


# Green Marketing Practices Related to Key Variables of Consumer Purchasing Behavior

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**Abstract:** This systematic review research has two objectives: (a) to identify Green Marketing (GM) practices related to the key variables of consumer purchasing behavior, and (b) to present a model for the generation of sustainable value by companies based on the results found. The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement process was followed and Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) sources were used for the document search. A total of 248 documents were found (Scopus = 110; WoS = 138), and the final selection was 34 papers. The GM practices found were placed in five categories: (a) Green products and services; (b) Green business image; (c) Green advertising; (d) Green purchasing experience; (e) Green marketing mix. The key variables of purchasing behavior that were found are: Environmental awareness, Green satisfaction, Green attitude, Green purchasing intention, Green purchasing preference, Word of mouth, Perceived value, Green experiential value, Responsible consumption, Green engagement, Green trust, Green loyalty, and Green purchasing decision. Finally, a sustainable value generation model called “Green consumption cycle for sustainable value” was presented.

**Keywords:** green marketing; purchasing behavior; responsible consumption; sustainable value; eco-friendly consumer behavior



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## 1. Introduction

Overpopulation in the last three decades and the generation of waste as a consequence of an excessive consumption of food, manufactured products, and services are considered to be the main causes of environmental deterioration [1,2]. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, organizations and consumers need to take action to minimize negative impacts on the environment [3]. For this reason, in recent years, an important sector of environmentally concerned consumers has developed who are willing to purchase green products and value companies that apply sustainable practices in their economic and commercial activities [4–6]. This trend in consumer behavior has led companies to make efforts to design, promote, price, and distribute products that reduce negative effects on the environment [7]. As a result, they have had to modify their products, change their production processes, and improve the packaging material, among other actions that imply greater responsibility toward the environment [8].

The authors have called these efforts Green Marketing (GM), which seeks to satisfy the needs of a consumer who has a preference for eco-friendly products and services [9,10]. In this way, the consumer is more demanding and constantly evaluates corporate prestige, distrusting companies that only seek to clean up their image through “Greenwashing” [11]. This bad practice consists of a false ecological orientation that seeks to influence consumers’ perception of the products, services, and policies of an organization, to increase its profitability [12,13]. In this regard, it is important to differentiate between real GM practices and those that are not. In this regard, care must be taken when evaluating GM activities, as they must be part of a comprehensive management process to address the environmental

requirements of customers and society cost effectively and sustainably [7]. In other words, GM activities are not only limited to green advertising and promotion but are part of a strategy to develop real sustainable practices involving the design, promotion, pricing, and distribution of products that do not have negative effects on the environment [14].

Because of the above, the purpose of this systematic review is to contribute to the state of the art on GM practices published in the scientific literature that have been related to the key variables of consumer purchasing behavior, with an emphasis on green purchasing behavior. This study is important because it contributes to sustainable development given that, by knowing these practices and their relationship with purchasing behavior, greater awareness can be created, both in companies and consumers, regarding the shared value they must assume in caring for the environment. Therefore, this study will help managers and marketing professionals adopt commercial policies and strategies related to sustainable development and, at the same time, will help them build a good reputation, consumer acceptance, profitability, and competitiveness in companies. Moreover, this study will help researchers to visualize the different variables associated with GM and consumer purchasing behavior, which will serve as a reference for their theoretical or empirical studies.

As background to this study, a systematic review was conducted to examine the literature on GM to determine the themes, sub-themes, and gaps between consumers' attitudes and purchasing behaviors toward green products. In addition, a model for green-purchasing decision making composed of three categories was presented: (a) personal factors affecting green purchasing; (b) green purchasing; and (c) green marketing mix [15]. Another systematic review was aimed at analyzing the preceding factors of green purchasing intentions and behavior through empirical studies conducted in India, concluding that purchasing habits are significant predictors of green purchasing behaviors and intentions [16]. Another antecedent was aimed at reviewing scientific articles related to purchasing behaviors toward green cosmetics, concluding that internal, social, and external factors influence purchase decisions because consumers value certain characteristics of green cosmetic products such as price, quality, brand, performance, and health benefits. In addition, this study proposes a model for analyzing the determinants of purchasing behavior regarding makeup, hair styling, and personal care products [17]. Finally, in a systematic review of consumer theory, the objective was to classify the factors that influence green purchasing behavior, finding that individual factors, attributes of green products, green marketing strategies, and social factors impact consumer behavior [18].

Therefore, it is evident that the systematic review studies conducted to date, where GM is associated with consumer purchasing behavior, are limited and are focused on green product purchasing decisions and on the factors that drive this behavior based on the GM strategies developed by a particular business sector. Therefore, this systematic research review, according to the purpose stated in previous paragraphs, has two objectives: (1) to identify GM practices related to key variables of consumer purchasing behavior, and (2) to propose a sustainable value generation model that will serve as a guide for companies regarding the GM practices they can adopt in their business strategies. In this sense, the aim is to answer the following question: What are the green marketing practices related to the key variables of consumer purchasing behavior described in the scientific literature?

### *1.1. Green Marketing (GM)*

The GM concept emerged in the late 1980s as a competitive trend that companies apply to differentiate themselves, offering green value propositions to attract and retain consumers [19]. For some authors, GM presents an emerging conceptualization, with emphasis on applying good practices related to environmental care such as green labeling, green management in the flow of resources, green advertising, eco-efficiency, and the reuse of materials [20,21]. At the same time, GM is also defined as a strategic policy that companies can adopt to increase their profitability through sustainable management that seeks to meet the needs of environmentally concerned consumers [22,23]. Moreover, from

an integrative perspective, GM is defined as the union between the satisfaction of needs, the generation of profitability, and the concern for helping the environment [24].

