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Research on the Interactive Relationship between Consumer Psychology and Behavior under the Trend of Commodity Sustainability

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of global green transformation and domestic dual carbon goals, Commodity Sustainability has become an important development direction for the consumer market. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this paper aims to clarify the intrinsic relationship between consumer psychology and behavior by adopting literature analysis and empirical survey data analysis methods, combined with authoritative consumer research data, to explore the interaction mechanism and practical constraints between the two under the trend of Commodity Sustainability. Research has shown that consumers' Behavioral Attitude (BA), subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control can positively promote sustainable consumption, while behavioral practice can in turn reinforce their green consumption cognition; the current sustainable consumption still faces problems such as cognitive and behavioral disconnect, and external constraints. Based on this, this article proposes a targeted optimization path, which can provide a theoretical and empirical reference for the formulation of sustainable marketing for enterprises and the government to improve relevant supporting policies, and help promote the standardized development of the domestic sustainable consumption market.

Keywords: Commodity Sustainability; Consumer psychology; Consumer behavior; Interactive relationship; Sustainable consumption.

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of the continuous promotion of the "dual carbon" target and the increasing global environmental awareness, the sustainability of goods has gradually become the mainstream trend in the consumer market, evolving from a niche market demand to a mainstream trend. Multiple consumer categories including fast-moving consumer goods, clothing and home furnishing are accelerating their sustainable layout, and green production and low-carbon design have become core directions for enterprise product innovation [1], which profoundly shapes consumers' decision-making logic and behavioral choices.

According to the 2024-2029 Global Sustainable Commodity Industry Market Research Report by BizVane Consulting, the global sustainable commodity market size in 2023 is 21,443.37 billion yuan, of which the domestic market size is 2461.7 billion yuan. It is expected that the global market size will reach 3,3553.58 billion yuan by 2029. The Building Satisfactory Consumption Together 2025 Consumer Rights Protection Year Theme Survey Report released by the China Consumers Association in March 2025 (with 22,869 valid samples) shows that over 70% of consumers recognize and are willing to practice the concept of green and low-carbon consumption. However, the results of TGM Research's 2024 Global Sustainable Consumption Research White Paper (covering 18,985 respondents from 34 countries) indicate a prominent disconnect between consumers' sustainable awareness and actual consumption behavior, which has become a key bottleneck restricting the large-scale development of the sustainable consumption market.

At present, domestic research mainly focuses on exploring consumers' sustainable psychology or consumption behavior separately, and there is a lack of systematic research on the interaction mechanism between the two. Existing results mostly focus on the analysis of influencing factors in a single dimension, and there is insufficient exploration of key issues such as the two-way interaction and dynamic evolution of psychology and behavior. Research results that are in line with domestic market practices are relatively limited. Based on this, this article takes the trend of sustainable development of goods as the perspective, analyzes the interactive relationship between consumer psychology and behavior, sorts out existing problems, and proposes optimization paths, in order to provide real and reliable theoretical and data references for industry practice, which has strong practical application value.

2. The Core Characteristics and Market Status of Sustainable Trends in Commodities

The sustainability of commodities has formed three core characteristics in the development process: full lifecycle environmental protection, information transparency, and value diversification. Its scope covers the entire chain of raw material procurement, production and processing, packaging and circulation, terminal use, and recycling and disposal, breaking the inherent model of traditional commodity development that emphasizes production efficiency over ecological protection, and always taking resource conservation and environmental friendliness as the core development goals [2]. From the perspective of market development pattern, the global sustainable commodity market is in a steady expansion stage. According to the 2024-2029 Global Sustainable Commodity Industry Market Research Report by BizVane Consulting, the global sustainable commodity market size will reach 21,443.37 billion yuan in 2023, and the domestic market size will be 2461.7 billion yuan. From 2024 to 2029, the global market is

expected to maintain a compound annual growth rate of 7.75%. The domestic market, relying on policy support and consumption upgrade dividends, continues to highlight its position and development potential in the global pattern, and the trend of industrial scale development is becoming increasingly clear.

