not for countries around Ecuador regions.

While basic capabilities are considered as capabilities to help meeting the basic human needs, on the other hand, the term capabilities refers to a wider range of functionings rather than being only survive, namely more complex and personal ends of individuals, e.g. having bicycle for a kid who likes to cycling, wheel-chair for a walking-disable, special swimming suit for swimmers or stretcher and may be some special paintbrushes for painters.

Nussbaum makes the distinction between capabilities in a broader framework. Namely, she distinguishes the capabilities as basic, internal and combined capabilities. By the way of basic capabilities she emphasizes the innate equipment

¹⁷ These considerations will be mentioned briefly in the part regarding to critics toward the approach below.

of individuals, necessary basis for developing more advanced capabilities. However, these capabilities are considerably rudimentary by themselves and they cannot be converted directly into a functioning. Secondly, in the context of internal capabilities, she refers to some sufficient and mature conditions in order to be able to exercise of requisite functions. According to her, basic and internal capabilities are depended each other to be exercised. Lastly, she mentions about the combined capabilities in which internal and basic capabilities come together (Nussbaum 2001: 84-5). To illustrate, a newborn child has a tongue to speech but needs to develop her brain to learn how to talk. In this example, having tongue to talk is the basic necessity to be able to talk. However, to convert this capability into functioning, infant needs to learn how to talk from her environment. After the infant learnt to talk and became ready to talk; now, she needs a space in which she is able to experience what she is able to do such as being free to talk or having no limitation to express her ideas, which all are combined capability.

After this parenthesis, let me turn my attention back to the core concepts of the approach. The capability approach's self-appointed concepts can be categorized under two different roofs. First roof covers the concepts of functioning and agency that are special to the approach. Under the second roof, it is possible to see the concepts that are commonly used in social sciences' literature but have different connotations in the approach, such as freedom and diversity.

2.1. The Concept of Functioning

The term function, in terms of its meaning, is clear and simple in daily usage. It can be defined as to operate, run or perform something. However, in the context of the approach, such concept refers to individuals' capability to be able to actualize or perform something valuable and reasoned. In this context, functioning is being defined as being able to perform some valuable and reasoned ends of individuals, meaning "beings and doings". Being means that, for example, being respected from society, being well-nourished or being in confidence and; doings means that, let say, taking part in a group decision or participation society's decisions, for example, in referendums. In this regard, the term of functioning, or

with a better say “entity of functionings”, disposes the capability approach different place than other approaches because of it particularly gives the importance to what individuals are able to be or do.

The term functioning is discussed in Sen’s works in terms of people’s effectual chances to undertake the actions and activities that they see valuable to be engaged in, and be whom they wish to be (Robeyns 2005: 95). In this context of discussing the term functioning illustrates being healthy, being literate, being respected, engaged in political participation, being part of a community, working, resting and so on. What is important or core of this term is having freedom in order for pursuing a kind of life that people consider as valuable for themselves.

Addition to this, the concept in the approach gives opportunity to researchers to operationalize the content of it differently than other researches’ perceptions. For example, valuable and reasoned functionings for women working in the agricultural sector with less than certain amount of income in, let say, Northern Black Sea Region can be different than young working poor in the Mediterranean Region, since the external conditions covering these two groups, the cultures they feel sense of belonging, climatic differences and interpersonal differences such as gender, metabolic differences, varied life perceptions etc. can lead to define valuable functionings different than each other for these two groups of research. Namely, what functionings is can be thought by some as being political participation or having some specific civic rights to be engaged in society. But, for some others, it can be considered as being in productivity in terms of evaluating financial resources or for others, it can be thought having opportunities in social and cultural practices. This means that variables of functionings can be changed by person-to-person, groups-to-groups or cultures-to-cultures. Although, the content of the concept can be varied in different researches, the logic that such concept is built on is same as what people can be or do. Therefore, it can be interpreted that what is important about functioning variables is the choices, needs and acceptances of subject groups or individuals of the research. Namely,

functionings is being considered in the realm of metaphors of “being able to” and “able to do”¹⁸.

One another core point about the concept of functioning is its distinction from the perception on what people have as goods and services. Goods and services provided to individuals can be seen as a vector of income of individuals. However, functionings is the vector of wellbeing for individuals. Let’s take one of favorite example in the approach being used to explain this difference. Bicycle is a common example in Sen’s works. Bicycle is just a good that can be bought by a certain amount of money and it has certain shape and color. Having bicycle is not important by itself, but it is important to provide an opportunity to us in order to reach somewhere faster than walking and, essentially, this characteristic of bicycle makes it bicycle, but not only its certain shape constructed by some empty iron pipes. Only possessing this good does not make sense if there is no meaning or opportunity to use it in order for going somewhere faster than walking. Accordingly, both having and able to use it together enable this bicycle as functioning (Sen 1983a: 160).

At that point, it can be significant to note that the relation between a good and its functioning in order to achieve certain beings or doings is affected by two groups of conversion factors. Conversion factors can be defined as the entities to help or hinder the translation of commodities into functionings (Grasso 2002: 5). Two different conversion factors can be mentioned in the simplest form¹⁹. The first is

¹⁸ In this context, one point needs to be emphasized that Sen questions one of primary proposals of Rawls on the equality in the space of primary goods. Rawls’s claim to equality in the primary goods among people, according to Sen, cannot yield in the realm of wellbeing that is better illustration for quality of life than possessing certain amount of goods. To illustrate, certain amount of rice can be thought a primary good for a Thai citizen. However, same amount of rice would be converted radically different levels by physically vigor child in Thailand and by a disabled teenager or an elderly woman in China. In this critic, Sen argues that Rawls’s reasoning should be broadened as to take greater note of contingency of external and interpersonal differences of individuals. According to him, the related research on the deprivation level and equality of people should be interested in what individuals are actually able to do or be, meaning their functionings, but not in the pounds of rice they consume (Alkire 2005a: 5-6).

¹⁹ Actually, the conversion factors are more than two, namely, according to Sen five different conversion factors can be mentioned. I will enlighten this point further on.

personal conversion factors that refer to personal conditions of a person to use commodities, for example, being not disabled for using bicycle or knowing how to cycle. It includes metabolism, physical condition, reading skills, intelligence etc. The second is social conversion factors that refer to opportunities provided by social norms and institutions, for example, not existences limitations for women to use bicycle in a society or no need to be accompanied by a male to use bicycle for women. This type of factors includes infrastructure, institutions, public goods, public policies, social norms, discriminating practices, gender roles, societal hierarchies, power relations etc. (Robeyns 2000: 5).

At last point, it may be useful to grasp the difference between functionings and capability. According to Sen, a functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. Functionings are related to living conditions because of they are different aspects of living conditions. On the other hand, capabilities are notions of freedom, in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead (Sen, 1987: 36). This formula on the distinction between capability and functioning means that whereas functioning is “beings and doings” of an individual, an individual’s capability is the various combinations of functionings that the individual can achieve (Robeyns 2000: 4). The difference between functioning and capability, as a conclusion, is based on that the former one is achieved outcomes and the latter one is about the potential to achieve these functionings (Walker and Unterhalter 2007: 4). Thus, capability and functioning are intimately connected with each other. However, they are independently useful concepts too (Alkire *et al* 2008: 3).

However, there is no definite universal list for what valuable functionings for people in all over the world, since the valuable functionings can be varied by region to region, culture to culture, group to group and even by person to person. That means that different sets of functioning will be valid for different people in

distinct settings and even different individuals in the same settings²⁰ (Sen 2005a: 158-9).

2.2. The Concept of Diversity

Concept of diversity, or as sometimes said, plurality, emphasizes that there is not any limit to set or create capabilities to flourish human life. According to Sen, valuable capabilities can be in wide range of spectrum from person to person, group to group and society to society in terms of their different characteristics, social structure, cultural distinctions, preferences etc. Sometimes the valuable capabilities can be vital like drinking clear water or being nourished for surviving and, sometimes, less central and life-sustaining such as going to cinema or riding the bicycle. Surely, it is possible to make a separation regarding to which capabilities are vital and indispensable. However, according to Sen, considerations of living standard encompass all valued functionings (Alkire 2005a: 9) since considerations of living standard can vary according to person-to-person and/or society-to-society. That means what I consider as important for my life can be different and/or invalid for another. This depends on someone's personal advantages and particular conditions in which an individual pursues her own life. Addition to this, it is worth to mention that individual's benefits from her capabilities can be assessed in a broad spectrum from her elementary needs such as nutritional status to more complex manner such as actualization of self-esteem (Ibid. 9). This is the emphasis on the importance of context depended definition of deprivation and poverty on which I will introduce a discussion later on. So, in the approach, this is another central point that the diversity of the valuable capabilities flourishing human life is crucial to be taken into account.

Let me start with an example. One's personal objectives or ends can be in relation with accomplishing some leading position in swimming tournament which necessities a committed workout in the swimming pool and some special suits or equipments. However, another person's objectives can be in relation with accomplishing some leading position also in chess-master tournaments that do not

²⁰ I will discuss on this point in depth during the part sixth.

necessity the same infrastructural ordering or equipments of the swimmer. Beyond the debate, the necessities are varied according to different objectives although; the ultimate aim is similar, i.e. accomplishing a leading position in the communities of swimmers or chess-masters.

Obviously, the differences in individual's benefits from personal capabilities which are in relation with personal capabilities can be ranged between lower needs (or aims) to higher needs (or aims) as well. This emphasis claims two points: First, the diversity of the needs should be taken into account while assessing the individual benefits from personal capabilities and, the second is the cruciality to avoid making a certain formula regarding to which capabilities are vital, since it is usually arguable that some certain capabilities are valuable in different samples, i.e. different cultures, groups, nations.

It is obvious to see that wide ranges of human diversity in terms of many aspects of human life and wide ranges of personal capabilities are needed to be taken into account. Comim draws the attention to this point and he emphasizes (2001: 6) that there are many sources of the diversity among humans, which needs to be taken into account, during the policy analysis process. Sen identifies as the most important of these sources by introducing five different categories as personal heterogeneities, environmental diversities, variations in social climate, differences in relational perspectives and distribution within the family (Sen 1999: 70-1; 2009: 255-6-7). While the first type of diversity as personal heterogeneities refers to the internal conditions of people, the other four refer to the external conditions that are needed to be taken into account.

Before giving a detailed content of these five different labels, let me firstly explain what is implied with external and internal conditions of individuals. By the way of external conditions, the stress is on varied occurrences surrounding the human life. It is possible that someone starts the life with different endowments of inherited wealth or in different natural atmosphere. She can be born in Gaza region filled with hostile actions or Stockholm surrounded with welfare

implications. People can come to the world in different societies or communities in which opportunities provided them can dramatically be differed from each other. Besides that, internal conditions of a person can be varied as well, such as differences in age, sex, mental abilities or physical abilities. Therefore, what important is exactly the multi-dimensional analysis based on these internal and external differences. This multi-dimensionality refers to the diversity of the spaces that I mentioned above. The importance of multi-space measurement illustrates that utilitarian, libertarian or rawlsian model of social justice are in deficiencies. Because, what is important is the ability of a person to convert her material ownership or set of rights into a valuable activity.

“If the object is to concentrate on the individual’s real opportunity to pursue her objectives, then account would have to be taken not only of the primary goods the person holds, but also of the relevant personal characteristics that govern the conversion of primary goods into the person’s ability to promote her ends. For example, a person who is disabled may hold a larger basket of primary goods and yet have less chance to pursue her objectives than an able-bodied person with smaller basket of primary goods. Similarly, an older person or a person more prone to illness can be more disadvantaged in a generally accepted sense even with a larger bundle of primary goods” (Sen 1997a: 198).

So, diversity of human beings and various needs or personal objectives make necessary to conduct a multi-dimensional analysis. This is the one of the strengths of the capability approach, namely, it accounts for interpersonal and external variations in conversion of the characteristics of commodities into functionings, which illustrates a radical shift away from the traditional welfarist evaluation in economics (Robeyns 2003: 17).

Before concluding this part, I need to present the content of five different sources of human diversity that are needed to be taken into account while analyzing policies. However, these sources can be considered as the preliminary sources of human diversity, which means, in different context or groups, cultures and societies, number of sources may be needed to be revised, increased or decreased according to the context. The first source of human diversity is defined as

personal heterogeneities including, let say, level of education, age, health status, gender, being single mother etc. The second source is defined as environmental diversities, e.g. physical environment, climate, regional differences or distinctions regarding to the provinces, districts etc. This source of diversity includes also the political environment referring to the political expressions, representation, freedom of speech, freedom to be elected or to vote. The third one is about the variations in the social climate, for example, variations concerning local culture, norms, social capital and so on. The fourth is the differences in relational perspectives, to illustrate, hierarchies, job relations etc. Last preliminary source of human diversity is put as the distribution within the family, e.g. concerning the equality of distribution of sources, fairness, prioritization between the genders or certain individuals etc. (Comim 2008: 166). These sources of human diversity should be taken into account while assessing any policy regarding to the capability deprivation of individuals since the sources are highly influencing on the personal conversion factors of the commodities that people hold or that are provided to the people from the state, an organization, an institution or a non-governmental organization. However, as I emphasized just above, it is important to avoid presenting any certain list of human diversity since the sources that have influences on the personal ability to benefit some policies can be varied according to the context in which the research is conducted. Therefore, the sources of human diversity introduced above should be considered as the preliminary entities of human capabilities.

Let me open the content of these preliminary sources of human diversity a little bit more by benefiting from the Sen's influential work called *Development as Freedom* (1999) in order to provide an insightful sketch.

First of all, personal heterogeneities can lead to varied needs. An ill person needs to be supported by medical treatment that is not necessary to be enjoyed by a healthy one or, income provided to the healthy one may not yield same quality of life for the ill one. Accordingly, for the sake of equality in terms of quality of life or for the sake of justice among different people, the compensation of

disadvantages is needed. This compensation makes necessary to take the personal heterogeneities into account. Secondly, environmental diversities let say the climatic differences such as temperature ranges, snowy or rainy climates have influences also on the quality of life of people. People's income level or material ownership, more generally commodities, is affected by the environmental diversities. Extra clothing may be need in northern Russia but may not be much crucial for the Russian regions around Black Sea. The environmental diversities include also the political factors such as freedom of speech, to be elected or voting in the democratic participation. The Afghan women can be a good example for this debate. If she cannot take a walk on the street unless she has a company from one of male members of her family, this means that political environment surrounding her cannot be compensated by providing to her more commodities or specifically an increased level of income. What she needs is something different than income, namely an alternation in the political environment she is surrounded.

The conversion of the personal commodity ownership into quality of life is also sharply influenced by the social climate around people. Absence of crime and violence, the nature of the relationships in the community and issues on pollution are not only environmentally shaped but also socially influenced entities. Differences in relational perspectives have influences on the commodity requirements and established patterns of behavior can be varied according to the differences in relational perspectives among communities, societies. As Sen always emphasizes, being relatively poor in a rich community can lead an exclusion of the poor to experience some elementary functionings which are valuable and reasoned because of some particular customs of that society. The person's income, in absolute terms, may be higher than average income of some poorer societies', but it would be still valid to say that she will be deprived or, with the words of Adam Smith, "not able to be appear in the public without shame" since she cannot experience some functionings defined as vital according to the customs of the community in which she lives. Although, it was written more than two centuries ago, Smith summarizes this question well:

“By necessities I understand, not only the commodities which are indispensably necessary for the support of life, but whatever the custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order, to be without. A linen shirt for example, is, strictly speaking, not a necessary of life. The Greeks and Romans lived, I suppose, very comfortably, though they had no linen. But in the present times, through the greater part of the Europe, a creditable day-laborer would be ashamed to appear in public without a linen shirt, the want of which would be supposed to denote that disgraceful degree of poverty, which, it is presumed, nobody can well fall into without extreme bad conduct. Custom, in the same manner, has rendered leather shoes a necessary of life in England. The poorest creditable person, of either sex, would be ashamed to appear in public without them. (...) In France, they are necessities neither to men nor to women, the lowest rank of both sexes appearing there publicly, without any discredit, sometimes in wooden shoes and sometimes in barefooted” (Smith 2009 [1776]: 519).

As is clear from above, differences in the relational perspectives of the communities in which individuals live are needed to be considered as well. Lastly, distribution within the family is another significant source of human diversity. The freedom and the wellbeing of the members are also associated with how these incomes and commodities are shared within the family. If the earned income or owned commodities that the family rules are generally invested to take the male members’ futures under guarantee, i.e. investment on the schooling of boys, this tendency makes obviously a major negative difference in terms of girls’ attainments in their life course. Therefore, distributional rules within the family have also major influences on flourishing the capability of the household members (Sen 1997b: 385-6; 1999: 70-1; 2009: 255-6-7).

2.3. The Concept of Freedom

First of all, I need to denote that capability approach gives chances people to define their own ends and gives right to express their own ideas on their deprived conditions. Addition to this, it claims that the evaluation of the policies should be conducted according to these expressed ideas and the definition of ends people presents. This is called as democracy that can, in the most simplistic form, be defined as ruled by people themselves instead of ruled by experts or guardians

(Deneulin and Crocker 2005: 1). Freedom to decide what is valuable for one's own life has the intrinsic importance in the approach since the freedom itself is the indispensable part of human dignity. The idea of democracy and democratic freedom to participate the decision-making process towards one's own life is crucial also in terms of the aspect called "agency" that I will introduce in this chapter below.

It should secondly be emphasized that focusing just on the functioning, or "achieved functionings" which is repeatedly used by Sen in order to imply a person's functionings he or she has successfully accomplished, is not sufficient since such concentration does not complete the picture. At that point, the concept of freedom comes to play and it is mainly related with a person's capability but it has different dimensions as well.

Freedom does not make itself meaningful sufficiently on its own. What important is to have the opportunity to realize this freedom, which has been summarized by the emphasis on substantive freedom above. Besides to this emphasis, I need to clarify some additional points such as "opportunity freedom" and "freedom into process". According to Sen, capability is ultimately a set of vectors of functionings that illustrates an individual's freedom to lead one type of life or another (Sen 1992: 40). It can be interpreted that capability is being defined around the question of freedom to choose valuable and reasoned ends that an individual assesses as a personal end for her own reasons. In that sense, the concept of freedom is concerned with having opportunities that a person can realize. This means that there is no sense to have a right or freedom to stay in a luxury hotel room if she has no financial or personal ability to afford to this accommodation. The importance of substantive freedom comes into play at that point and it takes the attention to the ability of the individual to realize this end, i.e. staying in a luxury hotel room. Let me now to widen the discussion in terms of opportunity freedom and process freedom.

First of all, it is necessary to imply that freedom is valuable since it gives us more opportunity to follow our personal and public ends. This dimension is important in terms of our actual ability to realize the objective that we attach value, which is summarized with the concept of substantive freedom. However, the process in which such freedom is actualized is also crucial. Process aspect of the freedom indicates that, “in which process and under what conditions, the outcome of free choice is actualized”. To illustrate, if the outcome of choice comes true because of a kind of coercive power imposed on individual herself from outside, it does not meaningful to say that individual has a freedom of choice. It is not important that the outcome of choice is the same or not with the results of free to chose without any coercive power imposed. The process in which individual is free to choice one type of objective or another is considerable as well. Let me quote one of the well-definitive examples of Sen to explain the distinction and connection between opportunity freedom and process freedom (Sen 2009: 228-9).

A kind lady tries to decide what she can do during her Sunday holiday. She would prefer staying inside the home and do nothing instead of hanging out with her friends during such a sunny holiday. If she is able to do what she exactly wants, let call this situation as “Scenario A”. As an alternative to this situation, imagine that there exists a military coup and it is suggested by soldiers to her that she should not go out unless she wants to be punished severely; accordingly, she decided to stay inside the home. Let call this as the “Scenario B”. The core point at this stage is to decide whether this lady’s freedom is violated in Scenario B, although the possible outcome of the Scenario B is similar with what is expected to be done in Scenario A -staying inside the home and do nothing-. The outcomes of the scenarios are the same; however, the processes in which the outcomes for the lady are diametrically opposite. If the process is ignored or kept the outside of any assessment, it is also impossible to mention about the opportunity. Because, staying in home in scenario B is not an opportunity anymore, but is an imposed necessity by military and this illustrates intrinsic connection between opportunity freedom and process freedom. So, any logical interpretation, I hope, would

express the “idea” that if the outcome is similar or exactly the same, no matter what the process is. Therefore, first, not only the outcomes of choice, but the process in which the individual reaches the outcome is crucial as well. Second, freedom can be violated “through either inadequate processes or unequal opportunities” (Sen 1999: 17). To sum up, opportunity freedom is associated with having an opportunity or ability to achieve, while process freedom is about process in which things are happening. So, capability is closely linked with opportunity freedom whereas agency is connected with personal process of freedoms (Alkire *et al* 2008: 4).

2.4. The Concept of Agency

In addition to functioning, human diversity and freedom, the term agency is also seen in the writings of Sen. It refers to what a person can do in order to achieve valuable functionings for herself. The term agency is defined as its dependency to the actor, namely, the agent. Agent is the person who acts and brings about change. What is important, according to Sen, is that the acts of agent can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, independently from what is accepted as right or wrong by some external criteria (Sen 1999: 19). This kind of agency aspect is crucial in terms of the emphasis on the substantive freedom of the capability approach. An individual’s agency aspect, in the perception of Sen, is based on the freedom of choice or individual’s pursuits of whatever her goals or values are, namely, what the person is free to do and achieve to be (Sen 1985a: 203).

By the way of emphasis on the agency, the approach’s main attempt is to denote the importance of personal expression of goals, objectives and fostering the public debate. Since an individual should be considered as a free participant of economic, social and political actions in the societal life, she is taken into account as the agent who has rights and abilities to decide what determinants are valuable to shape her life, instead of being shaped by an external and/or a coercive power.

