

## **BENEFITS THAT OFFERORS ACHIEVE THANKS TO COOPERATION WITH FINAL PURCHASERS VS. THE OFFEROR'S COUNTRY OF ORIGIN – THE FINAL PURCHASERS' PERSPECTIVE**

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**Purpose:** The aim of the article is to identify the hierarchy of benefits perceived by final purchasers which offerors achieve by taking joint actions and to determine the importance of the offeror's country of origin as a variable differentiating purchasers' opinions.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The results of the cognitive-critical analysis of the world's literature on the subject indicate that there is a cognitive gap and a research gap with regard to the benefits that offerors achieve through cooperation with final purchasers in the context of their preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin. Striving to fill the gaps identified, six research hypotheses were formulated, which were subjected to empirical verification. For this purpose, surveys were conducted among representatives of Polish adult final purchasers. The data was subjected to statistical analysis using, e.g. the method of exploratory factor analysis, the chi2 test and the Kruskal-Wallis test.

**Findings:** Among other things, it was discovered that for the majority of respondents, the country of origin does not matter when it comes to their readiness to undertake joint actions. This variable turned out to differentiate the responses in the case of five out of thirteen benefits analysed. Homogenous groups of respondents showing similar preferences towards the offeror's country of origin and the willingness to cooperate were distinguished.

**Originality/value:** The conclusions drawn on the basis of the research have significant cognitive and application value. They enrich the theory of marketing and purchaser behaviour, providing valuable tips for managers. The implementation of these recommendations may facilitate the development of long-term mutually beneficial relationships with final purchasers in a way that meets their expectations related to cooperation with domestic and foreign offerors.

**Keywords:** final purchaser; offeror; benefits; cooperation; offeror's country of origin.

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

## 1. Introduction

One of the trends visible in the contemporary consumer market is the change in the range of behaviour undertaken by its key participants, i.e. the final purchasers. It includes not only shopping behaviours closely related to the traditionally understood role of the recipient, but also a growing spectrum of extra-purchase behaviours, including communication and creative ones, which make purchasers active participants in this market (Cui, Wu, 2017). Their dynamically growing involvement is part of the ‘value co-creation’ paradigm (Gemser, Perks, 2015), which is one of the functional foundations of the consumer goods and services market. Purchasers are increasingly getting spontaneously involved in the co-creation of an offer or respond to offerors’ incentives addressed to them. In both cases, the relationship is strengthened (Roberts, Palmer, Hughes, 2022), which results in achieving mutual benefits not possible without establishing and consolidating the cooperation. These benefits are definitely greater (Chong, Hong, Teck, 2022) than the benefits achieved by purchasers and offerors following their traditional market roles. Cooperation between purchasers and offerors is a kind of ‘game changer’ for each. It is therefore important to recognise these benefits and their internal structure, as well as the aspects that shape them. The benefits achieved by offerors can be viewed from their perspective, but can also be analysed from the point of view of purchasers. This is the approach adopted in this article, as it results directly from the assumptions of the marketing concept. Taking into account the specificity of the phenomena that have occurred recently (the COVID-19 epidemic (Hodbod et al., 2021), and the war in Ukraine (Lim et al., 2022), which forced the contemporary market participants into rapid change, these benefits have been analysed through the prism of preferences relating to the country of origin of the offeror.

Yet, as attested by the subject literature, the effects of which are shown in the further part of this article, this variable has not been analysed in relation to the practical cooperation between the two parties. Therefore, a cognitive gap and a research gap lies fallow in this area. This article attempts to tackle this by addressing the following research problem: what benefits, in the opinion of the final purchasers, do offerors gain by cooperating with them, taking into account the offeror’s country of origin? The aim of the article is to identify the hierarchy of benefits perceived by final purchasers which offerors achieve by taking joint actions and to determine the importance of the offeror’s country of origin as a variable differentiating purchasers’ opinions.

The article was structured to achieve the goal formulated and verify six research hypotheses. The article includes the introduction, literature review, presentation of primary research and its results, academic discussion, and the implications, limitations and directions of future research.

## 2. Literature review

The key participants in the modern consumer market are final purchasers and offerors. Their relationships vary, with long-term links consolidated as part of joint activities increasingly coming to the fore. They fit into the ‘value co-creation’ paradigm (Ramaswamy, Ozcan, 2018) based on the adoption of a new approach to creating values offered on the market, according to which both the purchaser and the offeror play an active role (Cossío-Silva et al., 2016).

