



**An investigation into how marketers use Virtual Reality (VR) technology to
enhance consumer interaction**

Submitted by

Jonathan Adrian Cordero Alvarez

Master of Science in Marketing

National College of Ireland

Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2022

Abstract

An investigation into how marketers use Virtual Reality (VR) technology to enhance consumer interaction by Jonathan Adrian Cordero Alvarez

Aim and Objectives: This research aimed to examine the significance of virtual reality in marketing. This study's first objective was to determine virtual reality's importance and role in marketing. The second objective of this research was to explore how technology and language adaptation is necessary for developing high-quality experiences. The third objective of this review was to compare virtual reality in marketing with augmented reality. Finally, this study's fourth objective was to investigate virtual reality's impacts on consumer-brand interaction.

Method: This research employed a primary qualitative design and collected data using semi-structured interviews from 10 brand managers and marketers who shared in-depth perceptions on the significance of VR in marketing activities and its role in influencing consumer-brand interaction. The results were generated using the technique of thematic analysis.

Results: The findings suggest that virtual reality influences consumer-brand interaction as it allows consumers to have more holistic purchase encounters, making them feel more physically and intellectually connected to a company.

Conclusion: The study concluded that VR delivers long-term advantages through creative business structures and helps clients remain updated on the latest products through virtual experiences. Aside from that, VR provides a very immersive experience with a strong perceptual impact and psychological connection with consumers. Businesses might be able to take advantage of this relationship to engage with customers in novel and productive ways. According to studies, customers who have a strong emotional relationship with a brand are also more likely to make repeat purchases and become brand ambassadors for life.

Key Words: *Virtual Reality (VR), Consumer-brand Interaction, Qualitative Research, Thematic Analysis, Primary Data, Marketing, Technology, and Language Adaptation, Augmented Reality (AR)*

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland

Research Students Declaration Form

(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

Name: Jonathan Adrian Cordero Alvarez

Student Number: 20232551

Degree for which thesis is submitted: MSc Marketing

Title of Thesis: An investigation into how marketers use Virtual Reality (VR) technology to enhance consumer interaction

Date: 17th August 2022

Material submitted for award

A. I declare that this work submitted has been composed by myself.

B. I declare that all verbatim extracts contained in the thesis have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged.

C. I agree to my thesis being deposited in the NCI Library online open access repository NORMA.

D. Either *I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

Or *I declare that the following material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for the award of

(State the award and the awarding body and list the material below)

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, praises and thanks to God for all the blessings throughout my life and throughout this stage of my life.

Secondly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, B.Ed. & MIM Sinéad Darcy, for her marvellous supervision, guidance, and support. I express sincere appreciation for her generous participation in guiding, helpful criticism, supportive encouragement, and counsel throughout my MSc. Sinéad's direction, honest and valuable feedback played a crucial role in completing this dissertation. *Sine Metu.*

I would also like to thank the interviewees, who kindly gave up some of their valuable time to participate in my research and make this project possible.

Many thanks to all my master's teachers, especially Dave Hurley, Michael Bane and Dr Louise Maguire, whose words were always wise, and their knowledge was rigorous and accurate. I thank them for participating in this great challenge and for their patience, dedication, perseverance, and tolerance.

I should also appreciate all my colleagues at the National College of Ireland for their continuous encouragement and support.

I would also like to express my deepest thanks to Pablo, Matias, Fátima, Giovanni, Paola, Juan, and Gabriela. Even though I met each of you at different moments during this stage or even though you could not be with me all the time or in the way I wanted, I thank you for your participation in this great challenge, as well as your love, affection, patience, dedication, perseverance, and tolerance. *¡Los quiero!*

Last but not least, I am incredibly grateful to God and my whole family, starting with my mother, father, grandmother Irma, Nahara, and Antonio Lara. You have always believed in me, supported me, and loved me no matter the circumstances. None of this would have been possible without my family's love and support. *Ich Liebe Dich!*

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	I
Submission of Thesis and Dissertation	II
Acknowledgments	III
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Gaps in the Literature Review.....	3
1.3 Research Justification and Rationale.....	4
1.4 Aim of the Study	5
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Research Methods	6
1.7 Structure of the Study.....	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 What is Virtual Reality?.....	8
2.2.1 Introduction of VR into marketing.....	8
2.2.2 Virtual Reality as a Marketing Tool.....	9
2.3 The Impact of Virtual Reality in Marketing.....	10
2.3.1 The Opportunities Virtual Reality Offers in Marketing.....	11
2.3.2 The barriers of VR in marketing	11
2.4 Impacts of virtual reality on consumer-brand interaction	12
2.5 Comparing virtual reality in marketing with augmented reality	13
2.6 Summary	14
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	16
3.1 Introduction.....	16
3.2 Research philosophy	16
3.3 Research Strategy.....	17
3.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews	17
3.4 Research Methods	18

