

Why Do People Interact and Buy in the Metaverse? Self-Expansion and Cross-Cultural Perspectives

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Abstract

Many companies, especially in the fashion sector, are experimenting in metaverse making profits by selling virtual items. Then the questions arise: Why do people interact in the metaverse and buy virtual items for their own avatars? Do participants' behaviors in the metaverse vary by culture? To get the answers, this study provides a research framework that explains the relationships among perceived interactivity, perceived self-expansion, and purchase intention of virtual items. Drawing on the self-expansion theory, this study posits that consumers' interaction with others through their own avatars increases their perception of the expanded self, encouraging them to buy virtual items. The framework further posits moderating effects of culture (individualism/collectivism and indulgence/restraint) on the relationships. For example, it posits the reason consumers in restraint cultures purchase more virtual items when they perceive their expanded self than those in indulgence cultures.

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