

## HIERARCHY OF BENEFITS ACHIEVED BY FINAL PURCHASERS THANKS TO COOPERATION WITH OFFERORS VS. THE ENVIRONMENT AND SPECIFICS OF THIS COOPERATION

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**Purpose:** The aim of the article is to identify the hierarchy of benefits achieved by final purchasers as a result of their cooperation with offerors, taking into account the environment and specifics of this cooperation.

**Design/methodology/approach:** A cognitive-critical analysis of the world literature on the subject indicates that these issues have not been studied so far. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a cognitive and research gap in this regard. In order to reduce the gap, six research hypotheses were formulated. Primary research was carried out to verify the hypotheses. It covered 1,196 adult representatives of final purchasers in Poland. The collected data was subjected to quantitative analysis, using, inter alia, average scores analysis, comparative analysis, Pearson's chi-square independence test, and an analysis of the V-Cramer contingency coefficient value.

**Findings:** The results allowed, among other things, the following conclusions to be drawn: (1) non-material benefits of cooperation with offerors were more valuable for the majority of respondents, (2) the majority of respondents believed that the online and offline environments should be used in parallel as a place of this cooperation, (3) the respondents were more likely to express positive opinions on offers and offerors than negative ones, (4) dependencies were identified between non-material benefits and the environment of cooperation in the case of four benefits (those related to enriching the marketing potential of purchasers and meeting their social expectations).

**Originality/value:** The results obtained and conclusions drawn on their basis are characterised by high cognitive and readily application value, enriching the knowledge on purchaser behaviour and enabling offerors to take appropriate measures to encourage purchasers into cooperation.

**Keywords:** final purchaser, offeror, cooperation, benefits, online and offline environment.

**Category of the paper:** research paper.

## 1. Introduction

The growing dynamics of changes taking place in the contemporary consumer market has led to more unpredictability for both offerors and final purchasers. Therefore, participation in the market is burdened with an increasing level of risk. Consequently, its participants are faced with mounting challenges, which, while on the one hand more difficult to meet, on the other hand sees meeting them contributes to achieving a competitive advantage (Ronchi, Tontini, Carvalho, 2021). This is particularly important for offerors, whether they are manufacturers, traders, or service providers.

One of such challenges faced by offerors is to meet the growing and dynamically changing expectations of final purchasers, who would like to be much more actively involved in various market initiatives (Deallert, 2019). All changes taking place on the market lead to greater or lesser changes in purchaser expectations, which in turn brings about further changes in the way the market functions. It should be emphasised that the challenge faced by offerors is all the greater as not only the degree, but also the scope of purchaser expectations is changing. Increasingly, the expectations do not only concern the characteristics of marketing offers available on the market, but also the possibility of actively shaping them together with offerors.

All this is part of prosumption, one of the key current consumer trends, based on a paradigm of joint value creation (Prahalad, Ramaswamy, 2004) by offerors and purchasers, who act as value co-creators (Xie, Bagozzi, Troye, 2008). The active participation of purchasers in the marketing activities, which were attributed solely to offerors in the classic approach, allows both parties to achieve various benefits, yet it requires that offerors create the necessary conditions to facilitate joint activities. According to the assumptions of marketing, the starting point is the need to identify purchaser expectations related to this cooperation: the benefits expected by purchasers who join the process of the creation of a marketing product and other elements of an offer.

A review of the world literature, which is presented later in the article, reveals that these aspects have not been studied so far, especially in relation to the environment in which joint actions should be undertaken. Therefore, this article attempts to solve the following research problem: what benefits can a final purchaser achieve thanks to cooperation with offerors when preparing marketing offers, taking into account the environment and specifics of this cooperation? The aim of the article is to identify the hierarchy of benefits achieved by final purchasers as a result of their cooperation with offerors, with regard to the environment and the specifics of this cooperation.

The article was structured to achieve the aim and verify six research hypotheses. It includes the introduction, literature review, presentation of the primary research and its results, as well as the academic discussion, summary and the implications, limitations, and directions of future studies.

