Perceived Benefits of Customer Engagement for Companies: An Empirical Study on Customer Knowledge and Value Co-creation

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Abstract: Consumer – company collaboration in product and service co-creation and knowledge sharing generates measurable benefits for both parties. While consumer-related benefits are widely discussed in the literature, company-level benefits remain relatively underexplored. This paper aims to identify and empirically assess the key benefits for companies resulting from engaging consumers in business activities. A survey was conducted among 404 companies diversified in terms of sector, size, and market scope, all of which actively involve consumers in product and service development. The analysis focuses on the 12 highest-rated benefits of collaboration with consumers. The results indicate a consistently positive evaluation of customer engagement, with the highest ratings assigned to benefits related to product improvement, alignment with customer needs, and the use of customer knowledge (mean values above 5.6). Differences across structural characteristics of companies are limited and not systematic. In particular, factors such as size, sector, ownership, and market scope do not significantly differentiate the perception of benefits. In contrast, the perceived importance of customer engagement emerges as the key explanatory factor, highlighting the central role of strategic orientation and the recognition of customer knowledge within organizations. The findings may be particularly relevant for managers and decision-makers seeking to better understand and leverage customer engagement, as well as for researchers interested in the organizational perspective on value co-creation.

Keywords: Customer engagement, Customer knowledge, Perceived benefits, Organizational perspective, Empirical study

1. Introduction and the Research gap

Customer engagement in business activities has become an important feature of contemporary markets, particularly in environments shaped by digital technologies and interactive platforms. Instead of being passive recipients of products and services, consumers increasingly participate in evaluating offerings, sharing experiences, suggesting improvements, testing solutions, and contributing ideas for new products and services. In this context, customer engagement extends beyond traditional market exchange and becomes a mechanism through which companies acquire external knowledge, support product and service development, and improve responsiveness to changing market conditions (Rather et al., 2023). It also plays an important role in business process innovation, as organizations increasingly involve consumers in knowledge exchange and co-creation activities supported by digital technologies (Ziemba et al., 2022).

The growing importance of customer engagement has been widely discussed in the literature on value co-creation, service-dominant logic, and customer knowledge management. Prior studies show that consumers provide not only feedback but also ideas, experiential insights, and context-specific knowledge that support product development, service improvement, and innovation processes. At the same time, customer engagement is not a uniform phenomenon but includes a range of activities, from simple feedback provision to more advanced forms such as ideation, co-design, testing, and problem solving (Liu et al., 2019; Qiao et al., 2018). These activities are often informal and supported by digital infrastructures enabling continuous and large-scale interaction with consumers (Rather et al., 2023). As a result, customer engagement has become relevant not only in marketing and services but also in innovation, knowledge acquisition, and broader organizational development, generating value for both consumers and companies through strengthened relationships, loyalty, and knowledge exchange (van Heerden and Wiese, 2021; Burnham et al., 2021).

Despite the growing body of research, the literature remains largely focused on the consumer perspective. Existing studies primarily examine consumer experiences, motivations, satisfaction, and behaviours (Eisenbardt, 2020; Roy et al., 2018), while the company perspective – particularly the systematic assessment of perceived benefits – remains underexplored. Moreover, prior research often focuses on specific contexts or isolated outcomes rather than adopting a multidimensional approach to organizational benefits. Although customer knowledge is recognized as a valuable resource, its role in generating company-level benefits has not been sufficiently integrated with the value co-creation perspective.

Therefore, this study addresses the limited empirical understanding of which benefits companies perceive as most important when engaging consumers in sharing opinions, ideas, and knowledge. The main objective is to identify and evaluate the benefits perceived by companies as a result of customer engagement in business activities. The study focuses on the highest-rated benefits and examines whether their evaluation differs across selected organizational characteristics. Adopting a multidimensional perspective, it provides empirical evidence on the organizational value of customer engagement and strengthens the company-oriented perspective in the literature.