In general, the different concepts that explain GM can be understood under four approaches. The first approach describes the actions of GM from the point of view of product development, specifying that products must be eco-friendly from the choice of raw materials, design, marketing, consumption, and disposal [25,26]. The second approach is focused on market development and involves carrying out business exchanges with ecological responsibility and with a minimum negative impact on the natural environment [25,27]. The third approach is oriented toward satisfying the needs of two groups of customers: (a) those consumers who have environmentally responsible purchasing behavior; and (b) those consumers who need to develop ecological awareness in their consumption behavior [27–35]. A final conceptual approach focuses on green communication, which involves advertising strategies to improve consumer attitudes toward a green brand and influence their purchasing behavior toward green products [26].

By ensuring authentic GM practices, companies contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by the United Nations [36], especially goal 3 (promote good health and well-being) and goal 12 (sustainable consumption and production patterns), and at the same time, achieve customer brand loyalty [37]. The SDGs seek to focus efforts among countries to make the world a peaceful place free from critical social ills and to promote sustainability. In this sense, the concept of sustainability is closely related to GM, since sustainable development is defined as the ability to meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [38]. Likewise, GM consists of developing products that meet the needs and aspirations of customers without compromising the environment [32,39]. Thus, it is observed that both sustainable development and GM practices are aligned to the same objective, based on satisfying needs and preserving the environment.

One of the most applied GM practices by companies is green advertising, which is used to publicize the qualities of green products and their benefits of use; it is also used as a means to promote good practices in favor of environmental conservation [8,40]. Another GM practice is the use of eco-labels, whose design and information seek to visually impact the green qualities of the products to influence the purchasing decisions of consumers [41,42]. Similarly, another common practice is focused on continuous improvements associated with sustainability, which increases the perceived value of the product and positively impacts consumer purchasing decisions [43]. GM practices have also been developed in the production and distribution process of green products that, unlike the previous cases, are not easily perceived, since these strategies are carried out within the organization and are focused on reducing costs, increasing the functionality and innovation of the products, and reusing and reducing waste generated during the production process [44–46].

Thus, GM practices and sustainable business strategies should be strategically planned in companies from the corporate vision, organizational mission, strategic objectives, and tactical plans to achieve sustainable marketing results focused on creating value [32].

Given the above, GM is not only about promoting green products but is also taken as a business strategy that implies a radical change in the vision to lead organizations and not only to generate profits through consumption [7]. Consequently, GM becomes one of the most important axes for organizations to contribute to sustainable development [32,47].

Studies on GM have been applied to different business sectors. Thus, several authors have focused their studies on the hotel sector [31,34,40,45,48–50]. One of these research studies determined that there is a relationship between the environmental knowledge and concern of potential customers and their skepticism regarding the GM of hotels, finding that a lack of environmental knowledge influences skepticism [50]. Similarly, in the textile sector, a study was conducted on the purchase intentions of consumers regarding ecological garments, taking into account their quality and their connection with nature, concluding that these factors significantly influence purchase intentions [51,52]. Another study in the textile sector described consumer behavior toward green products, emphasizing environmental

awareness, concluding that the more environmental knowledge and concern customers have, the higher their purchase intention toward these products will be [53]. Similarly, in the food sector, studies have been carried out on GM and the variables associated with purchasing behavior [54–57]. For example, one study found that consumers' concerns about the environment, health, food safety, and knowledge of organic food significantly affect attitudes toward organic meat purchasing behaviors [56].

### 1.2. Consumer Green Purchasing Behavior

Concerning the conceptualization of consumer purchasing behavior, various definitions have been presented to explain this variable. The concepts revolve around the behaviors performed by consumers at the time of deciding to purchase a particular product. The most widely accepted approach in the literature revolves around the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which proposes that behavior can be predicted by analyzing the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control of individuals [58]. In this sense, purchasing behavior implies considering the planning and effort that people are willing to make when buying.

Regarding the concept of purchasing behavior under the perspective of sustainability, two approaches have been identified to explain its definition. A first approach is focused on the preference for green products, i.e., they emphasize that the purchase decision should be guided by the acquisition of an environmentally friendly product, which must comply with a process of production, distribution, consumption, and disposal that allows for sustainability [59–61]. Additionally, other product-oriented concepts emphasize the value of the ecological brand that consumers perceive, which is a driver of purchasing behavior [62]. A second approach focuses on purchasing ethics, i.e., the purchasing decision is based on the awareness and social responsibility of the consumer when purchasing a product or service [63,64]. These are consumers who try to satisfy their needs by making rational use of their purchases, which implies consuming what is necessary to generate as little pollution as possible.

Consumer behavior, over time, has become more oriented toward responsible consumption [65]. Thus, new purchasing behaviors have been generated that have given rise to the so-called green consumers, becoming a new attractive market segment for companies who adapt their strategies to offer green products and services in response to the environmental concerns of this market segment [66,67]. These consumers demand less polluting, recyclable, biodegradable products, and demand that their packaging does not damage the ecosystem. Thus, they seek to contribute to sustainability through their purchasing and consumption processes [68,69]. In other words, the ecological behavior of consumers implies respect and care for the environment when making a purchase.

However, price is one of the problems limiting the purchase of these products, which is overcome by applying GM strategies to make consumers more willing to buy these products regardless of price [70,71]. On the other hand, some studies show that when there is a relationship between quality and price in green products that are perceived and valued by customers, price is not a critical factor that negatively influences the purchase decisions of consumers [72]. However, despite all the studies conducted, it has not been possible to know for sure all the factors that directly influence consumer purchasing behaviors toward green products [73].

## 2. Materials and Methods

In the development of this research, the terms were defined concerning the objective of the study, being these: quantitative empirical research articles referring to GM practices and containing, at the same time, a relationship with the key variables associated with consumer purchasing behavior, without discriminating with regard to the age of the publications, the country, or the economic sector of the organizations where they have been applied.

In addition, for an adequate search strategy, it was considered whether to apply synonyms associated with the main variables of the study. Thus, to locate the GM practices,

it was decided to limit the search to studies that presented strategies located in the GM models and planning developed by the companies, which were located in the title, abstract, and keywords of the published documents. For this reason, it was decided to use the terms “models” and “planning”, since it is possible that the practices were published through planning actions or models in the organizations investigated. It was also decided to include the following terms in the search for key variables associated with purchasing behaviors: “purchase intention”, “buying behavior”, “consumer satisfaction”, “consumer loyalty”, “customer value perception”, and “repurchase of the consumer”.

Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) sources were used to locate the scientific articles. These sources index different mainstream journals that publish peer-reviewed scientific research papers evaluated under scientific rigor. Hence, the scientific community recognizes their reliability level in presenting results. The choice of these databases is justified, taking into account the sources used by the systematic reviews that make up the background of this study, which use Scopus as the only search source [17,18] and Google Scholar as a search engine to locate the Scopus and WoS databases [15].

To perform the study selection, a search string was designed using the default terms and the Boolean connectors “AND” and “OR” in both sources: “Green marketing” AND ((models OR planning) AND (“purchase behavior” OR “purchase intention”) OR (buying behavior) OR (consumer satisfaction) OR (consumer loyalty) OR (customer value perception) OR (repurchase of the consumers)).

The search and selection process began on 28 January 2022, in both sources, and the information base of all documents was exported in a Comma Separated Values (CSV) file and then organized in a Google Sheets spreadsheet that included relevant information for the analysis of information distributed in columns and headed by the following data: Author, Year, Title, Journal, Publisher, Source, Type of document, Language, Abstract, Keywords, Citations, and DOI. This database facilitated the location of the documents to be retrieved and their subsequent control. Each document retrieved was named with a code composed of the surname of the first author, the year of publication, and the title. Then, it was filed in a folder in Google Drive. In addition, new analysis columns were included in the documents that were not excluded to perform the content analysis of each selected article. These new headings were: Country (where the research was conducted), Main objective of the research, Main GM concept, Main concept of Consumer Purchasing Behavior, Study population, Sample size, Sample characteristic, Data collection technique, Instrument associated with green marketing, Instrument associated with consumer purchasing behavior, Main result, Main conclusion, GM practices, and Variable associated with consumer purchasing behavior. Likewise, after the content analysis of the documents, the selection process was completed with the inclusion of the articles that were related to the research question and the objective of this study.

For the adequate organization of the documents found, different tools were used that allowed for the ordering, categorizing, and analyzing of the bibliometric and content data. Thus, all the articles included were stored in a shared folder in Google Drive, where collaborative work was carried out to analyze the content of the documents. Likewise, the Mendeley reference manager was used, facilitating the writing of citations in different formats and allowing the adaptation of the reference text according to the requirements for its publication. Finally, for the presentation of the document exclusion process, the PRISMA Flowchart [74] was applied, consisting of the three phases in the selection of studies (identification, screening, and included).

As for the study selection sequence based on the PRISMA Flowchart, it began with the *identification* phase, which was determined by the characteristics of the research based on the predetermined search equation. The total number of documents found went through a screening process in which duplicates and those that did not correspond to an empirical article were discarded. Then, the actual *screening* phase was carried out, where documents that could not be retrieved and others determined by the following criteria were discarded: (a) papers whose research objective was not compatible with the purpose of this study, i.e.,

they were not aimed at presenting a relationship between GM strategies and consumer purchasing behavior; (b) papers with a sample size of fewer than 300 participants, following Malhotra's proposal, who states that for market studies of a consumer product, a sample range of 300 to 500 respondents should be available [75]; (c) papers that did not present a specific GM strategy; (d) papers with non-quantitative data analysis. Finally, the *included* phase was completed, where the total number of studies for review was presented.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Study Selection

Concerning the search for and identification of documents published in scientific journals indexed in Scopus and WoS, a total of 248 documents were found that met the search characteristics of this study, both for GM and the variables associated with consumer purchasing behavior. Out of the 248 documents, 110 were found in Scopus and 138 in WoS, with a higher percentage of indexing in the latter. These documents corresponded to articles, reviews, and conference proceedings. Table 1 below provides the results for the frequencies of the documents found in each database.

**Table 1.** Frequencies of scientific documents in Scopus and WoS.

Source	Absolute ( <i>n</i> )	Relative ( <i>n/N</i> )	Percentage (%)
Scopus	110	0.44	44%
WoS	138	0.56	56%
Total	248	1.00	100%

Note. *N* = Total number of documents, *n* = total number by each source database.

Figure 1 shows the *identification*, *screening*, and *included* phases of the documents found. The identification phase began by locating the studies in the Scopus and WoS sources, finding a total of 248 documents. Then, duplicate documents and those that did not correspond to an empirical article were eliminated, obtaining a first filter of 201 documents. In the screening phase, 13 documents were not retrieved because there was no access to the information, and 188 studies remained to be evaluated. Subsequently, some articles were eliminated according to the four exclusion criteria predetermined in this phase, excluding a total of 154 documents, so that the included phase ended with a total of 34 studies to be analyzed. The complete list of included papers, as well as each exclusion phase, can be found in a spreadsheet in Google Sheets (<https://n9.cl/8rn5l>).

#### 3.2. Study Characteristics

A total of 26 countries were found where research was carried out, distributed as follows: (a) China and India, with five research studies in each country; (b) Spain, with three research studies; (c) Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Switzerland, with two research studies in each country; (d) Australia, Brazil, Chile, Israel, Italy, Malaysia, Myanmar, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Vietnam, with one research study in each country. From this list, the countries where most research has been carried out in this area belong to the Asian continent. It is also important to note that some studies were conducted in more than one country. It should be noted that this list does not correspond to the countries where the studies were published, but to the place where the data were collected.

Figure 2 shows the number of publications that have studied the relationship of GM practices with the key variables of consumer purchasing behavior and that, in addition, went through the evaluation process according to the predetermined exclusion criteria. With these characteristics, an average of one article per year was published from 2012 to 2016, following an upward trend from 2017 to 2021, with the years 2020 and 2021 being the ones with the highest productivity at eight research studies published each year.