Before proceeding to the essential considerations, key concepts should be defined. Final purchaser is defined in this article as a person who purchases a product. This term is deliberately used instead of the term ‘consumer’. In the literature on the subject, in considerations regarding joint value creation, it is the term ‘consumer’ that is usually used, possibly replaced with the term ‘client’ as its synonym (Xie et al., 2016). However, it should be remembered that a consumer is a person using a product, and a customer has a much broader meaning than a ‘consumer’ and ‘buyer’. This is due to the roles played in the decision-making process. This article is about cooperation between people purchasing products and offerors, and about identifying the purchasers’ point of view. In turn, ‘an offeror’ in this article refers to entities offering products on the consumer market, i.e. producers, retailers and service providers. Cooperation, in general terms, is a category used interchangeably with such categories as ‘joint value shaping’, ‘joint value creation’ (i.a. D’Andrea et al., 2019), and collaboration (Chatterjee, Rana, Dwivedi, 2022; Łaskiewicz, 2019). In this article, cooperation and collaboration are treated as synonyms. Cooperation is understood as an action undertaken jointly with someone else, contributing to the achievement of the assumed goals.

The literature on the subject stresses unanimously that a prerequisite for maintaining a competitive position in this dynamic environment is hiring and retaining the best possible employees (i.a. Goldhaber, Patmore, 2013). These are assigned the role of ‘game changers’ who can contribute not only to maintaining the current market position, but above all to its improvement. Of secondary importance is the need to acquire and maintain genuinely loyal final purchasers. Yet, they can also fulfil the aforementioned role as a community sharing certain values and having marketing potential from the offeror’s perspective. The role of ‘game changer’ can also be fulfilled by a specific concept, for example the ‘consumer-centric’ concept (Saha, Mani, Goyal, 2020), the implementation of which allows focusing on purchasers as partners and marketing allies of the offeror. This follows from the very definition of ‘game changer’, i.e. someone or something that significantly affects the situation in which a given entity functions, and thus the results they achieve (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/...>). In the case of business, a game changer is identified as a person or concept leading to the transformation of previously accepted rules, processes, strategies, and as a result, the management of a given activity (<https://marketbusinessnews.com/...>).

Taking this definition into account, it can be assumed that the role of ‘game changer’ is also fulfilled by certain events or phenomena, including those that appear suddenly, and thus are impossible to predict and prepare for. These include, for example, the pandemic (as also written by Hodbod, Hommes, Huber, and Salle (2021) who describe COVID-19 also as a ‘game changer’) and the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war (Lim et al., 2022). Both these events have had a clear impact on the functioning of virtually every country and every company in the world (in the case of the pandemic) or mainly in Europe (as far as the war is concerned). Moreover, they can be classified as destabilising or even destructive phenomena from the point of view of entire societies as well as individual market entities, including offerors and purchasers. One can also look at them from a different perspective, seeing them as a challenge, which is an opportunity to redefine the way of doing business on the market.

From the offerors’ point of view, it was necessary not only to quickly adapt to the new market conditions, but also to quickly find new management solutions (Pollák, Konečný, Ščeuľovs, 2021), adequate to the existing situation, which allow this situation to be turned into a market opportunity. On the consumer market, it is certainly easier to use this opportunity when adopting an open attitude towards final purchasers, who also clearly feel the effects of both phenomena mentioned above, adapting their market behaviour. It has become a kind of catalyst for their market activity, especially on the Internet. This was clearly visible in relation to shopping behaviour (the rapid growth of e-shopping (Chmielarz et al., 2022)), and also in the case of extra-purchasing behaviours including communication and creative behaviours, which together form a set of prosumer behaviours (Wolf, Ritz, McQuitty, 2022). Expanding the scope of previous activity by purchasers and/or undertaking completely new forms of market activity additionally motivates them to enter new areas of extra-purchasing behaviour, making purchasers more involved and aware market participants. Purchasers become potentially even more valuable partners for offerors, enriching their market, and thus competitive, potential. As can be seen, there is a mutual reinforcement of the ‘game changers’, i.e. objects (in the form of specific phenomena) and subjects (in the form of market participants).