Obviously, it may be possible to observe that some outcomes of personal decisions of the free agent can be resulted with less happier or less satisfied consequences in relation with some other agents. However, these outcomes ultimately will be reasoned and legitimized by the ends of the agent herself, which refers to the individual's own ability to take the action for her own goals.

Why agency is important in the approach is also associated with that the agency freedom refers also the collective action and democratic participation of the individual. Addition to the intrinsic essentiality of the agency freedom for individuals, it is also worth to be considered as an instrument to enrich the collective action and democratic participation of the citizens since these actions are inseparable from human wellbeing (Alkire 2005b: 3).

4. Some Concluding Remarks on the Capability Approach

In its broadest form, the capability approach can be seen as a new paradigm in related fields (Robeyns 2003: 8). Addition to the links toward more contemporary figures like John Rawls²¹ and Isaiah Berlin²², by capability approach, Sen brings together mainly three leading figures in social science literature. First one is Aristotle and his writings on “political distribution” in terms of human flourishing or, with the terms of today, the human development. The second is Adam Smith and his perspective on the necessities that are required in order to “be in the public without any shame”. The third one is concerned with the human freedom and emancipation that was presented appropriately by Marx in his superficial definition of living conditions in which the importance of the personal ends summarized by the following words:

“(…) While in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic” (Marx 2004 [1845]: 53).

²¹ Inspiration from the difference principle.

²² Inspiration from the positive conceptualization of freedom.

As the first volume of the Human Development Report published in 1990, Mahbub Ul Haq, project director of the report, was starting his words with the following sentences:

“People are the real wealth of the nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. This may be appearing to be a simple truth. But it is often forgotten in the immediate concern with the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth” (HDR 1990: 9).

In this context, development is understood as enriching of the human capabilities and the expansion of substantive freedom of humans; but not just by the economic growth, namely gross national production, technical progress or industrial modernization (Dréze and Sen 2002: 3). Opposed to the mainstream understanding which is based on nations’ quality of life is depended the indicator as economic growth or Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the emphasis in the capability approach is to what people are actually able to do and to be (Nussbaum 2006: 49). Implicitly, it is arguable that all individuals are able to transfer their income in the similar level of welfare. Individuals’ benefit from the equal level of income is varied not only in different societies but even in the same household as well. Addition to this, individuals’ basic needs in order for satisfying basic capabilities are varied from countries to countries and even from district to district within the same country (Sen 1983a: 164). This is a move from the understanding of the human development based on the economic expansion and growth to the human development which has a logic on enriching people’s substantive freedom by the way of expanding their valuable and reasoned capabilities.

It is worth to mention that the capability approach is considered as a paradigm shift under the light of concrete examples illustrating utility-based assessments are limited to reflect real opportunities of individuals. In this discussion, equality of the resources, commodities or utilities does not give sufficient space to interpret the people’s welfare level since they do not take diversities in terms of needs and personal ends of the people into account. People have different abilities and are living in different external conditions which both are affecting individuals’

converting ability of the utilities into the ends that they define as valuable for their own life choices.

Although, many affluent countries have introduced a redistribution system in which any individual are not below of the so-called absolute or relative poverty line that are respectively based on one US\$ and two US\$ measurement per day, it is often reported that a feeling of social exclusion exists among beneficiaries of the minimum income guarantee programs (Bourguignon 2006: 85). To sum up, internal and external conversion factors should be considered in the assessment of welfare level of the citizens.

In this context, poverty is the capability deprivation of individuals and; development is the expansion of valuable and reasoned human capabilities. This is the brief and concentrated expression of the claim on how the poverty and inequality are to be considered in the methodological framework of this study.

Then, the questions can be asked what the valuable capabilities are and/or which capabilities are valuable to alleviate the poverty or inequality in a given society. It is crucial to note that there is no definite list for the valuable and reasoned capabilities that are universal and effectual for every society. However, there is a widely accepted and convincing formulation on which kind of capabilities can be accepted as valuable and reasoned. The logic of such acceptance was firstly expressed by Adam Smith centuries ago and repeatedly introduced to the discussions by Sen. The valuable capabilities are not only those which are related with being in a good health, being well-educated or avoiding premature mortality as well as other basic concerns, but it should also be understood with social achievements including the logic that, as emphasized by Adam Smith and Peter Townsend, “being able to appear in public without shame and being able to take part in the life of the community” (Sen 2006: 35).

It is mainly claimed by the capability approach that goods and commodities people hold or given to the people by an external device such as the State are only the means that help the individuals pursue their own ends. It is insisted that

neither the opulence by itself nor the utility adequately represents the human wellbeing; and they are not able to rescue individuals from deprivation (Clark 2006: 34). However, the real opportunities or possibilities, which are summarized with the emphasis on “substantive freedom”, are generally depended by the range of factors as interpersonal and external, namely individuals’ capabilities (Robeyns 2004: 9). These factors determines what people can do and can be with the help of means provided for them by an external device such as a social assistance program, reliefs, public goods and/or state provisions. Therefore, capability theory pays more attention to the people’s own choices or preferences that lead their own life. This is sufficiently strong reason to avoid from making a generalization about what the valuable capabilities are or ignoring the decisions by an external device on what kind of means are crucial. To illustrate, women’s preferences can be varied from the region to region along within the country. What is preferred by women in south may not be valuable for the preferences in north. Even the change can be observable not only between regions but different cities as well. Social norms, cultures, personal conditions, power relations, religious norms, discriminating practices, climate, infrastructures and a wide range of factors can come to play important roles on the preferences, needs and valuable ends of the women. Therefore, the capability approach does not suggest any definitive framework on what the people’s needs or what choices/preferences they should enjoy. Instead of it, the approach says every inquiry or investigation on these aspects should preserve its dependency to the context that it focused on²³.

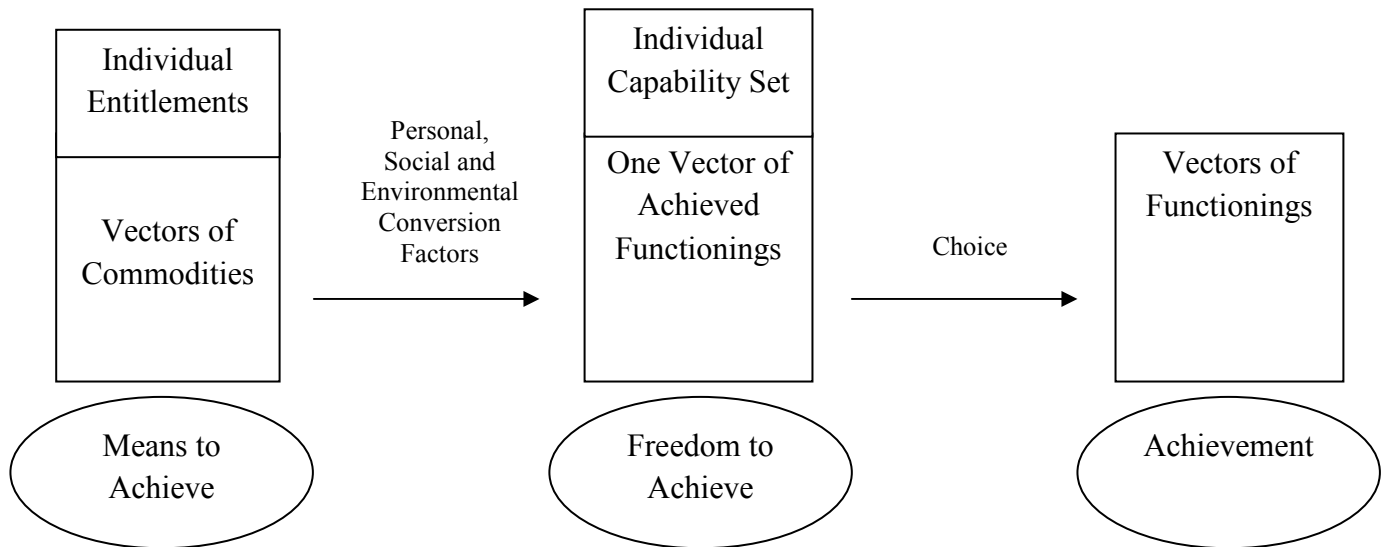
Obviously, being context dependent makes the analysis of the needs and preferences of individuals more difficult than the current mainstream models that are based on the utility, commodity or, particularly on income assessment models of inequality and poverty for researchers. Because, the multiple faces of an investigation should be taken into account in the capability approach. Besides

²³ One of the leading capability theorists, Martha Nussbaum, suggests a definitive capability framework in her influential work called *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* (2001). However, this certain and, at some points, revisable framework for valuable capabilities is not accepted by Sen and some other theorists. I will turn back this issue further on in details.

that, these multiple faces are not certain and universal, which necessities that needs and preferences of the individuals should be revised according to the alternations in the context that scientists focus on.

Now, let me summarize what capability approach is in a schematic illustration:

Figure I: Schematic Representation of the Capability Approach



(Robeyns 2000: 5)

As can be seen from the Figure I above, commodities, i.e. income or wealth, are only the vectors illustrating the individuals' entitlements and they are not much significant by itself, since they are only means or tools being used for the individuals' achievements. To give a meaning these vectors, it is important to take personal and social conversion factors of the individuals that are summarized above. These conversion factors and means of the achievements, namely the commodities, constitute individuals' capability set, in other words, individuals' freedom to achieve certain capabilities. Only after the introduction of these inputs, individuals are able to make choice among what they can do and can be. The chosen capabilities among these possible and available achievements, certain functionings are being actualized and that actualization illustrates level of human development or wellbeing.

In this context, the crucial points are the personal and social conversion factors and individuals' substantive freedom to choose what they can do and be, which can be clearly observable from the Figure I above. Accordingly, during the process of constituting a new social policy implementation regarding to three major aspects of this study, i.e. human development, poverty and inequality in the realm of capability approach, these two crucial points should not be missed out.

So, the question at that point is about how the capabilities of people will be measured, in other words, question of operationalization. This question refers also to the problem concerning the implementation of the approach to real life as a new social policy and developmental perspective. After the submitting some other critics toward the approach, I will follow the answer of this question further on.

5. A Common Confusion, Some Critics and Answers

Main critic towards approach is on the question how the capability approach can be applied to the real life, in other words, question of operationalizing. However, before discussing on the question of operationalization, let me start with relatively humble, but -no doubt- still valuable critics.

Although it is not a direct critic, there is a common confusion that when a reader starts to read on the capability approach, it is possible to observe a difficulty for her to perceive the difference between relative poverty and capability deprivation. Therefore, this may be worth to be mentioned as a first step.

The logic of the capability approach is based on that poverty is an absolute notion, but not a relative one. This absolutist core of the capability approach causes disputes between capability theorists such as Sen (1983a and 1985b) and scholars who have relativist approach, for example Townsend (1985).

The capability approach avoids making generalization on people's needs and refers to the diversity of needs in a certain society or group to accomplish certain functionings defined valuable and reasonable by individual themselves. Relativist approach sees the deprivation in terms of individuals' relative level of satisfaction

in a given society, community or household. Therefore, it is possible to observe that both of them are similarly taking the aspect of diversity into consideration. However, the capability approach concentrates on whether the valuable and reasoned capabilities of individuals are being accomplished or not, while the relativist approach focuses on relative satisfaction levels but not on if the personal ends can be actualized or not. For example, imagine a university who provides to its students a swimming pool that has twenty-five meters length. Every student in the university has a right to benefit from this swimming pool at equal levels, which means the pool does not provide any less or more opportunity to anybody. Under the given condition, according to relativist core, it is not possible to mention any relatively less opportunity for any student of the university. Now, imagine that an exchange student came to this university from abroad and her former university was providing to her 50 meters length pool which is necessary to be ready for swimming competitions, since the length of a pool is a valuable and reasoned factor during the training period. Although, there is no less equal opportunity for any students including the exchange one in this university - relativist approach-, the exchange one cannot actualize her personal end which is defined as being ready for next swimming competition -capability deprivation-, in such 25 meters-length pool.

In this regard, according to the capability approach, poverty is “an absolute notion in the space of capabilities, but very often it takes a relative form in the space of commodities or characteristics” (Sen 1983a: 161), which means that different individuals in terms of their valuable and reasoned²⁴ ends may need different type and amount of support or means to accomplish same functioning. Let me clarify it with another example: Assume that individual “A” is an elderly retired. He is not capable to walk or stand on in bus for long hours. On the other hand, individual “B” is an able-bodied student lady who is capable to walk on a street and stand on long hours in the bus. By assuming again, both of them need to go to town in order for taking out money from cashomat. Although, both individuals need

²⁴ The word “reasoned” is particularly important for policy-making process that is based on capability approach. I will explain this word’s particular importance in the following paragraph.

vehicle to go there and to actualize their personal ends -i.e. taking out money from cashomat in the example-, the characteristic of vehicles needed by them is vary. Elder individual may need a cab for such end since s/he is not able to stand on in the bus station while young and able-bodied lady can surely actualize same end by public transportation, i.e. a bus or subway. Accordingly, the means they need - public transportation or a cab- to actualize such certain capability -transportation to city centre- are different. Therefore, in the capability approach, since the poverty is understood in terms of capability deprivation, deprivation is an absolute notion in the space of capabilities, but the means to actualize such capability can be varied or relative.

If it is noticed, I implied the *valuable* and *reasoned* ends in previous paragraph above and during the entire chapter up to here. The word “reasoned” is particularly important to be emphasized, as the public policies introduced are matter of question. Because, someone can say that, “okay, I need a Cadillac to be transported from home to workplace, since I am defining my valuable end as to have a Cadillac for transportation”. Obviously, it would be ridiculous to accept this demand for policy makers and try to provide a Cadillac to this person just because he is defined his valuable end as to have a Cadillac for transportation. Once the public policy is the matter of question, policy makers should focus on the functioning of the individual rather than the capability itself. Because, as I emphasized before, functioning is the achievement itself -transportation in the example- while capability is the freedom to achieve -being able to be transported either by public transportation or a cab-. Therefore, in the example, valuable and reasoned end cannot be defined as possessing a Cadillac, but it should be defined as being able to mobilise from home to workplace and, thus, for policy makers, not the former one -providing a Cadillac-, but the latter one -being able to be transformed- should be taken into consideration during policy making process.

Addition to this central argument mentioned above towards the logic of relative deprivation of some scholar’s, the capability approach raises a counter critic to international relative poverty measurement in the space of multi-national

organizations' measurement of poverty as relative deprivation. As is known well, relative deprivation measurement of some internal organization like World Bank (WB) is based on the relative income measurement, so-called two US\$ per day. A relative deprivation of an individual in terms of income can lead to an absolute deprivation in terms of capabilities (Sen 2006: 36). Even under the situation in which, assuming, relative deprivation measurement is based on not two US\$ per day, but even on higher amount of income, i.e. five or six US\$, relatively poor individuals of an affluent country can be in a worse condition than the poor of less affluent country in terms of achieving same social or personal functioning. To illustrate, poor of an affluent country, let say in Norway, can suffer more than a poor of Namibia. To take part in the life of the community or among her friends, the Norwegian child may need to have a television featured LED technology or shoes like Nike, which, most probably, does not necessarily crucial at the same level for children of Namibia. Therefore, to make generalization on relative deprivation such as so-called two US\$ per day does not seem a worthwhile attempt.

Let's get a second example. Imagine that two people, one of them is from Britain and the other is from Ethiopia. To find a decent job in Britain might be necessity to possess a computer since the job opportunities are usually announced and published by virtual ways in Internet. However, the same social functioning, i.e. finding a decent job, in Ethiopia may not be interlinked to possess that kind of commodity such as computer and internet access since the labour markets are not as much virtualized as Britain. So, the question is related with who relatively poorer is at that stage: An Englishman who has not computer and internet access in order to find a decent job or the Ethiopian who does not need such commodity for the same social functioning? Under this situation, Englishman seems more deprived comparatively to her Ethiopian counterpart, if she does not hold any computer or internet access, although both of them are same in terms of not possessing such commodities, i.e. computer and internet access. Accordingly, relatively common better conditions in a more opulent country do not necessarily

mean relatively better chances in terms of achieving same social functioning. So, claiming that, as done by WB or some international organizations, two US\$ dollar per day is the valid benchmark of relative deprivation in UK and Ethiopia, or some other country comparisons, does not seem sufficiently significant. Therefore, poverty is an absolute notion in the space of capabilities -finding a decent job in my example-, but it usually takes relative form in the form of commodities -possessing computer and Internet access in the example above-.

To sum up, in the capability approach, the person's advantage is judged whether or not she is actualizing her valuable and reasoned ends for herself, but not in terms of relative conditions of her *vis-a-vis* to others.

Addition to this confusion, I need to evaluate a critic towards the approach that says that the capability approach is too individualistic. At first sight that the capability approach seems too individualistic since it gives more importance to the personal choices of the individuals and usually concentrates on individuals' personal ends as one, but not sole, of the starting points for assessments. Therefore, it is sometimes criticized that individuals are not assessed as part of their social environment and thus they are atomised and separated from their own environment in the approach in spite of every individual should be recognised as socially embedded in his/her environment.

The claim is right: Individuals should be recognized as socially embedded in their social and physical environment. However, it is not right that capability approach separates individuals from their social environment since the conversion factors of the commodities, as I framed above, are not only personal conversion factors, but the environmental and social conversion factors as well. That means, not only the personal conversion factors that determine individuals' preferences and needs are taken into account, social and environmental conversion factors also frequently emphasized in the approach. Therefore, it does not sufficiently seem significant that capability approach is too individualistic or gives importance to only micro scale assessments.

However, it cannot be insisted that the capability approach is not individualistic at all. Surely, it has clearly an individualistic dimension; even this dimension is much emphasized than some other equivalent theories in welfare economics. But it is a necessity needed to be emphasized that the capability approach embraces ethical individualism, but not the methodological/ontological individualism (Robeyns 2003: 43-4-5). However, some scholars insist that the approach is an example of methodological individualism (Deneulin and Stewart 2002: 66). So, what is the difference between ethical and methodological/ontological individualism?

Although, the term methodological individualism has been firstly introduced to the social science literature by leading German economist Joseph Schumpeter in 1908 as *methodologische individualismus*, it has been used by Austrian economist Hayek and von Mises in a different connotation. In Schumpeter's usage, methodological individualism refers to "just means that one starts from the individual in order to describe certain economic relationships" (Hodgson 2007: 212-3). However, in recent literature, it refers to the claim that society is built up from individuals and it is nothing more than the sum of individuals and their properties (Robeyns 2003: 44). Accordingly, all social phenomena should be explained from the point of view on individuals and properties that these individuals hold. However, in ethical individualism, starting point is not the individuals and their properties, but the social arrangements and their effects on personal affairs. So, in methodological individualism, people and their properties are considered as a starting point of the evaluation while, in ethical individualism, effects of social arrangements on individuals' behaviour as a starting point. In this context, despite the fact that it is not entirely based on ethical individualism, capability approach places an emphasis on it, but it does not seem accurate to claim that it is methodologically individualistic.

Since the approach gives a great deal of emphasis on opportunities provided by social structure and effects of environmental and social conversion factors on individuals' capabilities, it does not seem really convincing critics that the

capability approach is methodologically individualistic. Another proof that the approach is not methodologically individualistic can be seen by the emphasis on the importance of the individual choices. Remembering that it is mentioned a couple of times that choice and individual preferences are crucial for the capability approach and illustrated them in the schematic representation of the approach above. It is quite often emphasized that individuals' preferences and choices are affected from the social and environmental arrangements surrounding them. Particularly, these arranger factors are playing crucial role while passing from capability set of the opportunities to functionings of achievements. In this regard, in the capability approach, social and environmental arrangements have strong influences on individuals' behaviour, which is in accordance with what is said by ethical individualism. It can be worth to end this critic with a quotation by Dréze and Sen in order to illustrate that capability approach is particularly concerned with social opportunities that are strongly influenced by social order and public policy.

“The approach (*Capability Approach*) used in this study is much concerned with opportunities that people have to improve the quality of their lives. It is essentially a ‘people-centred’ approach, which puts human agency (rather than organizations such as markets or governments) at the centre of the stage. The crucial role of social opportunities is to expand the realm of human agency and freedom, both as an end in itself and as a means of further expansion of freedom. The word ‘social’ in the expression ‘social opportunity’ (...) is a useful reminder not to view individuals and their opportunities in isolated terms. The options that a person has depended greatly on relations with others and on what the state and other institutions do. We shall particularly concern with those opportunities that are strongly influenced by social circumstances and public policy” (Dréze and Sen 2002: 6).

In this sense, I also claim that every public policy implementation or state intervention should take every individual's one by one into consideration. The possibility of this consideration is just a matter of priorities and arrangement. To illustrate, the discourses “it was necessary to sacrifice for the sake of the majority” or “sacrifice for the sake of the state's/society's continuum” which we used to

hear in current public politics are considerably utilitarian perspectives which indicates also the way legitimizing mainstream policies. From that point of view, it seems a requirement to be ethically individualistic, but obviously not methodologically²⁵.

