



Social Science And Policy Challenges: Democracy, Values And Capacities (Research & Policy (UNESCO))

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Producing scientific knowledge that can inform solutions and guide policy-making is one of the most important functions of social science. Nonetheless, if social science is to become more relevant and influential so as to impact on the drawing and execution of policy, certain measures need to be taken to narrow its distance from the policy sphere. This decision is less obvious than it seems. Both research and experience have proved that policy-making is a complex, often sub-rational, interactive process that involves a wide range of actors such as decision makers, bureaucrats, researchers, organized interests, citizen and civil society representatives and research brokers. In addition, social science often needs to defend both its relevance to policy and its own scientific status. Moving away from instrumental visions of the link between social research and policy, this collective volume aims to highlight the more constructed nature of the use of social knowledge. Hence, it addresses issues pertaining to the epistemology of social scientific research, the role of social interaction and power in the production of knowledge and the institutional links that bridge research and policy. The authors' contributions promote a lively, scholarly discussion on democracy and participation as well as on values and capacities in the scientific making of policy that will enlighten the interested reader and enrich the academic and policy debates, while suggesting concrete proposals for capacity-building.

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