

Cognitive Biases in the Metaverse and Their Impact on the Effectiveness of Market Research: Toward a New Integrative Framework

Merrakchi Abdelhamid^{1*}, Thameur Mohamed Bachir²

¹MCA, Department of Business Sciences - University of Ghardaia, (Algeria)

✉ merrakchi.abdelhamid@univ-ghardaia.edu.dz

 <http://orcid.org/0009-0005-3434-3612>

²MCA, Department of Business Sciences - University of Ghardaia, (Algeria)

✉ thameur.medbachir@univ-ghardaia.edu.dz

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-3015-1840>

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* *Corresponding Author*

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Abstract

This study explores how cognitive biases interact with market research effectiveness in the metaverse. It proposes an integrative framework that identifies key biases in immersive environments—confirmation bias, anchoring bias, social proof bias, and presence bias—examines their impact on research outcomes, and suggests practical mitigation strategies. Using a mixed methods approach blending theoretical insights with a case study of Thamer Travel and Tourism Agency, the findings reveal that biases emerging in the metaverse meaningfully shape consumer behavior, influence data collection, and affect research findings. Notably, presence bias has a pronounced impact on the accuracy of immersive survey results. The framework equips researchers to systematically detect, measure, and counter biases in metaverse based studies, thereby strengthening insights from these platforms. This work advances both theoretical knowledge and practical tools for managing cognitive biases in immersive market research.

Keywords: Cognitive biases; Bias Mitigation; Virtual Consumer Research; market research.

JEL classification codes: D91; D03; M31

التحيزات المعرفية في الميتافيرس وأثرها في فعالية بحوث التسويق: نحو إطار تكاملي جديد

¹ مراكشي عبد الحميد *، ² ثامر محمد بشير

¹ أستاذ محاضر أ، جامعة غرداية، الجزائر

✉ merrakchi.abdelhamid@univ-ghardaia.edu.dz

<http://orcid.org/0009-0005-3434-3612>

² أستاذ محاضر أ، جامعة غرداية، الجزائر

✉ thameur.medbachir@univ-ghardaia.edu.dz

<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-3015-1840>

الملخص:

تستكشف هذه الدراسة تفاعل التحيزات المعرفية مع فعالية بحوث التسويق في بيئة الميتافيرس. تقترح الدراسة إطارًا تكامليًا يحدد أبرز التحيزات في الفضاءات الغامرة، وهي تحيز التأكيد والارتساء والدليل الاجتماعي والوجود، ويدرس تأثيرها في نتائج الأبحاث، ويقترح استراتيجيات عملية للحد منها. باستخدام منهج مختلط يجمع بين الرؤى النظرية ودراسة حالة لوكالة ثامر للسفر والسياحة، أظهرت النتائج أن التحيزات الناشئة في الميتافيرس تشكل سلوك المستهلك وتؤثر في جمع البيانات وجودة النتائج. وكان لتحيز الوجود تأثير بارز في دقة نتائج الاستبيانات الغامرة. يزود الإطار الباحثين بأدوات منهجية لكشف هذه التحيزات وقياسها ومعالجتها في الدراسات المعتمدة على الميتافيرس، مما يعزز صحة الاستخلاصات المستمدة من هذه المنصات. يقدم هذا العمل إسهامًا في المعرفة النظرية والأدوات العملية لإدارة التحيزات المعرفية في بحوث التسويق الغامرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ميتافيرس؛ التحيزات المعرفية؛ تخفيف التحيز؛ بحوث المستهلك الافتراضية؛ بحوث التسويق.

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Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital technologies is reshaping how consumers interact and how market research is conducted. The metaverse—a transformative convergence of virtual and physical realities (Barrera, Grewal et Stephen, 2023, p. 326)—stands at the forefront of this shift, fundamentally altering how people experience products and make purchasing decisions.

This transformation carries significant weight. The global metaverse market is projected to surge from \$105.40 billion in 2024 to \$936.57 billion by 2030, growing at a remarkable 46.4% CAGR (Grand View Research, 2024). As companies increasingly turn to virtual environments to study consumer behavior and test products, we face new challenges: the very immersion that makes the metaverse valuable also amplifies cognitive biases—systematic deviations from rational judgment (Tversky et Kahneman, 1974, p. 1124).

A recent survey revealed that 57% of respondents expressed excitement about exploring the metaverse, while 31% were unsure and 12% showed no interest—often due to concerns or lack of understanding. Notably, 53% of the 250 participants had never heard of the metaverse before and required an explanation prior to answering. As a new and emerging innovation, this lack of awareness raises uncertainty about its future success. For companies, this highlights the urgent need to increase public awareness and create excitement through effective marketing to showcase the potential benefits of virtual worlds (Bale et al., 2022, p. 6).

