

Maja Bosanac and Radovan Grandić

The Use of Vouchers in Education

Abstract: Modern education is experiencing undergoing numerous changes within the knowledge-based economy. It is in the phase of transformation, particularly towards the deconstruction of pedagogy as a science. One of the important factors contributing to the deconstruction and redefinition of education is the increasing privatisation of education at its different levels, which is offered as one of the approaches within the global education policies. The aim of this paper is to present the application of vouchers in education as one of the ways of realising public–private partnerships. To have a comprehensive approach, the paper emphasises both the advantages and challenges of voucher application in education. The contribution of the paper is the actualisation of a literature about public–private partnerships in education, presenting vouchers from a pedagogical rather than a dominantly economic point of view. In addition, the paper presents the educational policies aimed at expanding the choice of schools proposed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which are related to the application of vouchers at the compulsory level of education. The initiatives of applying vouchers in higher education, although less researched, are also presented. This paper has sought to shed light on the importance of knowledge about the broader socioeconomic aspect of vouchers and the specifics of voucher application at different education levels. No matter our personal attitude towards such approach, whether we advocate or oppose market principles in education, knowledge about what vouchers represent is gaining importance for everyone who is directly or indirectly involved in education.

Keywords: vouchers, education, public–private partnerships

UDC: 37.01

Scientific article

Maja Bosanac, Research Assistant, University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Pedagogy, Dr Zorana Đinđića 2, Novi Sad 21000, Serbia; e-mail:maja.bosanac@ff.uns.ac.rs

Radovan Grandić, PhD., full professor, University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Pedagogy, Dr Zorana Đinđića 2, Novi Sad 21000, Serbia; e-mail:grandic@neobee.net

Introduction

Modern education is undergoing numerous changes within the knowledge-based economy. It is currently in the phase of transformation, particularly towards the deconstruction of pedagogy (Šoljan 2007) as a science. One of the important factors contributing to the redefinition and deconstruction of education is its increasing privatisation at its different levels, which is offered as one of the approaches within the global education policies.

In the broadest sense (Gauri and Vawda 2003), the two basic archetypes for education systems are the public and private ones. In the public archetype, the state finances education and manages all the aspects of schooling, including school construction and teacher employment. The public archetype is useful because it constructs a system where there once was none or enables uniformity among schools. It has proven to be less effective, however, in motivating teachers and schools to respond to family problems. In the private archetype, the schools are privately owned and families pay the full tuition fee. This type of schooling allows parents to choose among schools, and the schools have a strong financial motivation to make their clients happy (*ibid.*). The public and private education systems are two extreme archetypes in education, but there are approaches that may connect them in terms of public–private partnerships, which are not unique and have a continuum (Patrinos et al. 2009), as presented in Figure 1.

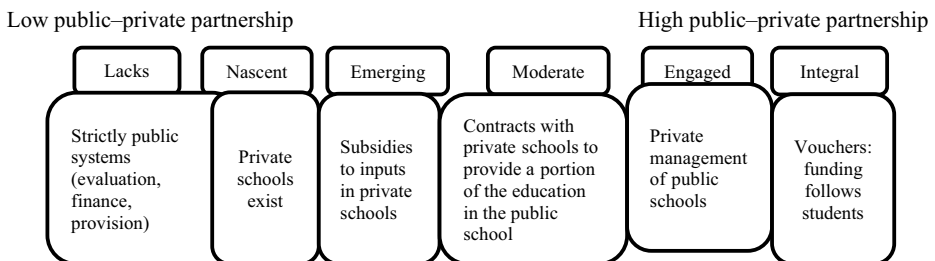


Figure 1: The public–private continuum (Patrinos et al. 2009, p. 16)

Gauri and Vawda (2003) point out that many analysts and reformers have argued that combining the public and private archetypes (i.e. public funding with private provision) is the best way to combine a universal approach with a systemic response. Vouchers are among the examples of this, as presented in Table 1. Also, it is important to emphasise that public–private providers are not unique; in the case of education, they ‘encompass a wide range of providers, including for-profit schools (schools that operate as enterprises), religious schools, non-profit schools run by non-governmental organisations, publicly funded schools operated by private boards and community-owned schools’ (Osorio et al. 2009, p. 2). Some authors (Molnar 2013) have raised the question of whether public–private partnership will be able to permanently provide positive effects or is really just a transitional phase towards complete privatisation, which, in the case of institutions of higher learning, can lead to the formation of elite universities and social injustice for those who cannot afford to enrol in them.