2. Customer Engagement and its Benefits for Companies: A Literature Review

In the context of collaboration between consumers and companies, engaging consumers in various processes and projects enables companies to gain valuable insights, strengthen customer relationships, and generate multiple forms of value (Chatterjee et al., 2022; van Heerden and Wiese, 2021). The conceptual framework is based on an earlier study and a systematic literature review, which identified four main categories of benefits: product-related, reputational, economic and social, and technological and informational. The resulting framework is presented in Figure 1.

Product-related benefits:

P1. Personalisation of products/services according to customer needs
P2. Product life extension
P3. Co-creation of products/values
P4. Higher level of service modernity
P5. Tailoring the offer to customer needs
P6. Product and service testing by customers
P7. Brand loyalty
P8. Faster adoption of emerging market trends
P9. Reduction of last-minute changes

Reputational benefits:

R1. More effective promotional and advertising activities
R2. Better understanding of customer needs
R3. Offering products and services that stand out from the competition
R4. Building long-lasting relationships with customers
R5. Improved customer retention rates
R6. Loyalty to the company and brand
R7. Aligning customer interests with the company's goals
R8. Enhanced company image and reputation

Economic and social benefits:

E1. Financial benefits
E2. Customers' willingness to pay a higher (premium) price
E3. Risk minimization
E4. New product distribution channels
E5. Gaining customers as business partners
E6. Building a community around the company/brand
E7. Improving business processes within the company
E8. Actions supporting sustainable development and corporate social responsibility

Technological and informational benefits:

T1. Direct posts and comments from customers
T2. Developing social media profiles
T3. Developing company mobile applications
T4. Access to emerging market trends
T5. Continuous improvement in IT areas

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 1: The comprehensive framework of benefits for enterprises

The four categories of benefits presented in Figure 1 provide a framework for understanding the value of customer engagement from the company perspective. The framework reflects the multidimensional nature of these benefits. Detailed descriptions of each category, based on the literature, are provided in the following subsections.

Product-related Benefits

Product-related benefits refer to improvements in products and services resulting from customer involvement. These include, among others, personalisation of products or services and tailoring the offer to customer needs, which reflect the ability of companies to better align their offerings with consumer expectations (Chatterjee et al., 2022; Scarlett et al., 2022; Shi et al., 2023). Customer engagement may also contribute to product life extension, ensuring that products remain relevant over time (Katona, 2015).

Furthermore, through co-creation of products, companies can more effectively incorporate consumer preferences into the development process, enhancing the overall value proposition (Abaidi et al., 2022). In addition, customer involvement supports a higher level of service modernity, as well as product and service testing by consumers, enabling companies to refine and improve their offerings based on direct user feedback (Chang and Hsu, 2022; He et al., 2022). These processes also facilitate faster adoption of emerging market trends and help reduce last-minute changes, increasing organizational flexibility and responsiveness. Finally, such engagement may contribute to brand loyalty, strengthening long-term relationships between companies and consumers.

Reputational Benefits

Reputational benefits relate to the impact of customer engagement on how a company is perceived by its stakeholders, particularly other consumers and the broader market. Engaging consumers in business activities contributes to building a positive brand image and enhances the credibility and transparency of the organization. When consumers are involved in providing feedback, ideas, or participating in co-creation processes, companies signal openness and responsiveness, strengthening trust and brand perception (Dessart et al., 2015). Customer collaboration may also increase brand visibility and authenticity, as engaged consumers often act as brand advocates, sharing their experiences and promoting the company within their networks (Zollo et al., 2020). Engagement in social media environments is often driven by socio-psychological mechanisms such as the need to belong and the fear of missing out (FoMO), which influence users' emotional responses and interaction with brand-related content (Biu et al., 2021). Continuous interaction with consumers allows companies to better understand expectations and align communication strategies, reinforcing brand consistency and reliability. Moreover, customer engagement supports the development of long-term relationships, fostering stronger emotional connections and contributing to higher levels of trust, satisfaction, and brand attachment.

