

Democratization of Science and Society Relationships

From Scientific Literacy to Knowledge Co-Production

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Abstract

Scientists seek to establish and maintain relationships with society and different groups of people, but these relationships have been rather one-directional and based on monologue logic flowing from scientists to the lay. During recent decades, however, the science and society relationships have witnessed changes: facilitating processes of dialogical and encouraging open/mutual participation. The present paper, while reviewing the literature, theoretical views and experiences of other countries, takes a glance at the Iranian situation and seeks to answer the following questions:

- ۱- How have been the forms of science and society relations during recent decades?
- ۲- What relations have exhibited these formations, echoing changes of society's forms?
- ۳- What parallels exist between forms of contemporary democracy and forms of science and society relations?
- ۴- How the Iranian situation of science and society relations can be organized in a more democratic direction?

The first section of the paper based on the study of the existing literature presents forms of science and society relations in three models of public deficit, public engagement, and public participation. The second section examines the link between three categories of science, society and democracy to clarify symmetry between these conceptual formulations with social changes and shifts in contemporary democracy forms. The finding of the paper shows the emergence of cultural and technological changes and that genesis of late modernity or postmodern society has

been effective in democratization of knowledge and society. The final section of paper proposes several ideas for developing democratic processes in science and social relations in the country.

Keywords: Science and Society; Democratization of Knowledge; Public Deficit Model; Public Engagement Model; Public Participation Model