## 2. Literature Review

The scope of activity undertaken by the participants of the contemporary consumer market clearly differs from their role in the classic approach to the market roles they fulfill. These differences are manifested, among other things, by a significant increase in the number of forms of activity undertaken, which results in the interpenetration of the role of the recipient (traditionally related to the final purchaser) and the role of the supplier (traditionally related to the offeror). These changes are part of the paradigm of co-creation value (Prahalad, Ramaswamy, 2004), for which the starting point is the customers and their experience centric concept (Saha, Mani, Goyal, 2020).

Before proceeding to detailed considerations on this subject, the concepts of final purchaser and offeror should be defined.

In this article, the term 'final purchaser' is intentionally used instead of 'consumer', which most other researchers employ. A final purchaser is a person who purchases a product, being also a consumer if they use the product themselves. Therefore, the terms are not synonymous (Baruk, 2021). The analysis covered persons who make the purchase, which justifies the use of this concept. Moreover, in the considerations on cooperation, this article uses the term 'offeror' in relation to enterprises operating on the consumer market. It is also a deliberate procedure.

First of all, the considerations in this article apply to all enterprises, regardless of their specifics. Secondly, in the literature on the subject, considerations on cooperation are usually narrowed down to producers (Mandolfo et al., 2020; Dellaert, 2019) and to service providers (Oertzen et al., 2018). However, in practice, cooperation may take place not only between purchasers and producers, or between purchasers and service providers, but also between purchasers and traders (retailers). Admittedly, it may also involve undertaking joint actions with other purchasers (Liljedal, Dahlén, 2018). However, the effect of such cooperation in practice always influences the offeror, for instance in terms of their image (good or bad), or in the case of the creation of a community of supporters who feel emotional loyalty towards the enterprise. The third key concept in this article is cooperation. In the case of cooperation between active purchasers and offerors, cooperation can be defined as undertaking joint activities aimed at creating products and other elements of a marketing offer so that its material and non-material features better meet purchaser expectations (Seyyedamiri, Tajrobehkar, 2020), bringing benefits also to offerors.

A contemporary final purchaser shows more and more activity that goes far beyond purchasing behaviour. The activity also includes communicative and creative behaviours (jointly creating non-purchasing behaviours), making the purchaser a much more engaged market participant (Zhang et al., 2020) than the one identified with traditional market roles based on the separation of functions. Therefore, in the literature on the subject, a final purchaser is referred to as an active purchaser (Seran, Izvercian, 2014), a committed purchaser (Bilro,

Loureiro, 2020), co-producer (Dargahi, Namin, Ketron, 2020), and a prosumer (Gržanić et al., 2022), etc.

It is worth adding that non-purchasing and purchasing behaviours interact, reinforcing or weakening each other, depending on purchasers' perception of their effects. For example, Alarcón López, Ruiz de Maya, and López López (2017) showed that joint actions undertaken by purchasers and offerors affect the intention of the former to repeat the purchase of the product of a given offeror. Therefore, this brings mutual measurable and immeasurable benefits, making the active purchaser an exceptionally valuable partner for the offeror (Xiao, Ma, Li, 2020; Opata et al., 2020).

Obviously, increasing the object and subject scopes of purchaser activity entails the necessity to increase the activity of offerors. They should create appropriate conditions (Zhang et al., 2018) for the involvement of purchasers in the process of joint creation of marketing offers through taking active measures to stimulate the involvement of purchasers as co-creators (Xie, Bagozzi, Troye, 2008) of products and the non-product components of marketing offers. It is not only about material conditions in the form of appropriate infrastructure (e.g. IT) and prizes, but also about non-material conditions (e.g. the atmosphere of cooperation, partnership relationships, etc.).