	2
3.4.1 Qualitative v Quantitative Vs Mixed Methods	19
3.4.2 Qualitative Methods.....	19
3.5 Data Collection Method	20
3.6 Sampling Strategy	20
3.7 Interviewees' Information.....	21
3.8 Data Analysis	21
3.9 Reliability and Validity	21
3.10 Ethical Considerations	21
3.11 Limitations	22
3.12 Summary	22
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS	23
4.1 Introduction.....	23
4.2 Thematic Analysis.....	23
4.2.1 Analysing the importance of virtual reality in marketing	23
4.2.2 The opportunities for new successes via VR application in marketing	25
4.2.3 The potential barriers for consumers	26
4.2.4 Analysing the influence of VR on consumer-brand interaction	27
4.3 Summary	28
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS	30
5.1 Discussion	30
5.2 Limitations	31
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION	33
5.1 Summarised Findings.....	33
5.2 Recommendations	34
5.3 Conclusion	35
5.4 Future Implications	36
References.....	37
Appendix.....	43

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Virtual Reality (VR) marketing enables firms to fill the gap between action and experience. VR can be utilized for offering a digital experience in place of a physical one that may promote services and products (Alcañiz et al., 2019). VR can also be utilized for highlighting the development of products and services. Similar to how social media has been able to transform the way brands communicate with consumers and how they advertise, VR and *augmented reality (AR)* have the ability to transform the way that consumers interact with services and products in stores and online (Burke, 2018). Currently, many businesses are focusing their attention on VR marketing; however, marketers still need to learn a lot to make the virtual experience engaging for consumers. It requires the effective use of technology to create an exceptional experience for customers.

AR marketing is considered the most common kind of VR marketing. It is less expensive and feasible for several firms to utilize than generating a headset experience. Since AR only needs a desktop application or phone, it is also more accessible to more customers. Companies have started adopting AR and VR marketing to allow consumers try products virtually before buying (Boyd & Koles, 2019). One of the advantages of this is that customers can be given a complete product view, so it is less likely that the customer may return it. Around 65% of e-commerce returns are due to the aspect that the product could not meet the expectation of the customers (Angeloni & Rossi, 2021).

This research study aims to evaluate the significance of VR in marketing and explore the potential of VR in attracting customers and boosting sales. The focus is also to determine the requirement for language and technology adaptation to generate a high-quality immersive experience.

1.2 Gaps in the Literature Review

The previous research literature review gap is that businesses are still hesitant to use this technology in marketing, considering the rapid development of VR and AR. The other research gap is that brand attitudes, and various emotional responses drive purchase intentions toward the brand. The fundamental strength of the research is the absence of virtual communication tactics. According to previous literature review research, various limitations to using augmented and virtual reality in marketing prevent businesses from exploiting this technology effectively. The other gap in the prior literature review research is the absence of an evaluation of language adaptation for producing a high-quality immersive experience for customers. Integrating innovative VR components that enhance the

user experience is still a challenge for businesses. The methodology framework required for applying XRs in marketing is lacking from the earlier studies.

Our study fills this gap by offering various approaches and methods for the market's virtual reality experiences. The fact that VR marketing is still in its infancy makes it necessary to perform in-depth research on this topic. Extensive research can aid in identifying prospective VR marketing components that allow marketers to offer consumers a distinctive experience. Investigating any barriers preventing a business from successfully integrating VR marketing into its operations is also critical. Therefore, this research emphasizes assessing the value of VR in marketing and identifying the necessity of including high-quality experience in marketing.

1.3 Research Justification and Rationale

According to Boyd and Koles (2019), while the majority of the big brands utilise the Web 2.0 platform as a marketing strategy in their marketing mix, VR is becoming important since its increasing penetration is making the user experiences dynamic, capturing behavioural interactivity and psychological presence. The purpose of the study is to investigate how marketers prioritise consumers' preferences so that, as a result, big businesses are required to give their customers the best experience possible when it comes to cutting-edge technologies like virtual reality. Grudzewski et al. (2018) also explained that VR helps marketers advertise products and services while establishing a relationship with customers to invest in them and offer feedback. However, the integration of augmented reality (AR) as an emerging trend enables businesses to provide clients with distinctive experiences to increase sales by making shopping more convenient. As a result, a crucial component of this study's justification was examining how consumer adoption of VR plays a role in boosting customer loyalty through VR-based apps that enhance immersive experiences.