Economic and Social Benefits

Economic and social benefits refer to both financial outcomes and relational value generated through customer engagement. From an economic perspective, involving consumers in business processes can reduce costs in areas such as market research, product testing, and innovation development, while also lowering decision-making uncertainty and improving resource allocation. Customer engagement may also support revenue generation by improving the market fit of products and services, leading to higher satisfaction and purchase intentions (Bies et al., 2021). Early consumer involvement can further reduce the risk of product failure and enhance innovation effectiveness, strengthening competitive positioning and long-term performance (Deloitte, 2018).

From a social perspective, customer engagement fosters stronger relationships between companies and stakeholders. Engagement in brand-related communities creates value for both consumers and companies (van Heerden and Wiese, 2021), enhances participation and a sense of belonging, and supports retention and knowledge exchange. As a result, economic and social benefits are closely interconnected, reflecting both financial and relational value.

Technological and Informational Benefits

Technological and informational benefits relate to the role of customer engagement in knowledge acquisition, information processing, and the use of digital technologies. By involving consumers in providing feedback, ideas, and experiences, companies gain access to diverse and context-specific knowledge not available internally, which can be integrated into innovation and business processes, particularly in digital environments (Qiao, 2017; Ziemba et al., 2022). Customer engagement also supports the development and use of technological tools and platforms that facilitate interaction and knowledge exchange. Digital environments, such as online communities and social media, enable companies to collect and use consumer input more efficiently (Wedel and Kannan, 2016), although their effectiveness depends on both technological and consumer-related factors (De Bruyne and Verleye, 2022).

Consumer engagement is influenced by socio-psychological mechanisms, such as the need to belong and fear of missing out (FoMO), which affect information processing and engagement behaviours (Davis et al., 2019). This enhances companies' ability to respond to market changes and incorporate consumer knowledge into decision-making. Ongoing interaction supports the continuous development of organizational knowledge, allowing companies to identify trends, detect changes in preferences, and adapt strategies. These processes strengthen informational capacity and support more data-driven decision-making (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Chandra and Rahman, 2024).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study aims to identify and evaluate the benefits perceived by companies as a result of customer engagement in business activities. It focuses on the highest-rated benefits and examines differences in their evaluation across selected organizational characteristics.

Based on this objective, the following research questions are formulated:

RQ1: *Which benefits of customer engagement are perceived as the most significant by companies?*

RQ2: *Do companies differ in their evaluation of these benefits across selected organizational characteristics?*

To address these questions, two analytical directions were adopted: (1) the identification of the most important benefits and their differentiation, and (2) the examination of differences across organizational characteristics. The following hypothesis is proposed:

> ***H1:*** *There are statistically significant differences in perceived benefits across selected organizational characteristics.*
>
> ***H1a:*** *Differences across ownership structures.*
>
> ***H1b:*** *Differences across company size categories.*
>
> ***H1c:*** *Differences across sectors of activity.*
>
> ***H1d:*** *Differences across market scope categories.*
>
> ***H1e:*** *Differences between IT-related and non-IT-related companies.*
>
> ***H1f:*** *Differences across levels of perceived importance of customer engagement.*

3.2 Research Design and Procedure

This study adopts a quantitative research design to empirically assess the benefits associated with customer engagement in business activities. The research is based on a structured questionnaire developed from a systematic literature review, which served to identify key benefit dimensions and operationalize the constructs.

The measurement instrument includes variables representing four categories of benefits: product-related, reputational, economic and social, and technological and informational, each operationalized through multiple items. Respondents evaluated each benefit using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*"strongly disagree"*) to 7 (*"strongly agree"*). The questionnaire also includes variables describing company characteristics, such as ownership structure, company size, sector, market scope, IT-related activity, and the perceived importance of customer engagement for company success, which were used as grouping variables in further analyses.