One another critic to the approach is from one of the leading figures on equality researches, namely, Ronald Dworkin. Broadly speaking, according to him, equality of welfare is not a significant way for the assessment of equality in a given society. Instead of it, he claims, equal commands of individuals over the resource or equality of resources should be taken into account (Dworkin 1981: 244). Choices of humans and, thus, gains and losses of individuals which are depended to these choices are influenced by some natural endowments such as talents, intelligences etc. Since these natural endowments are not the matters of choice for humans and they are naturally determined, individuals have not command to choose which natural endowments they possess at birth. Therefore, distribution of resources in the society should not depend on these natural endowments or should not depend on gains or losses as the consequences of these endowments. So, individuals should be treated equally in terms of redistribution of resources at basic level (Dworkin 2002: 65-83). On this theoretical ground, his emphasis is on the equality of resources or individuals' equal command on resources. In this context, Dworkin claims that, rather than trying to expand valuable and reasoned capabilities, redistribution of the resources is crucial. However, the justification of Dworkin can be questioned in terms of the point that welfare of citizens does not only depend on material assets like resources. This means that wellbeing is not the question only in terms of material poverty but it is

²⁵ In terms of this point of view, I consider in a similar vein with Robeyns that "capability approach ought to be ethically individualistic" (2003: 46). At this stage, to present Nussbaum's offer may be meaningful. She says "the account we strive for should preserve liberties and opportunities for each and every person, taken one by one, respecting each of them as an end, rather than simply as the agent or supporter of the ends of others. (...) It arises naturally from the recognition that each person has just one life to live, not more than one. (...) If we combine this observation with that thought that each person is valuable and worthy of respect as an end, we must conclude that we should look not just to the total or average, but to the functioning of each and every person" (Nussbaum 2000: 55-6).

a question in terms of life choices of individuals as well. Imagine a Kuwaiti citizen who has homosexual or lesbian preferences. Although, s/he lives in one of the most developed country in terms of economic power and welfare, if this person is not allowed to make her/his personal choices public such as same sex-marriage, then her/his wellbeing level is under treat. Therefore, Dworkin's critic to the capability approach that claims the focal variable should be equality of resources for equality evaluation in a given society, but not the equality of capabilities, for the sake of citizen's welfare seems arguable.

Addition to critics and confusion summarized just above, it should be mentioned that most strong critic towards the approach comes from the operational dimension. Therefore, this critic is worth to be evaluated under a different heading below. It poses mainly the question that how such an approach that gives that much importance to people own choices and to the diversity will be applied to the real life. In other words, it is the question of operationalization. I will try to follow some answers for this question in next part of the chapter.

6. An Attempt to Overcome the Question of Operationalization

Although, the answer for this question has been given and refined during the life course of the approach for last three decades, there is still confusion at the operational level. This question is well-summarized by Sugden:

“Given the rich array of functionings, that Sen takes to be relevant, given the extent of disagreement among reasonable people about the nature of the good life, and given the unresolved problem of how to values sets, it is natural to ask how far Sen's framework is operational. Is it realistic alternatives to the methods on which economist typically rely measurement of real income, and the kind of practical cost-benefit analysis which is grounded in Marshallian consumer theory?”
(Sugden 1993: 1953).

First of all, it is necessary to remind that the capability approach does not provide any certain formula, but it suggests a new conceptual framework for the measurement of poverty in the realm of social justice. Therefore, it does not seem really meaningful to expect a certain prescription that explains a universal cure for the poverty in worldwide.

The conceptual framework of the capability approach has been used international organizations like United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in order for policy making since 1990. For example, The Human Development Reports (HDRs) published by UNDP use capability approach as a new paradigm for the analysis of contemporary development challenges. Over time, the HDR reports have developed a distinct development paradigm, namely, human development paradigm (Fukuda-Parr 2003: 301-2). It should be accepted that these reports using human development index are not perfectly illustrating the core logic of the capability approach and still have some deficient points such as making assessments only in terms of three basic capabilities, respectively, life expectancy, standard of living and education and knowledge.

No doubt, first step for the operationalization of the approach is to create a capability set which satisfies the question of which capabilities are valuable and reasoned. However, this is not as easy as it is expressed.

First of all, it is necessary to explain what is meant by capability set. Capability set is a set of functioning vectors (a functioning n-tuple)²⁶, in other words, set of alternatives of an individual that s/he wants to follow for his/her own life. That is called also her real opportunities, i.e. what a person actually able to do or to be. Accordingly, the set of available functionings for choice constitutes a person's capability set (Sen 1997a: 200). So, every space in which a functioning is embedded should be defined.

The question at that point is about how these spaces will be defined. If there is unlimited human diversity, is it possible to define some spaces that are valued and reasoned for every diversified human condition? Actually, this is tried by some scholars that I will exemplify below. However, before discussing on these

²⁶ As a parenthesis, it may be worth to define what "n-functionings" means. "A functioning n-tuple (or vector) describes the combination of doings and beings that constitutes the state of a person's life. The functioning n-tuple is given by the utilization (through a personal utilization function) of the available commodity bundle. Each functioning n-tuple represents a possible life-style" (Clark 2006: 36).

scholars, my attention is to give some details of Sen's point of view on how to choose valuable capabilities.

According to Sen, it is not possible to create a certain and universal list as capability set which allows researcher to measure every country in macro-scale or every individual in micro wellbeing level. Although, there is no possibility to create a certain list, it is possible to make an index²⁷ by using some major capabilities. He claimed that being able to live long, escape avoidable morbidity, be well nourished, be able to read, write and communicate and take part in literary and scientific pursuits are some major examples of valuable capabilities at the beginning of 1980s (Sen 1983b: 754). In later years, it is possible to observe that he started to make more complex categorization on valuable functionings such as achieving self-respect, appearing in public without shame, entertaining family and friends, and taking part in the life of the community (Sen 1985a: 199).

According to him, nowadays, which capabilities matter should be decided by the process of democratic public discussions; since undemocratic, direct local decisions by policy makers may lead to the problem of over-generalization about the variables of valuable and reasoned functionings, i.e. a list of capabilities. It cannot be made one final list of capabilities, as this list may be used for different purposes and each purpose may need its own list. Therefore, Sen stresses that public discussions and justifications are a chance to lead a better understanding of the values and roles of specific capabilities (Robeyns 2005: 106).

Actually, according the Sen, the problem is not about whether creating valuable and reasoned universal capability list or not. Instead of it, the main question is related with to create a list without any public discussion or implementing democratic process to determine relevant capabilities. Therefore, it can be said

²⁷ What I mean by the word "index"? For example, being able to be well nourished may depend among Norwegian fishermen having access to some certain seafood (a specific functioning among this community's members), while it may depend on some specific agricultural product (a specific functioning among this community's members) for an inner Anatolian individual. However, being well nourished (a universal capability for all communities and a general item of a universal index) is valuable and reasoned for both of them obviously.

that Sen takes attention for the importance of democratic process to decide variables of the possible capability list:

“The problem is not with listing important capabilities, but with insisting on pre-determined canonical list of capabilities, chosen by theorists (*or policy makers*)²⁸ without any general social discussion or public reasoning. To have such a fixed list, emanating entirely from pure theory, is to deny possibility of fruitful public participation on what should be included and why” (Sen 2004: 77).

Therefore, it should not be expected that Sen suggests any universal list. The list that consists of some capability variables can change according to needs of the research or researcher. For example, a measurement of absolute poverty can be based on some sub-sets of basic capabilities that illustrate basic needs of human beings according to external and internal conditions or conversion factors of a group that is considered as the subject of the research or potential policy. However, an attempt to assess about their wellbeing and human development need a broader, and possibly a more longer and diversified set of capabilities (Sen 1993: 31-2; 40-2).

As is mentioned above, Sen’s conceptualization has been used some policy organizations since 1990, for example UNDP, and this conceptualization allows us to reach some conclusion remarks about how capabilities are being measured or what the valuable capabilities are²⁹.

HDRs use two main criteria to decide which capabilities are important and should be valued. First dimension uses universally valuable and reasoned capabilities for people, and second dimension focuses on basic capabilities, which means that their deficiency would cause a decrease in the space of some other complex

²⁸ Emphasis belongs to me.

²⁹ I should enlighten one point in here that Sen is against to the idea of creating certain lists defining the variables of human development, but he has helped developing a composite index (not a list of certain capabilities since he is against) of achievement in human development for UNDP although he still saves his reservation about possible deficiencies to create a universal list. The reason for his opposition about creating one certain list for measuring human development or people’s capabilities is related to avoid making over generalization among people who live different cultures, climates, social structure etc.

capabilities. However, what is important is that HDRs accepted that human capabilities either universally valued capabilities or basic capabilities can vary according to cultural context, regional differences, country specifications, researches' context, time and place and so on. This means that, also for HDR researchers, there is no specific universally defined capabilities list in accordance with what Sen claimed. Additionally, it is possible to find more than 500 regional or country level HDRs in which same theoretical tools and framework of capability approach is used. Besides that some governments have also interests to benefit from the approach for national policy making. To illustrate, in Germany, the second national report on poverty and wealth inspired from the capability approach in order to analyze poverty and social exclusion (Robeyns 2006: 351-2).

Instead of using one certain list of human capabilities, HDRs suggests a list of priorities that should be taken into account by governments or policy makers. These priorities can be ordered as follow: (1) Priority to "social development" in accordance with expanding education and health opportunities. (2) Economic growth generating resources for human development in its varied dimensions. (3) Political and social reforms for democratic governance securing human rights in order to provide people a life in which freedom, dignity, participation and autonomy are secured. (4) Equity in the above three elements with a concern for all individuals, with specially attention to the downtrodden and the poor whose interests are often neglected in public policy, as well as the removal of discrimination against women. (5) Policy and institutional reforms in the global scale that creates an economic environment more conducive for poor countries to access global markets, technology, and information (Fukuda-Parr 2003: 310-2).

Once it is focused on the priorities, it is clear that the list of valuable and reasoned capabilities and the measurement of them need to be considered separately for every sample country, community or group of people. This can be interpreted as a deficient point of the approach. According to Qizilbash, this point, which having no final list and being open-endedness of Sen's capability set, is its 'Achilles Heel' (Qizilbash 1998: 54). On the other hand, this point can be seen also its

strength, strategy and/or authenticity since the deficiency of a final list provides every community a chance to define their own functionings set and freedom to choice according to their own ends.

Although it seems impossible to catch a definite universal list in Sen's own writings, we can catch some clues on which criteria have intrinsically importance to create a list. In the book called *Development as Freedom*, Sen puts five "instrumental freedoms" which may help to contribute positively in the rise of people's capability level. Obviously, these five instrumental freedoms cannot be directly perceived as Sen's definite list that grasps the valuable capabilities for an empirical research. However, according to some scholars, such instrumental freedoms can be read as main headlines for the capability expansion of citizens. These five different instrumental freedoms are labeled as (I) Political Freedoms, (II) Economic Facilities, (III) Social Opportunities, (IV) Transparency Guarantees, and (V) Protective Security. According to Sen, these do not serve only to increase general capability level of people but they also serve to complement each other (Sen 1999: 38). Before considering on contents of these instrumental freedoms, I should say that particularly in this book, *Development as Freedom*, the word freedom is used instead of the word capability as Sen himself declared. After specify this technical difference, now I can turn my attention on these instrumental freedoms.

With "political freedoms", Sen emphasizes that, for example, democracy the freedom to scrutinize and being able to criticize authorities, besides that having an opportunity to benefit free press, media and multi-party elections. With the emphasis of "economic facilities", as it can be guessed, Sen indicates people's opportunity to benefit and use economic resources or entitlements. By the way of "social opportunities", people's ability to access health care, to be educated and to live in a society where others likewise enjoy these goods. "Transparency guarantees" illustrates the ability to trust others and to be sure that the information one receives is clear and honestly disclosed. And lastly, "protective security"

means social protections for vulnerable people that prevent dramatic deprivation (Sen 1999: 38-40).

Sen points out that which capabilities are matters can be decided by the target group which is the issue for research or policy that is planned to be operated. This imply, determination of relevant variables of the probable list by a publicly open and democratic discussion process, which means that Sen denotes the importance again the concept of freedom: Everyone should be endorsed to freely choose which capabilities are important for her/himself.

As can be understood, for Sen, the lists of valuable capabilities are context dependent. Although, it does not seem possible to create certain universal list in order to make measurement in capability level of people, some attempts that will be discussed below have been made to measure it. The empirical researches that have been concluded according to the theoretical formulation of the capability approach can be considered in nine different categories³⁰.

First type of research is called *General Assessment of Human Development of Countries*. This kind of researches tries to measure human capabilities in comparison with country achievement level in terms of three different aspects as life expectancy at birth, education and adjusted GDP per capita, which serves as a proxy for the material aspects of valuable functionings. Researches affirming this model use an index between one and zero. According to the taxonomy, zero illustrates a country that is worst in terms of these variables of valuable and reasoned capabilities. Insofar closing to the one, countries human development model goes better and one illustrates the countries which are the best in terms of expansion of valuable and reasoned capabilities. Human Development Reports published by UNDP is based on this research modeling. An investigation based on

³⁰ For this categorization and the content of it, I mainly benefited from Robeyns's fruitful guide called "The Capability Approach in Practice". The categorization and names of the categories belong to the Robeyns herself as well (2006: 360-70). In this prospective study, Robeyns well-outlines some main researches using the capability approach as a paradigm for empirical investigations. This study can also be read as a guide to investigate what have been done in practice by using capability framework up to now.

this model can be varied sharply than that of GDP ranking estimations. For example, according to 2004 data, the position of United Arab Emirates ranked 23rd in terms of GDP per capita. On the other hand, same country ranked 46th in terms of human development index.

Secondly, *Assessing Small-Scale Development Projects* refers to small-scale development project in one region. For that kind of research, Alkire's research projects can be seen as an example (Alkire 2005a: 233-96). According to the three case studies that Alkire concluded in Pakistan, analysis on capability level and traditional cost-benefit estimations can go different directions. For example, Alkire discusses on three different subjects for her investigation as goat rearing, female literacy classes and rose garland production. At first sight, although goat rearing seems to be an economic activity, internal rate of return depends on the choice of women's shadow wage. In terms of traditional cost-benefit analysis, female literacy has no value as economic activity for doing these two kinds of jobs that are goat rearing and rose garland. However, as concluded by Alkire, although female literacy is in indirect relation with these economic activities and had hardly any direct effects on female earnings, female literacy projects for reducing poverty a fundamental and transformative impact on female students. Besides that projects for poverty reduction that are based on traditional cost-benefit analysis only focus purely on economic activities and mislead capability inquiries like female literacy. According to the conclusion of the project, goat-rearing activity for poverty reduction in this region of Pakistan is purely superior to the other projects that are framed as female literacy and rose garland. However, the literacy classes have the strongest impact on knowledge and empowerment of females. To sum up, projects which focus only purely economic activities or activities concluded with a monetary outcome do not always illustrate quality of life which is a part of human development.

Third one is *Identifying the Poor in Developing Countries*. In this kind of researches, there is a comparison associated with the question of who is the poor? The answer for the question is searched according to two methodologies one of

them is in terms of income poverty measurement and the other is functioning-based deprivation measurement. In the majority of these kinds of researches, it is only focused on one country and using household surveys. For example, a research conducted by Ruggeri (1997), concluded that income based measurement of poverty is able to grasp some basic functionings like education, healthy and child nutrition. However, it has been founded by Ruggeri that income variable in itself appears insignificant as a determinant of shortfall in health, schooling and child nutrition and functioning of income is highly non-linear and depends on a number of other personal, household and regional characteristics. It is also analyzed in the research that not all-functionings poor are income-poor. It means that although they are not able to realize some functionings for example education, they do not appear as poor in terms of monetary comparisons. This result confirms that monetary poverty, to a large extent, does not reveal all dimensions of poverty.

Fourth type of the usage of the capability approach is *Poverty and Well-Being Assessment in Advanced Economies*. As can be understood from its headings, the capability approach is not limited to the cases of developing or underdeveloped countries. It can also be used for affluent countries. However, usage of the approach can be different. In developing countries, capability perspective is used generally to measure poverty, on the other hand, in affluent countries, it is not only used to measure poverty but also the level of wellbeing. One of the researches in this category is Balestrino's (1996) research. Balestrino focused on the question that is whether officially accepted-poor are functioning-poor or not. According to his conclusion, among 281 Italian households, 71 households are only poor in terms of income, 73 of them are only functioning-poor, and 137 of them are both. The research illustrates that an important share of the poor in total is not income-poor and important proportion of Balestrino's sample is the poor although they do not appear as the income-poor.

Fifth type of capability researches is called *Deprivation of Disabled People*. It is clear that a disable suffers more than an able-bodied in terms of living conditions.

At least two types of disadvantages they suffer more. First of all, they earn less than able-bodied people and secondly, they need more than able-bodied people because of their special needs. Obviously, the first type of disadvantage can be grasped in income or monetary based researches. However, second type of disadvantage cannot be easily proved by income-estimated framework. Zaidi and Burchardt (2005) concluded that when extra cost of being disabled is taken into account, living standard of disabled is lower significantly, and incidence of disabled among the people in the bottom quintile of the income distribution rises drastically, from 25 percent to 40 percent. This confirms that disabled people need more income than their able-bodied counterparts to achieve same level of wellbeing. It is also confirmed in another research conducted by Kuklys that a British disabled individual needs 44 percent more income to achieve the same level of material well-being with a non-disabled individual when all other things are accepted *ceteris paribus* equal (Kuklys 2005: 96).

Sixth type of research is called *Assessing Gender Inequalities*. These researches focus generally gender inequalities in terms of achievements in functioning level. What a male can achieve with the same opportunities of female (or vice versa) is taken into account in this type of researches. One example of this type can be illustrated by Sen's own research on Indian females. Although, the research itself is on gender discrimination rather than drawing the attention on gender inequality, this research can also be considered as assessing gender inequalities since discriminations structurally maintain inequalities between genders. Sen found that in terms of some functionings, like age-specific mortality rates, malnutrition and morbidity, females have less achievement level than their male counterparts (Sen 2005b: 52-69). In his other work, "Sen calculated that if female and daughters were treated like male fetuses and sons, there would be an additional 100 million women in world" (Robeyns 2006: 367).

Seventh type of the researches using capability approach in practice can be labeled as *Debating Policies*. Capability approach can also be used to discuss on some certain social policies as I mentioned before. One of the researches,

conducted in this field by Erik Schokkaert and Luc Van Ootegem (1990), showed that Belgian social policy for unemployed people does not help to compensate some of their functioning deprivations like social and psychological wellbeing, physical functionings and micro-scale contract. It has been concluded in their research that welfare policies for unemployed people should not be limited with financial instruments only and non-financial instruments need to be taken into account to support the functioning wellbeing of unemployed people.

Eighth type of research is called *Critiquing and Assessing Social Norms, Practices and Discourses*. These kinds of researches focus on critics on some social norms that could encourage certain types of acting that restrict people's freedom or capability, for example, in Iran or Afghanistan where women cannot run a business without being accompanied with a male relative. As an example for this kind of research can be illustrated from Kevin Olson's writing (2002). He used the capability approach to criticize the gender norms that have influences on the choices of women and men between labor and care and, hence, affect their wellbeing levels. "He argues that recognizing such norms requires feminist welfare theorists to argue not only for particular institutional changes, but also for a change in cultural agency which is needed to challenge and resist those norms" (Robeyns 2006: 369).

The last, ninth type of researches, is called *Functionings and Capabilities as Concepts in Non-Normative Research*. The capability approach has been used also in non-normative researches as explanatory analysis. Arends-Kuenning and Amin's research (2001) can be an example for this. They conducted a research in Bangladesh in order to question the issue that whether rural people perceive girls and women's education as an important human capital and capability. They made use of deep interviews and found out that education was primarily seen as human capital for the marriage and labor markets, and only a few respondents spoke on it in terms of its direct contribution to people's well-being and agency, which means capability in terms of researchers' conceptual framework.

In this regard, it seems possible to operationalize the logic of the capability approach, although there is no universally agreed a capability list including valuable and reasoned functionings. Despite the absence of a universally accepted capability list, there are some attempts to constitute this kind of list. One of the widely known attempts is the Nussbaum's model of "certain capabilities list". Let me clarify some points on Nussbaum's comprehensive perspective and her list of capabilities.

First of all, it should be said that Nussbaum model of measurement is not a final-completed list. It is right to point out that Nussbaum has been revising her list in process, however, when it is focused on variables in the list, it seems that the core of the content has not been changed much. Nussbaum says that revisions in her list represent "year of cross cultural discussions" (Nussbaum 2001: 76). Accordingly, it can be said that Nussbaum's list is a dynamic one and is in ongoing process.

However, before starting to discuss on Nussbaum's set, it should be stressed some distinctions between Nussbaum and Sen. Nussbaum and Sen's works are in alliance to criticize utilitarian perspective of social justice theories, but they are also different in terms of a couple of headlines. First, Nussbaum introduces the capability approach in terms of moral and political philosophies that specifically argue on moral and political principles that should be guaranteed to all citizens by societies and governments. To realize this task, Nussbaum developed a capability set that is defined as "central human capabilities" which can be seen as an universalistic approach in the capability theory. On the other hand, Sen focuses on the issue in terms of the question of "equality of what" and poverty, inequality discussions all together. He has no clear objective to constitute a universal capability set for guaranteed political principles that citizens should enjoy, but his objection is about the possibility of a list in terms of valuable and reasoned ends of individuals in the realm of welfare, i.e. well-being level. In this respect, it can be seen that Sen's discussion on the capability approach has basically economic reasoning whereas Nussbaum attention is closer to the discussion in terms of

humanity and politics as narrative approaches (Robeyns 2005: 104). Second, Nussbaum proposed a capability set consists of ten items, but it is not possible to observe a certain universal list in Sen's works. Nussbaum's list is presented as follow:

Table I: Nussbaum's List of Central and Functional Human Capabilities

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Life | Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length, not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living. |
| Bodily Health | Being able to have a good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter. |
| Bodily Integrity | Being able to move freely from place to place; having one's bodily boundaries treated as sovereign, i.e. being able to secure against assault, including sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction. |
| Senses, Imagination, Thought | Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason – and to do these things in a 'truly human' way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing self-expressive works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to search for the ultimate meaning of life in one's own way. Being able to have pleasurable experiences, and to avoid non-necessary pain. |
| Emotions | Being able to have attachments to things and persons outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one's emotional development blighted by overwhelming fear and anxiety, or by traumatic events of abuse or neglect (supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development) |
| Practical Reason | Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's own life. (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience.) |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Affiliation | (I) Being able to live for and towards others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; to have the capability for both justice and friendship. (Protecting this capability means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedoms of assembly and political speech.) (II) Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails, at a minimum, protections against discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, caste, ethnicity, or national origin. |
| Other Species | Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature. |
| Play | Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities. |
| Control Over One's Environment | (I) Political. Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association. (II) Material. Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), not just formally but in terms of real opportunity; and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having the freedom from unwarranted search and seizure. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into mutual relationship of mutual recognition with other workers. |

(Nussbaum, 2001: 78-80).