		Provision	
		Private	Public
Financing	Private	- Private schools	- User fees
		- Private universities	- Student loans
	Public	- Home schooling	
		- Tutoring	
		- Vouchers	- Public schools
		- Contract schools	- Public universities
		- Charter schools	
		- Contracting out	

Table 1: Financing and provision of services in public-private partnership (Patrinos et al. 2009, p. 3)

Cooperation between public and private institutions is becoming more common in different social subsystems and contexts. As Zečević and Pindžo (2016) point out, the public sector has an important role in regulating economic relations: improving the overall efficiency of such relations by correcting the market imperfections, ensuring stability through appropriate monetary and fiscal policy mechanisms and controlling and monitoring economic entities for the protection of the general social interests. The same authors point out that while liberal economists consider the freedom of action of the market actors the most efficient source of growth and prosperity in society, practice has shown that the market is not able to regulate economic relations completely independently, as evidenced by the frequent occurrence of monopolies, rising unemployment, inflation, environmental pollution, unacceptable disparities in income distribution and cyclical recession–expansion trends, among others, especially in certain economic branches (ibid.). Although the authors use the development of tourism to encourage competitiveness as an example of the foregoing, these realities can also be found in education.

Milutinović and Zuković (2013) point out the importance of the existence of alternatives within the existence of a pluralistically oriented society. In this context,

in societies with developed democracies, pluralism in education develops in parallel with political pluralism, which means that in addition to publicly established and funded schools, schools can be established by individual citizens, civic and teachers' associations, religious communities and legal entities (*ibid.*).

Although economic policies and market influence are often viewed as alternative mechanisms, the market and the state can and do complement each other in accordance with the available administrative and institutional capacities (Aikins 2009; Zečević and Pindžo 2016). Modern economies seek to address key economic issues through the coordination between and combination of the influence of market and government regulation (Pavić et al. 2007; Zečević and Pindžo 2016). In that context, the use of vouchers as a way of realising public-private partnerships within various social subsystems (tourism, health). These examples indicate the increasing occurrence of organisational isomorphism (Janićijević 2014); that is, there is a unique institutional pattern in the structuring and functioning of all organisations. This phenomenon does not bypass the process of education, however, even if the educational institutions in the contemporary society have more similarities with the institutions from the for-profit sector compared to the educational institutions in the past.

The voucher programs at the compulsory education level consist of three simultaneous reforms (Gauri and Vawda 2003): (1) enabling parents to choose schools; (2) creating intensive incentives for schools to increase enrolment and (3) granting autonomy to schools to respond to demands. There have been less researches on the application of vouchers in higher education compared to primary education (Jongbloed and Koelman 2000), and it is of utmost importance to bear in mind the education level with regard to voucher application. At the primary or compulsory education level, parents have an important role in choosing a school for their children. In the higher education level, however, the students assume a more important role in choosing among different higher education institutions. What voucher application has in common in all education levels, though, is that the responsibility for education is moving away from the system as a whole towards the individual.

The spread of democratisation and pluralism in education requires a certain degree of destatisation of education, which does not mean that the state should be released from its responsibility of overseeing educational activities (Spasenović and Zivković 2017). Education vouchers precisely indicate that in addition to the inevitable influence of the market, the specifics of individual countries (e.g. the population to which the vouchers relate, the quality of education or the level of access to it) largely affect the goals achieved through vouchers.

The education process is facing numerous criticisms, and the application of public - private partnerships in education, whose system the use of vouchers is part of, is among the objects of criticism. The analysis of voucher application in education, however, requires that certain socioeconomic aspects of such application be understood. It is in this context that this paper was conceived. The first section of the paper explains the term *vouchers* in education and its possible application in different contexts. It also explains the two main types of pertinent programs:

small- and large-scale programs. The second section gives an insight into the effect of marketisation on education and its relation to the privatisation of education. The third section shows the complexity of the application of vouchers at different education levels. Finally, based on the literature reviewed, the study's conclusions are presented.

Vouchers in education

The application of vouchers in education belongs to the study domain of educational policy. Spasenović (2019) points to the importance of knowing the process of creating educational policy because this process is inseparable from reform efforts in education. This process is of particular importance due to globalisation. That is, international actors have come to have increasing influences on national education policy. The application of education vouchers is one of the ways in which public-private partnerships can be realised (ibid.).

Despite the fact that vouchers are primarily connected with tourism or health, they are likewise used in education. This shows how the wider society and different organisations not necessarily primarily educational influence education. For the analysis of the system of voucher application in education, it is important to emphasise that the voucher is a form of financial support to the user and not to the public or private providers of educational services. Vouchers are defined as cash coupons or government-issued certificates to reimburse eligible private schools. Universal vouchers, which are available to all schools and students, should be distinguished from targeted vouchers, whose usage is selective, reserved to schools that meet certain criteria (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2017).