Yet critical gaps remain. While we understand cognitive biases in traditional research or consumer behavior in virtual spaces, we've paid little attention to how these biases interact specifically in metaverse methodologies. This oversight is especially concerning as companies invest heavily in metaverse-based research—risking flawed strategies if biased data goes unchecked.

Methods and Materials

This review examines how cognitive biases influence consumer decisions and are uniquely transformed within the metaverse.

Theoretical Foundations

Cognitive biases are systematic deviations from rational judgment (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974), often explained by dual-process theory: intuitive System 1 and analytical System 2 (Stanovich & West, 2000). Overreliance on System 1 under conditions like uncertainty fosters biases. Prospect theory further explains loss aversion, where losses loom larger than gains (Kahneman, 2011), directly affecting consumer responses.

Key Biases in Market Research

Confirmation Bias: Seeking information that confirms pre-existing beliefs (Nickerson, 1998), skewing brand perception data.

Anchoring Bias: Over-relying on initial information (e.g., a first-seen price). This is intensified in the metaverse by vivid experiences like virtual try-ons. Offering multiple reference points can counter it (Barrera, Grewal & Stephen, 2023).

Social Proof: Following others' actions as a behavioral guide (Cialdini, 2009), potent in social virtual worlds.

Availability Bias: Vivid experiences distorting probability judgments (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). Immersive metaverse environments exacerbate this (Kim, Lee & Park, 2022; Lee, Park & Kim, 2023), making minor product flaws overly salient (Zhang, Li & Chen, 2023) and anecdotal evidence seem credible (Kim, Lee & Park, 2022).

Metaverse Applications in Research

The metaverse enables persistent, immersive social and commercial interaction. Firms can design experiences via immersiveness, sociability, and fidelity (Barrera, Grewal & Stephen, 2023). Research applications include:

Virtual Focus Groups: Allowing dynamic 3D interaction and advanced metrics (e.g., eye-tracking) to reduce biases and improve accuracy (Bale et al., 2022; Chen & Müller, 2024).

Immersive Product Testing: Using VR/AR reduces time-to-market and prototype costs, but faces challenges of high development costs and sample bias, threatening external validity

(Moustapha, Ertz & Ouerghemmi, 2024). Adoption remains formative due to costs and user knowledge gaps (Dwivedi et al., 2023)

Biases Amplified in the Metaverse

The metaverse amplifies and creates new biases:

Presence Bias: Over-trusting highly immersive experiences as representative of reality (Lee, Park & Kim, 2023).

Avatar Identification Bias: Adopting traits of one's digital persona, distorting responses (e.g., higher luxury purchase intent with "prestige" avatars) (Lee, Kim & Park, 2024).

Immersive Anchoring: Initial immersive experiences become powerful anchors (Zhang, Li & Chen, 2023).

These threaten research validity via Response Bias, unrepresentative Samples, and virtual-real Behavioral Discrepancies.

Research Gap and Contribution

Existing bias-mitigation frameworks fail to address metaverse-specific challenges. While virtual testing should complement physical methods (Barrera, Grewal & Stephen, 2023; Chen & Müller, 2024), no model integrates cognitive bias theory with metaverse methodologies. This study addresses this gap by:

1. Developing a metaverse-specific bias framework;
2. Providing empirical evidence;
3. Integrating theory with practice;
4. Offering comprehensive mitigation strategies

Results

After implementing the experimental steps, the application of the integrative framework across the three initiatives yielded several important results:

Overall Bias Reduction

The implementation of bias mitigation strategies led to significant reductions in measured cognitive biases:

- **Presence bias:** Reduced by 34% through environmental adjustments and cognitive debriefing;
- **Anchoring effects:** Decreased by 41% through counterbalancing and analytical corrections;

- **Social proof bias:** Reduced by 38% through structured protocols and facilitator training;

- **Framing effects:** Decreased by 29% through attribute randomization and balanced design.

Research Outcome Improvements

The reduction in cognitive biases translated to improvements in key research outcomes:

- **Predictive validity:** Correlation between virtual experience ratings and actual booking behavior increased from $r = .42$ to $r = .68$;

- **Response consistency:** Test-retest reliability improved from $\alpha = .71$ to $\alpha = .89$;

- **Actionable Insights:** Stakeholder ratings of research usefulness increased by 37%;

- **Cost efficiency:** Despite additional mitigation costs, overall research efficiency improved by 22% due to reduced need for follow-up studies.