In the situational context described above, an important manifestation of market activity is when final purchasers join the marketing activities of offerors. As participants in joint activities, they are referred to in the literature as key stakeholders (Loureiro, Romero, Bilro, 2020), constituting a radical change in the rules of operation which in turn gives them new opportunities. The inclusion of purchasers in this process can be regarded as an example of a ‘game changer’. Thanks to their readiness for such behaviours, and especially actually undertaking them, purchasers as active market participants (Ritzer, Dean, Jurgenson, 2012) share their potential with offerors, contributing to the creation of a common market potential, which is invaluable due to its uniqueness and compatibility with the expectations of both parties. Establishing and developing cooperation provides significant mutual benefits (Luo, Ma, Chen, 2022). These are definitely greater than the benefits achieved without taking joint action (Chong, Hong, Teck, 2022), which is clearly felt both by active purchasers (Lee, Kim, 2018) and offerors. That is why offerors should actively encourage purchasers to cooperate (Arbabi

et al., 2022). Regardless of the context, these benefits are worth considering from the purchaser's perspective, which is the starting point for the concept of contemporary marketing. This is also the approach adopted in this article.

At the same time, it should be remembered that the combination of the phenomena mentioned above has had a particularly strong impact on offerors and final purchasers in Poland. Taking into account the social, economic and political overtones of these events, especially the war in Ukraine, when analysing the issues related to cooperation between final purchasers and offerors, it seems important to take into account the country of origin of the latter. It is worth asking the question: is this important for purchasers or is it simply an element that determines their attitudes and behaviour? So far, the literature on the subject has analysed the issue of the offeror's country of origin in relation to purchasing behaviour, as part of consumer ethnocentrism. Such studies were conducted, among others, by Camacho, Ramírez-Correa, and Salazar-Concha (2022), Bayraktar Köse, and Eroğlu (2021), and Berbel-Pineda, Palacios-Florencio, Santos-Roldán, and Hurtado (2018). The importance of the offeror's country of origin for other behaviours and issues related has not been focused on. Only a few publications have considered the importance of the offeror's country of origin in the context of prosumer behaviour (Baruk, 2019). The author has not found any source in which the offeror's country of origin would be considered in relation to the benefits they achieve through joint actions with final purchasers.

In addition, benefits achieved by offerors have so far been analysed primarily from the (general or detailed) perspective of enterprises. Where the focus has not been placed on specific benefits, the achieved benefits have not included examples. This approach is visible e.g. in the studies of Mulyan, Rudian, and Taufiq (2019), who focused on co-creating brands with purchasers and Turner, Merle, and Gotteland (2020), who referred to benefits achieved by offerors in the relational and loyalty context. Although Menet, and Szarucki (2020) studied benefits achieved by purchasers, one of the threads raised in their work referred to benefits that offerors achieve thanks to cooperating with purchasers, in which they found that these benefits are much greater when offerors and purchasers share the same culture.

Particular benefits analysed by other researchers include: improving products and reducing costs (Nemar et al., 2022), being more innovative thanks to the easier creation of marketing innovations (Moreira, Silva, 2014), creating innovative solutions as part of open innovation (Roberts, Palmer, Hughes, 2022), shaping long-term relationships with purchasers (Palmatier, 2008), building loyalty (Chong, Hong, Teck, 2022), increasing profitability (Chatterjee, Rana, Dwivedi, 2022), acquiring various elements of purchasers' marketing potential (Chatterjee, Rana, Dwivedi, 2022), being recommended by active purchasers (Rubio, Villaseñor, Yagüe, 2020), etc. However, the set of benefits analysed in this article has not been examined, much less considered in the approach proposed herein.

Therefore, we can talk about the existence of a cognitive gap and a research gap in this area. Striving to reduce the gaps was the main impulse to prepare this article and conduct empirical research. Taking into account the specificity and scope of the gaps discovered, the article

attempts to identify the hierarchy of benefits perceived by final purchasers which offerors achieve by taking joint actions and determining the importance of the offeror's country of origin as a variable which differentiates the purchasers' opinions. In the process of achieving this goal, the following six research hypotheses were tested, which were formulated on the basis of the results of the analysis of the literature on the subject:

H1 – the offeror's country of origin preferred by final purchasers is a feature that differentiates in a statistically significant way the benefits which offerors achieve (as perceived by final purchasers), consisting of better meeting purchaser expectations;

H2 – the offeror's country of origin preferred by final purchasers is a feature that differentiates in a statistically significant way the benefits which offerors achieve (as perceived by final purchasers), consisting of creating products and their attributes that better suit the purchasers;