Krbec (1999) points out that vouchers represent possible solutions to the problem of how to finance education, especially because of (a) the (centralised) control of education programs and teachers due to the strengthening movement towards imposing standards on schools and highlighting the basic goals of curriculum design and (b) the increased pressure imposed by the economic system and private entrepreneurship on the goals of education. In the voucher system, as pointed out by Gauri and Vawda (2003), the state usually continues to rely on the national curriculum, expanding the institutional environment, such as by creating and enforcing civil rights laws to guide schools towards the realisation of the curriculum's goals. However, it uses student enrolment as the exclusive indicator of the amount of effort that the school has exerted in attaining such goals.

When it comes to the new demands on higher education, in addition to the knowledge society and lifelong learning, Jongbloed and Koelman (2000) cite the emergence of a network society, which is characterised by a large degree of individualisation. The so-called *mass individualisation* or agility »implies that higher education providers are confronted with a growing diversity in terms of individual client demand« (ibid., p. 4). Therefore, student self-regulation has become an imper-

ative rather than a choice. When it comes to funding, the higher education sector is moving from the traditional *supply-driven* financing to *demand-side financing*, and vouchers illustrate such transition (ibid.). Vouchers, as a market-oriented type of funding of higher education, mean that higher education institutions do not receive direct government funding but have to compete for students; thus, instead of focusing on satisfying government bureaucrats, they have to focus on meeting the needs of the students, their »customers« (ibid.).

The vouchers applied at the higher education level in Serbia also include *innovation vouchers*, which are financial incentives that enable small and medium-sized enterprises to use the services of the scientific research sector to raise the level of innovation of their products to make these more competitive in the market (Agarski et al. 2020). After announcing its public offering, the company submits an application for an innovation voucher on the internet portal of the Fund for Innovative Activity¹ and a request for the services of the accredited scientific institution. If the innovation voucher is approved by the fund, the realisation will begin. Thus, through vouchers, scientific research organisations are able to provide scientific, technological and innovative services that are new to the business enterprise.

The application of innovation vouchers in Serbia was realised in cooperation with the Faculty of Technical Sciences from Novi Sad (ibid.). This type of cooperation indicates the increasing convergence of educational institutions with the economic sector, especially higher education institutions, which can contribute the most to the development of innovations that are gaining in importance within the knowledge-based economy. On the other hand, the concern about the cooperation between the for-profit and non-profit sectors indicates distrust of the possibility of successful cooperation between such sectors given that science should strive for truth and long-term effects while the for-profit sector often pursues short-term effects. Thus, questions about the convergence of the different interests (Bodroški Spariosu 2015) of institutions devoted to educational goals on the one hand and of those devoted to entrepreneurial needs on the other hand can be raised.

As stated in the Introduction section of this paper, the application of vouchers in different subsystems can also be viewed from the angle of their numerous similarities. The application of vouchers in education can be linked to the initiatives in tourism, among others. Although tourism and education operate in different contexts, there are numerous similarities in the approaches that they employ, including the application of vouchers. There is a causal link between tourism and economic development. Governments see tourism as a potential driver of economic growth and thus seek to improve their respective countries' competitiveness as tourist destinations to achieve tourism growth (Zečević and Pindžo 2016). Similarly, in the analysis of the relationship between education and the economy, education is seen as one of the most important development factors of countries, provided that it is appropriate to the development needs of the country and the different social factors act synergistically (Pastuović 2012).

¹ More information are available on website: <https://www.inovacionifond.rs/program/inovacioni-vauceri>