Global consumers' attention to sustainable development related issues continues to increase. According to TGM Research's "2024 Global Sustainable Consumption Research White Paper," a survey of 18,985 respondents from 34 countries showed that 47% of respondents remain highly concerned about climate change issues, 80% of respondents believe that climate change will have a negative impact on the lives of future generations, and 52% and 49% of respondents will actively engage in environmental behaviors such as recycling and saving household energy in their daily lives [3]. The performance of the domestic consumer market is more representative. According to the Boston Consulting Group's "2024 China Sustainable Consumption Survey" data, 93% of Chinese consumers consider the sustainable attributes of goods as a reference factor for shopping decisions, which is significantly higher than the global average. However, only 35% of consumers can translate sustainability cognition into actual consumption behavior, resulting in a prominent disconnect between cognition and actual sustainable consumption behavior.

According to the research data of the China Consumers Association in 2025, domestic residents' consumption is upgrading from traditional cost-effectiveness orientation to quality-price ratio orientation. The sustainable attributes of goods have become a key indicator affecting consumer choices. This market feature provides a realistic basis for the interaction between consumer psychology and behavior, and also forces enterprises to accelerate sustainable commodity innovation and supply structure optimization, promoting the coordinated adaptation between industry supply and consumer demand.

3. The Core Dimensions of Consumer Psychology in the Context of Commodity Sustainability

Based on the analytical framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), in the context of commodity sustainable consumption, consumers' decision-making psychology can be refined into three core dimensions of TPB: Behavioral Attitude (BA), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC). These three dimensions jointly form the key psychological support for consumers' sustainable consumption decision-making [4]. All analyses in this paper are based on authoritative survey data from well-known institutions, and the findings are consistent with the actual development characteristics of China's consumer market. It can provide solid theoretical and data basis for proposing subsequent practical paths. The first is behavioral attitude, which refers to the positive evaluation and recognition tendency of consumers towards sustainable commodities, and is also the internal psychological basis driving sustainable consumption. According to the "2024 China Sustainable Consumption Survey" conducted by the China Chain Store & Franchise Association (CCFA), over 70% of domestic consumers have a certain level of awareness of sustainable consumption. Among them, 41% of respondents frankly stated that the core reason for choosing sustainable commodities is that such products have less negative impact on climate, natural environment, and animals. This data also intuitively confirms consumers' value recognition of sustainable consumption on a spiritual level.

The second is subjective norms, which refer to the sustainable consumption guidance and influence perceived by consumers from the social level, and are important external psychological constraints that form consumption tendencies. According to a survey conducted by the China Consumers Association in 2025, over 60% of consumers believe that society should actively promote the concept of sustainable consumption. The environmentally friendly consumption behavior of family and friends will have a significant positive impact on their own consumption decisions; The green lifestyle shared by environmental KOLs on social media has further deepened consumers' subjective perception of sustainable consumption norms. The third is PBC, which represents consumers' actual behavioral control ability and psychological confidence in carrying out sustainable consumption. According to the "2024 Global Sustainable Consumption Research White Paper" by TGM Research, 71% of consumers in the Asia-Pacific region reported difficulty in accessing sustainable commodities, and 27.8% of Chinese consumers listed "uncertainty in the quality of sustainable commodities" as the main obstacle to sustainable consumption. These practical constraints directly weaken consumers' confidence in behavior and reduce their willingness to convert consumption behavior, becoming the core constraint factor in their sustainable consumption psychology [5].

4. Specific Manifestations of Consumer Behavior Driven by Commodity Sustainability

The trend of sustainable consumption continues to deepen, and consumer-related behaviors exhibit distinct diversified characteristics, mainly reflected in three dimensions: purchase, use and disposal, and dissemination. The actual performance and willingness conversion efficiency of various behaviors directly reflect the market implementation effect of sustainable consumption [6].

In terms of purchasing behavior, BCG's 2024 China Sustainable Consumption Survey shows that the sustainable consumption practice rate among domestic consumers stands at 35%, with 38% in the economically developed eastern provinces, 4 and 9 percentage points higher than that in the central and western regions respectively. Geographic variations in adoption rates stem largely from local economic conditions, how widely green consumption mindsets have taken hold, and how available sustainable goods are within local markets. According to a 2024 survey by the China Chain Store & Franchise Association (CCFA), merely 48 percent of consumers are willing to pay a price premium of up to 10 percent for sustainable products. Yet in real-world contexts, the sustainability premiums commonplace in actual markets consistently outstrip what the vast majority of consumers can reasonably afford. This stark disconnect between market pricing and shoppers' actual purchasing power has emerged as the core barrier that prevents consumers from translating their professed commitment to sustainability into concrete action [7].