Third, according to Nussbaum, citizens can demand those capabilities from the government, however, in Sen's discussion there is no discussion on government intervention to solve the problem of inequality or citizens' requests from government to solve the problem of inequality through capability sets.

It is worth to regard the Nussbaum's list as "too vague", namely it is too general. According to Clark, Nussbaum's list is derived largely from Ancient Greek Philosophy but it does not focus on concrete studies of human values, therefore, it can be seen as a natural starting point to consider on human wellbeing (Clark 2003: 176). However, there is a doubt to imply this list for comprehensive and context depended human development, poverty and inequality researches. There

is no difference in the Nussbaum methodology for the countries that differ in terms of their cultural, historical and institutional background. Therefore, Nussbaum's list is strictly prescriptive and completely overlooking cultural and historical differences of societies as well as neglecting internal differences of people by the way of a paternalistic perspective, since every government, according to her, should endorse such a list for the sake of quality of life of its citizens. She clearly declares that these ten capabilities should be provided to citizens and "a society that does not guarantee these capabilities to all its citizens, at some appropriate threshold, falls short of being a fully just society, whatever its level of opulence". She continues "one way to implement such a list would be through a written constitution with its account of fundamental rights" (Nussbaum 2006: 57). However, in the capability approach, such a paternalistic view, as a form of top-down determination of good and wellbeing, is seen as an undemocratic perspective since it has a kind of logic such as "we know what right thing is to do for you".

On the basis of the claims of capability approach above, I will continue via the case of this study, namely the reliefs provided by the institution GDSAS in Turkey. However, to evaluate this case in a more concrete ground, I need first to define the alternative approaches in the field of the directorate's performs its operations. Obviously, as is mentioned in its official documents, the institution works so as to solve the question of poverty and alleviate its harmful effects on the citizens. Therefore, the next chapter will be based on the poverty perceptions and poverty alleviation strategies.

Chapter III: Poverty and Poverty Alleviation Strategies

I have, in a great deal, explained social justice theories, the importance of the capability approach in this field and its unique characteristics up to here. Now, it is time to look into the issues that this study aims to elaborate. However, before starting on the discussion regarding to the subject matter of this study, let me briefly mention about the mainstream discussions in which this study is embedded.

As I declared before, the objective of this study is to critically assess the reliefs provided to the citizens of Turkey by GDSAS. In its broadest form, as one of the state institution, GDSAS tries to alleviate poverty by its projects and reliefs. Therefore, for the aim of drawing an outline in which this study is embedded, I need to briefly mention what poverty is or how it has been/is perceived and what the poverty alleviation strategies generally are. To answer these questions, I will follow in this chapter the way discussing respectively on poverty, measurement models of poverty, alleviation strategies of it and some common examples of these strategies in practice. By such a structure of this chapter, I expect that a ground on which the discussion regarding to my case rises will have been constructed in the mind of reader(s) at the end of chapter.

1. Poverty: An Outline for Its Definitions and Measurements

Since the field and discussions in it are extensively broad, I will present only some leading definitions and measurements of poverty in this part. Besides that, since I have lengthily elaborated one of the major approaches, namely the capability approach, to the issue of poverty above, I will not forward into the details of the perspective in here repeatedly. However, it can be useful to mention some other definitions too in order to grasp the uniqueness of the capability approach and its vital place in the related literature.

First of all, it is necessary to point out that there is not any poverty definition agreed by all scholars, needless to say that there is an absent consensus on what

poverty is. Therefore it can be claimed that poverty is inherently a contested concept (Alcock 2006: 4). Addition to the changes of the definitions in time, perceptions toward poverty are varied as well according to the social values of societies or how the societies perceive what poverty and who the poor is (Senses 2003: 62). Three studies conducted by Rowntree on poverty in York in the 1890s, 1930s and 1950s are the clear illustration of these changes on the definition of the concept. In spite of the fact that similar methods were used in the same social and geographical context, namely, city of York, in every occasion certain changes were observed about the definition of poverty (Alcock 2006: 15). However, majority of the researchers agree that it should be understood in relation with “particular social, cultural and historical context” (Lister 2009: 13).

Booth, as one of the first scholars introducing a methodological perspective to poverty researches at late 19th century, said that the poor is those who “have a fairly regular though a bare income, such as 18s to 21s per week”. For the definition of very poor, he said “those who fall below this standard” (Gillie 1996: 715). Although, Booth has never explained why he chooses the amount of “18s” and “21s” per week as the lines for poverty, his methodology still seems a cornerstone in this field since it is one of the first usages of these types of assessments. Similarly to Booth, Rowntree, one another pioneer figure in the field of poverty researches, stated that, “a family living on the scale allowed for must never spend a penny on the railway fare or omnibus. They must never go into the country unless they walk. They must never purchase a half penny newspaper or spend a penny to buy a ticket for a popular concert” (Rowntree 1901: 167). It is obvious that this kind of definition is overly superficial as it is compared with contemporary definitions of the poverty. However, they are considerably valuable since working a constitutive ground for dozens of poverty researches in the 20th century. It is obvious that in this broad inquisition field, namely poverty, Booth’s and Rowntree’s methodologies have been widely used during the life course of poverty researches in different forms such as inquiries in terms of absolute

poverty measurements and more relativistic assessments both of which take the income levels into consideration³¹.

In this context, among some of the contemporary definitions, I find it is worth to mention on Townsend's poverty definition as one of the pioneer definitions in the literature. Townsend emphasizes his understanding of poverty is not subjective but the objective one and points out three criteria as follows: The deficiency of resources to obtain the types of diet, lackness of joining in the activities and the absence of living conditions and amenities which are conventional in the societies (Townsend 1979: 31). Hagenaaers considers on poverty in terms of three basic definitions as follows: "(1) Having less than objectively defined, absolute minimum (2) Having less than others in the society (3) Feeling you do not have enough to get along" (Hagenaaers and De Vos 1988: 212). Addition to these definitions, Nolan and Whelan approve the Townsend's poverty perception as "inability to take part in societal life" (Nolan and Whelan 1996: 188) and, add "in the areas where consumption or participation is determined by command over financial resources" (Ibid. 193). In this approach, it seems that Nolan and Whelan have a poverty perception that is broader than classical income perception since it does not merely concentrate on income, but with a broader perception, financial resources regarding to several sources of standard of living as well. Unlikely than these definitions, human needs are emphasized as the focal point for poverty definitions by some other scholars. For these scholars, since the poverty is simply the absence of satisfaction of human needs, the challenge is not to define what poverty is, but is to explain what human needs are. In this context, human needs are comprehensively defined by Veit-Wilson as "the full range of intangible and material resources" which are essential to achieve the production and reproduction of the completely autonomous and participating individuals "in the particular society to which he or she belongs" (Veit-Wilson 1999: 85). The question at that

³¹ However, this type of investigation has been sharply criticized by different approaches claiming that poverty should be assessed not only in terms of income, regardless it is absolute or relative, but they should concentrate on social, political and environmental factors too as I emphasized in chapter two.

point is whether the definitions of human needs are based on universal and objective fact or they are socially constructed, which means they are the issues for interpretation (Lister 2009: 24). Addition to these, it can be mentioned about social exclusion as a new perspective among poverty perceptions. Although it is possible to find the roots of social exclusion in the writings of Weber and some emphasis in Durkheim, the contemporary definitions point out political aspects more than a sociological in origin (Daly and Saraceno 2002: 84-5). The modern usage of the term social exclusion is traced in the France where it is deployed to refer socially marginalized groups who had previously fallen the outside of social insurance system (Evans 1998: 42). Currently, social exclusion is defined in terms of five different activities. According to these approaches, a person is socially excluded if s/he is experiences a lackness in terms of (1) purchasing goods and services i.e. consumption, (2) participating economic and social activities which are valuable i.e. production, (3) involving in local and national decision making processes i.e. political participation, (4) social interaction (Burchardt *et al* 2002: 31). It is a necessity to imply that another perspective has to be introduced by some sociologist to the field of poverty. According to this perspective, poverty is needed to be understood in terms of social classes and; this emphasis requires to be accompanied with the aspects of inequality. Superficially, this approach can be summarized as multidimensional Marxist analysis of poverty. The main point of this analysis is based on the understanding that the poverty perceptions, which are based on just income and/or consumption, do not sufficiently concentrate on the socially and economically constructed basis of poverty and; because of this ignorance, they are failed to grasp the real structure of poverty. Wright, by this point of view, classifies four general approaches to define poverty and, after that, he claims, “economic oppression, economic exploitation and class generate a social system in which poverty plays a crucial functional role” (Wright 1995: 85). Lastly, it is worth to mention institutional approach to the poverty. According to this perception of poverty, the role of institutions in which the state structure, household, social norms or market are emphasized as the key determinants of poverty (Sindzingre 2007: 61-3). For example, one of researches in this

perspective, conducted by Harriss-White, is focusing on this issue and argues that, for her case, “destitute people are revealed yet again as the object of institutionalized state hostility” (Harriss-White 2005: 888). By her point of view, state may be in the actions that institutionalize the situations “having nothing as economic aspects of destitution, being nothing as social aspect of destitution and having no rights and being always wrongs as the political aspect of the institution” (Ibid. 882-5).

How or in which perspective the poverty is defined is crucial for politicians, academicians and researchers since being able to measure its extent within and across the societies in order to produce solution and implement policies to ameliorate the situations existing because of the harmful structures of poverty (Alcock 2006: 82). Therefore, with the light of these pioneer approaches regarding to definitions of poverty, the researches measuring poverty can be gathered under the two different broad roofs. First roof is constituted by the poverty researches merely concentrating on economic factors, which I will discuss below under the title of traditional approaches. Second roof is constituted by not only economic factors but, in addition to them, social and political factors being used to determine relative needs and deprivation levels of people, which I will discuss below under the title of contemporary approaches.

2.1. Traditional Approaches Regarding to Measurement of Poverty

In traditional approaches, poverty is usually assessed according to the either income or consumption expenditure of household in a certain period of time that is generally considered as annual durations. Based on this assessment, poor are identified as those who fall below some minimally acceptable level. In this regard, poverty is simply defined as having insufficient income or consumption (McCulloch *et al* 2001: 37). These approaches can be classified under two roofs according to their measurement methods: First one is the subjective measurement methods, and the second one is commonly used objective measurement methods.

The first measurement method of these approaches is subject to the particular assessments according to the distinct features of the sample; this is why it is called subjective. Although, there are different implementations regarding to the methods of the measurement and classifications of poverty, the logic is usually similar: To focus on income or consumption. To illustrate, in subjective measurement methods based on the quantitative investigation, the main point is to make the poverty analysis in accordance with the answers of respondents. This means that people, who are poor, are themselves experts of their deprived conditions; therefore, what is ideal is to ask their own views at all stages of research (Lister 2009: 47). This is why it is called participatory poverty research. By these types of investigations, it is usually asked to the responded, for example, “How much you need to sustain your life decently?”, “Can you sustain your life decently by your current income?” or similar questions and the answers are assessed in accordance with previously constituted scales, for example, “yes, fairly”, “yes, but not decent”, “with difficulty”, “not sufficiently”, or “not at all” (Adaçay 2008: 31). What important is in these types of assessments is to be based on the responds of the individuals constituting the sample. According to the answers obtained poverty line is constituted in the form of income or consumption level³².

The second poverty measurement method based on income or consumption level is so-called objective methods. However, the emphasis on “objectivity” in here does not mean that “accepted by everyone” or “no bias/prejudice”. It means being based not on the responds of some individuals, but on some quantifiable criteria constituted by experts.

The first objective measurement method is the absolute poverty measurement. The champions of this measurement are undoubtedly two names who shaped the major methodology in poverty researches at the beginning of the 20th century, namely, Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree. In this understanding of poverty,

³² This participatory method is also being used by multi-dimensional poverty investigations that are not only focus on income and consumption but some other variables as social and political too.

it is claimed that deprivation is to be understood as the deficiency of sufficient financial power, particularly income, in order for meeting basic physical needs (Lister 2009: 20-1). Nutrition has a central place in this definition. Therefore, poverty is simply defined as “a family (or an individual, a group, a community) is poor if it cannot afford to eat” (Joseph and Sumption 1979: 27). This measurement method is commonly used in the countries where the extreme food destitution occurs. In this regard, the absolute poverty measurement appears to base on the notion of subsistence or having sufficient to continue to live, regardless this life is a decent one or not. Rowntree has a tendency to use an independent judgement from the nutritionists for the aim of determining basic necessities. He made a distinction between primary and secondary poverty. Primary one refers to the individuals who cannot access the basic needs to survive and, the secondary poverty refers to the people who have resources but cannot utilize these in order to carry up themselves above the level of basic needs. Although Rowntree was aware the difference between relevant poverty levels, he was still perceiving both of them as poverty (Alcock 2006: 67).

Absolute poverty is discussed in a broad and narrow framework. In broad framework, it refers to the food, shelter and clothing expenditures or necessary income level for these. In narrow framework, it refers to only food expenditures or necessities for these minimum food requirements (Adaçay 2008: 34).

“These (*Absolute Poverty Lines*) are usually based on the cost of a basket of basic goods and services. Often the basket may consist only of the food necessary to reach a given calorific intake per day. The cost of this ‘food only’ basket is sometimes used as an extreme poverty line. When the cost of other basic non-food goods, such as housing and clothing, is added, this gives an upper poverty line” (McCulloch *et al* 2001: 47).

Obviously, the content of these broad and narrow understandings of absolute poverty line change over time and across countries. Otherwise, it would not seem a worthwhile attempt to introduce the same absolute poverty line to every country since the differences in purchasing power parity. Therefore, absolute poverty line

differs as well according to the countries development level. According to the 2008 estimations, poverty line, for underdeveloped countries is 1.25 US\$, for Latin American countries is 2.15 US\$, for Turkey and Eastern European Countries is approximately 4 US\$ and for the affluent countries is 14.4 US\$ (Okumuş 2010: 72-3).

No doubt, these differences reveal another discussion on the relativity of the countries in terms poverty line. Such discussion refers to the relative poverty measurement which is second objective poverty measurement in terms of categorization made above. The champion of the relative poverty measurement is undoubtedly Peter Townsend. This definition has close links with Fabien critics of post-war achievements of welfare state accompanied by Keynesian economic policies in the field of eliminating poverty in Britain (Alcock 2006: 65). The argument against to the absolute poverty line was based on the statement that the citizens are getting enough to avoid subsistence poverty generally, however, in terms of the average standard of living, the relative position of the poorest people in the society during the 1950s and 1960s was not better than they had been in the 1940s (Ibid., 65). Therefore, in the Britain, at that time, despite the fact that the economic growth and expansion were in continuation, the relative affluence of the poorest citizens *vis-a-vis* to others did not reveal significant change. In this regard, Townsend points out that “people’s needs, even for food, are conditioned by the society in which they live and to which they belong, and just as needs differ in different societies so they differ in different periods of the evolution of single societies” (Townsend 1979: 38). This is why he considers any conception of absolute poverty as inappropriate. Therefore, the concept of relative poverty is considered in relation with the concept of inequality and this perspective assumes that there is a linear correlation between the two. Although, there is a possibility to, theoretically, eliminate the poverty considered in terms of absolute line in a given society, the same argument is not possible if the poverty is considered in terms of relative line. Because, regardless to the amount of income people enjoy or regardless to whether their subsistence needs are satisfied or not, some people

will always be in a worse economical conditions than the others. To overcome this theoretical question, relative line is usually determined as a certain proportion of average or median income in empirical studies. To illustrate, in European Union, relative poverty line is determined as the 50 per cent³³ of average income or average expenditure (Senses 2003: 92).

One another crucial point concerning to the relative poverty is the comparison among citizens and the assessment in terms of participation of valuable activities in a given society. According to Oyen, relative poverty is thought in terms of deficiency of the participation of the citizens to the activities that are customary and/or valuable (Oyen 1992: 617). The roots of this emphasis on the participation are found in Adam Smith's writings on welfare that has been quoted before in chapter two. As it is remembered, Smith says, "a linen shirt, for example, is strictly speaking not a necessity of life... But in present times, through a greater part of the Europe, a creditable day-labourer would be ashamed to appear in public without a linen shirt" (Smith 2009 [1776]: 519). If the day-labourer cannot join the customary and valuable activities of the society, meaning that being excluded from the rest of society, because of the lackness of a linen-shirt, it is considered as being poor in the perspective of relative poverty measurement. More or less same emphasis can be found in one of the writings of Marx, published as a pamphlet in 1891 as well. He says that "Our wants and pleasures have their origin in society; we therefore measure them in relation to society; we do not measure them in relation to the objects which serve for their gratification. Because they are of a social nature, they are of a relative nature" (Marx 2004 [1891]: 24). Quoted from Senses, Marx, in one of his writings, says that a man who happily lives in a cottage starts to feel himself deprived after a palace is built up next to his cottage (Senses 2003: 91). That is the reason why the poverty is considered in relation with inequality in the Marxist thought as well. Therefore, it

³³ A revision has been done couple of years ago. Now, it is used 60 per cent of average income or expenditure in the Union.

is possible to observe a convergence between Marxist consideration of poverty and relative poverty perception.

To sum up, relative poverty lines are briefly defined as follows:

“These (*Relative Poverty Lines*) are defined by reference to the general standard of living in a given country. The line may be drawn as a fraction of average income or the average wage. For example, in Europe, half the median income is often used as a relative poverty line. Because relative poverty lines are relative to the general standard of living rather than being based on a minimum set of basic goods, they are higher in richer countries than in poor countries. Furthermore, relative poverty lines reflect the general distribution of income, so more equal societies will tend to have higher relative poverty lines than less equal ones” (McCulloch *et al* 2001: 47).

2.2. Contemporary Approaches Regarding to the Measurement of Poverty

In traditional approaches regarding to measurement of poverty, the question of poverty is assessed in terms of income or consumption expenditure of the individuals, groups or societies whereas in the contemporary approaches³⁴ it is rather considered in terms of not only income and consumption expenditures but some other variables are also considered as inseparable in order to assess social, cultural, political and environmental influences on deprivation. According to the logic of poverty measurements in this conceptualization, poor are not thought deprived only in terms of material ownership but they are also considered as being deprived from some other opportunities, such as having opportunity to be educated well, living long a decent life, access to the healthy services, being able to reach clean water, having right to access to electricity and communication services, political participation and/or benefitting from sanitary services (Adaçay 2008: 59). In these inquiries, the needs of people, as seen, are evaluated in a broader context than income and consumption expenditures. Therefore, these approaches can be classified as those that take divergent human needs in centre.

³⁴ The capability approach can be considered under this headline as well. However, as I have comprehensively elaborated it in the second chapter of the study, I will not open a repetitive discussion in here.

One of the well-known examples of these types of measurements is the Human Development Index (HDI) developed and implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The motto of the programme, “people are the real wealth of nations” (UNDP 2010: IV), is the clear illustration of their perspective. Human development is defined by it as follows:

“Human development is a process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical ones are to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect –what Adam Smith called the ability to mix with others without being ‘ashamed to appear in public’” (UNDP 2010: 12).

Human Development Index, defined around the logic of quotation above, is used for the ranking of the countries as “very high human development”, “high human development”, “medium human development” and “low human development”. To illustrate, in the list for the year 2010, Norway, Australia, New Zealand, United States and Ireland are respectively placed for the first five orders and categorized as the countries that have very high human development. Bahamas, Lithuania, Chile, Argentina and Kuwait are the first five countries having the high human development. Fiji, Turkmenistan, Dominican Republic, China and El Salvador are the countries that have medium human development whereas Kenya, Bangladesh, Ghana, Cameroon and Myanmar have the low level of human development (UNDP 2010: 143-5). Turkey has a place among high human development countries, but it is at the bottom of the list, ranged at 83, and close to the countries placed in the group of medium human development.

By HDI, these variables mentioned above as health, knowledge and decent standard of living are measured by focusing on, respectively, life expectancy rates at birth, mean and expected years of schooling and per capita income adjusted with purchasing power parity. However, it is also confessed by UNDP that despite the fact that HDI cannot fully capturing human development’s richness, it was considerably important step to take these three different variables into account

since HDI symbolizes a shift in the thinking of what development is or how it should be considered (Ibid. 13).

In addition to HDI, UNDP defines another index as Human Poverty Index (HPI), which can be considered as the complementary index of HDI. By HPI, it is aimed to “reflect aggregate deprivation in health, education and standard of living” (Ibid., 95). This means that its objective is to illustrate the distribution of actualized development in these areas. It particularly features accessing to qualified water resources and child nutrition as the indicators of economic resources of citizens (Adaçay 2008: 77 and Senses 2003: 103). Therefore, HDI and HPI are the complementary indexes and cannot be thought separately each other, since the former one has conglomerative perspective while the latter one has the deprivational. The difference between these two perspectives can be summarized as follows: As is known, in HDI, education is taken as one of the major indicators of the development in a given country. Therefore, a rise in average educational level of a particular group in a certain country is reflected in the overall educational increase of this country. Accordingly, the HDI does not reflect the distributional dimension of this increase regarding to educational advantage among different groups of the country, meaning that it is conglomerative approach. However, there might be an increase in the educational opportunities of, say, upper-middle class while there might be a sharp decrease in that of low-middle class of the same country. Therefore, it is a necessity to focus specifically on disadvantaged groups, in the example, low-middle class. In such a situation, if the overall population or demographic range of upper-middle class is higher than that of low-middle class, this would be shown in HDI that there is a human development increase in the educational aspects of the country, although there is a decrease in the overall educational advantages of the low-middle class. This concern is reflected by HPI, meaning that it is deprivational approach. To sum up, HDI helps to see overall development whereas HPI enlightens us to see particular development in the welfare of specific groups of the society. This is the

reason why these two indexes should be implemented together and not be considered separately from each other.