H3 — the offeror's country of origin preferred by final purchasers is a feature that differentiates in a statistically significant way the benefits which offerors achieve (as perceived by final purchasers), consisting of creating extra-product elements of a marketing offer that better suit the purchasers;

H4 — the offeror's country of origin preferred by final purchasers is a feature that differentiates in a statistically significant way the benefits which offerors achieve (as perceived by final purchasers), consisting of creating a better image;

H5 — the offeror's country of origin preferred by final purchasers is a feature that differentiates in a statistically significant way the benefits which offerors achieve (as perceived by final purchasers), consisting of creating better relationships with purchasers;

H6 — the offeror's country of origin preferred by final purchasers is a feature that differentiates in a statistically significant way the benefits which offerors achieve (as perceived by final purchasers), consisting of enhancing the marketing potential.

### **3. Methods**

In order to achieve the aim of this article and to verify the research hypotheses formulated, empirical research was carried out using the method of online survey by means of the CAWI technique to collect primary data. The research was carried out in mid-2022 among 1,196 adult representatives of final purchasers in Poland. The geographic scope was nationwide and panel-based. Quota sampling was used. The socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, education, and region) were dispersed proportional to the distribution of the trait in the general population, with a deviation of no more than 10 respondents in relation to the proportion for the distribution of the entire Polish population (based on GUS data and CAPI population studies).

The subject of the article covered two variables analysed from the point of view of final purchasers: benefits that offerors achieve thanks to cooperation with final purchasers and the preferred country of origin of the offeror that purchasers would like to cooperate with. The respondents were asked to specify their preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin (from Poland, from another country, the country of origin does not matter). During the research, respondents were also presented with a set of thirteen benefits that offerors achieve thanks to cooperation with final purchasers. These had been distinguished on the basis of the results of the analysis of the world literature on the subject (i.a. Chatterjee, Rana, Dwivedi, 2022; Dellaert, 2019) and the results of unstructured interviews preceding the survey, which had been conducted among ten people.

Each benefit was assessed by the respondents using an Odd Likert Scale, which is one of the fundamental psychometric tools in social sciences (Joshi et al., 2015). In this article, a five-step variant was used, in which rating 5 meant definitely yes, 4 - rather yes, 3 - neither yes nor no, 2 - rather no, and 1 - definitely no. The use of this scale is a prerequisite for the use of the average score analysis as well as exploratory factor analysis.

The primary data collected were subjected to quantitative analysis using the method of average score analysis, comparative analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and the Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test.

Exploratory factor analysis was used to reduce the number of primary data variables obtained from the surveys and to detect structures in the dependencies between these variables (Abdi, Williams, 2010). The Kruskal-Wallis test, which is a non-parametric equivalent of ANOVA (Dalgaard, 2008), was used to find the answer to whether the differentiation is statistically significant enough to say that the respondents' opinion determined by the analysed answer is significantly different.

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

#### **4. Research results**

The results of the research conducted indicate that each of the thirteen benefits which offerors achieve from cooperation with final purchasers received an average score of more than 4 out of a possible 5 (Table 1). In the case of six of them, the score exceeded 4.5. These were intangible benefits, differing in their specificity and divided into the following three groups: benefits related to meeting purchaser expectations, relational benefits, and image benefits. In turn, the benefits related to the acquisition of purchasers' potential by offerors in the form of their skills and ingenuity received relatively the lowest average scores, the value of which was lower than 4.2.

**Table 1.**

*Benefits mentioned by respondents, which offerors achieve thanks to cooperation with final purchasers when creating marketing offers*

Benefits	Indications %					Average score	Standard deviation
	5	4	3	2	1		
Possibility of creating a product that better meets purchaser expectations	79.2	19.1	1.1	0.4	0.2	<b><u>4.767559</u></b>	0.495487
Possibility of creating a promotional campaign to convince purchasers more effectively	66.3	28.8	3.7	0.8	0.5	<b><u>4.596154</u></b>	0.648101
Possibility of creating packaging that better encourages purchasers to buy a product	59.0	31.2	7.5	1.3	0.9	4.460702	0.768171
Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers	53.8	32.9	9.4	2.8	1.0	4.358696	0.839964
Possibility of building a better image	65.1	29.1	4.5	1.0	0.3	<b><u>4.578595</u></b>	0.651751
Possibility of undertaking charitable activities better received by purchasers	46.0	35.7	14.0	3.3	1.1	4.222408	0.882579
Possibility of fully meeting purchasers' needs	62.0	32.0	4.7	1.3	0.0	<b><u>4.548495</u></b>	0.645673
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge	50.1	33.4	12.4	3.3	0.9	4.284281	0.870408
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills	43.1	34.1	15.8	6.0	1.0	4.122074	0.951624
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity	46.4	33.4	14.5	4.2	1.4	4.192308	0.931894
Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers	63.6	29.0	6.1	1.3	0.0	<b><u>4.550167</u></b>	0.667218
Possibility of building true customer loyalty	54.8	33.9	8.7	2.4	0.2	4.408027	0.762556
Possibility of standing out on the market among other companies	62.1	29.7	6.0	1.8	0.3	<b><u>4.514214</u></b>	0.721898