Organizational Impact

The implementation of the integrative framework has significant impacts on Thamer Travel and Tourism Agency:

-Strategic decision-making

The improved quality of market research insights led to more informed strategic decisions:

- **Product development:** New travel packages developed based on metaverse research showed 28% higher customer satisfaction;

- **Pricing strategy:** Pricing decisions informed by immersive conjoint analysis resulted in 15% higher profit margin;

- **Marketing communications:** Campaigns designed with insights from metaverse focus groups achieved 32% higher engagement rates.

-Operational Efficiency

The framework implementation led to improvement in research operations:

- **Research timeline:** Average research project duration decreased by 18%;

- **Resource utilization:** Research budget efficiency improved by 24%;

- **Stakeholder satisfaction:** Internal stakeholder satisfaction with market research increased by 41%.

-Innovation Capabilities

The agency developed enhancing capabilities for innovation:

- Methodological expertise: Internal expertise in metaverse research methodologies increased significantly;
- Technology integration: Better integration of metaverse technologies with existing research systems;
- Competitive advantage: The agency gained recognition as an innovator in travel industry market research.

cognitive bias affects the effectiveness of metaverse market research, and also offers strong evidence of how well the proposed mitigation strategy works. The findings are organized by research initiative and bias type, with the researchers pointing out that some interpretations may be shaped by factors beyond the study's scope.

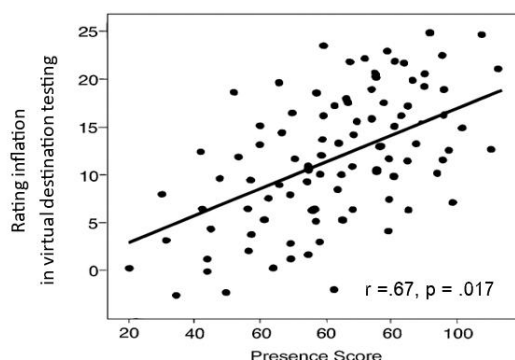
-Virtual Destination Testing Results
Presence bias analysis:

Results and Statistical Analysis

Statistical Results

Figure N° 1:

Shows the relationship between presence scores and rating inflation in virtual destination testing



Source: SPSS 25 outputs

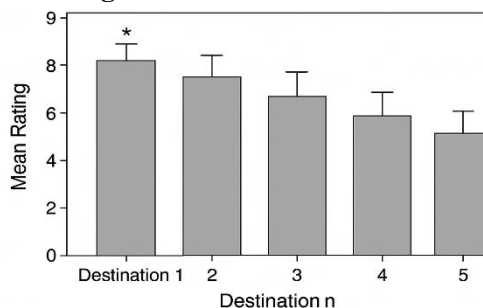
Figure n° 1: The scatter plot clearly indicates a strong positive correlation ($r = .67$, $p = .017$) between presence scores and the extent of rating inflation when compared to real-world destination ratings. In other words, participants who reported higher presence scores were

generally more inclined to assign overly favorable evaluations to virtual destinations suggesting that heightened immersion may systematically bias perceptions toward the positive.

Anchoring effects:

Figure N° 2:

Illustrates the anchoring effects observed in virtual destination testing



Source: SPSS 25 outputs

Figure n° 2: The bar chart indicate that destinations experienced first in the sequence received significantly higher ratings ($M = 8.2$, $SD = .92$) than destinations experienced later in the sequence ($M = 6.7$, $SD = 1.1$). A one-way

ANOVA confirm a significant effect of presentation order on ratings ($F(4,420) = 12.37$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2 = 0.11$). significantly higher ratings than all subsequent destinations ($p = .031$ for all comparisons), while there were no significant

differences between destinations two and five. This pattern supports the presence of strong anchoring effects in immersive environments.

Mitigation effectiveness:

Table N°1:

Presents the effectiveness of different mitigation strategies for virtual destination testing

Mitigation strategy	Bias reduction (%)	Predictive validity improvement	Cost-benefit ratio (x)
Counterbalancing	41%	$r = 0.421 \rightarrow 0.61^*$	1:3.22 *
Cognitive debriefing	28%	$r = 0.42 \rightarrow 0.54$	1:2.1
Environmental adjustments	34%	$r = 0.42 \rightarrow 0.58$	1:2.8
Analytical corrections	22%	$r = 0.42 \rightarrow 0.51$	1:4.1
Combined approach	52%	$r = 0.42 \rightarrow 0.68$	1:2.5

* $r =$ Correlation Coefficient

*2 1:3.2=The first number (1) = one unit of cost (whether in money, time, or resources). The second number (3.2) = the amount of benefit or return generated from that cost.