There are numerous cases around the world, both in developed and developing countries, of the application of vouchers in education with a variety of goals, which can be summed up as improving the quality of education and/or increasing access to education in general or for specific groups. Specific mechanisms cited for individual countries include stipends for the girls in Bangladesh to attend public or private schools; government partnerships with churches to share education costs in Belize; private management (church organisation) of public schools in Bolivia; matching grants, capitalisation grants and scholarships for poor students in Brazil; matching-grant schemes in Botswana; community financing in Chad; a voucher system for poor students and capitation grants for all students in Chile; matching-grant schemes and targeted bursary for poor and minority children in China; a targeted voucher system in Colombia; government sponsorships of students at private institutions in Côte d'Ivoire; provision of assistance to private schools serving low-income students in the Dominican Republic; allowing the poor to choose the school they will go to in El Salvador; targeted scholarships and capitalisation grants for all students in Gambia; targeted stipends for girls in 13 communities (Guatemala); matching-grant schemes in Ghana; matching-grant schemes and numerous incentives in India; targeted scholarships for junior high school students in Indonesia; student loans in Jamaica; vouchers for informal-sector workers for short-term skill upgrading courses in Kenya; government partnership with churches to share the cost in Lesotho; matching-grant schemes in Mauritius; targeted bursary for the poor and indigenous populations in Mexico; community-sponsored schools in Myanmar; scholarships for rural girls in Morocco and Mozambique; community scholarships and subsidies to private schools serving rural girls in Pakistan; scholarships for students to attend private and public schools in Dakar, Senegal; matching-grant schemes and targeted bursaries for secondary school girls in Tanzania; bicycles for poor students in rural areas in Thailand and per-capita subsidies in Zimbabwe (LaRocque 2008).

The characteristics of the voucher programs in different countries in the world have been summarised by some authors (Epple et al. 2017) into two types of programs, as briefly presented and discussed below.

- *Small-scale programs* – programs that place significant restrictions on who can receive vouchers, such as geographical restrictions (e.g. only the school district in the central part of the city), restriction to children with certain individual characteristics (e.g. low-income children) or based on school performance (e.g. only for students with lower scores)
- *Large-scale programs* – programs in which vouchers are distributed throughout the country, with minimal restrictions on who can receive them. Although it is pointed out that in theory these programs do not have to encompass the whole country (e.g. New York would be a sufficiently large metropolitan area for a larger program), in practice, all larger-scale programs are nationwide in scale.

As the topic of this paper is general, for the purposes of this paper, no detailed analysis of the approaches employed by individual countries for each of the two aforementioned types of programs was undertaken (which can be the starting point for further research). However, to gain an insight into which countries are more inclined towards one or the other of the two listed approaches, the USA is mentioned as a leader of small-scale programs, followed by Colombia and India (*ibid.*). On the other hand, Chile, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Sweden stand out as implementers of large-scale programs (*ibid.*).

Socioeconomic aspects of voucher application in education

As the so-called education market produces positive effects not only on the individuals receiving education but also on society in general, governments are concerned with raising the level of education of the population but also with strengthening their individual decisions regarding investment in education (Jongbloed and Koelman 2000).

The effects of education voucher programs depend on both their design and the institutional and economic environment. Specifically, the effects may depend on the size of the program but may also depend on other factors, such as the kind of educational regime that will prevail without the voucher program. The significant »effects« that are of interest is also an fundamental issue when it comes to different voucher programs. Epple et al. (2017) raise a question: What is their social objective? Jongbloed and Koelman (2000, p. 13) raise questions about the following regulation issues: (a) the issue of whether the voucher covers the full cost or only part of the cost of the programme in the educational institution; (b) whether there is some form of preferential treatment for disadvantaged families; (c) the selection mechanism used to allocate student places in schools that are oversubscribed; (d) whether all parents can re-choose schools each year; (e) whether both public and private providers are included in the system; (f) the range of programmes covered by the system and (g) whether educational providers are allowed to charge fees on top of the amount of the voucher, among others.

The differences between access to schools in larger and smaller areas imply that in small areas the schools are remote and therefore cannot be competitive with each other (each school has a monopoly on its students as sending one's child to a school other than the nearest one will entail high costs). In larger cities, according to Stanojević (2014), there are more schools and they are closer to each other, so the distance between them does not prevent competition, but if parents want to enrol their child in another school, they must seek the approval of the school to which they belong, which is completely wrong economically. Employing an analogy, Stanojević (2014, p. 26) cites the impossibility of going to another restaurant that an individual wants to go to if he does not get the permission of the restaurant closest to his home. Shops, hairdressers, parks, car repair shops or any other service or product are also analogous. Consequently, Stanojević (2014) points out that this system sends a message to school employees that they do not have to work hard

because no one will evaluate the quality of their work, but their jobs and salaries are guaranteed while children are forced to go to schools that do not encourage competition among the teachers.

Doolan (2014) critically approaches this view. Although she agrees that the importance of improving the quality of education is indisputable, the question of what quality is and how to measure and improve it is debatable. The proposed application of vouchers presented in the way Stanojević (2014) points out, according to Doolan (2014), is oversimplified. One more criticism refers to practical solutions. Stanojević compares education with the logic of the for-profit sector while the education system is a non-profit system characterised by numerous complex and controversial political issues and numerous dangers. In this context, the same author emphasises that the introduction of vouchers is not only a technical issue but is part of a broader set of values whose starting point is that the market best performs a fair distribution of goods (Doolan 2014).