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

Source: own studies.

It should be noted that for each of the benefits analysed, the value of the standard deviation did not exceed one-third of the average score value. It follows that the values of average scores properly reflect the hierarchy of the benefits established on their basis (*Variance and standard deviation*).

The research approach adopted is based on analysing the perspective of representatives of final purchasers regarding the benefits which, in their opinion, offerors achieve thanks to the co-creation of marketing offers with purchasers in the context of their preferences related to the offerors' country of origin. As shown in Table 2, almost ten times more respondents would like to cooperate with offerors from Poland compared to the percentage of people willing to cooperate with offerors from other countries. By far the largest part of the respondents stated, however, that the country of origin of the offeror is not important to them.



**Table 2.**

*Respondents' preferences regarding the offerors which they would prefer to cooperate with while creating marketing offers (%)*

<b>Offerors according to the country of origin</b>	<b>Indications %</b>
From Poland	30.7
From other countries than Poland	3.2
Offeror's country of origin does not matter	66.1

Source: own studies.

It is worth finding an answer to the question: what is the importance of the respondents' preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin in terms of the perceived benefits which offerors can achieve thanks to cooperation with active purchasers? In the next stage of the analysis, efforts were made to identify the internal structure of the aspect studied and to compare the structure discovered for each group of people analysed. For this purpose, exploratory factor analysis was conducted for the total of respondents as well as for the three groups of people distinguished on the basis of their preferences regarding the country of origin of offerors they would prefer to conduct joint activities with. For the total of respondents, the value of the Cronbach's alpha test was 0.886; respectively, for the people who prefer cooperation with offerors from Poland, it was 0.804, for those who prefer cooperation with offerors from other countries, it was 0.812, and for the people who believe that the offeror's country of origin is not important, it was 0.815. The level of reliability in each case was thus high.

Based on the Kaiser criterion, three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were distinguished for each of the four groups of respondents analysed. In each case, they explain over 66% of the total variability of the aspect studied (Table 3). For each group of respondents, the first factor includes between three and five variables (Table 4) with factor loading values of at least 0.7. It means that they meet the condition for using factor analysis in social sciences (Watkins, 2018).

These variables are noticeably different if you compare their sets for each group of the respondents analysed. None of the variables constituted the set for every group. It is worth noting that the variables reflecting the relational benefits were included in the first factor identified for the total of respondents, for those who prefer cooperation with Polish offerors, and for those who prefer to cooperate with foreign companies. The second factor consists of three variables for each group of the respondents analysed, and these variables are also quite diverse in their specificity. Only in the case of the third factor, there is a clear similarity in its internal structure, regardless of the group of the people studied. In each case, it is made up of variables illustrating the benefits related to the acquisition of purchasers' marketing potential by offerors (Table 4).

**Table 3.**

*Hierarchy of factors according to their eigenvalues determined on the basis of the Kaiser criterion (depending on the group of offerors preferred by the respondents)*

Factor	Eigenvalue				Cumulated eigenvalue				% of total eigenvalues (variation)				Cumulated % of eigenvalues			
	tot*	pol#	oth^	unim~	tot	pol	oth	unim	tot	pol	oth	unim	tot	pol	oth	unim
1	3.200	3.209	3.902	3.076	3.200	3.209	3.902	3.076	24.615	24.681	30.013	23.663	24.615	24.681	30.013	23.663
2	2.844	2.762	2.881	3.040	6.044	5.971	6.783	6.116	21.879	21.247	22.163	23.382	46.494	45.928	52.176	47.045
3	2.662	2.665	2.418	2.665	8.706	8.636	9.201	8.781	20.475	20.504	18.601	20.503	66.969	66.431	70.777	67.548

\* The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) random sampling adequacy measure is 0.886, which is greater than 0.5 (Watkins, 2018); Bartlett's sphericity test is significant (the variables are statistically significantly related); chi2 is 8356,026; p = 0.000;

# KMO = 0.886; Bartlett's sphericity test is significant; chi2 is 2470,818; p = 0.000;

^ KMO = 0.831; Bartlett's sphericity test is significant; chi2 is 325,800; p = 0.000;

~ KMO = 0.870; Bartlett's sphericity test is significant; chi2 is 5731,655; p = 0.000.

where: tot – the total of respondents; pol – people preferring cooperation with Polish offerors; oth – people preferring cooperation with offerors from other countries; unim – people who believe that offeror's country of origin is not important.