It is especially important to choose an environment for cooperation and incentives to effectively transform purchasers into prosumers. Cooperation between purchasers and offerors can take place both in online and offline environments. In the literature on the subject, however, the Internet dominates here. This approach is used, among others, by Tung, and Chen (2022), and Alarcón López, Ruiz de Maya, and López López (2017). It is true that the changes taking place on the market over the past few years have led to a significant increase in virtual activity of purchasers (particularly in social media (Appel et al., 2020)), partly as a consequence of the lockdowns caused by the covid-19 pandemic. However, it must not be forgotten that a large part of everyone's professional and private life still takes place in the real world. This applies, *inter alia*, to formal and informal interpersonal contacts, the establishment and maintenance of which is a necessary condition for non-purchasing behaviour, including communication and creative behaviours. Of course, much of these contacts are real, not virtual.

In order to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation with purchasers, offerors must also use incentives to encourage them to engage in joint activities. This is all the more important as the effective activation of purchasers as prosumers not only helps offerors achieve a competitive advantage (Soltani, Jandaghi, Forouzandeh Shahraki, 2016), but it more and more determines their survival on the market, which is emphasised, *inter alia*, by Kamali, Zarea, Su, and Soltani (2021). In order for these incentives to be attractive to purchasers, what must be understood is their expectations regarding the benefits they would like to obtain by taking on the role of marketing offer creators. Knowing these benefits, the offeror can prepare and use incentives that effectively influence purchasers, for example by highlighting possible benefits through

joint actions. The benefits can be so valuable to purchasers that they significantly exceed the expenditure offerors have to incur.

Although the literature on the subject has so far analysed benefits achieved by purchasers through cooperation with other entities, including offerors, the benefits have not been considered in the context proposed in this article; the expected environment of this cooperation and its specifics have not yet been taken into account. Among the benefits obtained by active purchasers, the following have been mentioned: the possibility of obtaining products that better meet purchaser expectations (Chatterjee, Rana, Dwivedi, 2021; Seyyedamiri, Tajrobehkar, 2020), the possibility of experiencing satisfaction (see Alarcón López, Ruiz de Maya, López López, 2017), the possibility of sharing one's knowledge (Baima et al., 2022), the possibility of acquiring new knowledge (Chatterjee et al., 2021), the possibility of acquiring new skills (Mandolfo et al., 2020), the possibility of acquiring new experiences and/or sharing them (Chen et al., 2018), the possibility of achieving social benefits (Bettiga et al., 2018), e.g. establishing relationships with other entities, and the possibility of achieving happiness in a hedonistic dimension (Chagas, Aguiar, 2020), among others. Moreover, studies have covered dependencies between the cooperation of purchasers and offerors with such variables as their satisfaction (Acharya et al., 2018; Alarcón López, Ruiz de Maya, López López, 2017), the willingness to re-purchase the offeror's product (Alarcón López, Ruiz de Maya, López López, 2017), loyalty and trust (Moise, Gil-Saura, Ruiz-Molina, 2020), etc.

However, as already mentioned, none of these studies followed the approach proposed in this article, according to which the benefits achieved by purchasers are being analysed in the context of the cooperative environment with offerors, taking into account the specifics of its communication. The cognitive and research gap in this area can be filled through achieving the goal of the article, which is to identify the hierarchy of benefits achieved by final purchasers as a result of cooperation with offerors, taking into account the environment of this cooperation and its specifics. In order to achieve the goal, the following six research hypotheses were verified:

H1: There is a dependence between material benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors and the environment of this cooperation.

H2: There is a dependence between material benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors and the specifics of opinions conveyed to offerors by purchasers.

H3: There is a dependence between non-material benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors and the environment of this cooperation.

H4: There is a dependence between non-material benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to cooperation with offerors and the specifics of opinions conveyed to offerors by purchasers.

H5: There is a dependence between the benefit of the possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations and the environment of their cooperation with offerors.

H6: There is a dependence between the benefit of the possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations and the specifics of opinions conveyed to offerors by purchasers.