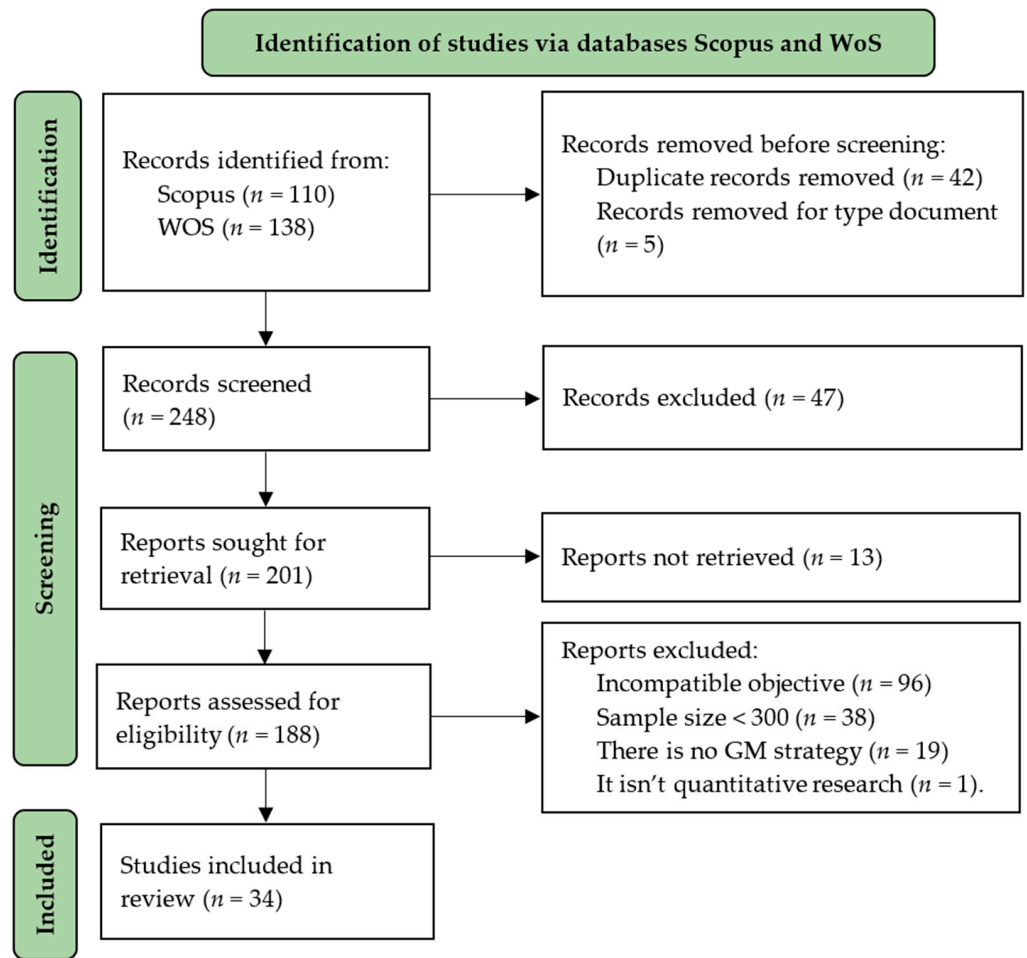


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Chart [74]. n = number of documents.

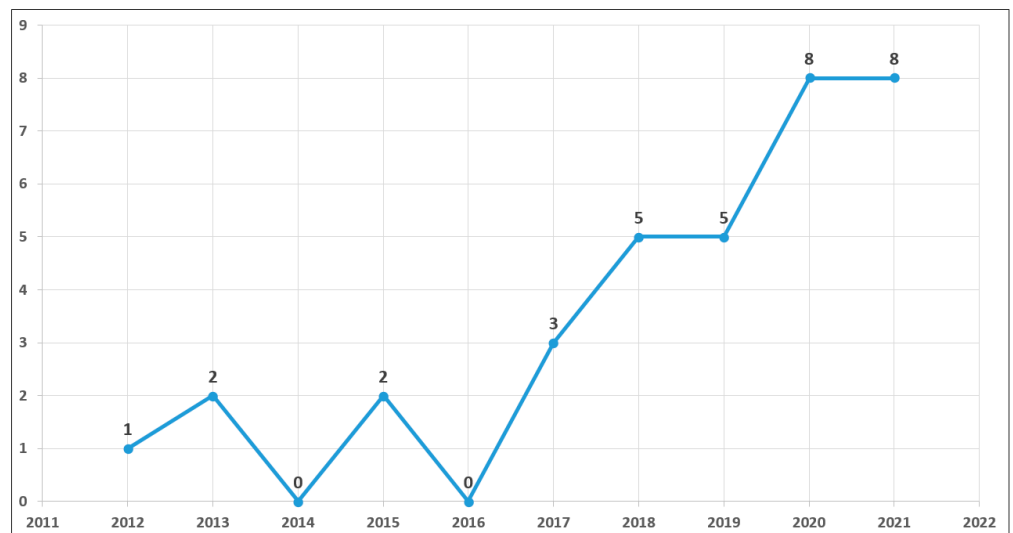


Figure 2. Number of publications per year.

### 3.3. Green Marketing Practices Related to the Key Variables of Consumer Purchasing Behavior

After reviewing the articles included for the analysis and categorization of the different GM practices and their relationship with the key variables of consumer purchasing behavior, it was determined that the various practices were oriented into five categories according to how they were applied or studied in the different research studies. Table 2 shows

these categories: (1) Practices oriented to the development of green products and services; (2) Practices oriented to the development of the corporate image; (3) Practices oriented to green advertising; (4) Practices oriented to the green shopping experience; and, (5) Practices oriented to the green marketing mix.