“The process of development in the contemporary world can be seen in two rather different ways. It can be characterized in terms of the progress being made by different groups in each community, putting weight on the fortunes of the rich as well as the poor, the well provided as well as the deprived. This ‘conglomerative perspective’ can be contrasted with an alternative, more specialized, viewpoint in which development is judged by the way poor and the deprived, in particular, fare in each community. This ‘deprivation perspective’ is specifically concerned with those who are forced to live deprived lives. In this accounting of the process of development, lack of progress in reducing the disadvantages of the deprived cannot be ‘washed away’ by large advances -no matter how large- made by the better-off people” (Anand and Sen 1997: 1).

One another contemporary measurement of poverty is based on composite poverty indicators. It is claimed in this model that poverty can be assessed by either combining the indicators regarding to the income and consumption expenditures with the some other indicators regarding to the health and education or, supporting the income and consumption expenditures with these health and educational indicators. To illustrate, for the aim of measuring poverty, income and consumption expenditures are taken in order to measure the level of access to the goods and services in the market. However, addition to this market based measurement, another measurement is made by taking un-commodified goods and services such as being able to access to the health and educational services or services provided to disabled people into account and they are combined with the previously made measurement in the market (Senses 2003: 99).

2. Poverty Alleviation Strategies

As can be mentioned above, poverty is now rarely considered in terms of income, instead it is accepted that it has a multi-dimensional forms. It is usually emphasized in this regard that poverty is the process of social disintegration, being voiceless or being forced to out of social cohesion. In this perspective, it is inevitable that poverty has a close connection with the violation of human rights

as well. Another words, poverty can also be thought as the denial of human rights³⁵ and, thus, the alleviation strategies of it should be considered as an obligatory task for every country and/or entire world societies, either by the way of international policies or country-specific strategies.

2.1. General Descriptions of Common Strategies

I find the content of poverty alleviation strategies defined by World Health Organization's is worth to be mentioned in this regard. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) operating under the United Nations (UN), poverty alleviation strategies can be based on six major complementary subjects: The first one is being result-oriented meaning to focus on the results and effectiveness of the policies which can be monitored. The second one is to be comprehensive which emphasizes a developmental process "integrating macroeconomic, structural, sectorial and social elements". Third one is to be country-driven which means, "representing the consensus on what steps should be taken". Fourth one is to be participatory meaning "all stakeholders should participate in its formulation and implementation". Fifth one is to be engaged with different "partnerships between the government and other actors"³⁶ and, the last one is to be long-term meaning that "focusing on reforming institutions and building capacity as well as long term goals" (WHO 2008: 11-2).

In the context of WHO's major elements of poverty alleviation strategy, especially the second and the fourth ones are important since these subjects give particular importance to, firstly, structural socio-economic formation of the country in terms of social and macroeconomic variables and, secondly, to the

³⁵ This idea is obviously shared by the capability approach as well. For detailed discussion, see: Sen 2009: 355-88.

³⁶ We see that the subjects fourth and fifth, after the 1990s, are especially introduced to the poverty alleviation strategies suggested by international organizations. They have been started to get strength parallel to the popular ideas such as democratic governance, cooperation of the elected rulers with the non-governmental organizations and other political actors representing minorities, broad participation of governing processes, i.e. governance. Capability Approach also shares some concerns of these two subjects such as being engaged in democratic partnership and participatory methods during the investigation on the subjects of poverty, development and inequality.

participatory assessments on the needs of the poor. Any poverty reduction strategy should not be considered independently from the developmental perspective³⁷, which means poverty cannot be reduced only by providing, for example, reliefs. It should be considered together with some macroeconomic and social alternations in the formation of the socio-economic conditions, for example decreasing the overall rate of unemployment can be considered as one of the major elements to alleviate poverty. Addition to this, poverty reducing strategies should take into account the poor's own point of views about their deprived conditions; otherwise, the policies suggested would intrinsically be paternalistic, i.e. having the logic of "I know what is right for you". Therefore, going to the poor and asking them about their deprived conditions and let them define their conditions by participatory methods in order to decrease poverty are particularly substantial. This second emphasis brings democratic process to the fore, which is given more importance by the capability approach as well.

So, as we consider the poverty alleviation strategies along with developmental issues and alternations of socio-economic formations or structure, four types of mainstream strategies³⁸ can be mentioned in here. First one is the *Growth Based Strategies* in which economic growth is put at the centre for the aid policies. The context of this type of strategies is consisted from, for example, generating resources, creating or increasing labour demand and decreasing the unemployment rates, increasing the demand for goods and services which are indirectly rising the overall labour demand of the companies. However, the question in these kinds of strategies is about distributional concerns of developmental practices or outcomes of possible developments since it does not always give a sufficient concentration on the distributional justice. The second one is called as *Empowering Strategies* that includes political spheres and

³⁷ As it can be emphasized before, the word development does not mean only the economic growth but it should also consist of social elements that are implied in the second complementary subject of the WHO.

³⁸ Regarding to these mainstream strategies, I used the International Labour Organization's (ILO) categorization made in the publication called *Social Dialogue and Poverty Reduction Strategies* (2006).

concerns such as human rights, democracy, governance, empowerment and participation. These concerns are put at the centre in this kind of strategy. The third one is the *Remedial Strategies* that seeks for the immediate responses to the poor's needs through of social funds and assistances³⁹. Social security, social protection and social assistance programmes can be given as examples of these strategies. However, one of the common concerns about these strategies is that they do not focus sufficiently on the causes of poverty. The fourth, and the last one, is called as *Social Sector Strategies*. Investments toward basic social needs such as education and health are considered as crucial in these strategies. By these investments, its aim is to enhance the “human capital”. However, as is known, these investments are generally designed pretty narrowly, for example, promoting only health and/or education oriented strategies, but not perceiving deprived conditions of poor in terms of more complex issues, i.e. having lack of interest toward personal ends or people or specific components of being socially excluded (International Labour Organization 2006: 25-6).

2.2. Some Examples of Common Implications of the Strategies

There are numbers of policies that aim to reduce the poverty. The most well known policy is transfer programmes. These programs, it can be said that, aim to reduce poverty by providing means from affluent to the poor or less advantaged. These transfer programmes are called redistribution policies in macroeconomics as well. In this kind of policies, cash transfers which is directly associated with the aim increasing the income level of the poor and/or in-kind transfers which is associated with non-income means, such as public housing, food, shelter, education, health provisions, are considered.

There are two basic points of discussion among scholars in these kinds of programmes. The first one is on that whether these kinds of means are provided universally or not. As is known, some scholars tend to claim that supports should be provided only to those who cannot afford it by himself/herself, that is called

³⁹ The case that I will comprehensively elaborate in the chapter fourth of the study can be classified as remedial strategy.

targeted transfers. On the other hand, some scholars claim that social provisions should be provided to everyone regardless they have economic power to afford them by themselves or not, that is called universal understanding.

The second discussion point in these strategies is about the dependency ratios. Some economist and policy makers argue that transfers from middle and high income earners to low income individuals cause a reduction in labour supply incentives of the low income recipients since some of their basic needs are already provided by transfer programmes of the governments. Besides that, these transfer programmes may reduce labour demand too since they are increasing tax burdens on the middle and high-income earners and, thus, reduce the saving and investment incentives. So, conservatives criticize these programmes as they are creating or increasing the dependence and loss of economic self-sufficiency (Saez 2006: 187-8, Ravallion 2006: 203, Mookherjee 2006: 232).

The other strategy is indirectly related with reducing poverty. This strategy is aiming financial growth and economic development and designing policies for this objective. The main point insisted is that economic development and growth will somehow solve the problem of poverty in long-term; therefore, the growth theory, in particular, is not concerned with poverty and inequality between the rich and the poor in a society (Aghion and Aghion 2006: 73). One of the prominent examples of this claim is the so-called “green revolution” letting a steady decline in India during 1960s and 1970s. What made it happen were an unusual productivity boost in agriculture sector, its spill over into the urban spaces and, hence, a decrease in the food prices (Ibid. 74). Growth based approaches are not a new perspective obviously. However, it recently starts to be shining again under the label of “New Growth Theory” which underlies three main ideas bounded up with each other as follow: First is the “productivity growth by the rate of technological innovations”. Second is such “innovations are the results of entrepreneurial activities and investments”. Third is that “innovative investments are itself affected by the economic environment” (Ibid. 75). Accordingly, poverty

alleviation is seen as dependent on the increases in the productivity rates by the advocates of this approach.

Another model to alleviate the poverty is the *micro-credit implications*. Although, it is difficult to find a consensus on what micro-credit is, one of the broad understandings of it implies the combination of social target and services with banking services (Okumuş 2010: 141). In this system, some financial opportunities, funds and/or credits are provided by some specific, local micro-credit organizations and international organization to the low-income earners and it is expected from them to build up their own business. This model is assumed that the poor are not able to reach financial opportunities sufficiently since their credibility concerning to the repayment of the credit is not enough trustful. Since the economic system is risky and has defects such as high inflation rates and fluctuating investment rates in developing countries, the poor's opportunities to benefit from these financial assets are less than their counterparts in the opulent countries. In this regard, it is claimed that, micro-credit provides benefit to the poor in terms of saving, increasing and varying their income sources (Ibid. 168). By the way of micro-credit implications, it is aimed to influence on (1) the alleviation of poverty, (2) the support of education of children, (3) emancipation of the health services for specifically women and children and (4) enhancement of the efficiency of women in the society and household (Ibid. 168-78). In this context, it is observed that the credit is provided to the woman herself in almost all form of the implications. Parallel to the micro-credit, *a complementary micro-insurance system* is suggested by some scholars. In this system, it is expected that vulnerability and persistent poverty is tied up and feed each other. Accordingly it is necessary to break the cycle. Therefore, it is aimed to insure the poor against to the most devastating man-made and natural risks, such as insurances for life threats, health, crops and agricultural risks for small-scale producers, earthquake, flood, drought and so on. Although, available implications of this suggestion are overly limited, the micro-insurance advocates argue that "selling insurance to the poor will give households new freedoms to pursue profit without fear" and, thus,

incomes will increase as a conclusion of diminishing poverty (Morduch 2006: 340). However, the question how such a micro-insurance system will be financed still remains in the core of this suggestion and; some humble answers for this question, which is sometimes given as “by the way of generous donors” (Ibid. 340), seems a little bit much optimistic under the rules of market-based economies.

One another policy suggestion is *the effective provision of public goods*. It is seen in this model that “effective provision of public goods is a key determinant of quality of life” (Besley and Ghatak 2006: 285). This suggestion is different than the traditional approach to the poverty alleviation strategies in terms of not focusing on the personal/private ownership, but, instead, it is concentrating on public goods provided to every citizen regardless of their social and economic conditions in a universalistic view. The claim in this view is that households which hold similar levels of private ownerships and consumption may indeed “enjoy very different standard of living once public goods are taken into account” (Ibid. 285) since public goods and services may have more stronger influence on individuals’ deprived conditions than the personal/private ownership⁴⁰.

Lastly, it is worth to mention social security system as a contemporary strategy to alleviate the poverty in a given country. The main method to implement a social security programme is the redistribution by in-kind or in-cash transfers of aggregate wealth of nation and the main logic is to provide a support to those who cannot secure themselves with adequate resources by the wealth collected by taxes from those who have more than enough for themselves. According to Alcock (2006: 204-5), social security policies can take two forms. The first one is to prevent poverty. In this form, it is aimed that “no one gets into circumstances in which they experience any form of poverty”, either absolute or relative. It is the first task to identify the circumstances in which there is a risk of poverty to

⁴⁰ I will discuss specifically on these kinds of provisions further on in the framework of my own suggestions to alleviate the poverty. Therefore, I will not deepen the discussion on these kinds of strategies in here for now.

determine who will be supported and which provisions are guaranteed for those who have potential to drop in these risky positions. The second form of social security policies is to provide reliefs for those who are already below under the officially determined line of deprivation, meaning that “restricting the provision of social security protection to those who are poor, in order to lift them out of, or relieve, their experience of poverty”. In this model, not those who are risky to drop below the poverty lines, but those who are actually poor and are already below under the deprivation limits are targeted to be supported. Social security programs can generally provide the supports either horizontally or vertically in a given society. On the first hand, horizontally means that all individuals are potential contributors of the system and, parallel to this, they are potential beneficiaries as well. Support is provided to people during their lifecycle at different stages of their needs. On the second hand, vertically means that supports are provided to only those who need them. Resources are redirected from those who have sufficient in order to afford their life decently to those who are in need. In this system, some individuals in the society may never be capable to contribute the system by taxes or other ways of contribution. However, this is not taken into consideration, meaning that there is nothing expected from the poor, which is dissimilar from the horizontally established social security systems (Ibid. 203).

On this ground that I discuss above, I will try to establish my case, namely the reliefs provided by GDSAS in the next chapter. During this chapter, I will follow the answer of the question whether or not the reliefs provided by this institution work to diminish the poverty in Turkey. By this investigation, I am planning to inquire the logical basis of social justice understanding in Turkey at the institutional stage by using capability approach as a methodological tool of the investigation.

Chapter IV: General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity

The social assistance system of Turkey has started to gain its contemporary form in the 1970s. For the era of Ottoman Empire, it is difficult to claim that there was an institutionalized social assistance system. However, this does not mean that there was not any social protection for the vulnerable and deprived individuals in that time. It is mentioned that, in the Ottoman era, social assistance and protection were based on voluntariness, donations and solidarity. Four pillars have constituted this informal social assistance system in the Empire.

The first two pillars were formed according to the rules of religious acceptances of Islam, and they are special forms of Islamic alms called *fitre* and *zekat*. Although, these two religious forms of the social assistance have not issued with any constitutional law in the Empire, it can be considered that they were socially obligatory in the society since norms of Islam in daily life were widespread. These two forms of assistances can be considered as tax on wealth since individuals earning well were socially and religiously liable to share the certain proportion of their income with deprived people. Third pillar of the social assistance was surely intra-family supports as one of the common assistance systems as happened in other societies where expansive and strong industrialization did not appear and; economic activities were based on the agricultural production. The charitable foundations were being constituted the last pillar of this informal social assistance structure. In the field of education, health, urbanization and social assistance, these charitable foundations could be regarded as the considerably influential formations in the life of communities of the Empire. In addition to these pillars, occupational unions can be considered as a pillar of solidarity and social assistance in the era; however, these unions were primarily targeting their members and appertain⁴¹.

⁴¹ For a remarkable discussion of the social assistances and the components of this system in Ottoman Empire, see: (Özbek 2004: 47-65 and 275-95).

In the era of early Republican Turkey, it is not possible to find a comprehensive social assistance system when it is compared with Western counterparts in the same field. During the early period of the Republican Turkey, Ministry of the Health and Social Assistance was established; however, there had been no other institution in this field until 1977. Social policies and regulations in this area have usually remained in the field of occupational regulations and at the legislative levels until the end of the 1970s and; therefore, it is difficult to observe satisfactory changes in the constitutional scale. Although, some steps in terms of the social rights regarding to the regulations in social security and insurances for the state's employees have been introduced to the labour market relations of the country, due to the late industrialization and modernization processes, comprehensive legal regulations covering also private sector's as well as public sector's employees have been started relatively late. For example, the term social assistance has not been mentioned even in the development programs until 1973. In the year 1977, solitary, weak and deprived people over the 65 years old and disabled gained the right to be protected by being entitled a standardized monthly income under the coverage of the law numbered 2022.

At the beginning of the 1980s, some major changes came to the agenda in Turkey and these changes can be considered as a watershed in the history of contemporary Turkey in terms of not only structural changes in the field of economic regulations but social aspects as well. These changes have been seen inevitable necessities by the ruling elites of that period in order to accomplish being adjusted to the mainstream tendencies of the international economic structure.

In this context, after the decisions taken on 24 January 1980 by the 43rd Government of the Republic⁴², structural adjustment policies have started to be introduced into the political and economic agenda of the country. The components of the new economic policies were designed in order to transform the economic

⁴² Formed by the Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*) and headed by the Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel.

structure towards more liberalization and privatization in accordance with the neo-liberal inclinations that have already started to be advanced in the major economies of the western part of the world. They were mainly targeting less state involvement in productive activities. During this process, one of the major changes was the transformation of economic structure from the model of import-substitution industrialization to the model of export-oriented growth, supported by the IMF, World Bank (Gürses 2006: 81-2) and OECD. The short-term goals of the 24th January measures can be summarized as “to solve the foreign currency bottleneck and balance of payment problems, to achieve price stability and to activate idle capacity and increase the growth rate” and the long-term objectives were “to minimize state intervention and develop a market economy and to shift from import substitution policies to industrialization policies aimed at export” (Güran 2011: 32). Actually, the concluding remarks of the 24th January decision in economical sphere can be labelled as ‘devastating’ in terms of its social reflections for the middle and lower classes of the society. As Öniş and Webb emphasize, although the January measures “improved the trajectory of the national economy, they caused increases in the average prices and; wages and prices did not keep up with overall inflation and thus they fell in real terms”. By that way, these measures caused “intense frustration among some groups” (Öniş and Webb 1994: 159). However, the point emphasized by Öniş and Webb is just one dimension of such devastative effects of the measures. In addition to these scholars’ claim, alienation in the workplace and social life, social exclusion in daily life, individual survival strategies in social security perception and increasing economic and social inequalities as well as poverty in the society have started to be widespread as the easily predictable outcomes of the measures, which can be thought that these measures were in collaboration with increasing globalization, liberalization and privatization processes in entire third world countries⁴³.

⁴³ Boratav, Yeldan and Köse conducted a detailed analysis of the Turkish economy between 1980-1998. The influences and impacts of globalization on income distribution and social policies after the early 1980s are re-considered by scholars in this remarkable discussion. I need to acknowledge

Against to the critics regarding to the 24th January measures, it is possible to observe some precautions taken by the government of that time. In 1982, Ministry of Education has started to provide scholarships and boarding schools for the deprived students and, in the year 1983, Prime Ministry Social Services and Child Protection Agency started to assist deprived people by giving priority to the children. The Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations gained an authorization to provide some social reliefs in 1984 (Hacımahmutoğlu 2009: 69). The government, in 1986, constituted the 3294 Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Law and this law can be considered as one of the responds to the critics toward the economic policies of that time in Turkey (Gürses 2007: 66 and Senses 1999: 432). Following this law, Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Fund was constituted. It was said that the aim of the fund was to protect those people who were not covered by any social security programme and to answer their needs. This fund have organised the institution of GDSAS and structured it as being dependent to the Prime Ministry of the country by the law numbered 5263 and, accordingly, it gained an institutional structure by this way in 2004 (Official Website of GDSAS). It was stated that this legal social assistance system had been designed to respond to the basic needs of those who cannot work and, thus, who were economically unproductive and those who were not protected by any social security programme. Therefore, it was considered as a social security and social service system established to serve the purpose of satisfying the needs of those who were deprived to afford basic life requirements (Sallan-Gül and Gül 2008: 367).

Some enlightened studies regarding to the social assistance system in Turkey can be mentioned at that point. In one of these studies, Açar calls the social assistance system in Turkey as the liberal-conservative regime. He concluded in his study that this liberal-conservative approach to the question of poverty is functional to the requirements of the capitalist accumulation and it serves for the reproduction

their contribution that makes easier to understand the relation between 24 January measures in Turkey and the process of globalization. For more enlightened discussion, see: (Boratav and *et al* 2000).

of capitalist economic structure (Açar 2009: 162). This claim is obviously related with the transformation of the economic structure of the country during the following period of the 24th January measures. As mentioned above, these measurements were taken in order to transform the economic structure towards more privatized and liberalized system. It is explicit now that such transformation brought together some mentality changes as well in the field of welfare state as in accordance with the new orientations in the world's leading economies, namely in the western world. One of these changes was the denial of social rights that is one another reflection of the neo-liberal welfare regime. In consistency with the neo-liberal tendencies and denial of the social rights, poverty perception in Turkey has been reduced to the understanding in which poverty is seen as the one of the negative consequences of individual's rational action. As mentioned in the first chapter of this study, that kind of perception is embedded in the libertarian social justice paradigm that sees the poverty as the consequence of the rational behaviours of the individuals. Obviously, this kind of interpretation of social justice has a reductionist understanding of poverty since it sees the poverty as a consequence of the agent's own decisions, but there is no space for the role of the structure surrounding the agent him/herself economically, socially, politically and may be culturally. Accordingly, in the field of social rights, a rejectionist understanding emerges as appropriately to the neo-liberal approach to the poverty. Such rejectionist understanding towards the social rights leads to the "moralizing poverty" that is a term conceptualized in the study of Açar's mentioned work above (Ibid. 145-53). Focusing on this conceptualization, it is possible to catch the some other clues of neo-liberal understanding regarding to the social justice. As can be remembered in the first chapter of this study, according to the neo-liberal approach, poor are the poor since they deserve it and the poverty is not the unexpected conclusion of the poor's own rational choice. Accordingly, their poverty is associated with the poor's own idleness, laziness, irresponsibility and improvidences in the neo-liberal thinking and, thus, they are poor since they deserve it, which is summarized with the term "deserving poor" (Ibid. 150).

Based on the neo-liberal orientation in the social and economic structure of the Turkey, which has been introduced to the country's economic structure with the 24th January measurements, the welfare regime has also been transformed as appropriately to the neo-liberal assumptions toward poverty.