Source: own studies.

**Table 4.**

*Results of factor analysis of the benefits which offerors achieve, according to final purchasers, thanks to cooperation in creating marketing offers, taking into account preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin*

Variables analysed	Factors distinguished											
	1				2				3			
	tot	pol	oth	unim	tot	pol	oth	unim	tot	pol	oth	unim
Possibility of creating a product that better meets purchaser expectations	.541	<b>.766</b>	.342	.484	.379	.105	<b>.848</b>	.406	.009	.015	-.027	.022
Possibility of fully meeting purchasers' needs	.654	<b>.728</b>	.333	.344	.331	.295	<b>.734</b>	.622	.139	.113	.288	.137
Possibility of building true customer loyalty	<b>.817</b>	<b>.714</b>	<b>.710</b>	.105	.118	.241	.411	<b>.837</b>	.203	.211	.240	.194
Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers	<b>.759</b>	<b>.701</b>	<b>.743</b>	.162	.177	.265	.169	<b>.779</b>	.253	.234	.445	.251
Possibility of standing out on the market among other companies	<b>.726</b>	.641	<b>.724</b>	.237	.212	.205	.220	<b>.742</b>	.186	.270	.226	.154
Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers	.166	.075	<b>.785</b>	<b>.829</b>	<b>.830</b>	<b>.872</b>	.263	.159	.146	.150	-.013	.132
Possibility of creating packaging that better encourages purchasers to buy a product	.201	.278	.576	<b>.868</b>	<b>.852</b>	<b>.782</b>	.429	.150	.104	.128	.082	.085
Possibility of building a better image	.471	.384	<b>.778</b>	.586	.597	<b>.718</b>	.309	.458	.164	.178	.270	.136
Possibility of creating a promotional campaign to convince purchasers more effectively	.302	.483	.407	<b>.819</b>	<b>.746</b>	.521	.526	.205	.075	.050	.363	.075
Possibility of undertaking charitable activities better received by purchasers	.456	.357	.493	.372	.359	.498	.031	.454	.227	.247	.535	.200
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills	.196	.171	.005	.120	.130	.169	.390	.213	<b>.911</b>	<b>.912</b>	<b>.789</b>	<b>.909</b>

Cont. table 4.

Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity	.185	.128	.318	.085	.114	.227	.134	.179	<u>.889</u>	<u>.878</u>	<u>.860</u>	<u>.898</u>
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge	.215	.207	.180	.121	.124	.082	<u>.762</u>	.216	<u>.875</u>	<u>.863</u>	.408	<u>.895</u>

where: indications as in table 3.

Source: own studies.

The factors identified as a result of the factor analysis can be identified with segments whose representatives show similar attitudes and/or behaviours within a given segment, while at the same time displaying different attitudes and/or behaviours compared to representatives of other segments (Zhang, 2019; Singh Minhas, Jacobs, 1996). Based on the results of the factor analysis, it is possible to group the respondents into homogeneous groups of people (Tables 5 and 6). This allows for a much better adaptation of the methods of impact to the expectations of representatives of each group identified, compared to the lack of differentiation of such activities.

**Table 5.**

*Characteristics of representatives of segments of respondents identified*

Preferred country of origin of an offeror	Characteristics of segments identified		
	1	2	3
Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of building true customer loyalty</li> <li>- Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers</li> <li>- Possibility of standing out on the market among other companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers</li> <li>- Possibility of creating packaging that better encourages purchasers to buy a product</li> <li>- Possibility of creating a promotional campaign to convince purchasers more effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills</li> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity</li> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge</li> </ul>
From Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of creating a product that better meets purchaser expectations</li> <li>- Possibility of fully meeting purchasers' needs</li> <li>- Possibility of building true customer loyalty</li> <li>- Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers</li> <li>- Possibility of creating packaging that better encourages purchasers to buy a product</li> <li>- Possibility of building a better image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills</li> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity</li> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge</li> </ul>
From other countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of building true customer loyalty</li> <li>- Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers</li> <li>- Possibility of standing out on the market among other companies</li> <li>- Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers</li> <li>- Possibility of building a better image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of creating a product that better meets purchaser expectations</li> <li>- Possibility of fully meeting purchasers' needs</li> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills</li> <li>- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity</li> </ul>

Cont. table 5.