**Table 2.** Frequencies of scientific documents in the Scopus and WoS sources.

	GM Practices	Authors	Key Variables of Purchasing Behavior
Green Products and Services	Use of eco-labels	[76–79]	Increases trust, awareness, satisfaction, loyalty, positive attitude, and purchasing intent for green products. Increases brand preference and positioning.
	Quality of green products and/or services	[25,80–83]	
	Product brand value	[84]	
	Remanufacturing of products	[64]	
	Use of eco-friendly plastic bags	[85]	
Green Business Image	Institutional green image	[29,31]	Increases trust, word-of-mouth recommendation, credibility, satisfaction, fidelization, attitude, loyalty, value perception, decision, and purchasing intention for green products.
	Institutional green brand	[26,43,62,65,86,87]	
	Corporate Social Responsibility	[4,82,88]	
	Green communication	[34,68,78,79]	
	Ethical organizational behavior	[37]	
Organizational culture development and green policies	[61]		
Green Advertising	Promotion through the influence of celebrities committed to the environment	[35]	Generates positive attitude toward the brand, green satisfaction, product recommendations, social influence, and intention and decision to buy green products. Develops environmental awareness and self-image with green purchasing behavior. In the case of greenwashing, it reduces the purchasing intention of informed consumers.
	Advertising focused on spirituality and ethics	[26]	
	Green advertising	[89]	
	Green advertising design	[30]	
	Use of rewards (monetary, donations)	[90]	
	Motivation of green consumption through attention by the opposite sex	[91]	
Greenwashing	[11]		
Green Purchasing Experience	Green experiential marketing	[28,86,92]	Trust, commitment, loyalty, satisfaction, and green experiential value.
Green Marketing Mix	Development of green marketing mix	[32,61,93]	Trust, green satisfaction, and purchase intention

Firstly, GM practices focused on the development of eco-friendly products and services were gathered, since their production, content, delivery, and use characteristics do not harm the environment. In addition, they strive to protect or improve the environment through energy conservation, resource optimization, the reuse of components, recycling, reduction, and the elimination of toxic agents. This category was called practices oriented to the development of green products and services, where strategies based on the use of eco-labels, quality development of green products and/or services, green product brand value, remanufacturing strategy, and use of eco-friendly plastic bags were presented. These practices seek to develop quality attributes in the product or service offered, as well as improvements in the packaging or delivery of products to reduce waste in the supply chain. These products and services are aimed at a segment of consumers concerned about the environment who, in addition, seek alternative eco-friendly offers to satisfy their needs, being aware of the price these products can reach. As a result, in the various studies reviewed, direct and significant relationships have been found between these practices and the key variables of consumer purchasing behavior, which resulted in (a) positive attitudes when purchasing green products; (b) the development of green awareness in the consumer; (c) increased trust in the green product; (d) purchase satisfaction; (e) brand loyalty; (f) increased purchasing intention for this type of product; (g) green brand positioning in the consumer; and (h) increased purchasing preference for green products [25,64,76–85].



Secondly, a series of GM applications were found, which were categorized as practices aimed at developing the corporate image. These activities seek different GM actions that raise the organizational reputation of all stakeholders through green institutional communication, application of policies with corporate environmental strategies, and eco-friendly organizational culture. Likewise, strategies based on green brand management, corporate social responsibility actions, and ethical organizational behavior were also found. These strategies seek to increase positive consumer perceptions regarding the company's responsibility and commitment to the environment. To this end, companies disseminate their environmental responsibility actions to motivate customer purchasing decisions toward the green products offered. Likewise, regarding the relationship between these actions and the key variables of purchasing behavior, the different research studies reviewed register positive impacts on the attitude of the green customer, such as (a) increased trust; (b) increased credibility; (c) satisfaction; (d) loyalty; (e) fidelization, (f) value perception; (g) increased purchasing intention; and, (h) promotion of word-of-mouth recommendations of the brand committed to the environment [4,26,29,31,34,37,43,61,62,65,68,78,79,82,86–88].

Thirdly, practices whose objective is to position the brand of a green product or service through different forms of communication to build credibility for the brand and increase its sales were grouped. This category was called practices aimed at green advertising, where advertising strategies were recorded through content and media associated with the environment. In this way, the promotion of products and services is sought through the influence of celebrities committed to the environment, advertising focused on spirituality and ethics, green advertising, green advertising design, use of rewards (monetary, donations), and motivation of green consumption through attention by the opposite sex. Regarding the relationship between these GM practices and the key variables of purchasing behavior, the studies analyzed show the following results: (a) increase in the intention to purchase green products; (b) green satisfaction; (c) social influence through the recommendation of green products or services; (d) active environmental concern; (e) development of a self-image committed to ecology; and (f) positive environmental attitudes [26,30,35,89–91]. Finally, these practices based on advertising do not always seek a real concern for environmental care, but rather, some companies use it as a means to take advantage of the trend of consumers seeking eco-friendly products and services, even presenting false advertising that ultimately has negative consequences on the image of the company, especially by customers informed about greenwashing [11].

Fourthly, a GM practice was found that is developed during the purchasing process, which was called green purchasing experience-oriented practices. This green experiential marketing strategy seeks to add value to the product or service through environmentally friendly experiences and increase the quality of the relationship between the consumer and the organization. In this practice, the company offers environments that provoke pleasant experiential memories associated with the environment, generating emotions such as intimacy, passion, and self-connection. These experiences seek to satisfy the need for sensory pleasure and improve the perception of environmental demands, causing organizations to connect emotionally with consumers. In this way, organizations that apply this practice seek to build positive long-term relationships through an unforgettable shopping experience caused by the service offered and the ecological value proposition of the organization. Regarding the relationship between these GM practices and the key variables associated with purchasing behavior, the research reviewed showed the following results: (a) high satisfaction; (b) increased trust in the product; (c) commitment to the purpose of the organization; (d) brand loyalty; and (e) increased green experiential value of the products they purchased [28,86,92].

