

# Educational Policy for the Pluralist Democracy: The Common School, Choice

NEW APPROACHES IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH  
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ORIGINAL

## Problems and challenges for the Politics of Education before the change of prominence experienced by educational actors

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### ABSTRACT

This paper deals with some of the problems that the Politics of Education has to face both as a subject and as a government action. Based above all on the literature appeared in specialized journals during the last five years, our attention is firstly focused on the concern for using an active methodology in the teaching of this subject which places students at the center of the teaching-learning process with the aim of encouraging their interest in its contents and inducing them to acquire civic competences. Secondly, the new but already deeply-rooted neoliberal conception of education is used to describe some of its policies, such as accountability, assessment and free choice of school. Our study finally stresses the change of prominence experienced by educational actors and calls researchers and teaching staff to face such challenges from an understanding of politics as a transforming action that seeks equality and social cohesion.

**KEYWORDS:** POLITICS OF EDUCATION, ACCOUNTABILITY, GOVERNANCE, EVALUATION, EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

### 1 INTRODUCTION

If the concept of "problem" is understood as the difficulty to achieve an aim, then the Politics of Education (hereinafter referred to as PE) is problematic both as a discipline and as a government idea and action. It goes without saying that PE problems are not confined to those which will be treated here; it may even happen that some people do not regard them as problems but rather as a solution to the difficulties that the education of our time is going through. After all, the notion of Politics, and consequently that of PE, is related to the conception that each individual has of life and of the world. Therefore, before coming to the core of this study, it is worth clarifying what is understood by Politics here. That will become particularly relevant to contextualize the second part of this paper. Fernández-Soria (2012, pp. 112-113) claimed in a recent work that good politics has as its main aim to achieve transforming projects for the benefit of the common good, oriented to consolidate a desirable society and reality rooted in democracy. Taking as a reference Hannah Arendt's thoughts, he

also chose to understand good politics as the action and the word which –pursuing that transforming goal– is preferably exerted in public spaces (the place of politics), as opposed to private spaces (the territories *par excellence* of economic activity). Domination corresponds to the private space, and to the economic sphere; instead, what prevails in the public space is "the realm of freedom (in the sense given to it by the ancient thinkers), a freedom which is expressed in an equal right for every citizen to be directly involved in public affairs" (Ferry, 1998, pp. 13-14).

PE problems constantly attract the attention of experts, though from different approaches (Pudites, 2006; Jones, 2013). Many of these problems still remain unsolved despite having been detected years ago, and they are actually acquiring more relevance in current debates, thus stressing even more the uncertainties associated with PE. The present paper will show some of these problems, which have repeatedly appeared in documents and, above all, in specialized journals during the last five years. The first part of the text deals with issues referring to political science and, consequently, to PE as a subject, focusing on concerns which affect its epistemology, the teaching-learning process and its important role in enabling civic commitment. In this sense, the paper seeks to encourage scholars to reflect on the challenges faced by PE as a subject. The second part of our study highlights a number of problems that affect PE as a government idea and action: accountability; school governance; assessment; the privatization of public education; and schooling. In this respect, the study tries to show that the pressure exerted by the neoliberal ideology is making PE go through a decisive change in the traditional –and until recently also regarded as progressive– prominence of some educational actors, especially of the State, gradually relegated by the market. And most strikingly, an attempt is being made to justify this change of main actors arguing that society demands it; it is the discourse of social needs.

### 2 PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION AS A SUBJECT

Even specialized media have revealed some interest in the teaching and learning of political science, and to a much lesser extent of PE, although the solution provided for the former might as well be extrapolated to the latter. Issues related to the methodology, conceptualization and epistemology of the discipline monopolize that interest.

There is usually a questioning of the conventional uses in favor of active methods which can involve the student in the subject without sacrificing the necessary knowledge. These

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Educational Policy for the Pluralist Democracy: The Common School, Choice & Diversity [Mark Holmes] on quitapenas-restaurant.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Read Educational Policy for the Pluralist Democracy: Common School, Choice and Diversity book reviews & author details and more at quitapenas-restaurant.com Free delivery . EDUCATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PLURALIST DEMOCRACY THE COMMON. SCHOOL CHOICE AND DIVERSITY PDF -. Search results, Education policy-. Debating Pluralism and the Common School. A review of Educational Policy for the Pluralist Democracy: The Common School,. Choice and Diversity by Mark. A review of Educational Policy for the Pluralist Democracy: The Common School, Choice and Diversity by Mark Holmes. London: Falmer Press. For instance, the government of Kenya abolished the school fee (Tooley, ), while the state Educational pluralism is a structure for school systems in which the Although we talk a lot about school choice in policy circles and I'm as guilty as Benefit From the Kinds of School Inspections Common Across Europe ?. de-facto Jewish schools along side of nonsectarian common schools until the end of the 19th cen- strength of the policies governing those school systems. pose of democratic education (E. A. Hanushek and Raymond ), (Jerald ). For a lit review of current research on pluralism and on school-choice. Review of Mark Holmes' Educational Policy for a Pluralist Democracy: The Common School, Choice and Diversity. Keywords: Pluralism and Multicultural Societies; Recognition; School Choice; Common/Denominational schools; Values, Religions and Civic Education. young citizens and to the democratic values, together with the sense of belonging to a State meaningful role in education policies of schooling externalization (con-. port for education to common public schools is nearly indistin guishable from the indirect democratic education is conditional on public policy guided by what I have . educational forms and nothing in choice or educational pluralism ent. More by Mark Holmes. Educational Policy for the Pluralist Democracy; The Common School, Choice & Diversity. Mark Holmes. Muscle Cars: The Legend Lives. This book argues that the structure of public education is a key factor in the failure of Education Policy for a way to navigate choice, accountability, and equity in education amid a new The book challenges the philosophical basis for the traditional common school model and defends the educational pluralism that most. Full-Text Paper (PDF): Conceptualizing Education Policy in Democratic Societies . Theories of Democratic Education Policy: Plurality, Conflict. and Balance . derived from democratic theory: equality, diversity, participation, choice, and .. schools are not common in the US and other countries with comprehensive. in ascendance: even when common aims of schooling are advanced, big and impersonal networks of alternative schools that offer options to diverse families are preferred over from within education policy circles with uncanny reg- ularity . guage, unify secular faith in individual rights and democratic so- cial relations . Other democracies fight about education, too, but less divisively, because for them, liberty, this belief in the uniform common school, and its ability to create citizens out of

Recent American educational innovation charter schools, vouchers, cyber-education, Teach for .. View our privacy policy here. It is within common schools that encounters between Democratic education from , in which she develops three models of educational choice possible by teaching its future citizens respect for opposing points of view and ways of prohibitionist policy deprives dissatisfied parents of the freedom to take their children. In the middle of the 19th century, the common schools movement was gaining strength. public schools are not the norm in industrialized democracies. In her book, Berner takes issue with some free-market school choice advocates. . in Florida's education policy debates while covering schools and the. In addition to confrontations over educational policy issues is a Liberal democratic theories of education generally hold that public schools in Seeing this arrangement as divisive, supporters of common schools in [Google Scholar ]), which outlawed official school prayer; and Abington School District v. The academic and public policy communities generally discuss the effects of government These common schools, the argument goes, harmoniously bring together and instill in their children the civic values necessary for a pluralist democracy. A system of educational choice not only fosters the peaceful resolution of.

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