

Attribution of Poverty among Youth in Lebanon

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KEYWORDS Poverty. Attributes. Youth. Lebanon. Individualistic. Structuralism. Fatalism

ABSTRACT The present paper is based on causal attribution theory, investigating how Lebanese youth attribute poverty. Using the Chi-square methodology, the researcher examined the relationships between poverty and a set of independent variables, for six different scenarios. In the first phase of the research, the researcher executes cross-tabulation analyses and searches for significant variables that may predict the social class of a student. A survey of a sample of 250 private- and public-school students shows that when compared with middle-class and rich students, poor students place less blame on individual factors. Moreover, poor students tend to believe in fatalistic factors as reasons for poverty more than middle-class and rich students do. In the second phase, the researcher filters the answers to assesses only the consistent ones (that is students who believed that fatalistic factors are reasons for both poverty and wealth). Out of 250 students surveyed, only 30 students attribute poverty to fatalistic factors. The unexpected result is that, under this category, there are more middle-class students than poor students. It is concluded that, on average, Lebanese youth attribute poverty to individualistic and/or structural factors rather than fatalistic ones.