### 3. Methods

In order to achieve the goal of this article and to verify the research hypotheses formulated, empirical research was carried out. To collect the primary data, the method of an internet survey was used, in which the CAWI technique was applied. The research was carried out in 2020 among 1,196 adult representatives of final purchasers in Poland. The geographic scope was nationwide. A quota sampling was used. The socio-demographic characteristics (sex, age, education, and region) were dispersed proportional to the distribution of a characteristic in the general population, with a deviation of no more than 10 respondents against the proportion for the distribution of the entire Polish population (based on Central Statistical Office (GUS) data and CAPI population studies).

The object of the article covered the following variables: the benefits achieved by final purchasers through cooperation with offerors, the preferred environment of cooperation between final purchasers and offerors, the specifics of opinions on marketing offers most often presented by final purchasers, and the specifics of opinions on offerors most often presented by final purchasers.

During the research, the respondents were asked to define their preferences regarding the environment of cooperation with offerors (online, offline, both of these environments) and define the specifics of opinions most willingly communicated to offerors (positive, negative, doesn't matter). They were also presented with a set of thirteen benefits that could be achieved by a final purchaser through their cooperation with offerors. The benefits were distinguished on the basis of a cognitive-critical analysis of the literature on the subject (see, *inter alia*, Mandolfo et al., 2020; Chatterjee, Rana, Dwivedi, 2021) and the results of unstructured interviews that had been conducted before the survey. Among them, we can distinguish two material benefits, ten non-material benefits, and a benefit combining both these dimensions, i.e. the one related to the possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations.

Each benefit from cooperation with offerors was to be assessed by the respondents using the odd Likert scale, which is one of the most fundamental and most frequently used psychometric tools in social sciences (Joshi et al., 2015). In this article, a five-step variant was used, in which the rating 5 meant definitely yes, 4 – rather yes, 3 – neither yes nor no, 2 – rather not, and 1 – definitely not. The use of such a scale is a necessary condition for using the method of average scores analysis.

The primary data collected was subjected to quantitative analysis using the following methods: average scores analysis, comparative analysis, Pearson's chi-square independence test, and the V-Cramer's contingency coefficient analysis. The chi-square test was used to determine whether there are statistically significant dependencies between the analysed variables, and the V-Cramer coefficient to determine the strength of the relationships between the analysed variables. It is used when at least one variable has more than two values (King et al., 2018), i.e. if the contingency table is at least  $2 \times 3$ .

Statistical analysis of the primary data was performed using the IBM SPSS Statistics Ver. 25.

#### **4. Research Results**

Among the thirteen benefits analysed, which, according to the respondents, purchasers can obtain thanks to cooperating with offerors, the value of the average score exceeded 4.00 in the case of seven (Table 1). The highest score was obtained for the benefit of 'the possibility of acquiring new knowledge', i.e. one related to enriching the marketing potential of purchasers. The two remaining benefits from this group, i.e. 'the possibility of acquiring new skills' and 'the possibility of acquiring new experience' also obtained relatively high average scores. In addition, the most important benefits included 'the possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations' and 'the possibility of establishing relationships with other people', which took the 3rd and 4th positions, respectively, in the hierarchy identified. Benefits allowing for meeting non-material needs, especially self-fulfillment and social needs, were of key importance.

**Table 1.**

*Benefits indicated by the respondents that are achieved by a final purchaser thanks to cooperation with offerors during the preparation of marketing offers*