In terms of some significant similarities, Buğra and Keyder claim that Turkish welfare regime shows resemblances with Southern European Welfare Regimes. The general features observed in the southern welfare regimes, according to them, are as follows:

- A labour market structure in which employment provided by small employers, self employment and unpaid family workers is very important;
- The large incidence of undocumented economic activity and unrecorded employment;
- A social security system with corporatist tendencies, constituting a fragmented system in which social rights are unequally distributed and universal health insurance is absent;
- The limited role of the state within the formal social security system; in contrast to this, the state playing a large role in the income opportunities of the individual through particularist mechanism in which patronage relations play a large role;
- Almost complete absence of social policies aimed at combating poverty and exclusion (other than those linked to unemployment), related to this,
- The importance of the family, local government and religious or non-religious institutions in promoting the welfare of individual and helping individuals to deal with risk situations. (Buğra and Keyder 2003: 13).

It is obvious that these similarities in terms of welfare regimes are accompanied with similarities in terms of social assistance system too. At the beginning of 1980s, parallel to the 24th measurements and particularly to the transformation of the economic structure from import-oriented strategy to the export-oriented one in Turkey, social assistance system has started to be transformed to the system based on the social solidarity and, thus, responsibilities of the state in this field has

been transferred to the society itself as appropriately to the neo-liberal trend. Therefore, it can be said that in the development of social assistance system of Turkey and especially in the case of GDSAS, a neo-liberal tendency of the state is in the evidence. As I will mention below in the following parts of this chapter, the idea that social assistance should be conditional on participation to productive activity is one of these resemblances of this neo-liberal tendency. Another resemblance of this neo-liberal tendency in the social assistance system is that “government authorities in Turkey, like their liberal counterparts elsewhere, repeatedly stress that social assistance in the form of unconditional grants entails the danger of fostering dependency” (Buğra and Keyder 2006: 223). A discourse that social assistance should not increase the dependency of the citizens to the state has been used as an argument time after time during the discussions regarding to the role of welfare state in Turkey.

In addition to this, it can be said that the social assistance system in Turkey has a collaborative features as well. A clear illustration of this claim can be found in the example of the idea regarding to micro-finance system that has been organised so as to solve the question of poverty without acknowledging right to income and that “allows for extensive collaboration between the voluntary sector and financial market institutions” (Ibid.) By this collaborative system that is appropriate to the neo-liberal tendencies, it is aimed to alleviate the burdens of social assistance on the state and to distribute the welfare responsibilities of the state to the market, voluntary sectors, family-centred social assistance and charitable foundations.

Despite the fact that there is more than one single non-governmental and governmental organizations serving in the field of social assistances in Turkey, today, the main institution working in this field is the GDSAS. In addition to this institution, three other governmental institutions performing in the field of social assistances can be mentioned such as Prime Ministry Social Services and Child

Protection Agency (SHCEK), Green Card⁴⁴ and Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations (VGM).

SHCEK was established in 1983 and it provides both in-kind and in-cash assistances primarily to the children. The main aim of the institution is to protect the unity of the family (Taşcı 2010: 89). The Green Card implementation can be thought as a sort of in-kind assistance organized for the deprived people and those who need social support. It has been started at the beginning of 1990s so as to satisfy the health needs of the poor, however, its coverage was expanded in 1998. There are two conditions to benefit from the Green Card. First is that the potential beneficiary should not be registered any other social protection programme and the second is that the monthly income of the potential beneficiary should be less than 1/3 of minimum income. One of the most important points is that the Green Card is provided to the citizens temporarily, but not permanently (Ibid). Lastly, the VGM can be mentioned as the other main institution performing in the field of social assistance in Turkey. This institution has been established in the framework of statutory decree numbered 227. In addition to its cash supports, the institution provides some in-kind supports as well such as public-soup kitchen services, accommodation for the students and camping services for the elementary school students (Ibid. 90). Although, as can be seen, the GDSAS is not the unique institution performing in the field of social assistance in Turkey, it can be considered as the major one among all of others performing in the same field. When the institution is considered in terms of both the content of its reliefs and its structural size, it does not seem difficult to consider it as the major social assistance institution of Turkey. The GDSAS's body is spread almost all districts of the country by its branches. These branches serve in 81 cities and 973 municipalities across the country.

⁴⁴ Although the Green Card is not literally an institution but an implementation, it can still be classified as an institution since it has gained an institutional formation in years and it currently serves independently from other state institutions performing in the field of social assistance.

1. The Legal Bases of the GDSAS

The constitutional basis of the institution GDSAS is the Turkish Constitution. In the second article of the Constitution, the state is defined as a welfare state. This emphasis is repeated in the article five under the definitions of the main objectives and duties of the Republic. Second, the institution legally based on two legal laws numbered 3294⁴⁵ and 5263⁴⁶. The first law organizes the fund of the institutions while the second one defines and describes the institution itself, in terms of its structure, operational body, authority and institutional responsibilities.

In this context, the fund that organized the institution itself afterwards was established according to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Law numbered 3294. The draft of the law accepted on 29 May 1986 in the parliament and it went in effect after it was published in the official gazette numbered 19134 on 14 June 1986.

A clarification is necessary here in terms of the main emphasis of the law. The most important articles of the law are the first and the second ones that respectively define the main aim and coverage of the law.

In the first article, the law emphasizes its main aim under three objectives: The first one is to help citizens who are in deprivation and destitution and to residents who are accepted by the Republic as temporarily or permanently. The second is to take precautions in order to increase the strength of social justice in the society as well as providing a fair-distribution of income and; the last one is to encourage the social assistance and solidarity. In this context, the coverage of the law includes three groups of people as it is indicated in the second article: The first group is constituted by those who are in deprivation and destitution. The second group is the citizens who are not covered by any social security institution established in

⁴⁵ The law includes 12 articles except for one additional and one temporary article. Details of the law can be obtained from official website of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Justice (<http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/739.html>). Retrieved on: 16.05.2011.

⁴⁶ The law includes 22 articles except for four temporary articles. Details of the law can be obtained from official website of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Justice (<http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/1426.html>). Retrieved on: 16.05.2011.

accordance with the laws and, those who are not paid with any income by these institutions. Lastly, those who have potential to be productive and become socially beneficial under the condition of providing a temporary assistance or an educational support constitute the third group.

However, with a delegated law enacted in May 1995, an addendum was made to this article and, it is declared by such addendum that treatment expenditures and orthopaedic tools of disabled people who are registered in and covered by a social security programme can also be taken under the coverage of this law, if these costs are not paid by the social security programme by which these disabled people are covered.

To introduce the services which target the groups mentioned in the first and second articles of the law, a fund provided under the management of Prime Ministry and Central Bank of the Republic has been constituted, which is enacted with the article third.

Article four embodies how the fund is financed. According to this article, the fund is financed by (1) other funds which has already been decided to be constituted by ministerial cabinet and will be constituted in future, (2) supplies from the national budget, (3) half of the traffic fine payments, (4) certain amount of income and corporate taxes⁴⁷, (5) 15 per cent of the advertisement incomes of the Radio and Television Supreme Council, (6) all kind of donation and assistances and (7) other sources. Article six arranges the inspection of the fund. It is enacted according to this article that Republic of Turkey Supreme Auditing Board of Prime Ministry inspects the fund.

One of the most important articles in the law in terms of the discussion of this study is undoubtedly the article seven. This article is arranged for the question of how the reliefs are provided. According to this article, reliefs provided by the institution are given to the citizens through the agencies of Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASF). Local authorities are inherently the managerial

⁴⁷ According to the article, ministerial cabinet determines the amount of the transfer.

officials of the foundations in the districts and cities. In cities, board of the trustees of the foundations is constituted by mayor, chief of the constabulary, heads of the provincial treasury, provincial director of national education, health director of the province, institutions for social service and children protection of the city and muftis whereas, it is constituted by mayor, senior official for law enforcement, district revenue officer, district director of the national education, a senior official from the ministry of health and muftis in the districts. Besides that, three citizens chosen by the local governor in cities and districts are assigned to the board of trustees as well.

On the legal basis of the law numbered 3294, the fund has been organized as the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity by another law numbered 5263. The draft of the law was accepted on 1 December 2004. According to its first article, the aim of the law is defined as to ensure the implementation of the law numbered 3294 and organising the procedures and principles regarding to the establishment of the GDSAS and its duties as well as the responsibilities.

As can be understood by the content of the first article, the law has been introduced so as to arrange the institution itself. The third article defines the duties and responsibilities of the institution and emphasizes that the main duties of the institution is to take the financial and managerial pre-cautions in order for actualizing the aims of the law numbered 3294⁴⁸. As its responsibilities, expenditures of the foundations established in cities and districts, their work and implementations, investigating and inspecting the procedures and principles of them and determining the criteria regarding to provide reliefs are defined by this article.

The law numbered 5263 organizes the duties and responsibilities of specific departments as well under the body of the institution. One of these departments is the Directorate of Relief Department that is placed in the core of the case for discussion ongoing in this study. According to the codes regarding to the

⁴⁸ Therefore, the law 5263 can be considered as the complementary sub-regulation for the actualization of the aims and responsibilities that are defined in the law numbered 3294.

responsibilities of the department in the article eight of the law 5263, the department is assigned as a responsible body to assess the demands for relief, creating the appropriate criteria to benefit from the relief programmes and, preparing the proposals in this framework⁴⁹. One another important point in the law in terms of the discussion ongoing is about the social assistance experts who are employed according to the article twelve. The responsibilities and duties of these experts, on the other hand, is not defined in the law, but in a separate instruction⁵⁰ which regulates the responsibilities, duties, assignment, employment conditions and principles of the social assistance experts. These cadres, according to the code 31 in the instruction, are assigned as responsible of the implementation and as a decision maker in the field since the assessments such as whether the individuals are eligible to benefit from relief programmes or not are being made in the local foundations according to the reports of these social assistance experts. Therefore, these cadres can be considered as the implementer authorities in the field during the inspection of deprived conditions of individuals. The main duties and responsibilities of these cadres are defined in the instruction as developing new strategies and programmes concerning to the social assistances, contributing social policies, researching on poverty and unemployment, conducting projects to prevent poverty and unemployment, observing the questions that citizens are faced during the process of benefitting from the reliefs and suggesting solutions for these questions are just some of them. According to the instruction, it seems that social assistance experts are the main cadres in the institution in the process of providing reliefs. However, these cadres actualize their responsibilities by the helps of other employees and cadres in the local social assistance and solidarity foundations. The article 19 of the law 5263 determines who these employees and cadres are.

⁴⁹ Obviously, such department and reliefs provided by the institution are placed central in this study. I briefly submitted only the legal basis of this department in this part of the chapter since its institutional and operational structure will be broadly assessed further on.

⁵⁰ The instruction can be acquired from the official website of the institution by following the address, <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/tr/html/383>, Retrieved on: 17.05.2011.

2. Institutional and Operational Structure of the GDSAS⁵¹

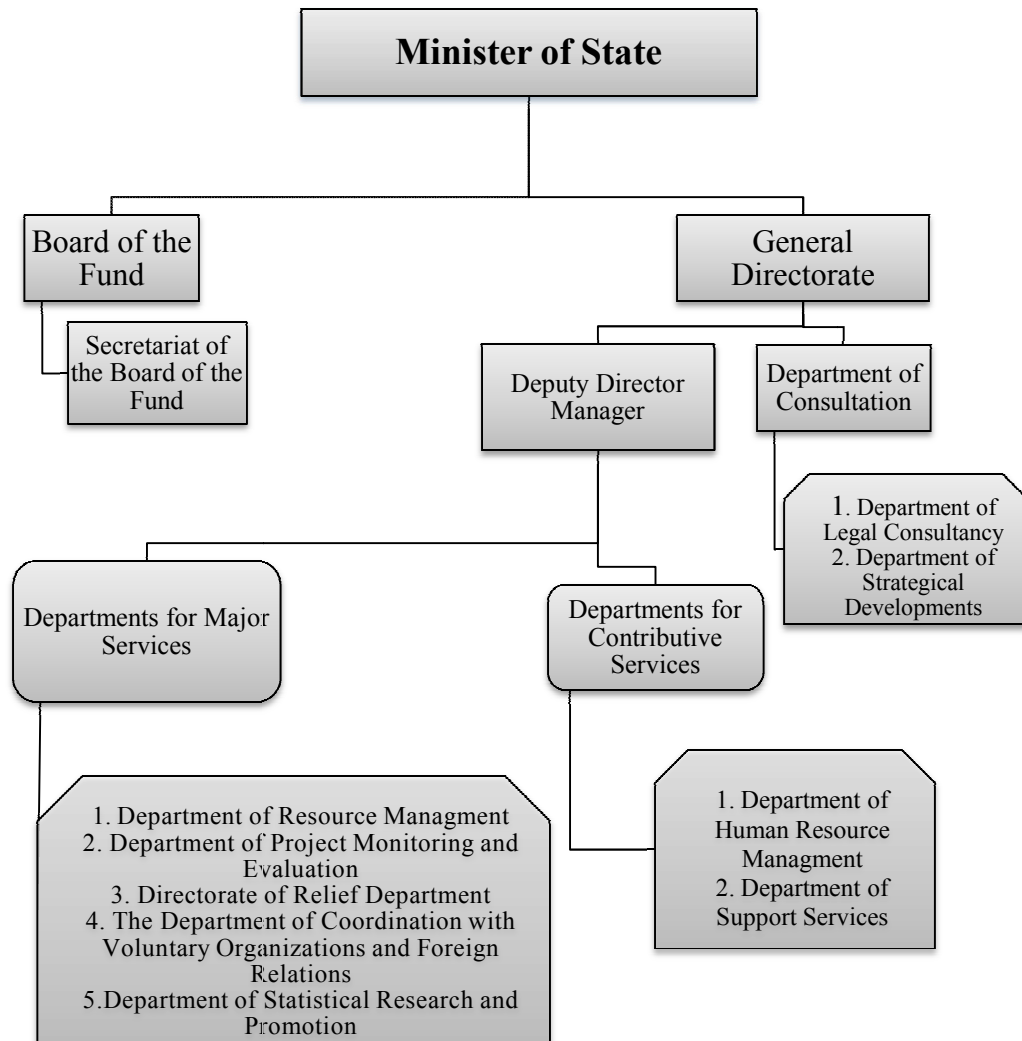
Financial sources of the fund established with the law numbered 3294 are transferred to the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations by means of General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity and; by this way, the reliefs are reached to the citizens.

The institution has been structured as directly dependent to the government and; one of the state's ministers takes the ruling on the top of the institution⁵². The table II below illustrates the organizational structure of the institution.

⁵¹ Majority of the information presented under the title of this part is obtained from the official website of GDSAS, <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr>, Retrieved on: 19.05.2011. Other sources in the part indicated separately.

⁵² It is beyond the discussion of this study, but I would like to indicate as a footnote that being directly dependent to the government or to the minister himself instead of state is a problem. One of the government ministers is assigned as the chief of the institution and he has certain and unquestionable ruling. This management method obviously does not seem appropriate in the principles of democratic governance. Being autonomous from the government itself but, at the same time, operating as a state institution is crucial especially for these kind of institutions in order to prevent political corruption. For example, this kind of managerial structure is open to the questions such as arranging social assistance system according to the political benefits of the current government or deciding who will benefit from the system, what the conditions to be benefited from social assistance are directly under the influence of the chief person on the institution. Such an organizational structure is open the political corruption and need to be discussed on it; however, at that point, it is beyond the discussion of this study.

Figure II: Organizational Structure of the GDSAS



The institution defines its mission in a broad spectrum. Contributing to ensure a fair income re-distribution, ensuring the effective usage of the resources to alleviate the poverty, supporting the citizens who are at the bottom line among all deprived individuals and cannot afford their basic needs, ensuring the social integration of the citizens by the way of sustaining the projects regarding to production and employment, cooperating with other state institutions and non-governmental organization in synergy to distributing reliefs effectively and promoting social assistance programs are defined as the major missions of the institution.

2.1. Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations

Such missions are aimed to be actualized by means of local social assistance and solidarity foundations established in the cities and districts. These foundations have been established to assist the deprived people in-cash and in-kind and; they carry their activities by 973 branches in every city and district under the management of local mayors. By this way, it is said that these foundations are organized as bridges between state and citizens. The decision making body of the foundations is constituted by the board of trustees and all relief programmes designed by the general directorate come into force according to the decisions of these boards. In this context, these boards can be considered as the implementing bodies of the reliefs in localities.

It is said that there is no hierarchy between the foundations and the general directorate and; these foundations are private legal entities, which seems as a contradictive discourse, since they carry the activities in localities in accordance with the relief programmes whose contents are defined and determined by the general directorate and, according to the law numbered 5263, they are inspected by the general directorate as well.

These foundations are financed by four main sources as follows: (1) the Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Fund, (2) all kinds of Islamic alms such as *fitre* and *zekat*, (3) incomes gained by shareholders and cooperations, and (4) other sources. The sources of the fund is distributed in conformity of the decisions taken by the foundations across the country, however, these foundations are allowed to use some self-sources as well to support citizens in-cash and in-kind.

To apply the reliefs, citizens should be eligible. Conditions for this eligibility is determined by three necessities as well as some specifities:

1. Firstly, the applicant should not be registered by any social security institution and should not be financially supported by any of them.
2. Secondly, being in an economic opulence that s/he does not hold any regular income to afford her/his basic needs.

3. Thirdly, if the disable citizens cannot satisfy their orthopaedic and functionalized needs by the supports of any social security institution in which they are registered, they can be supported by the fund with the rest of income that they are not supported by any social security institution.

In order to be supported by the SYDGM, the application is made directly to the local foundations by applicant him/herself⁵³ and; these applications are assessed in terms of three point: whether the applicant is registered in any social security programme, they benefit from green card implementation and they have any responsibility to care their relatives such as wife, husband, children or mother/father. After these assessments, the social assistant experts and other officials perform another inspection in the house of the applicant. This inspection is renewed every year and the duration of the inspection can extend over one year. The officials who are responsible to make intra-house inspection are chosen among, social workers, sociologists, psychologists, public relation specialists, social assistant specialists or experienced employees of the foundations. These officials arrange the house inspection form by introducing his/her personal opinion about the applicant and the demand for relief and; submit this form to the board of trustees of the local foundation. Hence, the decision whether the applicant will be supported or not is made by the board of trustees according to the information collected by the social assistance experts.

2.2. Organizational Structure of the Institution⁵⁴

The institution consists of ten departments. Except for general directorate, some of these departments serve as to provide major services and others are established for sustaining contributive services. Addition to these departments, for the

⁵³ Institution specifically regulates the application process and makes it easier for those who cannot apply to the relief programmes by him/herself because of some physical disabilities. See: <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/tr/html/155/Yardim+Basvuru+Esaslari/>, Retrieved on 01.06.2011.

⁵⁴ If the sources indicated in this part are not cited separately as a footnote, that means all information has been obtained from the official website of the GDSAS, <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/en/>, Retrieved on 21.05.2011.

consultancy, there are two departments more. Let me introduce first the major departments.

One of the major departments headed by the general directorate is the *Resource Management*. The tasks of the department is mainly to evaluate and manage the fund's resources to sustain the reliefs and some other activities as projects which seem crucial to break the cyclical chains of the poverty. Besides that, in accordance with the law numbered 5263, the department performs to increase the fund's resources, allocating fund resources in appropriate ways and issues stated by the Fund Council and follow up the income and expenses by monitoring the budget equilibrium. This departments is not only monitoring the reliefs but it is also designed so as to financially support the projects helping to alleviate the poverty by increasing labour force, educational activities for citizens, consultancy and information systems for employment opportunities. In this context, this Department of Resource Management is work in cooperation with the *Directorate of Project Monitoring and Evaluation*. Such department's duties are specifically defined by the law 5263 so as to evaluate and encourage the social projects developed by both the state's departments and non-governmental organization when it is necessary. Addition to the other duties given by the general directorate, the department does not only develop the project and project proposals, but it works as an implementer body of the previously suggested and accepted projects as well in the localities. It seems that perception of the department regarding to the so-called "social project" is based on the principle designed to gain economic productivity to the citizens. In this context, it is aimed to reach the citizens economically active and productive levels and, by this way, to ensure their integration into the society. Therefore, the department defines projects which are eligible to be supported as those which (1) can lead the citizens to gain income, (2) educational projects increasing employability and; (3) social relief/assistance projects based on cooperation in their principles to support projects⁵⁵. The other

⁵⁵ This information can be obtained from the official website of the department, <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/tr/html/131/Proje+Destek+Esaslari/>, and under the title of Proje Destek Esaslari (Principles of Project Support), Retrieved on: 21.05.2011.

department is the *Directorate of Relief Department* that has a central place in this study. Addition to the tasks given by the general directorate, department's major responsibilities are defined as "to evaluate the requests for relief, to develop appropriate criteria and suggestion within this concept" and "to monitor the supports being done on time and fully, to conduct them, to cooperate with related institutions and to determine the principles and methods" in the law numbered 5263. In this context, social assistance and solidarity foundations in localities provide reliefs as family, food, heating, sheltering, special cases, disasters, public kitchen activities, health, handicapped people and education⁵⁶ under the management and inspection of the general directorate. The other part of the institution is the *Department of Coordination with Voluntary Organizations and Foreign Relations*. The department carries its activities under the body of general directorate with nine persons including sociologists, social assistant experts and an interpreter. Addition to the tasks given by general directorate, the duties are defined as to coordinate with voluntary and international organizations in order to realize the aim of implementing projects, to follow up the studies of the voluntary organizations which are in cooperation with the department and; cooperation with the international NGOs and public institutions. In this context, the objectives of the department are identified as follows: Providing supports for the implementations of efficient and applicable social assistance programmes developed by the NGOs, public institution and organizations, universities and local administration, coordination with some specific international organizations like UNDP, EU, UNICEF and WB in the framework of combating with poverty and; to provide supports, coordination and guidance to the projects developed by the local social assistance and solidarity foundations with the coordination of EU funds and other international organizations. *Directorate Statistical Research and Promotion Department* works for the purpose of developing and publishing documents in order for promoting the activities being carried in the general directorate and local foundations. One of the most important duties of the

⁵⁶ I will comprehensively elaborate the department and its activities further on. Therefore, I am not deepening the relevant discussion in here to avoid being repetitive.

department is to publish the official journal of the GDSAS called “*Dayanışma*”⁵⁷ which includes issues, experiences, researches and cases within the field of social reliefs and assistances. Another important contribution of the department is to research the impact analysis of the reliefs periodically throughout the country. By this analysis, it is aimed to reach the information regarding to impacts of reliefs and projects on beneficiaries and; determine how much effective the activities would be on the question of alleviating poverty. Most recent impact analysis report of the department was published in July 2008.