The research has been extraordinarily successful in helping the researcher to present the many advantages that a successful firm may achieve with the help of an efficient VR solution. The research provides the many tactics and techniques required for the researcher and improves the customers' buying intentions. The many brands related to marketing can spread the word about their products throughout this study since they are aware of the new ways in which VR practices may help their products get better. With the aid of this study, consumer brand experiences also improve since cutting-edge technology advances various product categories, lowering obstacles associated with low-quality items, which are a big draw for consumers. The research of VR marketing is also profitable for the researcher as it enhances brand opportunities and consumer satisfaction. On the other hand, virtual reality experiences provide advantages that make it easier for people to mingle and relieve stress since

the cost structure of businesses is more efficient and draws in more customers thanks to higher-quality products. Therefore, the rationale of this study is to examine how advancements in technology and linguistic adaptation result in high-quality experiences that significantly impact how consumers perceive brands.

This study was conducted on the importance of VR in enhancing customer brand experiences through improved marketing strategies. As a result, the analysis will be critical for many parties. First, the research will be essential for marketers searching for new approaches and technology developments in marketing, such as VR, to determine whether it is a worthwhile investment from a marketing standpoint to attract and keep target consumers. This study will be essential for many businesses to see how the market is utilising VR in popular brands to improve the customer experience. Additionally, consumers who want to investigate if VR experiences can improve shopping experiences and decision-making for the best product will find this research quite important. Finally, future researchers can use the results of the current study to define and investigate the use of qualitative analysis in analysing the language and technological adaptations that result in the development of high-quality experiences when using VR for marketing.

1.4 Aim of the Study

This research study aims to evaluate the significance of VR in Marketing. The research objectives are:

- To evaluate the usage of virtual reality in marketing
- To explore the technology and language adaptation in marketing.
- To evaluate the research and contrast of VR with AR in marketing.
- To evaluate the current impact of the use of VR in marketing
- To analyze the influence of VR on consumer-brand interaction
- To explore the potential barriers for consumers in engaging with VR

1.5 Research Questions

The focus of this research is on an investigation into how marketers use Virtual Reality (VR) technology to enhance consumer interaction.

The sub questions that this leads to are:

- What is the usage of virtual reality in marketing?
- What are the technology and language adaptation in VR marketing?

- What is the current impact of the use of VR with AR in marketing?
- What is the influence of VR on consumer-brand interaction?

1.6 Research Methods

The sampling method were used in the current research since the information is gathered from numerous journal articles, research papers, and other websites, the primary research approach is employed. The primary strategy helps to acquire the data, and interviews are conducted with a variety of people; thus, the sampling technique is helpful for research. The interview allows all responses since it allows all applicants to voice their perspectives. With the aid of the interview, numerous inquiries are answered.

1.7 Structure of the Study

Chapter 1 of the current study includes a background of the research which highlights the main concepts discussed in the research to identify the problem and formulate the aim and objectives to be catered in the study.

Chapter 2 contains a critical review of the existing literature relevant to the research area and topic of the study. This chapter presents previously established knowledge and ideas about VR technology in modern times, as well as its strengths and weaknesses in today's world. In addition, a literature gap is identified to be addressed in the findings. This chapter critically explores the literature on VR technology, highlighting the main concepts discussed in the research to identify the problem and formulate the purpose and objectives to be achieved in this study. The purpose of this chapter is to inform researchers about the topic of VR technology and the different uses it has been put to, and to raise awareness of the potential of this tool in the marketing industry.

Chapter 3 of the study presents a detailed description of the research methods and techniques selected for data collection and analysis, including evidence-based justifications. This chapter also presents the sampling method and size, ethical considerations, as well as the general research philosophy that is best applied, and the resulting approaches and strategies that are chosen, based primarily on established frameworks.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and a brief analysis of them in terms of key findings, patterns, and insights that contrast the results and were revealed by the analysis of the raw data.

Chapter 5 presents a critical reflection of the results in context with the literature. It attempts to synthesise the results of the primary research with the secondary research in Chapter 4, allowing for a better theoretical understanding of the research to be developed. This chapter will also analyse the

limitations that emerged during the research as well as the limitations that emerged from the interviewees.