Benefits from cooperation	Indications (%)					Average score	Position	Standard deviation
	5	4	3	2	1			
The feeling of having a genuine influence on the offer and /or offeror	54.6	34.7	7.0	2.8	0.9	4.39	6	0.810
The feeling of being needed	37.9	35.6	17.1	6.9	2.6	3.99	8	1.028
The possibility of testing the suitability of one's ideas	44.6	41.0	10.0	3.2	1.3	4.25	7	0.853
The possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations	56.8	34.2	6.5	2.0	0.5	4.44	3	0.747
The possibility of obtaining a material prize	20.7	27.9	29.8	14.5	7.1	3.41	10	1.072
The possibility of obtaining a cash prize	23.1	27.6	27.8	14.4	7.1	3.45	9	1.103
The possibility of acquiring new experience	56.3	33.8	6.3	3.0	0.7	4.42	5	0.794
The possibility of acquiring new knowledge	59.9	30.9	6.2	2.2	0.8	4.47	1	0.777
The possibility of acquiring new skills	59.6	30.1	6.7	2.8	0.8	4.45	2	0.802
The possibility of establishing relationships with other people	57.8	31.3	7.1	3.2	0.7	4.43	4	0.811
The possibility of impressing other people with one's activity	23.2	24.0	28.5	14.9	9.4	3.37	11	1.049
Filling up excess free time	16.5	23.2	26.7	18.1	15.5	3.07	13	1.009
The possibility of acquiring respect from other people	20.2	24.1	28.2	16.6	11.0	3.26	12	1.012

where: 5 – definitely yes; 4 – rather yes; 3 – neither yes nor not; 2 – rather not; 1 – definitely not.

Source: own study based on research results.

The relatively smallest role was played by the benefits allowing for the satisfaction of material needs and psychological needs, including ‘the possibility of impressing other people with one’s activity’ and ‘the possibility of acquiring respect from other people’. The benefit that received the lowest average score was ‘filling up excess free time’, for which the greatest proportion of respondents answered negatively (over one third). It should be added that for each of the benefits analysed, the value of the standard deviation did not exceed one third of the average score. This indicates that the values of average scores accurately reflect the hierarchy of the benefits identified (*Variance and standard deviation*).

The following stage of the research process analysed the environment of cooperation with offerors preferred by the respondents and the specifics of communication behaviour. As shown in Table 2, almost 70.0% of the respondents thought that both the online and offline environments are equally useful as a place for joint activities. The Internet alone was indicated in this context by slightly more than a quarter of the respondents. This confirms the fact that offerors cannot focus solely on the Internet as an environment of cooperation with purchasers, but should create conditions for undertaking cooperation in both environments in parallel.



**Table 2.**

*The respondents' preferred environment of cooperation with offerors in the preparation of marketing offers (%)*

<b>Environment of cooperation</b>	<b>Indications (%)</b>
online	27.3
offline	4.3
both environments are equally useful for cooperation with offerors	68.4

Source: own study based on research results.

The results of the research show that in the course of cooperation with offerors, positive and negative opinions about offers and offerors were expressed by a similar percentage of the respondents (Table 3). It can only be noted that a slightly larger proportion of the respondents shared positive opinions with offerors about them, while a slightly larger percentage of the respondents provided offerors with feedback about the offers regardless of the specifics of these opinions. All the while, over six times more respondents most willingly expressed positive opinions than negative ones in both contexts. The percentage of respondents providing their opinions to offerors regardless of their specifics was similar to the percentage of those expressing positive opinions about offers or offerors. This type of communication activity was demonstrated by almost every other respondent.

**Table 3.**

*The specifics of opinions about marketing offers and offerors that are most willingly communicated to the offerors by respondents (%)*

<b>Specifics of opinions</b>	<b>Indications (%)</b>	
	<b>Opinions about offers</b>	<b>Opinions about offerors</b>
Positive	44.1	47.3
Negative	7.3	7.0
Nature of the opinion does not matter	48.6	45.7

Source: own study based on research results.

The aim of the next stage of the research process was to identify dependencies between the benefits achieved by purchasers from cooperation with offerors and the environment of this cooperation as well as the specifics of opinions conveyed to them. As shown in Table 4, eight statistically significant dependencies were identified for the specifics of opinions about offers, and seven dependencies for both other variables. However, each of these dependencies was characterised by a slight strength, as evidenced by the V-Cramer coefficient value, which in no case exceeded 0.3. The only benefit for which a dependence was identified with each of the three analysed variables was the 'possibility of acquiring new skills'.