Data were collected using the CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing) method. The study targeted companies operating in Poland that actively engage consumers in product and service development. The questionnaire was addressed to owners, directors, managers, and specialists who declared direct involvement in collaboration with consumers. The questionnaire was prepared in Polish, and a pilot study conducted in July 2025 confirmed its clarity and required only minor adjustments. The main survey was carried out between August and September 2025 using CAWI, supported by telephone follow-up. Invitations were sent to 9,120 companies. After data screening, 404 complete responses were retained, resulting in a response rate of 4.4%. The sample characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample characteristics

Category	N = 404	%
Ownership structure (Domestic private / Foreign private / Public)	292 / 70 / 42	72.3 / 17.3 / 10.4
Company size (Micro / Small / Medium / Large)	65 / 109 / 149 / 81	16.1 / 27.0 / 36.9 / 20.0
Sector of activity (Manufacturing / Services / Trade / IT & Technologies / Finance & Insurance / Education / Healthcare)	84 / 143 / 77 / 59 / 24 / 9 / 8	20.8 / 35.4 / 19.1 / 14.6 / 5.9 / 2.2 / 2.0
Market scope (Local / Regional / National / International)	60 / 72 / 155 / 117	14.9 / 17.8 / 38.4 / 29.0

Category	N = 404	%
IT-related activity (Yes / No)	233 / 171	57.7 / 42.3
The importance of customer engagement (1–7; 1 = not important at all, 7 = very important)	19 / 65 / 45 / 64 / 66 / 85 / 60	4.7 / 16.1 / 11.1 / 15.8 / 16.3 / 21.0 / 14.9

As presented in Table 1, the sample is dominated by private companies and medium-sized enterprises, with a strong representation of companies operating at the national and international levels, as well as a substantial share of IT-related businesses, ensuring diversity across key organizational characteristics.

4. Results and Analysis

To answer the main research question (RQ1), descriptive statistics were applied to identify the most highly evaluated benefits of customer engagement. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the 12 highest-rated benefits (N = 404)

Code	Shorter benefit name	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	% ratings 5-7
P1	Personalisation to customer needs	5.624	1.005	6	5	85.4
P5	Tailoring offer to customer needs	5.619	1.244	6	7	81.4
R4	Building long-lasting relationships	5.594	1.344	6	7	80.2
R2	Better understanding of customer needs	5.584	1.413	6	7	81.2
R12	Improved customer service quality	5.532	1.372	6	7	76.0
R8	Enhanced company image and reputation	5.505	1.372	6	7	79.5
R6	Loyalty to the company and brand	5.418	1.449	6	7	79.0
R3	Offer stands out from competition	5.408	1.378	6	7	75.0
T1	Direct customer posts/comments	5.386	1.402	6	6	76.5
P6	Customer testing of products/services	5.381	1.224	5	5	75.7
R5	Improved customer retention rates	5.359	1.420	6	5	76.0
P7	Brand loyalty	5.347	1.382	5	7	73.5

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 indicate that all examined benefits were evaluated positively, with mean values above the midpoint of the scale ($M > 5.34$), confirming a generally favorable perception of customer engagement among companies. More than 80% of responses fall within the upper range of the scale (scores 5–7) for the highest-rated benefits, indicating their clear importance for the majority of companies. The results suggest that companies particularly value benefits related to product improvement, alignment with customer needs, and the effective use of customer knowledge. Taken together, customer engagement is primarily associated with operational and product-related improvements rather than more strategic outcomes, thereby addressing RQ1.

4.1 Differences in Perceived Benefits Across Company Characteristics

To address RQ2 and verify H1, non-parametric tests were applied to compare groups. The Kruskal–Wallis test was used for variables with more than two categories, while the Mann–Whitney U test was applied for the binary variable (IT-related activity; H1e). These tests examined whether perceived benefits vary across selected organizational characteristics (Table 3).

Table 3 shows that differences in perceived benefits are limited and occur only for selected variables. Significant differences were identified for ownership structure (R4, R5, R6), market scope (R2), and IT-related activity (P1, P6, P7, R3, R4, R5), while no differences were found for company size and sector of activity. Consequently, H1a, H1d, and H1e are partially supported, whereas H1b and H1c are rejected. In contrast, the perceived importance of customer engagement (H1f) differentiates all analysed variables, with higher importance consistently associated with higher benefit evaluations.

Effect sizes are generally small ($\varepsilon^2 = 0.01$–0.02; $r = 0.10$–0.19), indicating limited practical significance. In contrast, the effect size for H1f is large ($\varepsilon^2 = 0.40$), highlighting its substantial impact.