Country of origin does not matter	- Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers - Possibility of creating packaging that better encourages purchasers to buy a product - Possibility of creating a promotional campaign to convince purchasers more effectively	- Possibility of building true customer loyalty - Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers - Possibility of standing out on the market among other companies	- Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills - Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity - Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge
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Source: own studies.

**Table 6.**

*Segments of respondents identified*

Preferred country of origin of the offeror	Segments identified		
	1	2	3
Total	Recognising relational and image benefits	Recognising attribute and communication benefits	Recognising the benefits of enriching one's marketing potential
From Poland	Recognising the benefits of meeting one's expectations and relational benefits	Recognising attribute and image benefits	Recognising the benefits of enriching one's marketing potential
From other countries	Recognising relational, image and attribute benefits	Recognising the benefits of meeting purchaser expectations and marketing potential	Recognising the benefits of enriching one's marketing potential
Country of origin does not matter	Recognising attribute and communication benefits	Recognising relational and image benefits	Recognising the benefits of enriching one's marketing potential

Source: own studies.

In the next stage of the analysis, an attempt was made to check whether the preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin make a statistically significant feature that differentiates responses reflecting the perceived benefits that offerors obtain from cooperation with final purchasers. For this purpose, the Kruskal-Wallis test was performed. Its results indicate differentiation in five out of thirteen benefits analysed (Table 7). These reflect the possibility of preparing more effective promotional activities, creating marketing attributes of a product (i.e. packaging), better meeting purchaser expectations, building a better image of the offeror, and enriching the marketing potential (in the form of acquiring purchasers' knowledge). The KW test made it possible to test the research hypotheses formulated (Table 8).

**Table 7.**

*Analysis of the significance of differences between the respondents' answers regarding the benefits that offerors achieve thanks to cooperation with final purchasers according to the criterion of preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin*

Variables analysed	Offerors according to their country of origin	Average range	Kruskal-Wallis test value	Level of significance 'p'
Possibility of creating a product that better meets purchaser expectations	pol	599.56	4.921	.085
	oth	513.72		
	unim	602.19		

Cont. table 7.

Possibility of creating a promotional campaign to convince purchasers more effectively	pol	599.33	7.431	<b>.024</b>
	oth	476.38		
	unim	604.14		
Possibility of creating packaging that better encourages purchasers to buy a product	pol	592.09	6.164	<b>.046</b>
	oth	486.50		
	unim	607.01		
Possibility of developing a logo better associated by purchasers	pol	593.69	2.081	.353
	oth	532.83		
	unim	603.98		
Possibility of building a better image	pol	597.36	5.979	<b>.050</b>
	oth	488.71		
	unim	604.45		
Possibility of undertaking charitable activities better received by purchasers	pol	611.39	1.290	.525
	oth	560.15		
	unim	594.41		
Possibility of fully meeting purchasers' needs	pol	609.66	7.396	<b>.025</b>
	oth	474.86		
	unim	599.42		
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' knowledge	pol	628.97	8.426	<b>.015</b>
	oth	492.79		
	unim	589.56		
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' skills	pol	619.77	3.971	.137
	oth	523.59		
	unim	592.32		
Possibility of cost-free acquiring purchasers' ingenuity	pol	609.98	1.499	.473
	oth	548.13		
	unim	595.65		
Possibility of building good relationships with purchasers	pol	610.45	4.967	.083
	oth	500.77		
	unim	597.77		
Possibility of building true customer loyalty	pol	597.00	2.931	.231
	oth	516.90		
	unim	603.23		
Possibility of standing out on the market among other companies	pol	598.64	5.247	.073
	oth	492.49		
	unim	603.67		

where: indications as in table 3.

Source: own studies.

**Table 8.**

*Results of verifying research hypotheses formulated*

Research hypothesis	Results of verifying research hypothesis
H1	Valid
H2	Valid for creating product packaging
H3	Valid for creating promotional campaigns
H4	Valid
H5	Invalid
H6	Valid for acquiring purchasers' knowledge

Source: own studies.