**Table 4.**

*Benefits indicated by the respondents, which are achieved by a final purchaser thanks to their cooperation with offerors, and the preferred environment for this cooperation, the specifics of opinions about offers, and the specifics of opinions about offerors*

Benefits from cooperation	According to the preferred environment for cooperation			According to the specifics of opinions about offers			According to the specifics of opinions about offerors		
	Chi2 test	V-Cramer coefficient	'p'	Chi2 test	V-Cramer coefficient	'p'	Chi2 test	V-Cramer coefficient	'p'
The feeling of having a genuine influence on the offer and/ or offeror	11.804	0.070	0.160	4.516	0.043	0.808	12.094	0.071	0.147
The feeling of being needed	11.633	0.070	0.168	23.513	0.099	<b>0.003</b>	19.161	0.090	<b>0.014</b>
The possibility of testing the suitability of one's ideas	10.152	0.065	0.255	19.149	0.089	<b>0.014</b>	17.674	0.086	<b>0.024</b>
The possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations	20.556	0.093	<b>0.008</b>	9.486	0.063	0.303	18.219	0.087	<b>0.020</b>
The possibility of obtaining a material prize	17.233	0.085	<b>0.028</b>	15.768	0.081	<b>0.046</b>	12.926	0.074	0.114
The possibility of obtaining a cash prize	18.598	0.088	<b>0.017</b>	9.858	0.064	0.275	9.044	0.061	0.339
The possibility of acquiring new experience	25.040	0.102	<b>0.002</b>	14.456	0.078	0.071	9.317	0.062	0.316
The possibility of acquiring new knowledge	24.262	0.101	<b>0.002</b>	26.937	0.106	<b>0.001</b>	12.193	0.071	0.143
The possibility of acquiring new skills	21.143	0.094	<b>0.007</b>	22.737	0.097	<b>0.004</b>	19.172	0.090	<b>0.014</b>
The possibility of establishing relationships with other people	26.865	0.106	<b>0.001</b>	13.944	0.076	0.083	17.538	0.086	<b>0.025</b>
The possibility of impressing other people with one's activity	7.781	0.057	0.455	16.700	0.084	<b>0.033</b>	24.169	0.101	<b>0.002</b>
Filling up excess free time	7.805	0.057	0.453	16.256	0.082	<b>0.039</b>	12.087	0.071	0.147
The possibility of acquiring respect from other people	12.991	0.074	0.112	28.652	0.109	<b>0.000</b>	19.942	0.091	<b>0.011</b>

where: 'p' – level of significance

Source: own study based on research results.

The results obtained made it possible to verify the research hypotheses formulated (Table 5).

**Table 5.**

*Effects of verifying the research hypotheses*

Research hypothesis	Effects of verifying the research hypothesis
H1	Valid
H2	Valid only for the possibility of obtaining a material prize and the specifics of opinions about the offers
H3	Valid for four non-material benefits (including benefits related to enriching the marketing potential of purchasers and meeting their social expectations)
H4	Valid for seven non-material benefits and the specifics of opinions about offers, and for six intangible benefits and the specifics of opinions about offerors
H5	Valid
H6	Valid only for the specifics of opinions about offerors

Source: own study based on research results.

## 5. Discussion

The results of the research indicate that among the benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors, the respondents attributed the greatest importance to the following: enriching their marketing potential, the possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectations, and the possibility of establishing relationships with other people. This is in part in line with the results of research by other researchers investigating the benefits of cooperation between final purchasers and offerors. However, as a rule, they analysed selected benefits without attempting to identify their hierarchy as was undertaken in this article. For example, Chatterjee, Rana, and Dwivedi (2021) and Windasari, Lin, Kato-Lin (2021) emphasised the possibility of creating products that better meet the growing requirements of recipients, yet they analysed it from the perspective of benefits achieved by enterprises cooperating with purchasers. A similar perspective was also adopted by Cheung, and To (2020); moreover, they focused only on services, i.e. products of non-material nature.