Table 3: Statistical test results and effect sizes across organizational characteristics

Organizational characteristic	Variables with significant differences	Effect size (ε²/r)
Ownership structure (H1a)	R4: H (2, N= 404) =6.31 p =0.042	0.010
	R5: H (2, N= 404) =7.16 p =0.027	0.013
	R6: H (2, N= 404) =11.15 p =0.004	0.022
Company size (H1b)	No differences	-
Sector of activity (H1c)	No differences	-
Market scope (H1d)	R2: H (3, N= 404) =10.59 p =0.014	0.019
IT-related activity (H1e)	P1: Z= 2.366; p=0.018	0.118
	P6: Z=3.811; p=0.0001	0.190
	P7: Z=2.024; p=0.043	0.101
	R3: Z=2.043; p=0.041	0.102
	R4: Z=2.428; p=0.015	0.121
	R5: Z=2.923; p=0.003	0.145
The importance of customer engagement (H1f)	Differences across all variables	0.400

To complement the statistical analysis, frequency distributions of high-value responses (scores 5–7) were examined for variables showing statistically significant differences across ownership structure and market scope. The results are presented in Figure 2.

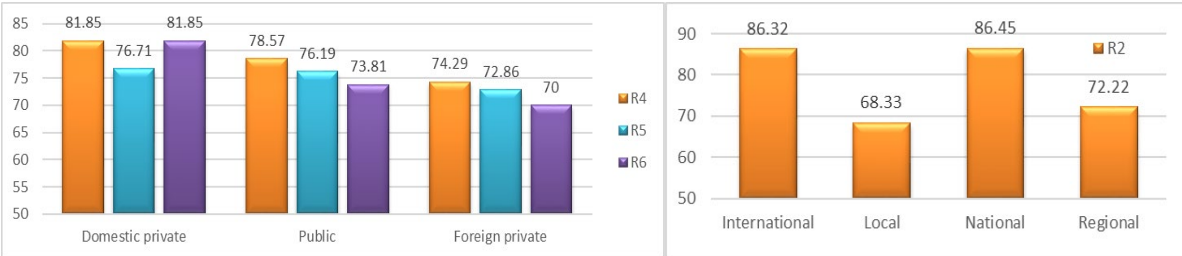

Figure 2: Share of high-value responses across (a) ownership structure and (b) market scope

Figure 2a shows the distribution of high-value responses (scores 5–7) for selected benefits (R4, R5, R6) across ownership structures. The results indicate relatively small differences between groups, with domestic private companies reporting the highest values, particularly for R4 (building long-lasting relationships) and R6 (loyalty). Public organizations show slightly lower evaluations, while foreign private companies consistently report the lowest values across all three variables. Overall, the pattern suggests a similar perception of relational benefits across ownership types, with only moderate variation.

A similar pattern is observed for market scope in the case of R2 (better understanding of customer needs), the only variable with statistically significant differences (Figure 2b). Companies operating at national and international levels report higher evaluations compared to those operating locally or regionally. Despite these differences, the overall distribution remains relatively consistent, suggesting that perceived benefits are largely independent of market scope. This observation aligns with the statistical results.

To further explore differences in perceived benefits, frequency distributions of high-value responses (scores 5–7) were analyzed for variables with statistically significant differences related to IT-related activity. The results are presented in Figure 3.