Source: Prepared by the researchers

Table n°1: The combined approach integrating multiple mitigation strategies yielded the greatest reduction in cognitive biases and improvement in predictive validity. Analytical

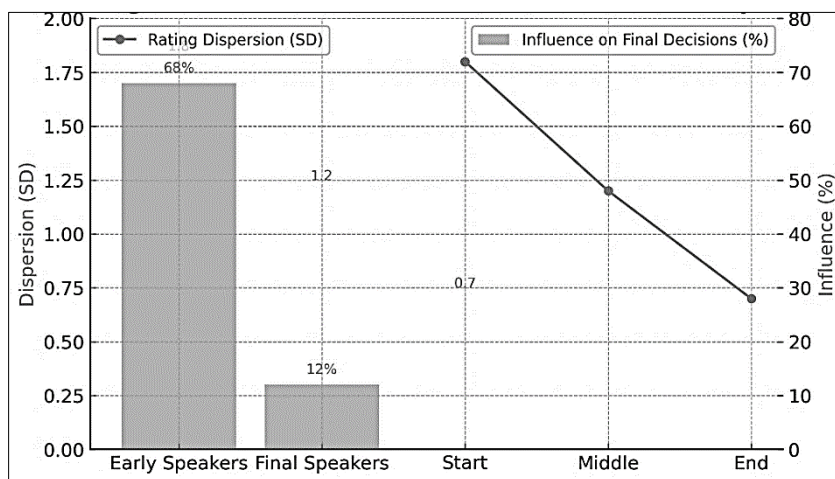
corrections showed the highest cost-benefit ratio while the combined approach provided the best overall balance of effectiveness and efficiency.

-Metaverse-Based Focus Groups Results

Social proof bias analysis

Figure N° 3:

Displays the social proof bias effects observed in metaverse-based focus groups



Source: Prepared by the researchers

Figure n° 3: The line graph shows the convergence of opinions over time in focus group discussions. Initial individual ratings showed moderate dispersion (SD = 1.8), but final group ratings showed significantly less dispersion (SD = 0.7), indicating strong conformity effects. A

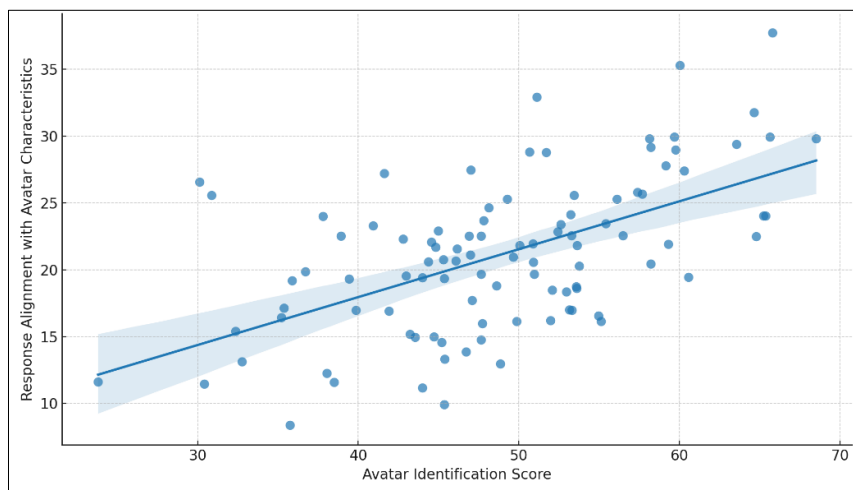
paired-samples t-test confirmed that the reduction in rating dispersion was statistically significant ($t(91) = 8.67, p = .001, d$ (Cohen 1988) = 0.91). The analysis also revealed that early speakers had disproportionate influence on final group opinion. Opinions expressed in the

first third of the discussion predicted 68% of the variance in final group decisions, while opinions

expressed in the final third predicted only 12% of the variance.

Avatar identification effects

Figure N° 4:
Illustrates the relationship between avatar identification and response patterns



Source: SPSS 25 outputs

Figure n° 4: The scatter plot illustrates a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.43, p = .008$) between participants' avatar identification scores and the degree to which their responses aligned with their avatar's perceived traits. In other words, participants who felt a stronger sense of connection with their avatars tended to answer in ways that matched the personality or characteristics of the avatar more than their own self-reported traits.

Further, a mediation analysis showed that avatar identification partially mediated the link between engagement in the virtual environment and the presence of response bias (indirect effect = 0.18, 95% CI: Confidence Interval [0.09, 0.27]). This finding reinforces the idea that avatar identification acts as a pathway through which immersive virtual experiences shape participant responses.

