

27.2.2026

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Title

Students: Customers, clients, or pawns?

Publication year

2013

Source/Footnote

In: Higher education policy. - 26 (2013) 3, S. 291 - 307

Inventory number

44414

Keywords

Studentenschaft : Studienverhalten ; Studentenschaft : allgemein

Abstract

The metaphor of the student as a consumer or customer is widely used within contemporary higher education, and impacts on the ways in which students, academics and institutions behave. These, and a number of alternative metaphors for the student, are critically reviewed. The alternatives considered include both contemporary (student as client or as co-producer) and longstanding expressions (student as child, employer or apprentice). A new, and perhaps rather darker, metaphor, that of the student as a pawn, is then proposed. The usefulness of metaphors in higher education policy, and in analyses thereof, is considered. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)