

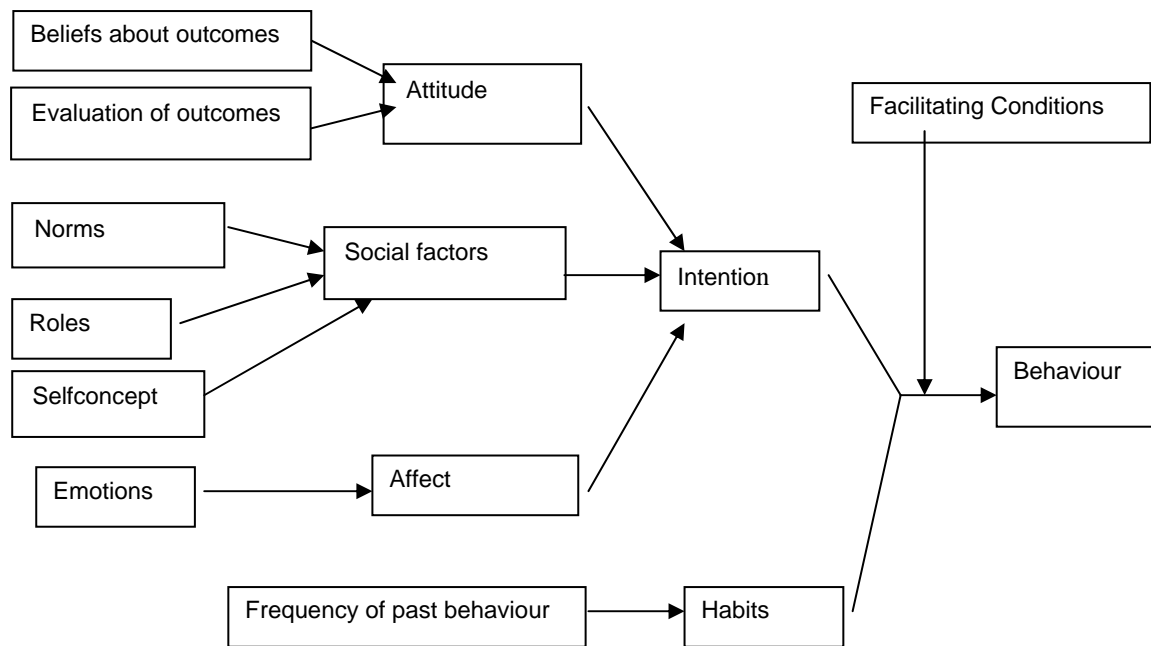
## Triandis' Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour

If there is one key element in the social psychology of behaviour that is still missing from Stern's ABC model, it is the role of habit. Stern (2000) acknowledges this and proposes that an integrated model of environmentally significant behaviour would consist of four factors: 1) attitudes; 2) contextual factors; 3) personal capabilities; and 4) habits. The general thrust of Stern's suggestion is very similar to an attempt made almost thirty years ago by social psychologist Harry Triandis to develop an integrated model of 'interpersonal' behaviour. Triandis recognised the key role played by both social factors and emotions in forming intentions. He also highlighted the importance of past behaviour on the present. On the basis of these observations, Triandis proposed a Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour (Figure 4) in which intentions – as in many of the other models – are immediate antecedents of behaviour. But crucially, habits also mediate behaviour. And both these influences are moderated by facilitating conditions.

Behaviour in any situation is, according to Triandis, a function partly of the intention, partly of the habitual responses, and partly of the situational constraints and conditions. The intention is influenced by social and affective factors as well as by rational deliberations. One is neither fully deliberative, in Triandis' model, nor fully automatic. One is neither fully autonomous nor entirely social. Behaviour is influenced by moral beliefs, but the impact of these is moderated both by emotional drives and cognitive limitations.

Social factors include norms, roles and self-concept. Norms are the social rules about what should and should not be done. Roles are 'sets of behaviours that are considered appropriate for persons holding particular positions in a group' (Triandis, 1977). Self-concept refers to the idea that a person has of his/herself, the goals that it is appropriate for the person to pursue or to eschew, and the behaviours that the person does or does not engage in.

Emotional responses to a decision or to a decision situation are assumed distinct from rational-instrumental evaluations of consequences, and may include both positive and negative emotional responses of varying strengths. Affect has a more or less unconscious input to decision-making, and is governed by instinctive behavioural responses to particular situations.



**Figure 3 Triandis' Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour**

Triandis offers an explicit role for affective factors on behavioural intentions. In more recent writings, the attempt to incorporate emotional antecedents into a model of action has received a lot of support (Bagozzi *et al.*, 2002, Steg *et al.*, 2001). Triandis theory of interpersonal behaviour captures many of the criticisms levelled at rational choice theory in a way that is not done by some of the other models. It also can be, and has been, used as a framework for empirical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the component factors in different kinds of situations. It also can be, and has been, used as the framework for empirical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the component factors in different kinds of situations. Far less use has been made of Triandis work than was made of the Ajzen- Fishbein work. However, where it has been used, it appears to have additional explanatory value over Ajzen's model, in particular, by including role beliefs and habits.