The marketisation and privatisation of education are both gaining in importance, but they have many critics. It is important to emphasise that these terms are not synonymous with each other. Some authors (Marginson 1993; Whitty and Power 2000) emphasise, for instance, that it is possible to have privatisation without marketisation, and to illustrate this, they cite an example of state subsidies to the private sector that actually protect it from the market force. On the other hand, though, »marketi[s]ation of the state sector may make resorting to the private sector less attractive to some parents« (ibid., p. 95). Generally, although there can be some tension between privatisation and marketisation, they more often complement than compete with each other. As such, even if privatisation does not constitute market relations by itself, it does create a potentially favourable environment for market activities (ibid.).

In education, besides marketisation and privatisation, the term *quasi-markets* involves a »combination of parental choice and school autonomy, together with a greater or lesser degree of public accountability and government regulation« (ibid., p. 94). When it comes to marketisation in higher education, Bok (2005) points out that many scientists, especially those dealing with traditional disciplines, have deliberately chosen the academic way of life in relation to the world of trade partly because they believe that the search for truth and knowledge is a more honourable vocation than the search for material wealth. In contrast, some authors (Wissema 2009) believe that universities will become irrelevant in society if they do not move away from their traditional roles.

No matter what our personal attitude may be, whether we advocate or are opposed to the commercialisation or marketisation of education, the knowledge about this topic is gaining importance for everyone who is directly or indirectly involved in education.

Advantages and challenges of the voucher system

To provide a comprehensive insight into the complexity of the application of vouchers in education, both its advantages and possible challenges as found in the studied literature are presented herein. While some countries have a longer history of voucher application in education, other countries are still in their infancy with regard to such. While the experiences of some countries cannot be transferred to other countries, current theoretical researches give more valuable information and data compared to empirical studies.

Advantages of the voucher system

The idea of implementing the voucher system in education is accepted by many authors because education is considered critical for individual and national well-being and because some authors emphasise the low quality of education (Gauri and Vawda 2003) and of the management of the school system. The proposal for voucher application in the primary education level will enable parents to choose the school that their children will attend, will fund schools on the basis of the number of pupils who will choose them and will allow schools significant management autonomy to make them more attractive. This solution is obviously based on market principles (ibid.).

For the arguments in favour of the application of vouchers in education, Epple et al. (2017) emphasise the possibility that it will lead to market or quasi-market provision of education, with competition that encourages efficient provision. This will lead to increased educational diversity in terms of curriculum and teaching methodology, which will address the excessive homogeneity associated with monopolised public provision. Although, as Epple et al. (2017) state, there might be concerns about externalities from educational attainment, (e.g. a modern democratic society requires its citizens to be literate in a common language), restrictions on private providers may address this issue. The same authors add to this that the level of vouchers would address capital market failures affecting educational investment in a way that it could be supplemented with policies supporting educational loans. The voucher level also will address the capital market deficiencies affecting education investment; by choosing the residence and school separately, vouchers will increase access to quality education especially for students at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. According to some authors (ibid.), vouchers will provide both efficiency and fairness gains.

One of the first questions that can come to our mind is this: Can market principles really improve the quality of education? The success of the use of vouchers in more ambitious education programs, according to Gauri and Vawda (2003), depends on an institutional infrastructure that is challenging in both industrial and developing countries. Thus, the authors (ibid.) point to the matters outlined below:

- There is a danger of bias in assessing the performance measures that are strongly related to the efforts of agents. In this context, it is stated that family

background, not school success, often explains the variation in student performance. Such confusion on the part of parents will form bias by creating a strong incentive for schools to attract students that parents will consider »desirable«.

- The agents are against risk (i.e. The state as a principal pays schools as its agents for providing educational services (Gauri and Vawda 2003). Schools that suffer from declining enrolment receive lower incomes, which may result in lower teacher and staff compensation. This in turn leads to a decline in morale and reputation, which makes it potentially difficult for one to find another job.
- Intensive incentives are valuable only if the increasing extra effort creates better performance. However, there are circumstances when schools, although motivated by intensive incentives, cannot significantly improve their learning outcomes due to factors beyond their control (e.g. the influence of exogenous factors such as social expectations and population density may reduce the effect of school effort). Also, there may be circumstances in which the marginal effect of school effort is powerful, such as when a modest number of public school students are given a voucher to attend private schools.
- Relative compensation between activities may serve as an obstacle the success of the voucher system in improving the quality of education. That is, if a compensation scheme with intensive incentives rewards certain activities at lower rates, the agent will not perform such activities. As such, voucher programs may not stimulate curriculum innovation, as its advocates hope, and may even jeopardise it because in many contexts, parents are conservative about teaching methods and the compensation formula does not pay schools for innovation or professional development.
- Monitoring is important. In the voucher program, the school will be rewarded if it can exaggerate its enrolment rates and cope with it, and if it increases the average grades that its students expect to receive, which in turn will attract more students.