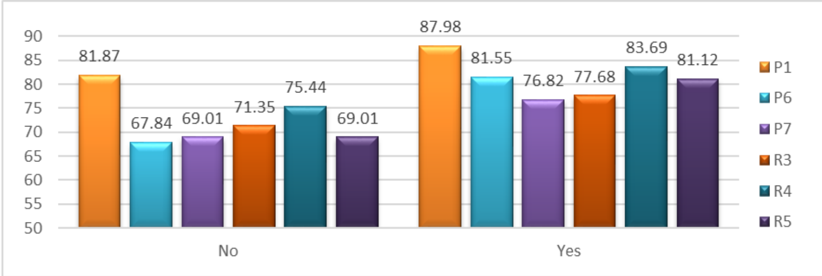

Figure 3: Share of high-value responses across IT-related activity

Figure 3 shows consistently high levels of positive evaluations across both groups, regardless of IT-related activity. However, IT-related companies ("Yes" on the chart) report slightly higher values. The largest difference is observed for P6 (Product and service testing by consumers), amounting to 13.7 percentage points, suggesting that IT-related companies benefit more from direct consumer involvement in testing processes. Another notable difference is found for R5 (Improved customer retention rates), with a gap of 12.1%. Differences for the remaining variables range between 6% and 8%, indicating that IT-related companies may more effectively leverage consumer engagement to strengthen long-term relationships. Taken together, although IT-related activity introduces some variation, perceived benefits remain consistently high across both groups. These findings are consistent with the statistical results, which indicate significant but relatively small effect sizes.

To further examine the role of perceived importance of customer engagement, frequency distributions were analysed across its levels. The analysis focuses on selected benefits with the highest mean values, providing insight into how strongly companies perceive these benefits depending on their strategic orientation. The results are presented in Figure 4.

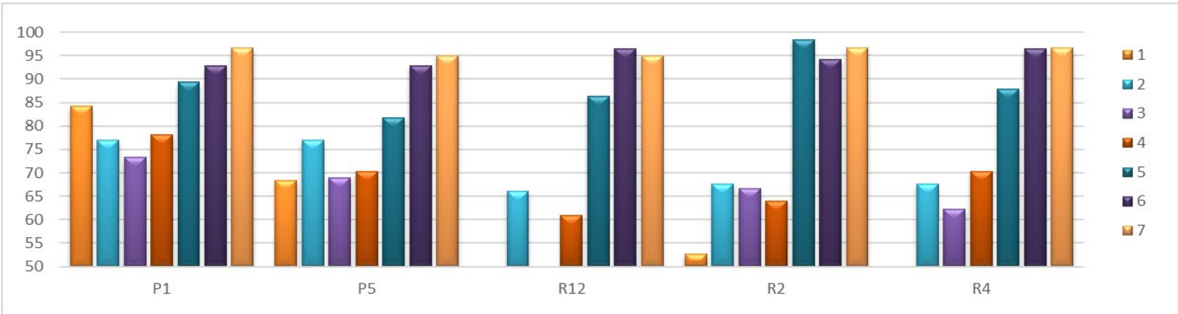

Figure 4: Share of high-value responses across levels of perceived importance of customer engagement

Note: 1 means "Not important" whereas 7 means "Very important"

Figure 4 shows a clear increase in the share of high-value responses as the perceived importance of customer engagement rises. Companies assigning low importance report lower evaluations, whereas those considering it highly important consistently report the highest values. This pattern is particularly visible for key benefits such as P1 (Personalisation of products/services according to customer needs), P5 (Tailoring the offer to customer needs), and R4 (Building long-lasting relationships with consumers).

The results indicate a strong positive relationship between perceived importance and benefit evaluation, suggesting that companies with a stronger strategic orientation toward customer engagement are more likely to recognize its value. These findings are consistent with the statistical results, which show a large effect size for this variable, highlighting its dominant role in differentiating perceived benefits across companies

Taken together, the results provide partial support for H1. While structural characteristics of companies, such as ownership, size, sector, market scope, and IT-related activity, do not significantly differentiate the perception of benefits (H1a–H1e are only partially supported or not supported), the perceived importance of customer engagement emerges as the key explanatory factor. In this regard, H1f is clearly supported, as higher levels of perceived importance are consistently associated with higher evaluations of all analysed benefits.

This pattern is consistently reflected in the graphical analyses (Figures 2–4), which show only minor variations across structural characteristics and a clear increasing trend in benefit evaluations with higher levels of perceived importance. These findings indicate that differences in perceived benefits are driven primarily by organizational attitudes and strategic orientation toward customer engagement, rather than by objective company characteristics. They address RQ2 by demonstrating that the evaluation of benefits is not determined by structural features of companies, but rather by how they perceive the strategic importance of engaging consumers.