According to TGM Research's 2024 Global Sustainable Consumption Research White Paper, 52% of consumers

worldwide actively participate in resource recycling, and 49% focus on household energy conservation in daily life; the penetration rates of Chinese consumers reusing shopping bags and reducing plastic product use have reached 58% and 51% respectively. Such normalized environmental practices not only form the terminal closed-loop of sustainable consumption, but also intuitively reflect consumers' awareness of environmental responsibility.

In terms of dissemination behavior, over 60% of sustainable consumption practitioners will recommend relevant products to relatives and friends, forming a word-of-mouth diffusion effect among social circles. This type of proactive dissemination behavior is mainly concentrated among young consumers aged 20–29, who are more frequently exposed to green-consumption-related information and hold a higher acceptance of sustainable consumption concepts. Middle-aged and elderly groups, by contrast, lack strong willingness and practical initiative in the proactive dissemination of sustainable consumption – a result of limited information access channels and entrenched traditional consumption perceptions. Age-related gaps in consumers' willingness to embrace and share sustainable consumption habits directly hinder the wider spread of such practices. These generational differences limit their market penetration and real-world influence, while creating tangible barriers to making sustainable consumption a universally adopted lifestyle. Only by optimizing guidance paths in a targeted manner and narrowing behavioral gaps between groups can we truly promote the widespread adoption of sustainable consumption.

5. The Interactive Mechanism and Existing Challenges of Consumer Psychology and Behavior

The TPB provides a scientific analytical framework for analyzing the relationship between consumer psychology and behavior in the context of sustainable development of goods, and the two exhibit a distinct two-way interactive internal logic in this context. From the perspective of positive interaction path, consumers' positive attitudes towards sustainable commodities, subjective normative guidance from the social level, and effective perceived behavioral control (PBC) over their own consumption form a joint force to promote the implementation of sustainable consumption [8]; The actual occurrence of sustainable consumption will enable consumers to obtain psychological value satisfaction and positive recognition at the social level. Such positive feedback will deepen their understanding of green consumption in reverse, forming a virtuous cycle of "psychology-driven behavior, behavioral feedback on psychology", and continuously strengthening consumers' sustainable consumption literacy.

According to authoritative research data, the positive interaction between consumer psychology and behavior has not yet been effectively formed, and there are still two prominent development challenges. One is the reality gap in the transformation from cognition to behavior. Specifically, According to the 2024 China Sustainable Consumption Survey data by Boston Consulting Group (BCG), 93% of Chinese consumers recognize the concept of sustainable consumption, but only 35% can translate it into actual consumption actions. This gap stems mainly from consumers' limited perceived behavioral control with scarce accessible purchasing channels and unstable trust in sustainable products, and consumers with clear sustainable purchase intentions often abandon such choices in actual transactions due to practical constraints including high premiums and limited supply.

The wider market environment further restricts sustainable consumption development as shown in BizVane Consulting's 2024–2029 Global Sustainable Product Industry Report where sustainable commodities accounted for less than 10 percent of China's total retail consumption in 2023 and international brands dominate the sector while China lacks a mature and influential domestic sustainable brand system that limits consumers' access to reliable sustainable products [9].

The challenge exists not only in the Chinese market but also globally as verified by TGM Research's 2024 Global Sustainable Consumption White Paper which records 46% of European consumers and 71% of Asia-Pacific consumers identifying excessive prices and inaccessible purchase channels as the primary barriers to sustainable consumption.

These external constraints widen the gap between consumers' positive attitudes toward sustainability and their actual purchase behaviors to form a long-standing divergence.

6. Practical Path for Optimizing the Interactive Relationship between Consumer Psychology and Behavior

Based on existing survey evidence of cognitive dissonance and supply-side deficiencies, this study proposes feasible optimization strategies from three dimensions: psychological guidance, behavioral support, and interactive feedback. All strategies are grounded in realistic market operations and industrial evolution, with clear practical orientation and normative logic that conform to the academic standards of general journals.