Finally, in fifth place, practices were detected that combine some of the strategies described in the previous paragraphs, where the short-term actions of the traditional marketing mix, but with a green orientation, are notorious. These product, price, place, and promotional tools seek to reduce the negative environmental impact of the company's marketing actions through joint actions involving the development of eco-friendly products

and services. Similarly, it seeks to ensure that the price of these products is equitable to the benefits they offer, which should be perceived by customers as fair with regard to the quality and ecological purpose they pursue. To this end, the organizations apply a market development strategy where, together with their customers, they promote an environmentally responsible market culture. All these actions are complemented with transparent communication focused on developing an attractive promotion, both in form and substance, to induce green purchasing and consumption behavior. Regarding the relationship of these GM practices with the key variables of purchasing behavior, the studies reviewed revealed the following benefits: (a) increased green consumer satisfaction; (b) improved confidence in green products; and (c) increased purchasing intention [32,61,93].

#### 4. Discussion

The objective of this research was to identify green marketing practices related to the key variables associated with consumer purchasing behavior. Additionally, a second objective was to present a value strategy model based on GM practices associated with purchasing behavior, to make these strategies available for the creation of social and environmental value in the market.

GM has different meanings and is also known by other terms such as “environmental”, “ecological”, and “eco-marketing”, among others [65]. All these definitions require the implementation of environmentally responsible marketing strategies. In addition, within the GM concepts, the aim is for the consumer to adopt eco-friendly behavior [94,95].

In this review, four conceptual orientations referring to GM were found, which were grouped into: (a) those related to product development; (b) those related to market development; (c) those focused on the customer; and (d) those that highlight green communication. A common feature among the reviewed concepts is that they are all related to sustainable development and corporate social responsibility, where organizations of all sizes, economic sectors, and locations are called upon to contribute from their scope of action (production and marketing) to create spaces where GM strategies are applied, and to promote, through their operations, concrete actions on environmental care [32,37].

In this way, GM becomes a tool that allows for a more sustainable society through the design and development of products, market development, and communication and advertising strategies, since it is not only focused on satisfying the needs of the current generation but also on transcending to future generations through a message that promotes awareness of consumption, oriented to the conservation of the environment [96,97].

New trends in consumer behavior and advances in the study of GM have revealed various attitudes aimed at responsible consumption such as environmental awareness, environmental concern, and green purchasing intention, among others. Out of these attitudes, responsible purchasing behavior and the various key variables associated with this behavior stand out, since this variable brings together various habits that responsible consumers have turned into a lifestyle [6,98]. In the literature, there are particular definitions of purchasing behavior which revolve around the behavior of consumers when deciding to buy a particular product [87,89,99]. Regarding the concept of sustainable purchasing behavior, two approaches have been identified that explain its definition: (a) focused on the preference for green products by the consumer, who wants the products to be ecological [59–62]; and (b) focused on purchasing ethics, with a rational attitude toward responsible consumption, prioritizing brands with social responsibility [63,64].

One way to demonstrate the results for GM is through the consumer purchasing behavior [81]. Knowing this relationship, it can be concluded that if organizations apply effective GM strategies, these will have a direct impact on green purchasing intentions and responsible effective purchases, positioning their brand and increasing their profitability [10,78,90,100].

In the reviewed documents, different GM practices related to consumer purchasing behavior were found. These practices were grouped into five categories based on their characteristics, which were: (a) Practices aimed at the development of green products

and services; (b) Practices oriented to the development of the business's image; (c) Green-advertising-oriented practices; (d) Practices aimed at the green shopping experience; and (e) Green-marketing-mix-oriented practices.

Regarding the practices oriented to the development of green products and services, it is prioritized that the products to be marketed are ecological, from the acquisition of raw materials for their preparation to the form of the presentation and sale of the product, which is aimed at a segment of consumers concerned about the environment. In this regard, studies on the development of green products agree on the characteristics that these must have to be considered "environmentally friendly"; in this way, studies based on the circular economy are associated with this group of practices detected in the literature [101], as well as the evaluation of the impact of these products on the environment [10]. In the review of documents, it was found that the quality of the products and the manufacturing strategies have a causal relationship with various manifestations in consumer purchasing behaviors [25,64,80–83], coinciding with the aforementioned studies that point out that the design of products in a circular economy must ensure a reduction in environmental damage through actions such as innovation in eco-design, recycling, product durability, the use of renewable resources, prevention of and reduction in waste during production, and the constant evaluation of the impact of products on the environment [10,101]. In addition, strategies based on the use of labels and ecological plastic bags were detected, which were also found to be directly related to increased trust, awareness, satisfaction, WOM, loyalty, and purchasing intentions and decisions [76–79,85]. These findings are related to research focused on the use of these strategies, where they find that eco-labels serve as information on the environmental conservation attributes of a product and maximize the interest of consumers by enforcing and promoting resource preservation standards by companies [102]. In addition, on the use of biodegradable bags, a study reports that this practice is a good mediator between the ethical attitude and consumer purchasing behavior, which increases purchasing intentions [103].

Regarding the practices oriented to the development of the business's image, the strategies found in the review seek to increase the reputation of the organization through the communication of the actions caring for the environment that they carry out, to make known to consumers about the social and environmental responsibility assumed by companies. These actions are also exposed as GM strategies by various studies, where they find that the social responsibility factor plays an important role as a mediator in the effect of the GM on the product or corporate reputation [82] and these, in addition, are related to the consumer's purchasing decision [104]. In this review, it was found that institutional image strategies, the development of the green brand, CSR, green communication, ethical conduct, and the development of organizational culture with green policies have direct effects by increasing trust, word-of-mouth recommendations, credibility, satisfaction, loyalty, perceptions of value, loyalty and purchasing decisions and intentions [4,26,29,31,34,37,43,61,62,65,68,78,79,86–88]. These findings are consistent with the results on the integrity of the brand in the marketing process, implying that one of the attributes most valued by consumers is the personality of the brand developed through specific actions related to the conservation of the environment by companies, which ultimately determines purchasing decisions and raises businesses' reputation [105].