In addition to these major departments, two contributive departments can be mentioned as *Legal Consultancy Department* and *Department of Support Services*. The first one works so as to “review the laws, regulations and instructions prepared by the departments and other legal issues in terms of legal constraints” and; the second one works specifically so as to “realize all type of administrative and financial services of establishment, purchasing, renting, maintenance and repair, archives, health and so on needed by General Directorate”.

Obviously, in this organizational structure of the GDSAS, the most important department is the Directorate of Relief Department and its provisions in terms of ongoing discussion in this study. Therefore, the following part of the chapter will be based on this department and reliefs provided to the citizens by means of it in order for presenting a comprehensive evaluation.

3. An Evaluation of the Reliefs and Logic of the Institution

Let me start with the evaluation of the reliefs⁵⁸ provided by the GDSAS to the citizens, permanent residents and asylum seekers⁵⁹ in the Turkey.

⁵⁷ “*Solidarity*”

⁵⁸ All information regarding to the types of reliefs, conditions to benefit from them and statistical fulfilments can be observed by official website of the Institution as <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/tr/html/87/Yardimlar+Dairesi/>, Retrieved on 25.05.2011.

⁵⁹ The conditions regarding to benefit from the reliefs of the institution for the permanent residents and asylum seekers are specifically issued in the legislation numbered

The first relief program is the family supports. Under the roof of these reliefs, there are three types of provision provided to the families. These are shelter, food and heating provisions. It is stated that, to be eligible for benefiting from the shelter provision, house of the family should be not proper to be lived in. However, the question at that point, how it is decided whether or not the house of the family is not proper. Necessities concerning to be proper is not clarified neither in the law legislation nor in the specific legislations introduced by the directorate itself. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the initiative about whether the family is eligible to be supported with shelter provision or not belongs to the board of trustees in the localities. This situation obviously causes a concern such as assessing the needs of the family who has applied shelter provision does not depend on the scientific criteria, but on the initiative of the board of trustees in the localities.

The provisions given for the remediation of the shelter conditions are made in-cash and in-kind. These two types of provision are obviously better than providing only in-cash provisions, since the questions regarding to the shelter may not be remediated only by the way of income-based provisions. For example, providing financial provisions may help to pay the rent of the house, but they may not be sufficient to provide a decent life or ameliorate the physical conditions of shelter such as protecting individuals from rain and cold. To illustrate, in a research conducted by Hacımahmutoğlu in the Keçiören district of Ankara, it is concluded that sheltering provisions of the local foundation of GDSAS are usually provided so as to help the beneficiaries to pay their rent. These individuals, with this relief, firstly pay their rent and the rest of the relief does not sufficient to pay the cost of other necessities of a decent life such as costs of electricity, water and sanitary services (Hacımahmutoğlu 2009: 192). Therefore, sheltering provision should not only be considered as the aspect of rent, but that of a decent life. Surely, at that point, one can claim to increase amount of sheltering provision in a way to compensate the other requirements of the decent life. However, at that point, to

B.02.1.SYD.0.08.300.5990/8237 and dated 20.05.2009. This legislation can be acquired from, <http://www.sydg.gov.tr/tr/html/407>, Retrieved on 25.05.2011.

specifically measure these expenditures and provide them in-cash for every family according to different amount of consumption and due to the number of family members would be another problem, namely problem of calculation and possible prejudices or subjectivity. Therefore, instead of in-cash provision, to provide them in-kind, such as being exempt from the cost of water, electricity and sanitary services, by cooperating other state institutions seems a better way.

Beside these, sheltering question is not associated only with having a roof over the head. Requirements of the decent life in a shelter should be considered also in terms of protecting from the natural conditions and environmental questions such as climatic conditions. If the cost of these requirements are tried to be calculated for every family separately, sheltering question may probably become inextricable. In other words, problems of sheltering because of environmental factors surrounding the shelter and because of requirements of a decent life can be fixed well by in-kind provisions. However, it seems by the information presented GDSAS⁶⁰ that the institution's main focus is to provide in-cash assistance as the shelter provision. In this context, although, the number of beneficiaries obtaining the shelter provisions has been dramatically increased in years and especially in 2008, the question whether the sheltering problems can be solved by enhancing financial assistance, still remains in the core. Without taking the other requirements of the decent life in a shelter like electricity, water and sanitary services into consideration, it cannot be said that shelter provisions are appropriately provided to the perspective that "being in public without any shame" or "being able to take part in the life of community" since the sheltering questions may probably be not only related with the question of having a roof over the head.

The second type of family support is the food provision. It should be confessed that these reliefs are not provided sufficiently. These reliefs are provided once in a time in every three months and four times in a year. As in-kind, some food packages, cleaning materials and shopping cheque are provided to the citizens by

⁶⁰ <http://www.sydg.gov.tr/tr/html/179/Aile+Yardimlari/>, Retrieved on 25.05.2011.

taking care of their specific needs. In the context of the discussion concluded in the chapter two, it can be said that these reliefs seems proper to solve the question of food poverty appropriately to the perspectives of the capability approach since the specific needs are taken into consideration. However, in the information provided by the institution, it is not possible to find answers for the questions of how the quantity of the food packages are measured and what is the determinant of the “specific needs”. It seems that these questions are answered in the field while the social assistance experts employed in the local foundations are in the process of making inspection. Therefore, for the answer of these and related question, it seems necessary to make a separate empirical research in the field.

The third type of family support is arranged so as to provide the heating material. By this material, deprived houses determined by the inspection of the social assistance experts and sociologists can benefit up to 500 kg coal annually. The transportation costs are in the responsibility of the institution and cooperative state organization. As of 2003, it has been observed an increase in the number of beneficiaries of the coal provision and; this provision was provided over the two millions of people in 2008. The question regarding to this relief is concerned with the specifically determined amount of coal. Can it be claimed that this quantity of the relief is an effective cure for every family? The geographical location, spaces of the house, number of family members living in the house and varied climate conditions are all influential on the heating conditions. Without taking into account of these differences, there is no reason to claim that the relief is organized and provided effectively in terms of the perspective of capability deprivation.

In addition to this, according to the legislation⁶¹ numbered B.02.1.SYD.0.08.301.01.03/7100-10352 and dated 12.08.2008, the sheltering supports have been started to be provided only to those who are single parent, fatherless, disable, elder, mistreated and those who have chronic disease. This change that was made by the legislation limits the beneficiaries of the support and,

⁶¹ The legislation can be acquired from: <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/tr/html/466>, Retrieved on 25.05.2011.

indicates the logic that those who are not among one of these groups are not accepted as sufficiently deprived for shelter provisions. For example, married couples who are not elderly and disable, or fatherless are not seen suffering from lack of sheltering, although, it may be very possible to observe these kind of individuals suffering from sheltering conditions⁶². However, it is also necessary to approve that this provision is provided as in-kind. Because, if providing certain amount of financial assistance for the heating relief would be preferred way, there could be justice questions among the beneficiaries since the differentiated cost of transportation of coal or taxes varied from one locality to another locality across the country.

The second relief programme of the institution is constituted by the educational supports. There are four types of provision provided by the institution as educational supports. The first one is the complementary educational supports such as school bag, school uniform, bureaucratic stuffs. These provisions are supported according to the specific socio-economic conditions and demographic differences of the localities. It is clear that provisions in this field have been increased dramatically since the 2003. Instead of providing cash assistance, to directly provide complementary stuffs themselves would be inappropriate since the existence of differentiated costs of these materials vary across regions. However, by the information submitted by official information system of the institution, it is claimed that needs of the localities and demographic differences in the localities are taken into account during the process of providing complementary educational materials, which is a proper perspectives to the capability approach.

The second type of provision is to provide lunch to the deprived elementary and obligatory school children. It seems that demands toward this relief has indicated

⁶² The book called *Yoksulluk Halleri* presents remarkable examples regarding to the deprived families and individuals in Turkey. In this book, there are dozens of real stories among which some of the individuals clearly suffer from the inadequacy of sheltering although, they are not, for example, single parent or elderly. See: Aksu, Bora *et al* (2007): *Yoksulluk Halleri*, Edited by N. Erdoğan, İletişim Yayınları (İstanbul).

a dramatic increase since 2003 when it is considered in terms of the financial source allocated for it. However, it is not possible to observe same proportion of increase in terms of the beneficiaries. Since 2003, the beneficiaries have increased approximately 21 per cent, the financial resources allocated for it have increased much more than that proportion, approximately 156 per cent. This situation can be interpreted by two ways. The first one is that the quality and quantity of the relief have been increased in years and, thus, financial resources allocated for it have been increased during years. The second one, while the financial resources allocated for this relief have been increased, the utilization acquired by the relief decreases. However, there is no opportunity in the information presented by the institution to affirm which interpretation is right.

The third type of provision in the field of educational supports is the scholarship given to the higher education students. Contrary to the launch provision, both the beneficiaries and financial resources allocated for this relief has been indicating a sharp decrease since 2003. While 213.898 students were benefitting this provision in 2003, this number is decreased to 4.413 in 2008⁶³. However, in terms of the discussion ongoing in this study, the question is mainly related with the being income-based. The conversion factors which influence these students capability and, thus, their well-being levels are not taken into account while providing this relief, which can be easily proved by the fact that all of the beneficiaries are obtaining the same amount. On the one hand, general price indexes in their localities and their personal expenditures are varied according to their genders, environmental factors or personal ends defined by beneficiaries themselves, which are not taken into account. This is obviously a question for this type of provision as it is considered in terms of the capability approach that concentrates on relativity of needs and personal wellbeing.

The fourth and the last type of provision in the field of educational supports is the free transportation relief provided to the disables. Disables who continue to their

⁶³ For statistical information, see: <http://www.sydg.gov.tr/tr/html/180/Egitim+Yardimlari/>, Retrieved on: 25.05.2011.

formal education and need special education are supported with free transportation. The institution says that the aims by this relief is to provide so as to (1) make an easy access for the disables to the education, (2) increasing schooling rates of disables, (3) encouraging schooling of them and (4) increasing the rate of to take place in the educational life of these individuals. In terms of the logic of the capability approach, this relief should be approved since it seems satisfactory to meet the mobilization needs of individuals who have different kind of disabilities. In terms of capability perspective, as is defined in the second chapter and third part of this study, it can be claimed that functioning of mobilization of disables who have different levels and types of disabilities is guaranteed by such provision. However, in terms of the objectives of the institution, this relief does not seem sufficient by itself, especially in terms of increasing the rate of disables in taking place of the educational life and it needs to be supported by some other reliefs. Because, taking place in the educational life of the community cannot be assessed by increasing only the mobilization opportunities, especially for disables, since the deprivation of disables regarding to schooling does not only related with access to schools.

At that point it is crucial to assess third relief program organized by the institution for disables only. Addition to the free transportation relief toward disables, between 2003-2008, 10.626 individuals were supported with some specific disable tools which satisfy different needs of varied disabilities. It can be said that the supportive tools for disables provided by the institution ranged in a broad spectrum from wheelchair to telescopic glasses. However, the number of beneficiaries of them⁶⁴ is remarkably limited as once the total number of disables is taken into consideration in Turkey.

The fourth relief program is constituted by the ad-hoc services. The first type of this relief program is the public soup kitchen services serving in 51 cities to approximately 35 thousands people. The main objective of this type of provision is to provide daily food for individuals. Besides that, this relief program also

⁶⁴ See: <http://www.sydg.gov.tr/tr/html/166/Ozurlu+Yardimlari++/>, Retrieved on 02.06.2011.

provides disaster supports for the natural disasters by means of local foundations in the provinces. However, it is almost impossible to find reliable information about these reliefs in the official information systems of the institution. The lack of information force researches to carry out their own fieldwork in this area.

The fifth relief programme of the institution is health supports. To benefit this support, the citizens need to prove that s/he (1) is not able to afford the cost of health expenditure, (2) is not registered any social security program, (3) has not any trustee who has a social security registration. Such support is mainly provided to the green card owners. If the individuals are not covered by the green card implementation, according to the law numbered 3816, additional supports are provided to these individuals by GDSAS. In this context, if the citizens, permanent residents or asylum seekers have not gotten green card, they are firstly required to apply for green card to benefit from health supports of GDSAS. It seems that, the coverage of the health supports provided by GDSAS is pretty wide. The emphasis as “all costs and every service” in one of the official documents⁶⁵ of the institution indicates that green card owners can apply for every health problem if such problem is not covered by green card implementation. In this context, especially for the health supports, it can be claimed that the institution guarantees to protect the individuals from capability deprivation existing because of health problems. The only problem is the requirement of holding green card and; this card, it is said in the law numbered 3816, can be acquired from the green card offices of local municipalities.

Lastly, the conditional cash transfers constitute the sixth relief programme. It is said in the official documents prepared for this program by the institution⁶⁶ that this program is organized for the benefit of the most disadvantaged groups who have not gotten any social security protection and regular income in the society.

⁶⁵ Relevant information can be acquired from the official document of GDSAS, http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/upload/mce/2008-2010/video/saglik_yardimlari_el_brosuru.doc, Retrieved on 25.05.2011.

⁶⁶ The document can be acquired from: <http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/upload/mce/2008-2010/video/sntbrosur2009.doc>, Retrieved on 25.05.2011.

However, these disadvantaged groups are allowed to benefit only three different kinds of cash transfers in the forms of education, health and pregnancy. These supports are provided to those (1) who are between zero and six years old as in-cash health support, (2) who are between six and 17 years old as in-cash educational support and (3) who are pregnant as in-cash pregnancy support. Individuals can apply for these supports but the permanentness to benefit these supports depends on some conditions they are required to fulfil regularly. To illustrate, for the in-cash health support, the families should engage their children in regular medical check-up in the local health care centres. For in-cash educational supports, the families should send their children to the school regularly and prove they do so through submitting official documents that they can get from the managerial boards of the schools to the local social assistance and solidarity foundations. For the in-cash pregnancy support, pregnant women should take part regularly in the pregnancy controls in medical centres. Addition to the condition which is ambiguously determined as “being poor”, individuals should fulfil these conditions as well to benefit conditional in-cash transfers provided by the institution. Obviously, these fields in which the institution GDSAS provides assistance are some of the basic deprivational fields. However, the limitation of these targeted areas and of the quantity of the provisions do not seem entirely appropriate to the poverty understanding of capability approach. Additionally, individuals’ poverty or capability deprivation in the fields of education, health and pregnancy may be related with some other factors which beyond the financial deprivation and; it is quite clear that these factors are not taken into consideration. Besides these, the quantity of the in-cash supports does not seem sufficient. To illustrate, for the elementary female students, the support is 25 Turkish Liras and for the male students 20 Turkish Liras for every month. For the high school female students, the amount of transfer payment is determined as 45 Turkish Liras and for male ones 35 Turkish Liras. Which capability or capabilities can be satisfied by these amount of in-cash provisions is question. However, despite the fact that the quantity of the in-cash transfers does not look like to help the students to refrain “being in public without any shame”, at least to

take the gender dimension of the capability deprivation into consideration is one and the only heart-warming point⁶⁷ in terms of conditional cash transfer provisions.

In addition to the deficient and criticized points of the reliefs in terms of capability approach above, at that point, it is worth to discuss briefly on the impact of the current relief programmes of the institution. Between June-December 2007, the institution conducted an Impact Assessment Research⁶⁸ that aimed to assess the utilization of the reliefs and projects on the alleviation of the poverty as well as effectiveness of them⁶⁹.

According to the findings of the research, in-cash provisions are less preferred by beneficiaries. Instead, 63 per cent of the beneficiaries prefer in-kind assistance. This empirical data indicate that income-based social assistance is not as much satisfactory as in-kind social assistance. As this empirical fact is considered in terms of the capability perspective, it is proved again that the conversion factors influencing the well-being level of individuals and summarized in the second chapter of this study should be major reference points in the assessment of poverty. Gül and Ergun have found a similar finding by conducting an

⁶⁷ Although, every relief program and every type of relief have been elaborated just above, it should be confessed that this assessment is a theoretical one and there is still a need for further empirical research. These reliefs should be specific issues for separate comprehensive quantitative or qualitative research that can be conducted so as to measure or discuss their impact or contribution in terms of strengthening the social justice in the society, since neither official information system nor the publications of the institution, such as the journal called *Dayanışma*, provides sufficient information concerning to the ameliorative effects of these reliefs. Addition to the normative evaluation of the logic of reliefs and social assistance system in Turkey, which has one of the central places in this study, every single relief programme needs an impact analysis as well.

⁶⁸ There are two reports currently available in the official website of the GDSAS. One of these reports is on the workshop of the impact assessment of the reliefs and the other is the finding of impact assessment of the reliefs and projects of the institution. They can be obtained from the sources below:

(1) http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/upload/mce/2008-2010/dayanisma_dergisi/etki_analizi_calistay_raporu.doc

(2) http://www.sydgm.gov.tr/upload/mce/2008-2010/dayanisma_dergisi/sydgm_etki_analizi_sonuclari.doc, Retrieved on: 31.05.2011.

⁶⁹ This is sole and thus the most recent research introduced by the institution on the impacts of the reliefs and projects.

independent research among the beneficiaries of the GDSAS's reliefs. Authors have done the research in the Ankara, in the districts of Keçiören, Mamak and Altındağ by interviewing randomly selected beneficiaries of the GDSAS's provisions. According to their findings, beneficiaries of GDSAS get substantially the reliefs in-kind instead of in-cash ones (Gül and Ergun 2003: 393). Since the utility gained by in-cash social reliefs can be diversified according to the conversion factors such as environmental, personal, cultural and distributive variations in the households, it does not seem much meaningful to insist that same amount of in-cash reliefs provide sufficient or equal satisfaction for every individuals. This theoretical claim of the capability approach seems as approved by the findings of impact assessment report published by institution itself.

Another finding indicates that main beneficiaries of the social reliefs are women and children. Obviously, these groups are the most vulnerable ones in the society. According to the official statistics, 60 per cent of the beneficiaries are female while only 40 per cent is illustrated as male. This fact approves the claim of the capability approach that the gender differences are one of the internal factors that have influence on to convert personal holdings into wellbeing. In other words, variations in terms of the conversion ability of personal holdings into wellbeing are determined by the factor of gender differences as well. Addition to this, children are the other most vulnerable strata in the society. The finding, which indicates that main beneficiaries of the social reliefs are consisted from female and children, proves again that personal factors influencing the conversion ability of the commodities are crucial for the assessment of poverty and/or determination of who the poor are, as asserted by the capability approach.

Besides that, complains of beneficiaries regarding to the clothing, food and heating are intensified in some regions in terms of insufficiency of these reliefs. This is another proof that differences among individuals from region to region should be taken into account, which refers to the external conversion factors that have been discussed in the second chapter.

However, it is indicated by this impact assessment report that some in-kind reliefs provided by the institution in the field of educational and health assistances are the most satisfactory reliefs. In terms of health assistance, if it is remembered, there is an emphasis in the law that “every cost and all health questions” are covered in the social assistance program of the GDSAS for the individuals who are eligible to benefit these reliefs. Accordingly, every health questions causing capability deprivation are in the coverage and, thus, capability enhancement in the related field is guaranteed. This is proved by the discourse of beneficiaries who say “GDSAS save their lives in terms of this relief”.

To sum up, these findings published by the institution approve that some social relief programmes should be re-arranged according to the perspective of the capability deprivation. In other words, demanding in-kind reliefs more than in-cash ones and; importance of internal and external conversion factors which influence well-being level of beneficiaries indicate that reliefs arranged in accordance with satisfying the capability deprivation of individuals are more effective than those reliefs arranged in the form of financial assistance.

In the workshop organized for the evaluation of the findings of this impact assessment research of the institution in 22-23 July 2008, participants, who were consisted of independent researchers, government representatives, NGOs and scientists, emphasized some crucial points that are emphasized in line with the capability approach. These points are as follows: First of these points is the emphasis on the distribution of the reliefs in the household. As mentioned in the second chapter, according to the capability approach, for a healthy assessment of the well-being level of individuals, it is necessary to take distribution within the household into consideration. It is a well-known fact that, for example, investment made for the benefits of male members of the families or sons sometimes takes priority in terms of the allocation of the resources in the household. This obviously causes an inequality in terms of the capability development between the genders within the household.

Second, participants of the workshop have highlighted that decisions regarding to the methods of providing reliefs which are taken by the local foundations should be more flexible in accordance with the specific features of the localities. In the second chapter, it was emphasized that environmental conversion factors and regional variations influence the benefits of individuals. Therefore, this emphasis of the participant is another point approved by the capability approach. Authorization of the local foundations regarding to take independent decisions about who needs social assistances should be increased and; more flexibility should be provided them in terms of determining the eligibility criteria since the particular conditions of the localities can be assessed better by the local foundations themselves. The regional differences between urban and rural, climatic differences, cultural diversities are, no doubt, other important considerations. Participants pointed out also that these factors should be added to the assessments during the process of providing social reliefs.