The influence of cooperation between purchasers and offerors on purchasing behaviour was also studied. For example, Alarcón López, Ruiz de Maya, and López López (2017) looked at the impact of sharing experiences gained by purchasers through cooperation with offerors on the intention to re-purchase the offeror's product. Therefore, they analysed other aspects of cooperation between these two groups of entities, taking into account a different context of the analysis. Research was also carried out on the impact of joint value creation by offerors and purchasers on their intentions to engage in similar behaviour in the future (Tung, Chen, 2022). It should be emphasised, however, that these studies concerned only the online environment; moreover, as can be seen, they referred to a completely different perspective than the approach proposed in this article. In turn, Moise, Gil-Saura, and Ruiz-Molina (2020) found out that the involvement of purchasers in joint activities with offerors positively influences the level of the perceived satisfaction, loyalty and trust. As can be seen, they analysed only selected effects of cooperation, which can be equated with benefits achieved through taking joint actions. Moreover, they did not consider benefits in the context proposed in this article, which takes into account, *inter alia*, the environment for cooperation and its specifics.

## 6. Conclusions

The research conducted shows that the respondents primarily see the possibility of gaining non-material benefits in cooperation with offerors. They especially appreciate the possibility of enriching their marketing potential, of creating marketing offers that better meet the growing expectations of purchasers, and of establishing interpersonal contacts. Over two thirds of the

respondents stated that cooperation between final purchasers and offerors should take place simultaneously online and offline. Moreover, positive opinions about offers and offerors were much more willingly expressed than negative ones, although the largest percentage of the respondents did not take into account the specifics of the messages provided.

Among the statistically significant dependencies that were identified, one can mention, among other things, the dependence between material benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors and the environment of this cooperation, and the dependence between the benefit of 'the possibility of obtaining a marketing offer that better meets purchaser expectation's and the environment for cooperation with offerors. Ultimately, it can be said that in light of the responses, some of the research hypotheses turned out to be valid, while others were not confirmed (Table 5).

## **7. Implications, limitations and directions for future studies**

The results of the research carried out and the conclusions drawn on their basis constitute a significant contribution to the theory of marketing and the theory of market behaviour, especially behaviour undertaken as part of cooperation. They make it possible to reduce the knowledge gap identified during the analysis of the world literature on the subject. The results also reflect respondents' expectations regarding the environment of their cooperation with offerors, contradicting the view expressed in literature that the Internet is the only or the best environment for joint activities. The respondents primarily appreciated the fact of using the online and offline environments in parallel. The identification of (1) the hierarchy of benefits that, according to the respondents, final purchasers achieve thanks to their cooperation with offerors, (2) the dependences between benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors and the preferred environment of cooperation, and (3) the dependences between the benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to their cooperation with offerors and the specifics of opinions most often communicated to offerors about them and about marketing offers are also of great cognitive value.

The results of the research carried out are also of great empirical value. They have important practical implications, especially managerial ones. They allow, among other things, for shaping the environment of cooperation in line with the expectations of final purchasers, taking into account the need for creating conditions to undertake joint activities both online and offline. On the other hand, identifying the hierarchy of benefits expected by the respondents allows managers to develop a composition of incentives that will effectively stimulate active final purchasers to engage in joint marketing activities. The knowledge of the specifics of the most frequently communicated opinions is an important piece of information, confirming the necessity for managers to attach particular importance to the creation and co-creation of

marketing offers characterised by the greatest possible compliance with the expectations of active purchasers.

Obviously, the research has some limitations. These include those related especially the subject (the research covered only adults), object (the research covered the benefits achieved by final purchasers thanks to cooperation with offerors in relation to three variables), and the geographic scope (the research covered representatives of final purchasers in Poland). The limitations will guide future research, allowing for their elimination. Therefore, in the course of future research, the analysis will cover minors. An attempt will also be made to analyse benefits achieved by final purchasers from cooperation with offerors in terms of other variables, including demographic and behavioural ones.

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