

Social Trajectories of first generation's rural subjects accessing to university education in the Maule Region, Chile

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Abstract

This paper aims to illustrate the social history of first generation's rural youth accessing to the university in the Maule region, Chile. In a society wherein education has become the most important positions allocation mechanism, there is a need for a reflection on the conditions of production and distribution of knowledge/power in an economically vibrant and socially exclusionary social order. It is possible to evidence that rural areas in the Maule region have both a diverse distribution of goods and assets and an uneven location of markets and institutions. Additionally, the milieu affects the individual portfolio opportunities by either restricting or granting the access to quality services. Higher education acts as a conversion strategy for a young low-income people, because it allows social mobility and breaking off the collective inertia. Simultaneously, higher education also represents a reproduction's mechanism. Although young people obtain a higher quality of life by graduating from a university, such graduations does not necessarily imply a better social status.

Key words: Social Paths, Social Structure, Higher education, Mobility.

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