Third, participants of the workshop have drawn the attention that there is an ambiguity in the poverty understanding of the institution. Who is deprived, who need assistance and who are eligible to benefit from the reliefs should be determined according to the recent scientific criteria. However, in the law numbered 3294 that regulates the conditions of benefiting reliefs and eligibility does not include any clear definition. Although, poverty is not particularly defined as the capability deprivation or there is not any particular suggestion by the participants in terms of that point during the workshop, to take the attraction towards the ambiguity of the identification of the poor was undoubtedly important.

Lastly, in the report, attention has been paid to the point that social reliefs and projects for alleviating poverty should be arranged so as to give the priority for the benefits of the most disadvantaged groups and individuals. This is appropriate emphasis in terms of the second principle of the Rawlsian model of social justice which inspires the capability approach and which is introduced in the first and second chapters of this study.

As can be seen from the evaluation of the case of this study above, there is not any direct relation with the recent paradigms and the developments in the fields of poverty studies, namely towards the capability approach. Although, the institution provides some of the reliefs in ways which the capability paradigm draws the attention on, this does not seem as a conscious attempt. The clear illustration of the old-fashioned poverty understanding of the directorate can be captured straight from the head of the institution himself. The president of the GDSAS defines poverty as follows:

“Poverty is sociologically defined in two forms; absolute and relative poverty. Both of these definitions use income level as base and indicate a quantitative limit. Absolute poverty can be defined as satisfying the individuals’ basic needs, such as food and shelter, which are necessary in order to be stay healthily survived. Relative deprivation, on the other hand, includes social dimension more than the absolute poverty and has characteristics differing from society to society, since it is identified as that individuals cannot satisfy their social needs and fall off below the average economic level of a particular society” (Yıldırım 2010: 9).

It is obvious that poverty understanding of the head of institution, and accordingly the institution itself, illustrates the perceptions that are discussed in the third chapter of this study under the title of traditional approaches toward poverty. Among the words of Yıldırım as the head of the institution, there is no possibility to observe any clue of the objective regarding to flourish the valuable and reasoned human capabilities.

Based on the discussion of the relief programmes and logic of the institution above, this study attempts to put forward six assertions in relation with the theoretical framework of this study, namely capability approach and Rawlsian model of social justice.

Firstly, income-based assessments made by the institution do not take people’s particular deprived conditions into account. More importantly, according to the poverty perception of the GDSAS, people are assessed as poor if they do not hold certain amount of income, which can be directly observed also by the words of

managerial cadres of the institution. In terms of the recent developments and advances in the field of poverty studies, this is a sort of primitive poverty understanding, which belongs to the previous decades -namely to the theories of Rowntree and Booth-, and it does not have much consistency with the claims of capability approach. In this regard, according to the law numbered 3294 that has established the GDSAS, definition of poor is ambiguous as well as it is based on insufficient criteria such as commodity ownership, which can be observed in the first part of this chapter. If it is necessary to remind, the article one in the law defines one of the main objectives of the institution so as to (1) help citizens who are in deprivation and destitution and (2) assist the residents who accepted by the Republic as temporarily or permanently. However, if the identification of the poor is ambiguous and/or based on income-based assessment, this means that solutions of the institution for poverty, deprivation or destitution are ineffective in terms of the capability approach. Because, poverty is a multi-dimensional question which necessities to take many different aspects into consideration. Obviously, the income or, by a more abstractive conceptualization, the commodity ownership is one of these dimensions, but not the unique one. Therefore, the assessments regarding to who the poor are is inadequate to produce effective solutions. One of the main critics of capability approach toward this old-fashioned poverty understanding is about that assessments of poverty based on commodity ownership is invalid since they do not concentrate on the particular conversion factors of the localities which determines the wellbeing level of individuals.

Secondly, in conjunction with my first assertion, I claim that these particular conversion factors that are differentiated from region to region can superficially be classified as environmental factors, personal heterogeneities of individuals, household divisions, gender related questions and political factors. However, to make generalization on the contents of these factors is also not functional since they can be varied from context to context. For example, environmental factors influencing the deprivation level of people can force to provide a heating material for cold and arid climates. However, for some other regions, the environmental

factors can be not related with climate, but, for example, the environmental pollution that is obviously influential on the quality of life of people. Therefore, as a general formula, it can be claimed that poverty assessment should be context dependent. In this regard, if the type of provisions provided in the field social assistance systems and the eligibility criteria were determined by the local authorities, this would lead to produce a well effective solutions. However, in the structural and operational system of GDSAS, the criteria are determined centrally and local authorities do not hold any initiative to determine them according to the law mentioned in the first part of this study. They are responsible to determine who holds eligibility to these criteria during the process of application for reliefs. This means that for the every region of the country, deprivational conditions of people are assessed according to the same logic, although, these conditions can be varied from region to region, let say, Eastern Black Sea Region to Mediterranean Region. Therefore, based on these claims of the capability approach, I suggest increasing the initiatives of local authorities, namely social assistance and solidarity foundations in the localities in terms of determining the valuable and reasoned criteria of poverty and eligibility conditions to apply the reliefs.

Thirdly, as can be seen in the part of legal basis of the GDSAS, reliefs are provided according to the mentality of gaining productivity to the citizens. That means relief are aimed to make citizens economically productive. Discourse regarding to this objective can be captured the emphasis in the relevant legislations on “making researches on unemployment” as one of the responsibilities of social assistance expert. In addition to the discourse, as it can be remembered, one of the relief programmes was the conditional cash transfers. The aims of the conditional cash transfers are also based on to gain economic productivity to the citizens as well as help them take part in the societal life. However, conditionality to be eligible these supports should not be based on economic productivity but to enhance valuable and reasoned capabilities which individuals attribute importance. This perspective of the capability approach refers to the substantive freedom that has been introduced in the second chapter of this

study under the sub-title of freedom. The economic productivity obviously may be one of the ways by which citizens can take place in the life of society and socially included. However, it is not the unique one. The perspective on to gain economic productivity illustrates the perception in which development is considered in terms of economic wealth. However, as it can be remembered from the second part of the second chapter, capability approach concentrates on human development. Some of the universal proofs of the claim, “economic development does not necessarily mean welfare”, can be found in the empirical investigations of capability-based researchers. Some of these researchers and their findings have been summarized in the second chapter of this study. For example, if it is remembered, Sen found that although, per capita incomes of South Africa, Brazil, Gabon and Oman are six or seven times higher than China and Sri Lanka, the welfare conditions are better in the latter countries. Besides that, average life expectancy among the residents of Harlem district in USA, as another example, is lesser than that of individuals living in Bangladesh. These empirical facts indicate that economic wealth by itself is arguable indicator of welfare. Therefore, in the processes of arranging and providing reliefs to the citizens, the perspective of GDSAS should be broaden beyond the economic welfare and it should be changed in consistency with the aim to increase the human capabilities, but not only to gain economic productivity to the citizens. It can be claimed that the conditions for such cash transfers are organised so as to encourage capabilities in the field of education and health as well as decreasing morbidity rate at birth by providing in-cash pregnancy support. However, the concerns at that point are those (1) the quantity of supports is strictly standardized for every student in the field of educational supports, which means conversion factors are not taken into account and (2) valuable and reasoned capabilities are limited with only the fields of education, health and morbidity.

Fourthly, some of the provisions are provided as both in-kind and in-cash; however, this does not mean valuable and reasoned capabilities of individuals are taken into account. It can be claimed that there are not only cash provisions but

provisions also in-kind. That is right. However, it does not mean that these in-kind and in-cash provisions satisfy varied needs of individuals, households or local residents. Because, not only the ways in which provisions are provided, but how the potential beneficiaries are determined is important as well. The determination of the potential beneficiaries is made according to three conditions which are (1) being deprived, (2) being not registered any social security institution and (3) having a potential to be economically productive under the condition of being supported with reliefs. These conditions are indicated in the legal basis of the institution. One of the core problems regarding to the reliefs provided by the institution on is just this point: Deprivation is not a concept that can be measured by these three criteria. I already criticized the first condition above that “being deprived” is ambiguous discourse. I also questioned the third condition that is about being “economically productive”. However, the second condition needs to be approved when it is considered in terms of preventing reiterated supports. If the person is supported to satisfy one of her needs by a social security organization, it would undoubtedly not be logical to support her for the same need repeatedly. Accordingly, in consistency with the capability approach’s perspective, the first thing needed to be done in the legislative stage is to clearly define what valuable and reasoned capabilities are in localities, but not define them centrally. The second thing, after the process of defining valuable and reasoned capabilities, is not to focus on to gain economic productivity, but to concentrates on enhancing these capabilities. The third thing, which is in the practical stage, is to introduce social policies that lead to increase achieved functionings of individuals, which is illustrated in the Figure I in the second chapter of this study. Obviously, to introduce these kinds of social policies, it is important to determine what these functionings really are. The questions of “how these functionings will be determined” and “what the statistical weights of them are” are the issues of special quantitative and qualitative researches needed to be done by social assistance and solidarity foundations in localities.

Fifthly, my main critic to the operational and institutional systems of the GDSAS is not directly concerning with to provide in-cash, in other words, income-based assistance. Instead of it, I assert that to make income based evaluation in order for determining “who poor is” and “how can their quality of life be ameliorated” is not a proper way when recent paradigms and developments in the poverty studies are considered. In this regard, it can be seen that one of the indirect outcomes of the logic regarding to income-based assessment is, accordingly, the condensation of providing in-cash supports as it can be observed from the relief programmes of the GDSAS. If there were opportunities to enhance individuals’ valuable and reasoned capabilities by providing only in-cash supports, there would be no problem in terms of the capability approach. However, in the case on GDSAS, it seems that to satisfy not only reasoned and valuable capabilities but, even the basic capabilities by means of in-cash assistance is not possible. This claim is supported by the one and sole impact assessment report of the institution which has been mentioned above that 63 per cent of beneficiaries prefer to be supported in-kind, instead of in-cash social reliefs. However, it should be confessed that this critic is not valid in terms of every type of provision provided by the institution. To illustrate, the relief programme organized for the health questions of the individuals is arranged to answer every health problem of the beneficiaries who are eligible to obtain it. Especially, not in the law itself, but in the legislative stage, some regulations mentioned above give the right to the potential beneficiaries that they can apply to the institution for every type of their health question which prevents them to live their life decently. Therefore, to make generalization such as any of the relief programmes of the institution do not take different capability deprivations of individuals into consideration seems highly problematic. In addition to the critics towards in-cash assistances of GDSAS, there are also some questions toward in-kind provisions as well. For example, strictly determined 500 kg coal for heating needs in every district is not proper perspective in terms capability approach. Although, it is provided in-kind, this relief programme does not take care of external differences such as environmental variations or internal differences such as number of family members living in the

house, space of the house and so on. On these explanations, my fifth assertion is briefly that the type of provision, such as being in-kind or in-cash, is not intrinsically a problem in terms of capability approach; but the major concern is to not take varied needs and characteristics, namely internal or external conversion factors, of potential beneficiaries into consideration.

Lastly, when the logic and operationalizing model of the institution are considered, it seems that the directorate adopts the poverty reduction strategy which is based on remedial solutions and social sector strategies that has been discussed in the chapter three of this study. If it is necessary to remind, growth based strategies put the economic growth at the centre and, thus, try to prevent the poverty through increasing macro-economic fulfilments of the country. This is a kind of preventative way of poverty. Empowering strategies to alleviate poverty is mainly associated with the aspects as human rights, democracy, governance, empowerment and participation. In these kinds of strategies, poverty is seen as the aspect of political and human rights. These strategies try to alleviate poverty by the way in which participation of individuals to the process of decision taking is increased. Because, these strategies are generally established on the logic that anyone cannot decide better than the poor themselves on the issues that what the poverty and its determinants are. One another strategy is remedial strategies that seek for the immediate responses to the poor's needs by the way of social funds and assistances. Lastly, it can be mentioned social sector strategies in which investments toward basic social needs such as education and health are considered as crucial in order for enhancing human capital. In this context, the poverty reduction strategy adopted by the GDSAS can be considered as remedial and social sector strategies. On the first hand, having a perspective towards ameliorations in the field of educational and health questions in almost all relief programmes and trying to increase human capital in these fields let the institution to gain a social sector characteristic. On the second hand, since it tries to give immediate responses to the poor's needs by means of social funds and assistance, it can be claimed that the GDSAS's structure has a characteristic based on

remedial strategy to alleviate poverty. This claim can be observed also in the process of emergence of GDSAS in 1986. It has been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter that GDSAS has been emerged as a response to the critics that appeared because of devastating socio-economic effects of 24th January measurement on the lower and middle classes (See: Gürses 2007: 66 and Senses 1999: 432). However, a common concern about the remedial and social sector strategies is that they do not focus sufficiently on the causes of poverty. In this regard, it can be claimed that GDSAS's strategy is based on how to manage poverty, but not inherently to prevent it. Accordingly, it is not possible to claim that these strategies have a perspective to permanently prevent the poverty in the country. However, in terms of the capability approach, poverty is not seen as a problem to be solved with temporary solutions. The capability approach presents itself as a long-running developmental strategy and a new paradigm that is contrary to the poverty alleviation strategies designed so as to produce urgent and temporary solutions. In this context, according to the capability approach, the cyclical chain of poverty cannot be broken only with the investments toward health and education or immediate helps to the poor by the way of transfer payment models. Besides these, capability approach pays special attention to the actualization of individuals' personal ends. Its one of the core claim is that anyone cannot know better than individual's themselves about their deprived conditions. Therefore, during the decision-making process regarding to alleviate poverty, the participation of individuals, namely their opinions, are substantially important. In this context, according to the capability approach, every poverty alleviation strategy should consist a dimension based on the empowerment strategies that emphasize the importance of the participation of individuals in the decision-making mechanisms and democratically operating processes. Otherwise, to implement the strategies independently organized and decided from the democratic participation of the poor illustrates a paternalistic standpoint that feeds the perspective of "we know what right for you is".

Conclusion

In this study, the main question was whether or not the main social assistance institution in Turkey, General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity, serves to institutionalize social justice and to solve the problem of poverty, when considered in terms of the capability approach.

To answer this question, I have initially discussed on what social justice is and how it is perceived by different approaches. In this regard, I have concluded that in the historical development of the social justice, three mainstream perspectives have been emerged as libertarian, utilitarian and rawlsian model of social justice. Although, it is possible to observe significant contributions that help to overcome the deficiencies of the social justice theories in this historical development, it cannot be claimed that these contributions solve the every question in these three mainstream social justice theories. Briefly, utilitarian model of social justice gives an intrinsic importance to the utilities of individuals but not pays sufficient interests to the abuses of libertarian rights while the libertarian model focuses on the civic and liberal rights without sufficiently focuses on the socio-economic rights. On this basis, it seems that rawlsian model considers the issue of social justice in terms of both libertarian and utilitarian perspectives and tries to combine them. Therefore, theoretically it seems that rawlsian model is more satisfactory than the former models. However, to make a lexicographical ordering, in other words constituting a hierarchy between libertarian and socio-economic rights illustrates the inadequacy of the rawlsian model. Since these rights are complementary for each other and they cannot be separated, rawlsian model needs to be supported with the claims of the capability approach. To convert libertarian and utilitarian rights into wellbeing, individuals need to be entitled by both of them. In this context, the concept of substantive freedom of the capability approach comes to the agenda. The concept of substantive freedom emphasizes that the welfare of the citizens does not depends only to be entitled with certain set of rights, libertarian or utilitarian, but it depends also that whether or not people are able to actualize these rights in practice. Therefore, the capability

approach takes the attraction towards the factors that are influencing people's abilities to convert these rights into personal wellbeing. With reference to the some emphasises of the influential philosophers in history such as Aristotle (the emphasis of human flourishing), Adam Smith (the emphasis of being in public without any shame), Karl Marx (emphasis of to actualize individuals' own ends which are in relation with society's interests), and Peter Townsend (the emphasis of taking part in the life of community), the capability approach insists that all obstacles which prevent individuals to actualize their own ends are seen as the parameters of poverty. In this context, it can be claimed that the commodity ownership by itself is not intrinsically important as a determiner of human wellbeing, but the conversion factors are intrinsically significant parameter on this issue. Therefore, poverty is the capability deprivation.

So far, there has been a dominant tendency that based on the poverty perception in terms of income or commodity ownership in the academic literature. However, despite the fact that it is possible to observe this tendency has gradually been replaced with the multi-dimensional perspective of the capability approach in the western academic literature, there is still a dominant trend in Turkey, especially in the institutional stage, regarding to perceive the poverty in terms of commodity ownership. According to the main claim of this thesis, which is in consistency with the capability approach, commodity ownership, particularly income level, of people should not be focal point to assess the poverty in Turkey as well. Instead of commodity or income deprivation, the capability deprivation of people should be preferred as a focal point in the process of assessment poverty. Such capability deprivation can be influenced by numerous different factors that influence to "realize people's ends" or prevent them to "be in public without any shame".

On the one hand, it is possible to classify these factors under two headings: External conversion factors which surround the individuals culturally, environmentally, politically and so on and, the internal conversion factors which inherently belong to individuals themselves such as gender, age, ethnicity, being disable or able bodies and so on. On the second hand, it is not completely possible

to determine the content of these external and internal factors universally. Since the external conversion factors, let say, can be associated with environmental differences in the cold and arid climates of the world while both of cultural and environmental factors can be altogether influential in some other regions of the world. Therefore, the determination of conversion factors influencing people's wellbeing should be context dependent. Accordingly, the determinants of deprivation can be varied from region-to-region, culture-to-culture and even from one community to another. Based on this reasoning, what is crucial is to let the people themselves to define what their deprivational conditions are before starting to make an assessment on poverty.

On the basis of these claims of the capability approach above, I have assessed the structure, legal bases and relief programmes of the institution, General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity, in Turkey. My evaluation has been concluded with the following points below.

Firstly, the poverty perception of the institution is based on the income, which can be directly observed along with the official writings of managerial cadres and relief application criteria of the institution. The people who do not hold certain amount of money are defined as poor, which means who the poor are and who are eligible to be supported with relief(s) are assessed according to the income level of people. Although, the legal definition of "who poor are" in the law numbered 3294 is ambiguous, the perception regarding to poverty is clearly based on income level as I illustrated in the first part of the last chapter. Moving from this inadequacy, my suggestion is, firstly, to clarify the definition of poverty as the capability deprivation in the legal stage and, secondly, replace the poverty perception in this regard as well.

Secondly, I claim that the institution does not take particular deprivational conditions of people into account, which means that it introduces same relief programmes to every region, every community and every family. To overcome this question, I suggest increasing the initiatives of local social assistance and

solidarity foundations in terms of deciding what type of relief should be introduced and who are eligible to be supported by these reliefs. The current centralized and paternalistic implementation strategy of the institution does not take relativity of needs and that of conditions of people and, thus, not allow eliminating capability deprivation of individuals.

Thirdly, it seems that some reliefs are provided to the individuals in consistency with the objective that is to increase the economic productivity. This can be observed from some specific discourses of legislations and in specific emphasises on the responsibilities defined for the social assistance experts. I suggest that the reliefs should be organized in consistency with to enhance the capabilities of individuals since the economic welfare coming from increasing economic productivity does not mean always increasing quality of life or welfare as I reasoned above. The empirical evidences of this claim can be found in the comparisons made by the researches that I outlined in the second chapter.

Fourthly, the type of provisions, in-cash or in-kind, is not inherently seen as a problem in terms of the capability approach. But the crucial point is that whether or not individuals' capabilities are enhanced by either in-cash or in-kind assistance. In this regard, there is no direct opposition of the capability approach towards in-cash assistance. However, there is a particular problem concerning to the in-cash provisions of the GDSAS. Although, some of the reliefs provided in-kind seems satisfactory in terms of enhancing capabilities regarding to health and education, the same cannot be claimed for in-cash provisions. This claim is justified also by some empirical fact mentioned in the last chapter. Since it may be financially impossible to support every individual one by one in order to increase their capabilities, I suggest increasing the in-kind public goods and services vertically and horizontally. By increasing services vertically, I mean to increase the quality of public goods and services. By this way, individuals' satisfaction level will be augmented as well. By increasing services horizontally, I mean to increase the quantity of public goods and services. By this way, numerous functionings can be satisfied. In this context, after the determination of valuable

and reasoned capabilities of individuals by the works of local authorities in districts, social policies as in-kind public goods and services can be introduced so as to satisfy these functionings. This way of assistance will make easier to enhance the valuable and reasoned capabilities of individuals in comparison with providing in-cash assistance. To illustrate, for the actualization of the transportation capability, in other words the mobilization functioning, if the assistance system is established on to provide in-cash assistance, a requirement will be emerge to calculate the amount of this cash for every individual in relation with their particular necessities. Accordingly, this calculation can finally become inextricable in the society. Therefore, to introduce, let say, free public transportation as an in-kind public service that is arranged to satisfy mobilization functioning would be an easier and more efficient solution.

Fifthly, the operational logic of the institution can be classified as the poverty alleviation strategy based on remedial and social sector strategies. These strategies inherently are not designed to solve the question of poverty, but to give temporary and urgent responds to its devastative effects. In addition to this, these strategies do not focus on the causes of poverty as well as they do not perform with this motivation. In this context, the operational logic of the institution indicates a characteristic based on to manage the poverty, but not to eliminate it.

In addition to these concluding remarks of this study, I need to briefly mention a weakness emerged at the end of the last chapter in this study. This weakness is based on the absence of an empirical investigation. Especially in terms of an assessment on the impacts of relief programmes introduced by the institution, an empirical research that should be designed on the influences of relief programmes on the beneficiaries' capability levels seems necessary. Although, it was quite possible to assess the legal bases and operational logic of the institution in terms of the capability approach, the limitation of the available information regarding to the impacts of the relief programmes makes a further empirical researches crucial in this field. It is obvious that this weakness could not be predicted without concluding this theoretical investigation that I tried to conduct in this study,

however, as a suggestion for further researches in the same field, I would like to emphasize the cruciality of such an empirical investigation.

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