

# Investigating consumers' intent to shop at Metaverse: A proposed agenda

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## Background and Purpose

- The term *Metaverse* is comprised of the prefix “meta” (implying go beyond) with the word “universe” to indicate the imaginary linkage between the physical world and the digital world (Lee et al., 2021).
- In the Metaverse, the users can interact with each other through digital avatars and digital universe (Suh & Prophet, 2018; Wohlgenannt et al., 2020).
- Thus, the Metaverse creates the opportunity for consumers' increased demand for novel and entertaining retail experiences.
- Consequently, retail businesses that have established a presence in a 3D virtual world can engage consumers in a new shopping experience (Domina et al., 2012).
- With the given background and current scenario, the **purpose** of the present study was
  - To explore the recent status of the Metaverse from consumers' perspective.
  - To find the consumers' motives in buying digital merchandise on Metaverse platforms.
  - Provide future directions in this area by suggesting conceptual models for studying the consumer intention to shop at Metaverse.

## Theoretical Background

- Studies related to the Metaverse are limited (Narin, 2021). Thus, we propose to borrow concepts of consumer experiences and engagement research in the physical world and adopt them in the Metaverse context.
- Sproles and Kendall (1986), suggested the following eight characteristics: (1) perfectionism, high-quality consciousness; (2) brand consciousness; (3) novelty-apparel consciousness; (4) hedonistic, recreational shopping consciousness; (5) ‘value for money’ shopping consciousness; (6) impulsiveness; (7) confusion from over choice; and (8) habitual, brand-local orientation, as the important mental approaches of consumption denoting them as consumers styles inventory (CSI).

## Methods

- Through extensive literature review, research related to consumer experiences and engagement in the physical world are studied.
- Based on the understanding of consumer experience in the physical world, relevant concepts are proposed to study for application in the metaverse.