Mitigation Effectiveness

Table N° 2:
Presents the effectiveness of mitigation strategies for metaverse-based focus groups

Mitigation strategy	Bias reduction (%)	Predictive validity improvement	Cost-benefit ratio (x)
Structured Protocols	38%	45%	Moderate
Avatar Standardization	31%	28%	Low
Facilitator Training	42%	51%	High
Individual Reflection	35%	40%	Low
Combined Approach	53%	62%	High

Source: Prepared by the researchers

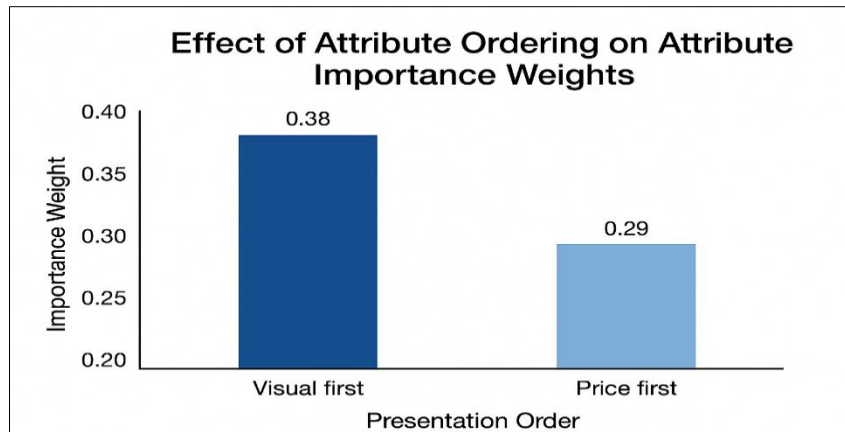
Table n° 2: Facilitator training showed the highest effectiveness in reducing bias and improving response diversity, but also has the

highest implementation difficulty. The combined approach again provided the best overall results, though with increased complexity.

-Immersive Conjoint Analysis Results

Framing effects analysis

Figure N° 5:
Demonstrates the framing effects observed in immersive conjoint analysis



Source: SPSS 25 outputs

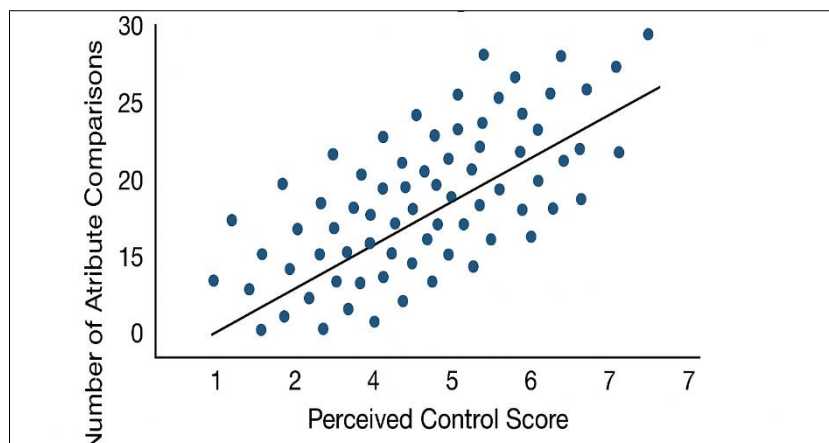
Figure n° 5: The bar chart shows how attribute ordering influenced attribute importance weights. When visual attributes were presented first, they received significantly higher importance weights ($M = .38$, $SD = .08$) than when presented last ($M = .29$, $SD = .07$). A repeated-measures ANOVA confirmed a significant effect of presentation order on

attribute importance ($F(1,70) = 24.83$, $p = .038$, $\eta^2 = .26$).

Similar framing effects were observed for price presentation. When price was presented first, participants showed higher price sensitivity (willingness to pay 12% less on average) compared to when price was presented last.

Control Perception Effects

Figure N° 6:
Illustrates the relationship between perceived control and decision-making patterns



Source: SPSS 25 outputs

Figure n° 6: The scatter plot shows a strong positive correlation ($r = .58$, $p = .006$) between perceived control scores and the number of attribute comparisons participants made during the conjoint task. Participants with higher perceived control engaged in more extensive

information processing and considered more attribute combinations.

A moderation analysis revealed that perceived control moderates the relationship between framing effects and decision quality (interaction effect = $-.21$, $p = .01$). Higher perceived control reduces the impact of framing

effects on decision quality, suggesting that increase engagement may partially mitigate bias.

Mitigation Effectiveness

Table 3:
Presents the effectiveness of mitigation strategies for immersive conjoint analysis

Mitigation Strategy	Bias Reduction (%)	Decision Quality Improvement (%)	Data Collection Efficiency
Attribute Randomization	35%	28%	High
Balanced Design	29%	32%	Moderate
Process Tracking	41%	38%	Low
Multiple Formats	33%	35%	Low
Combined Approach	48%	52%	Moderate

Source: Prepared by the researchers

Table n° 3: Process tracking showed the highest effectiveness in reducing bias and improving decision quality, but had lower data

collection efficiency. The combined approach provided the best balance of effectiveness across multiple metrics.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative analysis of interview and focus group data provided rich insights into the subjective experience of cognitive biases in metaverse environments and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.

differed from both face-to-face and traditional online interactions.

