

## Human Societies in Transition: Interdisciplinary Pathways for Understanding Behaviour, Systems, and Transformation

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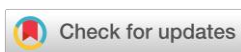
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**Abstract:** Contemporary societies are undergoing rapid and interconnected transformations driven by technological advancement, shifting governance systems, evolving cultural norms, and growing environmental challenges. These dynamics are reshaping human behaviour, institutional performance, and patterns of social interaction in complex and interdependent ways. This editorial for the Human Social Review (HSR) highlights the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach to understanding these changes, emphasizing the integration of sociology, psychology, political science, economics, education, and related fields. It argues that human behaviour is increasingly influenced by digital ecosystems, algorithmic systems, and global information flows, which require new analytical frameworks that combine behavioural and socio-technical perspectives. At the same time, persistent issues such as social inequality, governance deficits, and declining institutional trust remain central concerns in global development discourse. The editorial further underscores the importance of social capital, community resilience, and participatory governance in addressing contemporary challenges. It also draws attention to the dual role of digital technologies in enabling innovation and inclusion while simultaneously generating risks such as misinformation and polarization. Additionally, the growing urgency of environmental sustainability is framed as a behavioural and institutional challenge requiring interdisciplinary solutions. Overall, the editorial positions HSR as a platform for rigorous, comparative, and policy-relevant scholarship aimed at advancing understanding of human societies and promoting equitable, resilient, and sustainable development outcomes.

**Keywords:** Interdisciplinary social science; Human behaviour; Social transformation; Digital society; Social inequality; Governance and institutions; Social capital; Community resilience; Public policy; Sustainable development; Behavioural change; Digitalization; Civic engagement; Social systems; Globalization



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Human societies are undergoing profound and multidimensional transformations shaped by rapid technological change, evolving governance structures, shifting cultural norms, and increasing environmental pressures. These changes are not isolated; rather, they interact in complex ways that continuously reshape human behaviour, institutional performance, and collective social outcomes. In this context, the *Human Social Review (HSR)* emerges as a scholarly platform committed to advancing interdisciplinary understanding of human behaviour and social systems. The journal recognizes that no single discipline is sufficient to explain the complexity of contemporary social realities. Instead, sociology, psychology, political science, anthropology, economics, education, and related fields must converge to develop deeper, more integrated explanations of societal change and human development.

At the centre of contemporary transformation lies the changing nature of human behaviour. Individuals today navigate environments that blend physical, digital, economic, and institutional influences in increasingly interconnected ways. Decision-making is no

longer shaped exclusively by traditional institutions such as family, education, or religion, but is also strongly influenced by digital platforms, algorithmic systems, and global flows of information (Beck, 1992). Social media, artificial intelligence, and digital communication technologies have redefined how people form identities, construct beliefs, and engage with others. These developments have created new behavioural patterns characterized by immediacy, connectivity, and constant exposure to information, while also raising concerns about misinformation, cognitive overload, and emotional well-being. As a result, understanding human behaviour now requires an integration of cognitive psychology, behavioural economics, and digital sociology.

Alongside behavioural transformation, social inequality continues to be one of the most persistent and complex challenges facing global societies. While economic development and technological progress have improved living standards in many contexts, disparities in income, education, health, and opportunities remain deeply entrenched. Importantly, inequality today extends beyond traditional economic measures to include digital access, institutional trust, and social capital. These overlapping dimensions of disadvantage reinforce one another, producing cycles of exclusion that are difficult to break. Addressing these challenges requires both empirical rigor and contextual sensitivity, as patterns of inequality vary significantly across cultural, political, and geographic settings. Comparative and cross-national research is therefore essential in identifying both universal drivers and context-specific manifestations of stratification.

In parallel, governance systems and political institutions are experiencing significant shifts under the pressures of globalization, democratization, and technological change. Citizens are increasingly informed and digitally connected, leading to higher expectations for transparency, accountability, and participation. However, rising engagement does not always translate into increased trust in institutions. In many societies, growing political awareness coexists with declining institutional confidence, contributing to polarization and fragmented public discourse. Social movements, civic activism, and digital advocacy have become central to political expression, reshaping traditional notions of governance and participation. These developments highlight the importance of studying governance not only as a structural system but also as a dynamic process shaped by interaction between institutions and citizens.

The rise of digital society further complicates the landscape of social interaction and institutional functioning. Digital technologies have transformed communication, learning, work, and cultural production, creating new opportunities for innovation and inclusion. At the same time, they introduce significant challenges such as algorithmic bias, surveillance concerns, digital addiction, and the spread of misinformation (Putnam, 2000). The influence of digital platforms extends beyond communication into shaping public opinion, political behaviour, and even emotional responses. Understanding these dynamics requires a socio-technical perspective that examines not only technological systems but also the social, political, and economic contexts in which they operate. This approach is essential for developing ethical frameworks and governance models suited to the digital age.

Community structures and social capital remain fundamental to understanding resilience and well-being in contemporary societies. Despite the rise of digital connectivity, local communities continue to play a vital role in providing support, trust, and collective identity, particularly in times of crisis or uncertainty. However, processes such as urbanization, migration, and globalization are transforming traditional community bonds, leading to both fragmentation and the emergence of new network-based forms of solidarity. Social capital—expressed through trust, reciprocity, and networks—remains a key determinant of how effectively communities respond to social, economic, and environmental challenges (Giddens, 2023). Understanding resilience therefore requires attention to both institutional capacity and grassroots social dynamics.

Development and public policy research also occupy a central place in contemporary social science, particularly as global priorities shift toward inclusive and sustainable development. Increasingly, policy frameworks emphasize human-centered development that

goes beyond economic growth to include education, health, gender equality, and overall well-being. However, significant gaps remain between policy design and implementation, often due to institutional inefficiencies, behavioural constraints, and contextual mismatches. This has led to growing interest in behavioural insights and evidence-based policymaking as tools for improving policy effectiveness. Strengthening the connection between research and policy practice is essential for achieving meaningful social progress.

Environmental and sustainability challenges further underscore the need to understand human behaviour within broader ecological systems. Climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation are not only technical problems but also deeply social and behavioural issues. Individual consumption patterns, cultural values, institutional incentives, and governance structures all influence environmental outcomes (Castells, 2011). Therefore, addressing sustainability requires interdisciplinary approaches that integrate environmental science with behavioural psychology, economics, and political analysis. Encouraging pro-environmental behaviour and strengthening institutional responses are critical for achieving long-term ecological balance.

In conclusion, the *Human Social Review (HSR)* is positioned as an intellectual space dedicated to advancing rigorous, interdisciplinary, and socially relevant scholarship. The complexity of contemporary global challenges demands research that transcends disciplinary boundaries and integrates diverse methodological approaches. By fostering dialogue across fields and regions, HSR aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of human behaviour, institutional systems, and societal transformation. Ultimately, the journal aspires to support the development of more equitable, resilient, and sustainable societies through evidence-based knowledge and innovative theoretical insights.

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