Taken together, the results indicate that the perception of benefits is less dependent on structural factors and more strongly related to the strategic orientation of companies. This conclusion is reinforced by the effect size analysis, highlighting the dominant role of perceived importance.

5. Discussion

The aim of the study was to identify and empirically assess the key benefits for companies resulting from engaging consumers in acquiring opinions, ideas, and knowledge. The study adopts a multidimensional perspective on benefits, encompassing four categories, and examines their variation depending on selected organizational characteristics, such as company size, sector, ownership structure, market scope, IT-related activity, and the perceived importance of customer engagement. The adopted approach enables the identification of the most important benefits as well as a better understanding of the mechanisms shaping their perception within organizations. The findings contribute to the literature through their empirical verification and extension.

Research on customer engagement consistently emphasizes its role as a source of knowledge and a factor supporting value co-creation. In particular, Chatterjee et al. (2022) and Gligor and Bozkurt (2021) indicate that consumers represent an important source of knowledge used in product and service development processes. The results of this study are consistent with this perspective, as the highest-rated benefits relate to product improvement, better alignment of offerings with customer needs, and relationship building. This confirms that, in organizational practice, customer engagement is primarily perceived as a tool supporting operational activities and product development.

Similarly, van Heerden and Wiese (2021) argue that customer engagement fosters relationship building and strengthens loyalty. The results of this study are in line with this view, as reputational and relational benefits, such as building long-term relationships and brand loyalty, are among the highest-rated. This indicates that companies recognize the importance of customer engagement not only in the context of products, but also in relation to market relationships.

In contrast, Ziemba et al. (2022) highlight the role of technology and digital processes in enabling value co-creation and knowledge exchange. The findings are only partially consistent with this perspective, as technological and informational benefits are recognized by companies, but are not among the highest-rated. This may suggest that, although technological infrastructure provides important support for customer engagement, it is not perceived as the primary source of value in organizational practice.

At the same time, the results do not confirm some assumptions present in the literature. De Bruyne and Verleye (2022) and Wedel and Kannan (2016) suggest that the use of customer engagement may depend on organizational characteristics, such as the level of digitalization, business model, or available resources. However, the present study does not identify significant differences with respect to company size, sector, or market scope. This indicates that, contrary to earlier suggestions, the benefits of customer engagement may be more universal and accessible across different types of organizations.

The literature on value co-creation, including the work of Payne, Storbacka, and Frow (2008), emphasizes the strategic and systemic nature of customer engagement, highlighting its importance for long-term value creation and competitive advantage. In this context, the findings of the present study are not fully consistent with this perspective. Strategic and economic benefits are evaluated lower than operational ones, which may suggest that companies do not fully recognize the long-term potential of customer engagement. These differences may, however, result from changes over time and the evolution of market practices, in which customer engagement is increasingly used in a more direct and operational manner.

Similarly, the service-dominant logic approach (Vargo and Lusch, 2008) assumes that value co-creation is a fundamental mechanism of market functioning. However, the findings indicate that, in organizational practice, customer engagement is not yet fully treated as a strategic element, but rather as a tool supporting specific operational activities. This discrepancy may be related to the development of digital technologies and the changing ways in which customer engagement is applied, which increasingly take a more immediate and application-oriented form.

An important complement to these observations concerns the perceived importance of customer engagement. Unlike structural characteristics, this variable clearly differentiates the evaluation of benefits. This finding aligns with research emphasizing the role of organizational orientation and the use of customer knowledge (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). At the same time, it extends existing approaches by showing that it is not so much organizational resources or characteristics, but rather the way customer engagement is perceived and interpreted, that determines its value for the company.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the use of self-reported data may introduce response bias. Second, the sample consists exclusively of companies operating in a single country and intentionally engaging consumers in their activities, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts and to organizations that do not adopt such practices. Future research should include cross-country comparisons, incorporate objective performance indicators, and examine both positive and negative outcomes of customer engagement.

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Ethics Declaration: The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. The data were collected anonymously and used exclusively for research purposes.

AI Declaration: Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used to support language editing and improve the clarity of the manuscript. The author takes full responsibility for the content, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

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