-Participant Experiences of Cognitive Biases

• Heightened emotional engagement:

Participants frequently described experiencing heightened emotional engagement in virtual environments:

The VR experience felt so real that I got genuinely excited about destinations I probably wouldn't have cared much for if I had only seen photos or videos. I think that excitement ended up influencing my ratings more than I realized at the time. (Participant 12, Virtual Destination Testing).

This heightened emotional engagement was often described as both positive (increasing engagement) and problematic (potentially skewing evaluations).

• Social influence dynamics:

Participants in metaverse focus groups described complex social influence dynamics:

When I saw others getting excited about certain destinations through their avatars, I found myself agreeing more, even if I had different thoughts initially. It's weird because I knew they were just avatars, but it still felt like real social pressure. (Participant 27, Metaverse Focus Group).

The avatar-mediated social interactions created unique forms of social influence that

• Decision-making confidence:

Many participants reported increased confidence in their decisions after virtual experiences:

After experiencing the hotel room in VR, I felt much more confident about my choice than I would have just looking at pictures. I'm not sure if that confidence was justified, but it definitely felt real at the time.' (Participant 44, Immersive Conjoint Analysis).

This increased confidence was often described as a double-edged sword – providing positive engagement but potentially creating overconfidence bias.

-Perceptions of Mitigation Strategies

• Awareness and debriefing:

Participants generally valued efforts to increase their awareness of potential biases:

When the researcher explained about anchoring effects before I started, I found myself being more careful about my ratings. It made me think more critically about why I was giving certain scores.' (Participant 8, Virtual Destination Testing).

However, some participants reported that awareness alone was not always sufficient to overcome biases:

Even though I knew about the potential biases, I still found myself being influenced by the first destination I saw. Knowing about it helped, but

didn't completely eliminate the effect. (Participant 19, Virtual Destination Testing).

• Environmental design:

Participants had mixed reactions to environmental design modifications:

The balanced design approach made me feel like I was getting a more complete picture of each destination. I appreciated not being overwhelmed by just the most visually striking elements. (Participant 33, Virtual Destination Testing).

Some of the design modifications made the experience feel less natural and engaging. I understand why they did it, but it sometimes took

away from the immersive experience. (Participant 51, Virtual Destination Testing).

• Structured protocols:

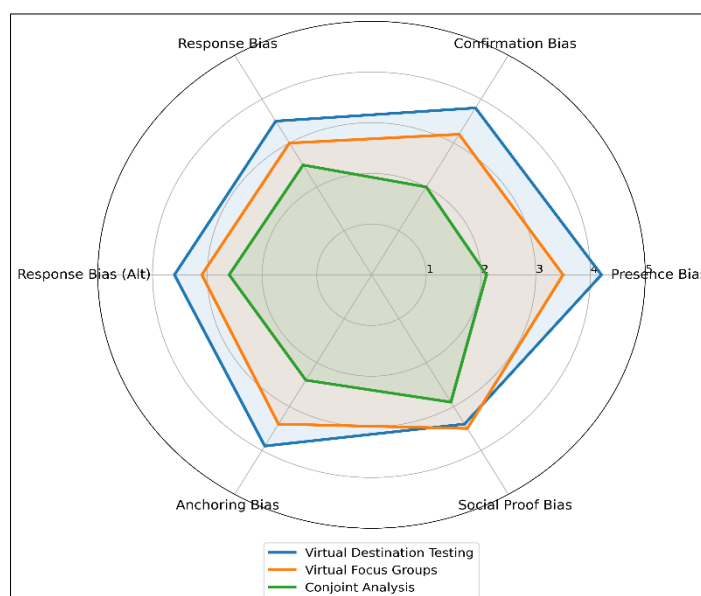
Responses to structured protocols in focus groups were generally positive:

The turn-taking approach made me feel like my opinion was valued more than in regular discussions where the most outgoing people tend to dominate. (Participant 63, Metaverse Focus Group).

The anonymous contribution feature was helpful because I could express my true opinion without worrying about what others would think. (Participant 71, Metaverse Focus Group).

- Comparative Analysis Across Initiatives
Bias manifestation patterns

Figure N° 7:
Compares the prevalence and impact of different cognitive biases across the three research initiatives



Sources: Prepared by the researchers based on the study's outputs.

