

Family Factors Related to School Dropout in Chile

January 2012 Revista de Ciencias Sociales (Venezuela) 18(1):136-150

Abstract

The existing association between school dropout rates and poverty make this phenomenon a central element on the educational policy agenda. The possibility of a better future for youth in vulnerable sectors depends precisely on solving this problem, taking into account the importance of education as a social inclusion mechanism. The main objective of this article was to evaluate the presence and specific weight that a series of family factors has in contexts of primary level dropouts from a poor urban sector in the city of Santiago, Chile. This descriptive field study included applying a survey to a sample of 304 primary school dropouts from the sector. Results showed that the dropouts' families have some clear characteristics: they are numerous, monoparental and exhibit low educational levels and significant economic problems. Conclusions are that the low socioeconomic level and the existence of certain problems within the families translate into poor school performance and little parental support for their children, factors that can lead to dropout.