As part of the arguments against the use of vouchers in education, Epple et al. (2017) state that vouchers will lead to sorting students by school according to characteristics such as income and ability (such sorting is often called stratification). Such sorting will have negative consequences due to its peer effects, but even if peer effects do not exist, sorting will negatively affect the less advanced students through information channels. For example, staying in a »bad« school can stigmatise students in the labour market, affecting their incentive to learn. Starting from the premise that is more expensive to educate disadvantaged students, Epple et al. (2007) point out that stratification would impose costs on the public sector. Even if the public sector continues to serve students, political support for public school funding will be reduced by vouchers, which will complicate the problem. Students who are not sufficiently well informed may make worse choices or decisions than education policymakers do.

Peter McLaren is a sharp critic of modern trends in education. He points out that as things stand now, the main purpose of education is to make the world safe

for global capitalism, and the movement of education towards entrepreneurship, privatisation and voucher plans is only a hint of what corporate-oriented curricula represent for capitalist social relations (McLaren 2013). In addition, opponents of private schools and private education point out that the introduction of market principles abandons the most important function of public education: the transfer of common cultural values of national interest (Milutinović 2011, p. 146).

While acknowledging the advantages of voucher application in education but not denying its challenges, we draw the conclusions below from the evidence proposed by the OECD (2007, pp. 23–24) in creating a basis for educational policies aimed at expanding school choice and promoting equality, quality and innovation in the school system as a whole.

- There is a need to focus on framework conditions and implementation. Introducing and expanding school choice requires smart policies that ensure that benefits are maximised while risks are minimised.
- That choice is real, relevant and meaningful must be ensured. If schools are not allowed to respond to diverse student populations and to distinguish themselves from each other, choice is meaningless.
- A level playing field must be created so that all education providers will enter the system. When private schools are invited to be part of the ‘functionally public’ education system, they should have the capacity to offer a similar range of options for courses as public schools do.
- It must be ensured that all schools that receive public funds meet their public obligations (basic tenets of fairness and justice in their operations, including non-discrimination among applicants for a place or slot in the school, and adherence to public health and safety standards).
- All parents must be given the right to choose their preferred school for their children. Schools, public and private alike, should invest in developing their relationships with parents and local communities to help them make informed decisions.
- Checks and balances that will prevent choice from leading to more inequity and segregation must be put in place. The risk that school choice and voucher systems will result in higher levels of social segregation among schools, less social and cultural heterogeneity within schools and less access to high-quality education for children from disadvantaged backgrounds is real.
- Education systems must be made more demand-sensitive. The benefits of school choice will materialise only in an environment where parents, students, external stakeholders and the local community can participate in the school and can have their voices heard and appreciated.
- Maintain a strong state or central education authority. While greater school autonomy, decentralisation and a more demand-driven school system may transfer more decision-making powers to lower levels of an education system, the policymakers at the state or central level still have a key role when it comes to the formulation of a strategic vision and the drafting of clear guidelines for education.

Concluding remarks

On the basis of the presented literature, it is concluded that the emergence of public–private partnerships in education cannot be viewed separately from broader socioeconomic and political events. In this context, to have a comprehensive approach to education, it is not enough to have knowledge about the sciences focusing on humans, such as philosophy, psychology and anthropology. Sociology and economics also have an indispensable influence on the educational process. The significant changes that have happened in the education system have to do with education quality and accessibility but also financing of education. In addition, although voucher application in education is an economic rather than a pedagogical term, the analytical approach employed in this paper adds the pedagogical point of view. One of the significant pedagogical implications of voucher application in education is the greater influence of parental decisions when it comes to applying vouchers at the primary education level. Therefore, to adopt a more comprehensive approach to this topic, it is important to educate parents so as to help them make decisions that are in the best interests of their children. As emphasised in the paper, there has been less research about voucher application in higher education, but this topic may become more relevant in the future as a consequence of the global education policy and of the marketisation of higher education.