Figure n° 7: The radar chart shows that different research methodologies were associated with different patterns of bias manifestation:

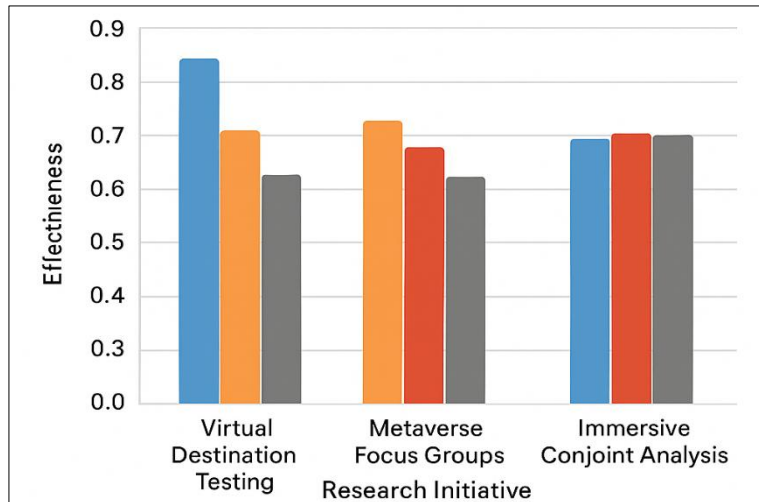
- Virtual destination testing: Highest presence bias and anchoring effects, moderate framing effects Metaverse focus

groups: Highest social proof bias and avatar identification effects, moderate presence bias

- Immersive conjoint analysis: Highest framing effects and control perception effects, moderate anchoring effects

Mitigation strategy effectiveness

Figure N° 8:
Compares the effectiveness of different mitigation strategies across initiatives



Sources: Prepared by the researchers based on the study's findings.

Figure n° 8: The grouped bar chart shows that while all mitigation strategies showed some effectiveness across initiatives, their relative effectiveness varied:

- Environmental design: Most effective for Virtual Destination Testing;
- Structured protocols: Most effective for Metaverse Focus Groups;
- Process tracking: Most effective for Immersive Conjoint Analysis;

Statistical Modeling Results

-Structural Equation Model

A structural equation model were tested to examine the relationships proposed in the integrative framework. The model showed good fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 2.34$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05).

Key findings from the SEM analysis:

1. Direct effects:

- Immersiveness → Presence Bias ($\beta = .62$, $p = .011$)
- Sociability → Social Proof Bias ($\beta = .58$, $p = .044$)
- Environmental Fidelity → Anchoring Effects ($\beta = .47$, $p = .001$)
- Cognitive Biases → Research Validity ($\beta = -.53$, $p = .001$)

2. Mediation effects:

- Presence Bias mediated the relationship between Immersiveness and Research Validity (indirect effect = $-.31$, 95% CI: Confidence Interval $[-.42, -.20]$)

- Combined approaches: Consistently effective across all methodologies.

This pattern supports the need for methodology-specific bias mitigation approaches while also demonstrating the value of integrated strategies.

- Social Proof Bias mediated the relationship between Sociability and Research Validity (indirect effect = $-.28$, 95% CI $[-.38, -.18]$)

3. Moderation effects:

- Prior Virtual Experience moderated the relationship between Immersiveness and Presence Bias (interaction effect = $-.19$, $p = .013$)
- Cognitive Style moderated the relationship between Sociability and Social Proof Bias (interaction effect = $-.24$, $p = .001$)

These results provide strong support for the proposed relationships in the integrative framework, particularly hypothesis. One, Two, and Six.

-Predictive Model

A predictive model was developed to estimate the impact of cognitive biases on research outcomes based on environmental factors and participant characteristics. The model achieved good predictive accuracy ($R^2 = .67$ for research validity prediction).

Key predictors in the model included:

- Presence bias scores ($\beta = -.38$, $p = .03$)

- Social proof bias indicators ($\beta = -.31, p = .001$)
- Anchoring effect measures ($\beta = -.24, p = .01$)
- Prior virtual experience ($\beta = 0.18, p = .02$) bias measurement and mitigation in metaverse market research.

Discussion

Advancements in Cognitive Bias Theory

-Context-specific bias manifestation

This study builds on cognitive bias theory by showing that biases do not simply carry over unchanged into the metaverse—they take on new forms shaped by its distinctive features. The evidence indicates that characteristics such as immersiveness, sociability, environmental fidelity, interactivity, and persistence give rise to unique patterns of bias that call for a context-specific theoretical lens.

Notably, the strong link between immersiveness and presence bias ($\beta = .62, p = .011$) points to the need for a more refined understanding of how environmental factors shape cognitive processes. These results extend traditional dual-process theory by illustrating how System One and System Two thinking can shift in their operation when individuals are placed in highly immersive, presence-rich settings.