## Proposed Models

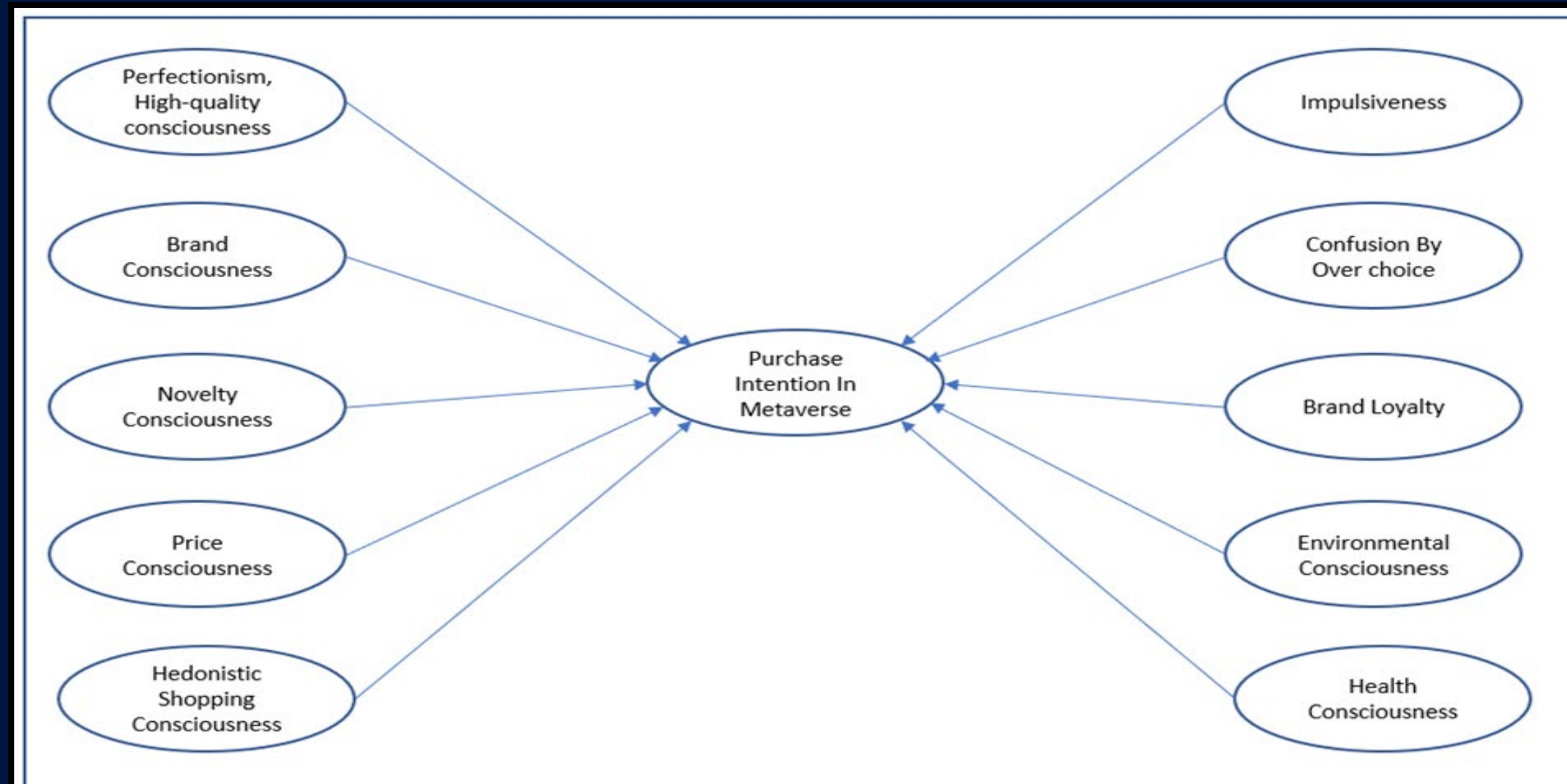


Figure 1: A proposed conceptual model for studying the consumer intention to shop at Metaverse: Consumer Styles Inventory (CSI) approach

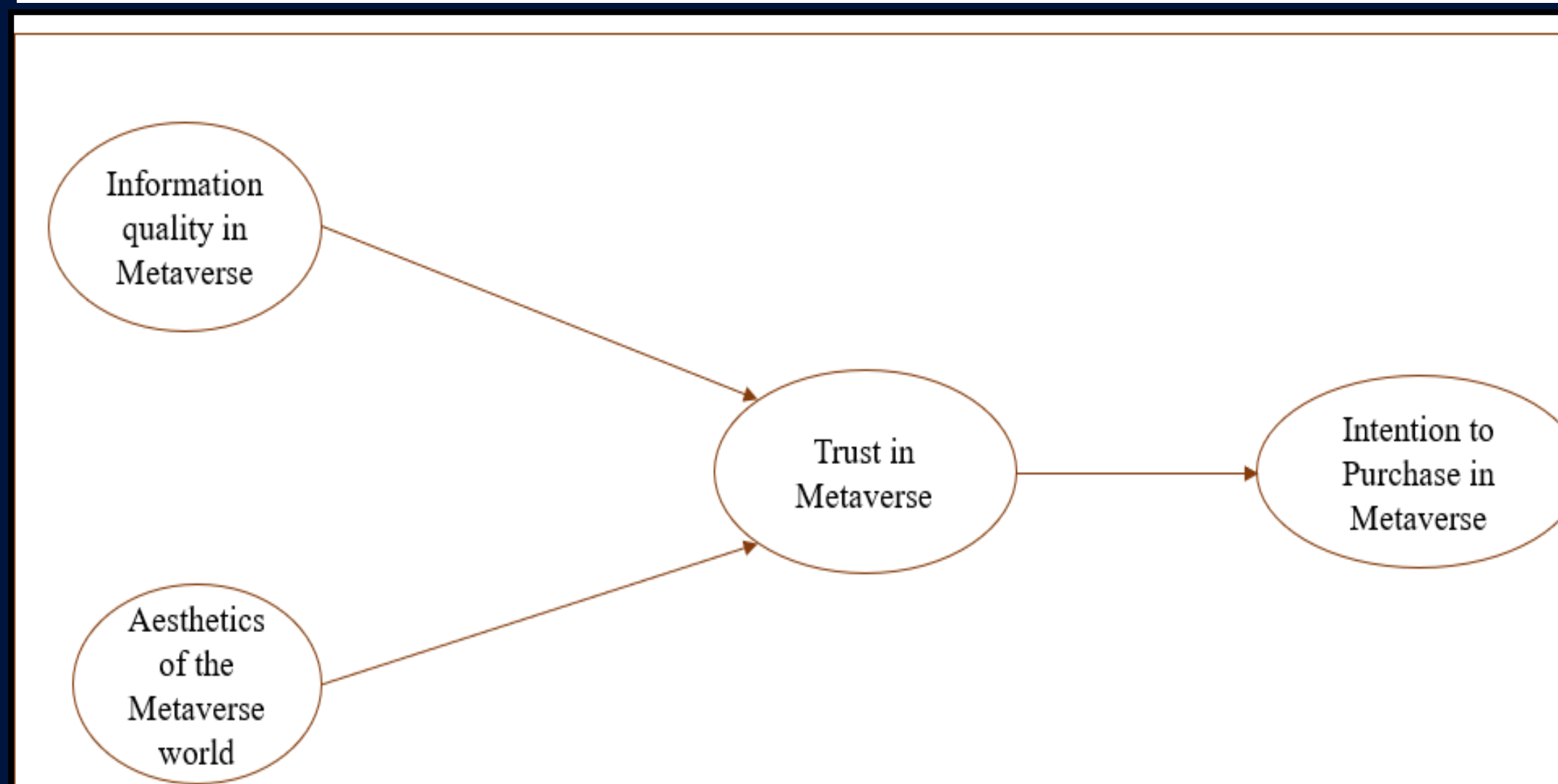


Figure 2: A proposed conceptual model for studying the consumer intention to shop at Metaverse: Elaboration Likelihood Model Approach

