

LOGIC AND INTERESTS OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS TO STUDY A MASTER'S DEGREE ABROAD: IMPLICATIONS FOR BECAS CHILE

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the expansion of higher education and in particular the boom of graduate studies in Chile. It contrasts discursive and theoretical assumptions of public policy encouraging graduate studies, particularly through Becas Chile program, with the perspective of those who are doing graduate studies. The study attempts to understand the interests of undergraduate students that have completed their degree on social sciences to pursue a Master's degree abroad. It uses an exploratory and descriptive qualitative methodology based on literature and 14 in-depth interviews. Based on the Bourdieu approach, this project is framed under a theoretical prism emphasizing that actions and decisions are reasonable rather than rational and therefore they can involve different rationalities of action (not only instrumental). Results show the existence of at least two rationalities motivating the pursuing of these studies: a strategic rationality oriented to the insertion into the labor market and an experiential one oriented to individuation. As it could be seen, these findings may imply important consequences for public policy in graduate education.

Keywords: graduate studies, rationalities, interests, Becas Chile

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