-Bias interaction and amplification

The findings indicate that cognitive biases in metaverse environments rarely function as isolated mechanisms; instead, they tend to interact in ways that can amplify their overall influence. For instance, in virtual destination testing, the interplay between high presence bias and strong anchoring effects produced an especially pronounced impact on participants' decision-making. Such patterns highlight the importance of developing more sophisticated theoretical models—ones that explicitly account for the interactions between biases rather than treating them as independent, stand-alone phenomena.

-Avatar-Mediated Cognition

The results concerning avatar identification add to the growing body of research on avatar-mediated cognition. The observed moderate correlation ($r = .43, p = .008$) between avatar

- Cognitive style (analytical vs. intuitive) ($\beta = .22, p = .018$)

The model demonstrates that cognitive biases have substantial predictive power for research outcomes, supporting the importance of

identification and the alignment of participant responses indicates that virtual self-representations can generate distinct psychological effects, unlike those found in either face-to-face or conventional online settings. These findings extend social cognitive theory into immersive virtual contexts and underscore the need for novel theoretical frameworks capable of capturing the complexity of avatar–user dynamics.

Contributions to Metaverse Research

-Empirical evidence for metaverse effects

Our study offers some of the first robust, empirical insights into how metaverse environments shape cognitive processes and decision-making. Although theoretical discussions on the potential impacts of the metaverse have been plentiful, systematic empirical evidence has been scarce. The present findings address this gap by demonstrating both the opportunities and the challenges inherent in metaverse-based research. Notably, the marked improvement in predictive validity when cognitive biases were mitigated (from $r = 0.42$ to $r = 0.68$) underscores the potential of virtual environments to yield high-quality insights—provided that bias is carefully managed. These results refine the theoretical understanding of the metaverse's research value while clarifying its methodological constraints.

-Methodological framework development

The integrative framework developed in our study represents a significant theoretical contribution to metaverse research methodology. By systematically addressing cognitive biases in metaverse contexts, the framework provides a theoretical foundation for understanding and improving metaverse-based research practices.

The framework's emphasis on the interplay between environmental factors, cognitive biases research methodologies, and mitigation strategies advances theoretical understanding of metaverse research as a complex system rather than a collection of isolated techniques.

Advancements in Market Research Theory

-Virtual research validity

The findings contribute to market research theory by providing new insights into the validity of virtual research methodologies. The differential patterns of bias manifestation across research initiatives support the development of more nuanced theories of research validity that account for the specific characteristics of virtual environments.

The strong relationship between cognitive biases and research validity ($\beta = -.53, p = .001$) provides theoretical support for the importance of bias management in ensuring the validity of metaverse-based market research.

Conclusion

Our study has made significant contributions to understanding cognitive biases in metaverse market research and their impact on research effectiveness. The development and empirical validation of the integrative framework provide both theoretical advancement and practical guidance for researchers and practitioners.

The key findings demonstrate that cognitive biases are prevalent and impactful in metaverse environments, with different patterns of manifestation across research methodologies. The proposed mitigation strategies show significant effectiveness in reducing biases and improving research validity, with combined approaches providing the greatest overall benefits.

The theoretical contributions extend cognitive bias theory, metaverse research, and market research methodology by providing context-specific understanding of bias manifestations and their management. The practical implications offer guidance for market researchers, organizations, and technology developers in improving the quality and effectiveness of metaverse-based research.

As metaverse technologies continue to evolve and become more prevalent in market research

-Integration of traditional and virtual research

This study advances theoretical understanding of how traditional and virtual research methodologies can be effectively integrated. The evidence indicates that metaverse-based research should not be viewed as a substitute for traditional methods, but rather as a complementary approach that benefits from deliberate integration and careful bias management. The observed effectiveness of combined mitigation strategies across diverse methodologies lends support to theoretical models that prioritize methodological triangulation and integration over competition between approaches.

and consumer engagement, the importance of understanding and managing cognitive biases will only increase. This study provides a foundation for addressing this challenge and offers a framework for continued advancement in this important area.

The limitations of the study highlight opportunities for future research, and the proposed directions suggest promising paths for continued exploration. As researchers and practitioners continue to work at the intersection of cognitive psychology, virtual reality, and market research, the insights gained from this study will contribute to more effective and reliable metaverse-based market research practices.

Ultimately, this research demonstrates that while metaverse environments present unique challenges for cognitive bias management, they also offer unprecedented opportunities for understanding consumer behavior and preferences when approached with methodological rigor and bias awareness. The integrative framework provides a roadmap for harnessing these opportunities while managing the challenges, paving the way for more effective and insightful metaverse market research in the future.

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