Epple et al. (2017) point out that vouchers did not achieve the success their advocates had pointed out, but neither did their miserable failure predicted by their opponents materialise. Likewise, their theoretical and empirical results do not give reasons even for cautious optimism about the potential gains of voucher design improvement. The literature review conducted herein leads us to conclude that additional research is needed on this topic, with a detailed analysis of the legislative, regulatory and institutional framework. Special attention should be paid to the different possibilities of applying vouchers within developed, developing and underdeveloped countries. In certain contexts, taking into account the national, primarily developmental characteristics of countries, depending on the focus on certain goals, vouchers may prove to be a positive solution in certain conditions even as their application in other countries may prove inadequate. Also, market principles are the guiding principles of voucher application in education, which is the essential fact to consider when it comes to the adequacy of voucher application regardless of the education level.

The requirement of pluralism of education approaches can be seen in two possible ways. On the one hand, it presents a greater possibility of choice, but this choice, on the other hand, signifies greater individual responsibility. Consequently, for every individual indirectly (e.g. parents) or directly (pupils, students) involved in the educational process to make the best choice, he or she must be familiar with the wider social context and its relevant implications on the educational process. Also, the external influences of different interest groups (Union institutions, governments, parents, the market, civil society) can make the situation more complicated and can sometimes foster conflicting interests, with such groups setting aside the educational goals and instead imposing their own interests. The most

important role in shedding light on the importance of these issues and in fostering an understanding of the complexity of the numerous external influences on the educational process is in the hands of those who are largely responsible for the educational process: the educators.

Reference

- Agarski, B., Baloš, S., Vukelić, Đ., Hadžistević, M., Trivković, M., Pećanac, M. and Budak, I. (2020). Saradnja nauke i privrede kroz realizaciju inovacionih vaučera. In: V. Katić (ed.). *XXVI Skup Trendovi razvoja: Inovacije u modernom obrazovanju*. Retrieved from http://www.trend.uns.ac.rs/stskup/trend_2020/radovi/T2.1/T2.1-6.pdf. (Accessed on 25. 8. 2020).
- Bodroški Spariosu, B. (2015). Univerzitetsko obrazovanje - od Humboltovog modela do Bolonjskog procesa. *Nastava i vaspitanje*, 64, issue 3, pp. 407–420.
- Bok, D. (2005). *Univerzitet na tržištu*. Beograd: Clio.
- Doolan, K. (2014). Opasnost vaučera u obrazovanju: osvrt na tekst »Ekonomska logika osnovnog obrazovanja u Srbiji«. *Political perspectives: Journal for political research*, 4, issue 2, pp. 39–42.
- Epple, D., Romano, R. E. and Urquiola, M. (2017). School vouchers: A survey of the economics literature. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 55, issue 2, pp. 441–92.
- Fond za inovacionu delatnost. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://www.inovacionifond.rs/program/inovacioni-vauceri> (Accessed on 25. 8. 2020.).
- Gauri, V. and Vawda, Y. A. (2003). *Vouchers for basic education in developing countries: A principal-agent perspective*. The World Bank.
- Janićijević, N. (2014). Institucionalna organizaciona teorija kao novi istraživački okvir za razumevanje savremenih organizacija. *Teme*, 52, issue 3, pp. 251–270.
- Jongbloed, B. and Koelman, J. (2000). Vouchers for higher education. *A survey of the literature. Study commissioned by the Hong Kong University Grants Committee*. Enschede: CHEPS.
- Krbec, D. (1999). Privatne škole i obrazovna politika u Hrvatskoj. *Revija za socijalnu politiku*, 6, issue 3, pp. 269–278.
- LaRocque, N. (2008). *Public-private partnerships in basic education: An international review*. Reading: CfBT Education Trust.
- McLaren, P. (2013). *Če Gevara, Paulo Freire i pedagogija revolucije*. Beograd: Eduka.
- Milutinović, J. (2011). *Alternative u teoriji i praksi savremenog obrazovanja – put ka kvalitetnom obrazovanju*. Novi Sad: Savez pedagoških društava Vojvodine.
- Milutinovic, J. and Zuković, S. (2013). Odgojne i obrazovne tendencije: Privatne i alternativne škole. *Croatian Journal of Education: Hrvatski časopis za odgoj i obrazovanje*, 15, issue 2, pp. 241–266.
- Molnar, T. (2013). Javno-privatno partnerstvo u visokom obrazovanju kao promotor razvoja tržišno primjenjivog znanja. *Andragoški glasnik: Glasilo Hrvatskog andragoškog društva*, 17, issue 2, pp. 145–164.
- OECD. (2017). *School choice and school vouchers: An OECD perspective*. Paris: OECD.
- Osorio, F. B., Patrinos, H. A. and Wodon, Q. (eds.). (2009). *Emerging evidence on vouchers and faith-based providers in education: case studies from Africa, Latin America, and Asia*. World Bank Publications.