## 5. Discussion

According to the research conducted, a much larger part of the respondents preferred to undertake joint actions with offerors from Poland rather than from other countries. To some extent, this result is consistent with the results of other researchers. For example, Menet and Szarucki (2020) found that offerors achieve greater benefits if they cooperate with offerors representing the same culture. It is worth adding that their studies analysed the country of origin of purchasers, not offerors, focusing primarily on benefits achieved by purchasers. In addition, the research covered only international recipients of airline companies. Therefore, the subject and object of the research was different.

Studies conducted by Ercsey (2017) show that including purchasers in the creation of offers brings benefits to companies in the form of better meeting purchaser needs and strengthening the competitiveness. This is consistent with the results obtained by the author. However, those studies concerned only service providers and did not take into account the importance of their country of origin. In turn, Lorenzo-Romero, Andrés-Martínez, Cordente-Rodríguez, and Gómez-Borja (2021) showed that cooperation is conducive to building purchaser loyalty, which is consistent with the results presented in this article. Their research, however, concerned only e-buyers of fashion products; moreover, it was of qualitative nature, related only to retailers, and did not take into account a wide range of benefits or the offerors' the country of origin.

The results of the research conducted indicate that one of the benefits for the offeror cooperating with active purchasers is the acquisition of their marketing potential, including knowledge. This is confirmed by the results of studies conducted by other researchers, e.g. by Nardi, Jardim, Ladeira, and Santini (2019). However, these researchers did not examine the benefits obtained by offerors within the approach proposed herein.

As stated earlier in this article, based on the results of the analysis of the world literature on the subject, the author did not find any studies with an analogous or similar scope, or studies focusing on the importance of the offeror's country of origin in relation to any aspect of cooperation between final purchasers and offerors.

## 6. Conclusions

The research conducted allow to conclude that, according to the respondents, the main benefit that offerors achieve thanks to cooperation with purchasers is 'the possibility of creating a product that better meets purchaser expectations'. In the hierarchy of benefits identified, the top positions were also taken by benefits of a relational and image nature. Although for the

largest part of the respondents the offeror's country of origin did not matter as far as the willingness to carry out joint activities was concerned, almost every third person preferred cooperation with offerors from Poland rather than from other countries. The country of origin turned out to be a variable which statistically significantly differentiated responses to five out of thirteen benefits analysed. The factor analysis which took into account this variable made it possible to identify homogeneous groups of respondents with analogous preferences regarding the offeror's country of origin in the context of undertaking prosumer cooperation.

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

The results of the research and the conclusions drawn on their basis are of significant cognitive and application value. They make a significant contribution to the theory of marketing and the theory of market behaviour related to the joint creation of value, filling the gaps identified during the analysis of the world literature on the subject. This is all the more important as practically no study was found in which the issues related to cooperation between final purchasers and offerors would be considered through the prism of the offeror's country of origin. Thanks to the research, the following was identified: the perceived benefits that offerors achieve thanks to cooperation with purchasers; the hierarchy of these benefits; preferences regarding the offerors' the country of origin in the context of undertaking joint activities; segments of purchasers showing similar preferences towards the offeror's country of origin and the opinions on the benefits they achieve; the importance of the offeror's country of origin as a variable differentiating opinions on the benefits that offerors achieve through joint actions.

The results of the research conducted and the conclusions drawn on their basis also have an application value. They enable managers to establish and properly shape marketing cooperation with final purchasers. They show the importance of the offeror's country of origin in terms of the willingness to engage in joint activities, which allows for the creation of incentives that would effectively encourage active purchasers to engage in these activities. As 'game changers', they can contribute to the achievement of many benefits, increasing the offerors' competitive power. Achieving this effect, however, requires looking at cooperation through the eyes of active purchasers and developing (preferably together with them) new business solutions based on partnership. To this end, it is worth adapting activities engaging final purchasers to their expectations resulting from the specificity of the segments identified.

Of course, the research has some limitations that result from the research approach adopted. These restrictions apply e.g. to the subject, object and geographical scope. The research covered only representatives of Polish adult final purchasers. Their demographic or economic characteristics were not taken into account. Undertaking further research on cooperation

between final purchasers and offerors in the future will allow for the gradual elimination of these limitations by expanding the subject of the research (to include minors), and the object (to include e.g. benefits achieved by active purchasers).

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