Regarding the practices aimed at green advertising, the strategies seek to position the brand of an ecological product or service and generate environmental awareness in consumers through the different forms of promotion, through advertising by influence through promotion by word of mouth (WoM) via the same ecological consumers and influencers committed to caring for the environment, who spread information about the benefits of eco-friendly products and services. In this regard, various studies report on the importance of how to promote green products and how these influence environmental awareness and the purchasing decisions of consumers [106–108]. In the present review, strategies were found based on the development of green design and advertising, which are associated with greater environmental awareness, satisfaction, and attitudes toward

green products [30,89]. On this, some studies find that consumers need information about the green product throughout the search, selection, and purchasing decision process, both through advertising and in the characteristics of the same product (eco-label), which positively and significantly influence the green purchasing intention [106] and promote a higher green reputation for companies [108]. Other practices registered in this classification are those oriented to spirituality and ethics [26,89], which indicate that messages with moral meaning have a positive impact on purchasing behavior [109]. Finally, studies that measure the impact of advertising from influential personalities show a positive response when they have pro-environmental content and that the attitude and purchasing intention is related to the type of influencer with whom they interact [35,107].

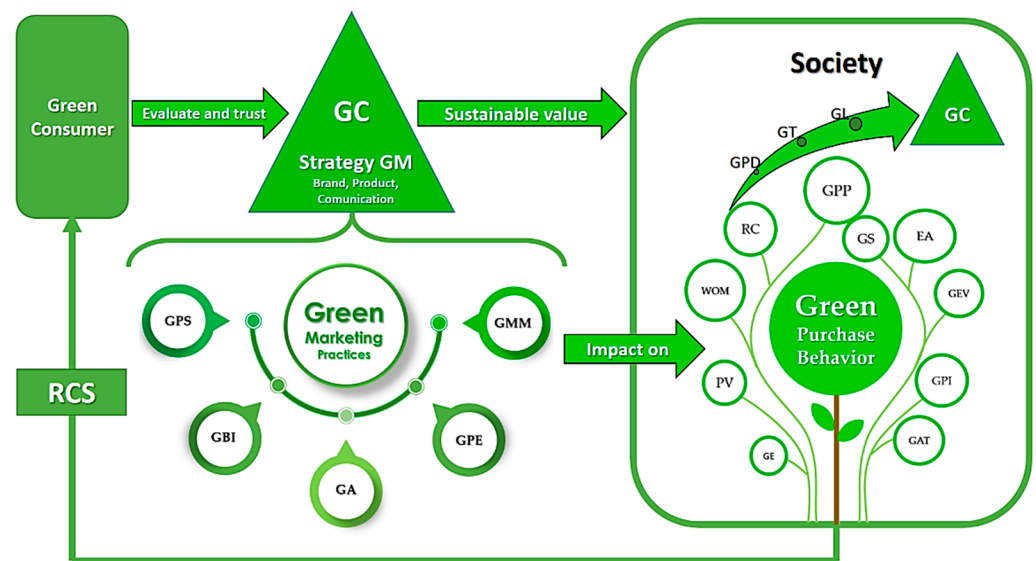
Regarding the practices oriented toward the green shopping experience, organizations apply green experiential marketing strategies, generating environments that offer a pleasant shopping experience and provoke positive memories that add value to the product and the brand [28,86,92]. Those have effects on consumer trust, commitment, loyalty, and satisfaction. Given this, companies that seek to improve the tangible effects of their ecological marketing strategies stimulate the purchasing intentions of consumers from the service in the same purchasing process [110].

Finally, regarding the practices oriented to the green marketing mix, the organizations apply the joint product, price, place, and promotional strategies to offer eco-friendly products with fair prices according to the quality and costs that characterize this type of product. In addition, they apply transparent communication that promotes a culture of environmental commitment on the part of consumers and is focused on developing increasingly sustainable markets [32,61,93]. Similar to these findings, other studies have evaluated the effect of the marketing mix on the perceived quality and concern for the environment [111].

Concerning consumer purchasing behavior, three investigations have been found in the review literature that have categorized this variable into different factors. Thus, a review investigation aimed to classify the factors that influence green purchasing behavior, finding that individual factors, attributes of green products, green marketing strategies, and social factors have an impact on consumer behavior [18]. Another approach determined the themes, sub-themes, and gaps between the attitude and purchasing behavior of consumers toward green products, presenting as a contribution a model for dividing green purchasing decisions into three categories: (a) personal factors that affect the green purchase; (b) the green purchase; and (c) the green marketing mix [15]. Finally, a third study reviewed scientific articles related to the purchasing behavior for green cosmetics, concluding that internal, social, and external factors influence purchasing decisions because consumers value certain characteristics of green cosmetic products such as price, quality, brand, performance, and health benefits. In addition, this study proposes a model for the analysis of the determinants of purchasing behavior for makeup, hairstyle, and personal care products [17].

In the background of systematic reviews on the subject, no research has been found that has categorized GM practices or that has presented any explanatory model on the relationship of GM strategies to consumer purchasing behaviors, which is why this study is relevant since it provides a proposal for categorizing these practices that can be applied in organizations that wish to develop a competitive advantage in GM as a business strategy. Likewise, this study represents a reference to know and understand the different variables represented as internal factors or dimensions within the study of GM strategies and that, at the same time, can serve as a basis for future theoretical and empirical research related to GM.

As the second objective of this review, it was proposed to present a value generation model based on GM practices associated with consumer purchasing behavior, to make these strategies available for the creation of sustainable value in the market. Next, Figure 3 graphically presents the different interactions of GM practices in the context of the organizations that apply these strategies.



