

Behaviour Change Theory

Finding your audience and building a question

CSSci Team

12.02.2025



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Why does theory matter?

You need to build a website

- ▶ **Websites are more than information platforms** – they *influence behaviour*
- ▶ Strong behavioural theory improves engagement, effectiveness and impact
- ▶ Your challenge: **apply the appropriate theories** (from the manuscript on Canvas) to **your** project

The big picture

Behaviour change = Motivation + Opportunity + Capability

- ▶ Motivation: what **drives** users?
- ▶ Opportunity: what **external factors** help or hinder?
- ▶ Capability: what **skills/ knowledge** do users need?

Framework for application

Behaviour change = Motivation + Opportunity + Capability

- ▶ **Define the behaviour change goal:** what changes do you want to see?
- ▶ **Identify the barriers to change:** why isn't behaviour change happening?
- ▶ **Find the appropriate theories:** we'll look at these in a moment!

Key questions for your project

- ▶ Who are the **target users** of your website?
- ▶ What **behaviour** do you want to change?
- ▶ What are the **barriers** preventing this behaviour change?
- ▶ What **theory** helps overcome these barriers?
- ▶ How will you **translate theory** into website features?

Example 1: GGD vaping prevention website

- ▶ Goal: reduce vaping among minors
- ▶ Barriers: social influence, misinformation, lack of awareness
- ▶ Theories:
 - ▶ Social norms and peer influence: Showcase influencers modelling non-vaping behaviour
 - ▶ Framing and risk perception: Present risks using storytelling
 - ▶ Self efficacy and empowerment: Provide interactive tools to resist peer pressure

Example 2: Bike to work Amsterdam

- ▶ Goal: increase bike adoption from orphaned bikes
- ▶ Barriers: lack of awareness, inconvenience, social norms
- ▶ Theories:
 - ▶ Environmental support and nudging: Make finding a bike easy and rewarding
 - ▶ Gamification and community building: Create social incentives and leaderboards

Find the theories

- ▶ From the document on Canvas, find the appropriate theories!
- ▶ Which ones are appropriate to your project?

Apply the theories

- ▶ How will you implement these on your website?