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**Title**

Students : customers, clients or pawns?

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**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)

**Signature**

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