- Patrinos, H. A., Barrera-Osorio, F. and Guáqueta, J. (2009). *The role and impact of public-private partnerships in education*. The World Bank.
- Pastuović, N. (2012). *Obrazovanje i razvoj: Kako obrazovanje razvija ljude i mijenja društvo, a kako društvo djeluje na obrazovanje*. Zagreb: Institut za društvena istraživanja u Zagrebu.
- Spasenović, V. and Vujisić Živković, N. (2017). Pokušaji ostvarivanja pedagoškog pluralizma u obrazovnoj politici i praksi u Srbiji. *Acta Iadertina*, 14, issue 1, pp. 1–14.
- Spasenović, V. (2019). *Obrazovna politika globalni i lokalni procesi*. Beograd: Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju Filozofskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu.
- Stanojević, I. (2014). Ekonomska logika osnovnog obrazovanja u Srbiji. *Političke perspektive*, 4, issue 1, pp. 23–38.
- Whitty, G. and Power, S. (2000). Marketization and privatization in mass education systems. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 20, issue 2, pp. 93–107.
- Wissema, J. G. (2009). *Towards the Third Generation University. Managing the University in Transition*. UK: Edward Elgar.
- Šoljan, N. N. (2007). Taksonomija svjetskih razvoja u obrazovanju: prema (de) konstrukciji pedagogije. *Pedagogijska istraživanja*, 4, issue 2, pp. 317–339.
- Zečević, B. and Pindžo, R. (2016). Uloga podsticaja u unapređenju konkurentnosti turističke destinacije – primer Republike Srbije. Retrived from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Renata_Pindzo/publication/310586059_ULOGA_PODSTICAJA_U_UNAPREĐENJU_KONKURENTNOSTI_TURISTICKE_DESTINACIJE_PRIMER_REPUBLIKE_SRBILJE/links/5831d00f08ae004f74c2a78f/ULOGA-PODSTICAJA-U-UNAPREDENJU-KONKURENTNOSTI-TURISTICKE-DESTINACIJE-PRIMER-REPUBLIKE-SRBILJE.pdf (Accessed on 20. 09. 2020).

Maja BOSANAC (Univerza Novi Sad, Srbija)

Radovan GRANDIĆ (Univerza Novi Sad, Srbija)

UPORABA VAVČERJEV V VZGOJI IN IZOBRAŽEVANJU

Povzetek: Področje vzgoje in izobraževanja je danes priča številnim spremembam, ki se dogajajo v na znanju temelječem gospodarstvu. Je v fazi preoblikovanja, zlasti v smeri dekonstrukcije pedagogike kot znanosti. Eden od pomembnih dejavnikov, ki prispevajo k dekonstrukciji in redefiniciji vzgoje in izobraževanja, je njuna vse obsežnejša privatizacija na različnih ravneh, ki se ponuja kot eden od pristopov v okviru globalnih izobraževalnih politik. Namen tega prispevka je predstaviti uporabo vavčerjev v vzgoji in izobraževanju kot enega od načinov uresničevanja javno-zasebnih partnerstev. Zaradi celovitega pristopa prispevek poudari prednosti in izzive uporabe vavčerjev v vzgoji in izobraževanju. Članek prinaša aktualen pregled literature o javno-zasebnih partnerstvih v vzgoji izobraževanju in vavčerje predstavi s pedagoškega in ne pretežno ekonomskega vidika. Poleg tega predstavi izobraževalne politike, namenjene večji izbirnosti šol, ki jih predlaga Organizacija za gospodarsko sodelovanje in razvoj in so povezane z uporabo vavčerjev v obveznem izobraževanju. Predstavljene so tudi pobude za uporabo vavčerjev v visokem šolstvu, ki so sicer manj raziskane. Namen tega prispevka je osvetliti pomen znanja o širšem socialno-ekonomskem vidiku vavčerjev in posebnostih uporabe le-teh na različnih stopnjah vzgoje in izobraževanja. Ne glede na to, kakšen je naš osebni odnos do takšnega pristopa, ali zagovarjamo tržna načela v vzgoji in izobraževanju ali jim nasprotujemo, postaja vedenje o tem, kaj predstavljajo vavčerji, vse pomembnejše za vse, ki so neposredno ali posredno del vzgoje in izobraževanja.

Ključne besede: vavčerji, vzgoja in izobraževanje, javno-zasebna partnerstva

Elektronski naslov: maja.bosanac@ff.uns.ac.rs.