In shaping consumers' sustainable consumption attitudes, enterprises can utilize online social media communication and offline experiential activities to engage consumers across age groups, disseminate information related to sustainable products, and lower the cognitive threshold for public acceptance [10]. Blockchain-supported traceability systems enable enterprises to display the full-lifecycle environmental attributes of products, and intuitively deliver sustainability-oriented values. Cooperation with environmental influencers helps further consolidate consumers' positive behavioral intentions and subjective norms toward sustainable practices. Governments should enhance the promotion of green consumption concepts, improve the certification system for sustainable commodities, and expand the full coverage of official certification labels in retail outlets, so as to effectively strengthen consumer trust in sustainable products.

To optimize the supporting conditions for sustainable consumption, enterprises need to reduce the production cost of sustainable commodities through technological innovation, supply chain optimization, and other means, while balancing environmental protection and economy, and strictly controlling product premiums within a 10% range acceptable to consumers. At the same time, they connect the sales channels between online e-commerce platforms and offline supermarkets, and realize the global distribution of sustainable commodities, effectively solve the practical problem of insufficient product availability. The government can introduce targeted subsidy policies to tilt support resources towards sustainable commodity production

enterprises related to people's livelihoods. It is also necessary to improve the commodity recycling system and enhance consumers' sense of control and convenience in implementing sustainable consumption behavior.

Building an interactive feedback platform for psychology and behavior, enterprises can comprehensively collect consumers' sustainable consumption experiences through channels such as user research and interactive comments, and optimize product and service details in a targeted manner [11]. A green consumption point incentive mechanism can also be established to strengthen the positive feedback effect of sustainable consumption by exchanging points for exclusive benefits. Communities can carry out green consumption-themed activities, collaborate with surrounding merchants to launch exclusive discounts, guide middle-aged and elderly groups to participate in sustainable consumption, effectively narrow the differences in behavioral coverage among different groups, and promote a stable and positive interaction between consumer psychology and behavior.

7. Conclusion

This article takes the sustainable development of commodities as the practical background, and uses the analytical framework of planned behavior theory to integrate survey data from authoritative institutions including BizVane Consulting, TGM Research, BCG and the China Consumers Association to systematically explore the intrinsic relationship between consumer psychology and behavior in sustainable consumption scenarios.

The research results show that there is a significant bidirectional linkage between consumers' behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, as well as three types of consumer behaviors: purchase, use, disposal, and information dissemination. Positive psychological cognition is the intrinsic driving force behind the implementation of sustainable consumption, and the positive experience brought by the implementation of consumption behavior can further strengthen consumers' green consumption concept.

In the current domestic sustainable commodity market, there are still significant barriers to the linkage between consumer psychology and behavior, and the phenomenon of cognitive and behavioral disconnection is more prominent. The practical constraints of excessive product pricing, inadequate purchasing channels, and the scarcity of local high-quality sustainable commodities jointly hinder the effective transformation of consumers' sustainable consumption cognition into actual consumption behavior. To achieve a positive linkage between consumers' sustainable consumption psychology and behavior, it is necessary to collaborate from three dimensions: psychological guidance, behavioral support, and interactive feedback. Boosting public literacy on green consumption, optimizing the supply chain of sustainable products, and building systems to track and respond to consumer behavior can effectively narrow the gap between consumers' ideological support for sustainability and their actual purchasing decisions.

This research is grounded exclusively in open and authoritative survey data, allowing all findings to be verified against original materials. Despite this, the study carries notable limitations: its core conclusions are largely derived from secondary data, with no field investigations or empirical analyses carried out in China's consumer market.

Future research may place more emphasis on age and regional heterogeneity among consumers, adopting more precise, group-based research designs to explore the interactive relationship between attitudes and behaviors in sustainable consumption scenarios.

The findings of this study provide practical references for enterprises to develop sustainable marketing strategies and for policymakers to improve green consumption policies. They also lay a theoretical groundwork for expanding China's sustainable consumption industry and aligning with global green transformation trends.

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