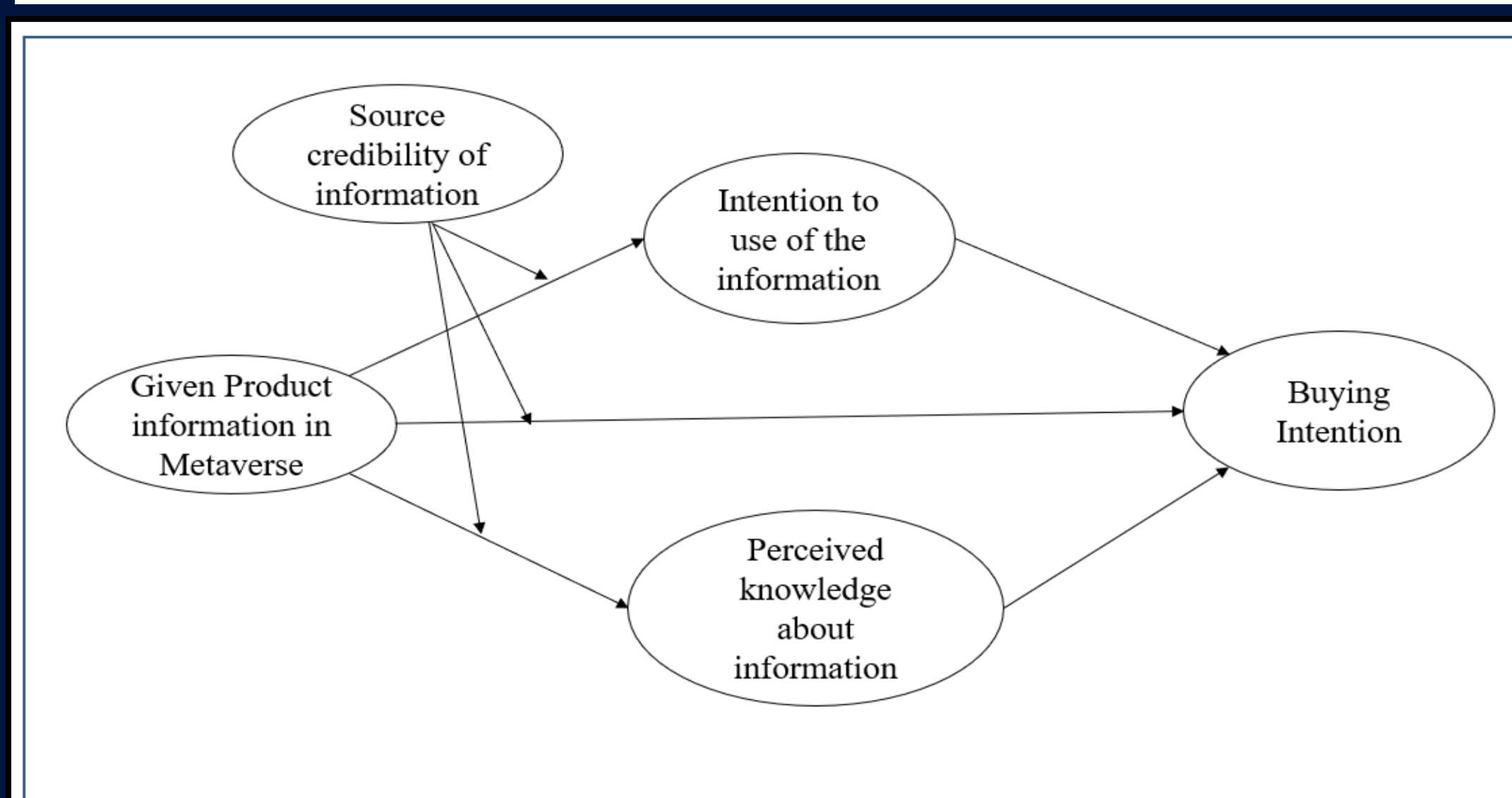


Figure 3: A proposed conceptual model for studying the consumer intention to shop at Metaverse: Elaboration Likelihood Model Approach

## Proposal for future action

- The Metaverse platform extends opportunities for researchers in all fields including consumer behavior.
- Metaverse can enable the consumers' perceived enjoyment of shopping via hedonistic values, recreational shopping consciousness, and novelty-apparel consciousness.
- As digital native & tech-savvy generations (i.e., Generation Alpha and Gen Z) are growing rapidly in the Metaverse (Soltes, 2022), they are more eager to get innovative and new shopping experiences (Kim et al., 2010). Thus, perceived innovativeness and perceived ease of use of technology can be the potential area for research.
- the Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) based products might create a marketplace for selling or renting their products in the metaverse.

## Conclusions and Implications

- More the consumers are engaged in the Metaverse, the more opportunities for business in the Metaverse. Thus, theories such as the Flow theory and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) can enhance new prospects of Metaverse application in the broader area of the consumer science research.
- Collecting data on Alpha and Gen Z consumers who shop on Metaverse might provide theoretical and managerial implications to drive future research in this area.

## Key References

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