

Drivers of Energy Saving Behaviour: The Relative Influence of Normative, Habitual, Intentional, and Situational Processes

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Abstract : Campaigns aiming to induce energy-saving behaviour among householders use a wide range of approaches that address many different drivers thought to underpin this behaviour. However, little research has compared the relative importance of the different factors that influence energy behaviour, meaning campaigns are not informed about where best to focus resources. Therefore, this study applies the Comprehensive Action Determination Model (CADM) to compare the role of normative, intentional, habitual, and situational processes on energy-saving behaviour. An online survey on a sample of households (N = 247) measured the CADM variables and the data was analysed using structural equation modelling. Results showed that situational and habitual processes were best able to account for energy saving behaviour while normative and intentional processes had little predictive power. These findings suggest that policymakers should move away from motivating householders to save energy and should instead focus their efforts on changing energy habits and creating environments that facilitate energy saving behaviour. These findings add to the wider development in social and environmental psychology that emphasizes the importance of extra-personal variables such as the physical environment in shaping behaviour.

Keywords : energy consumption, behavioural modelling, environmental psychology theory, habits, values

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