

OVERVIEW

This issue of *Calidad en la Educación* consists of eleven articles divided into eight empirical studies, two essays and a descriptive writing about an innovative experience.

In the Studies section, it firstly presents the article “Academic performance of students from different socioeconomic levels: the case of the Catholic University of Chile,” where researchers Ximena Catalan and Maria Veronica Santelices analyze the academic performance of university students from different socioeconomic levels defined according to the administration of the school the students graduated from and their family-income quintile. Findings show that academic results do not differ substantially among students from different socioeconomic levels.

Then in his article “Judicialization of higher education?”, Professor José Julio Leon analyzes the jurisprudence of High Courts for the last five years in areas as consumer protection, basic rights protection and other general rules applied to higher education institutions. In practice, the author concludes that this jurisprudence applied to the student rights has contributed to advance the consolidation of democracy.

In “Career choice among low socioeconomic-status newcomers in highly selective Chilean universities”, researchers Evelyn Carrasco, Claudia Zúñiga and Jacqueline Espinoza aimed to comprehensively identify and describe factors associated to career choice among low socioeconomic-status students studying in highly selective universities at the Metropolitan Area and detect potential differences between those entering via PSU test and those who enter through affirmative action programs. Those initiatives that contribute to a better understanding about how applicants to higher education make decisions and promote the informed selection of academic alternatives are highly valued by this Council and are considered significant inputs for our “Choose a career” portal and the information system “INDICES”. After

that, the article “Accreditation of Chilean undergraduate programs in arts” by researcher Ignacio Villegas, addresses the scenario of the accreditation process for university arts programs specifically studying accrediting agencies, peer evaluators and accreditation councils. This study provides a better understanding on how the system of quality assurance works in higher education, compared to an area of knowledge with particular characteristics and yet little studied, such as in the case of artistic careers.

The fourth article in issue 40 of our journal correspond to report about research project awarded by the CNED Call 2012 and 2013 supporting educational research.

Teacher evaluation and gender are the issues addressed by Professors Rodrigo Medel and Rodrigo Asún in their article “Surveys on teacher evaluation and gender biases: an exploratory study,” which reports the findings of a research about gender patterns in the responses of Chilean university students of a teacher evaluation questionnaire.

Moreover, in his work “Constitution of actors in the higher education quality system as of the actor centered institutionalism: The AQU Catalonia case and its transformation from a consortium to become an agency,” professor Nelson Paulus analyzes the implementation process of public policies for quality assurance of higher education in Catalonia, Spain, focusing on the interaction among the different actors involved in the process.

Then, in his article “Aspiring to a selective university and achievement of aspirations: Determinant factors,” researcher Alvaro Gonzalez reviews the influence of cultural capital on the aspirations to study at selective universities and the realization of these by students of Concepcion. Using a questionnaire applied to 1.054 students in fourth year of scientific humanist secondary education, the study finds that even after incorporating variables related to student academic achievement, the influence of cultural capital persists on the aspirations and their realization.

The Study sections ends with the article “Logic and interests of social scientists to study a Master’s degree abroad: Implications for Becas Chile program,” by the researcher Manuela Mendoza. In a context of an expanding higher education with internationalization and growth of post-graduate studies in Chile, she contrasts discursive and theoretical assumptions of public policy for encouraging postgraduate studies –particularly Becas Chile– from the perspective of those who are conducting studies facilitated by these policies.

The first text of the Essays section, “Vocational-technical education in Chile and United States from a historical and comparative perspective” by María Paola Sevilla systematizes historical events that have marked the evolution of vocational technical education in Chile and the United States since the early Twentieth Century. The article notes that vocational technical education in Chile requires comprehensive and long-term policies. This approach is especially pertinent at a time of discussions about new public policy instruments systemically and comprehensively addressing education and training for work in Chile, such as the national qualifications frameworks.

The Essays section is closed by the international contribution: “The education project in the Spanish university according to the European Higher Education Area” by professors Jesús Muñoz-Cantero and María Dorinda Mato-Vásquez. The article notes challenges for the teacher preparation and performance experienced by Spanish universities in the Bologna Plan implementation.

Finally, the descriptive writing “Sistematizing the implementation of the equality in education admission system (known before as equity vacancy) in Psychology career in Universidad de Chile 2010-2012” by Maria Paulina Castro, Carolina Aranda, Carolina Castro, Horacio de Torres, Catalina Lizama and Juan Williams describes the case of University of Chile as one of the pioneering experiences in alternative mechanisms for equitable access to university.

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