**Figure 3.** Green consumption cycle for sustainable value.

Figure 3 shows the green consumption cycle for sustainable value creation developed from this study. This cycle begins with the need to satisfy the green consumer, who seeks eco-friendly products and services, which must have attributes that do not negatively affect the environment, that is, they must be designed, produced, marketed, and disposed of responsibly. Likewise, the green consumer evaluates the proposals of the organizations before making their purchasing decision, which includes an exhaustive analysis of the characteristics of the product (eco-label, ecological packaging, resources used in production, transport, among others), the brand's image, and the company's reputation. Given the security of being in front of a green company and a product that satisfies their needs, an attitude of trust is developed toward the products of the evaluated company. Consequently, green companies (GC) observe this new sector of consumers and adapt their policies and strategies to provide a product or service that meets the expectations of the green consumer. Faced with this new consumer trend, the GCs implement GM strategies that become practices that allow the achievement of business objectives, generating sustainable value. The GM practices that have been found in the literature are established in five categories: (a) Green products and services (GPS); (b) Green business image (GBI); (c) Green advertising (GA); (d) Green purchasing experience (GPE); and (e) Green marketing mix (GMM), where each of them includes actions that satisfy the need of the green consumer and promote responsible consumption in potential customers who have not yet adopted this green purchasing behavior. These practices, as recorded in research, have an impact on the different key variables associated with consumer purchasing behaviors, which are transformed into responsible consumption habits and a lifestyle that is conscious of caring for the environment. These key variables are diverse; however, the literature has exposed some of them as being the most frequent: Environmental awareness (EA), Green satisfaction (GS), Green attitude (GAT), Green purchase intention (GPI), Green purchasing preference (GPP), Word of mouth (WOM), Perceived value (PV), Green experiential value (GEV), Responsible consumption (RC), and green engagement (GE). In addition, 3 key variables are closer to the interaction with the GC, since these variables determine the purchasing action and allow for the permanence of these companies in the market: green trust (GT), Green loyalty (GL), and green purchasing decision (GPD). In this way, the company participates in the formation of new green consumers, being part of the generation of a new responsible consumption society (RCS), from which a new client will emerge who will become a green consumer, who will renew the cycle of green consumption and will have a positive impact on the organization, valuing and consuming its products and contributing to the profitability of the company, making it sustainable. A contribution of

the organization throughout this consumption cycle is the generation of sustainable value that benefits the environment, not only in the transformation of its business operations but also in the contribution to the transformation of a more conscious and responsible society with regard to the environment, supporting the objectives of sustainable development and sustainability in general.

## 5. Conclusions

Consumers are becoming aware of existing environmental problems. Therefore, before making a purchase, they look for information about the product or service, which must have eco-friendly attributes in its production, commercialization, and disposal. In addition, the company that provides the product is also evaluated in terms of its image and reputation. These aspects influence consumers' purchasing decisions. For this reason, GM is a strategy that companies can apply to develop a competitive advantage.

GM practices implemented by companies to promote a responsible consumer society are: use of eco-labels, quality of green products and/or services, products' brand value, remanufacturing of products, use of eco-friendly plastic bags, institutional green image, institutional green brand, corporate social responsibility, green communication, ethical organizational behavior, organizational culture development and green policies, promotion through the influence of celebrities committed to the environment, advertising focused on spirituality and ethics, green advertising, green advertising design, use of rewards, motivation for green consumption through attention by the opposite sex, green experiential marketing, and development of a green marketing mix. These practices were grouped into five categories: (a) Green products and services; (b) Green business image; (c) Green advertising; (d) Green purchasing experience; (e) Green marketing mix. Furthermore, key variables associated with purchasing behavior were found, which are: Environmental awareness, Green satisfaction, Green attitude, Green purchase intention, Green purchasing preference, Word of mouth, Perceived value, Green experiential value, Responsible consumption, Green engagement, Green trust, Green loyalty, and Green purchasing decision.

Finally, a social value generation model called "Green consumption cycle for sustainable value" was designed. This model explains the company's contribution to the transformation of a responsible consumer society through the application of GM practices that have an impact on consumer purchasing behavior. This cycle begins with the green consumer's need to acquire eco-friendly products and services, which are offered by green companies (GC) through the implementation of various GM practices, thus generating sustainable value through the development of environmental awareness, forming new green consumers and being part of the generation of a new environmentally responsible consumer society, supporting sustainable development objectives in its operations.

**Theoretical implication.** The main contribution and strength of this research is the proposal of a theoretical model that allows for recognizing a green consumption cycle for the creation of sustainable value, obtained from the GM practices found in the scientific literature. To facilitate their study, these practices are grouped into five categories that can serve as a basis for the construction of theoretical principles in the development of future research on GM. In addition, it contributes to the study of the purchasing behavior of the ecological consumer, by presenting the impact that GM strategies have on them.

**Methodological implication.** The most important contribution of this research in the methodological field is the presentation of orderly and sequential data processing, according to the model required in the PRISMA Flow Chart, which is presented through a Google Sheet where the whole procedure of the search and selection of documents can be seen. This method can serve as an example for the development of future systematic reviews, useful in the academic and research field (<https://n9.cl/8rn5l>).

**Business implication.** Understanding GM practices and the impact they have on green consumer purchasing behaviors will enable managers and marketing professionals to adopt commercial policies and strategies to effectively reach environmentally conscious customers. In this way, this study contributes to sustainability by applying GM strategies

that generate awareness of rational consumption that will allow for the expansion of the sector to new green consumers, contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. In addition, applying these strategies will allow for building a good reputation, consumer acceptance, profitability, and competitiveness in companies.

This study has some limitations, such as the limited use of Scopus and WoS databases without taking into account other databases that could contribute to the search for papers on the subject such as EBSCO, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, and Springer, among others. However, the databases used guarantee reliable sources for research in this thematic area. Likewise, free access databases such as SciELO, and Redalyc, among others that could have contributed to studies in Latin America, were not considered. Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic search engines, which may allow other researchers to broaden the search in gray literature, were also not considered. Another limitation is the scope of the results of this review, which do not present quantitative results of a meta-analysis.

Therefore, it is recommended for future studies of GM practices related to purchasing behavior to be conducted considering the various databases and search engines mentioned in the previous paragraph, to broaden the selection of studies. Likewise, it is recommended to carry out reviews with meta-analyses to verify the trend in the quantitative results of the research reviewed. Finally, it is recommended to carry out experimental and longitudinal empirical studies to test the application of the sustainable value creation model proposed on the basis of the results of this research.

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