Chapter 6 is the conclusive chapter which presents summarised findings, recommendations for the respective field and suggestions for future research. In addition, some future implications that may be helpful for future research in the field of VR technology will also be mentioned for consideration in any future efforts.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

According to Bonetti et al. (2018), virtual reality has proven to be a successful promotional tool, as customers are drawn into the new world by the interactive experience, which improves the brands' engagement with their customers via technology. From marketing perspective marketers are increasingly seeing virtual reality as a tool when building their marketing strategy as through content and advertising, VR allows consumers to be more innovative and participatory (Jung et al., 2021; Boyd and Koles, 2019). In this chapter an in-depth and investigative review of existing research and literature in relation to VR is presented to highlight the significance of VR in current marketing practises and its impact on consumer-brand interaction. This chapter will look at the opportunities VR brings to brand marketing and the barriers to its use or introduction as part of a marketing strategy. In addition to this, the similarities and differences between VR and augmented reality (AR) in marketing and the impact of VR on consumer-brand interaction will be discussed.

2.2 What is Virtual Reality?

According to Meinhold (2020), virtual reality is an interactive technological device (software, hardware, peripheral devices, and other elements) that acts as an interface between the human being and the computer in which the user is immersed in a three-dimensional computer-generated environment. This technology creates a fake but realistic environment placing users in a virtual scenario thanks to virtual 3D technology. Depending on the device, VR marketing can be both multi-sensory and visually appealing.

2.2.1 Introduction of VR into marketing

Although this technology has been mostly applied in the gaming industry (e.g., Batman: Arkham VR or Beat Saber), these devices have found their way into various industries such as tourism (e.g., National Geographic VR) and shopping (e.g., Walmart). Thus, demonstrating that VR serves as a valuable marketing tool (Alcañiz et al., 2019).

In agreement with Poetker (2019) VR was introduced to marketing in 1987 when Jaron Lanier along with VPL Research, developed a line of software for virtual reality applications. Selling the first VR equipment such as VR goggles, data gloves and later the full data suit. After this in 1993 the SEGA company introduced the SEGA VR which included four video games. It was until 2010 when Palmer Luckey designed the prototype of the Oculus Rift with a 90-degree field of view.

On March 25, 2014, Facebook acquired that company and in that same month, Sony revealed its Morpheus project, which would later become PlayStation VR. From this year was when more and more VR projects began to emerge such as the HTC Vive, PSVR, and Samsung Gear VR, promoting a growth in the VR market as well as its use by companies.

2.2.2 Virtual Reality as a Marketing Tool

As explained in the study by Hollebeek et al. (2020), while VR is viewed as important and increasingly recognised in marketing considering its role in the consumer journey it has been noted that firms capable of offering sensory feedback, firms tend to use computer-mediated interactive environments to drive desired consumer behaviours and strengthen consumer relationships. Leading companies, such as North Face, Sony Pictures, McDonald's, BMW, and Jaguar Land Rover are rapidly utilising virtual reality technology to strengthen consumer interactions, and as a result, VR is being hailed as the unique and fastest form of video traffic. Therefore, the use of VR marketing is vital for offering up-to-date user experiences e.g., Virtual Locker Room of Coca-Cola to emerging channels of distribution i.e., Wayfair Idea Space (Hollebeek et al., 2020). It is also important for boosting the interactions with customers by creating an impact on their behavioural, cognitive, and social engagement which encourages them to invest in the respective brand. Similarly, the research by Chadha and Ahuja (2020) while highlighting the use of VR in marketing explained that Burberry initiated a 'Kisses Campaign' while working in collaboration with Google aimed at promoting the lipsticks referred to as 'Burberry Kisses' by letting users share virtual kisses along with any personalised message using their favourite colour of lipstick by the use of VR technology. Additionally, the luxury fashion brand in Italy i.e., Prada known for quality and prestige as a turnaround strategy launched its interactive VR application namely 'Prada x Prada' to shift the use of its fragrances to the next level including L'Homme and La femme (Chadha and Ahuja, 2020).

Furthermore, research by Loureiro et al. (2019) through virtual reality experiences applied in marketing efforts, consumers can ensure a more vivid representation, making their imagination run wild and eliciting positive attitudes towards the brand. The research thus presented explained of few brands using VR in communication campaigns such as Marriott International, Shangri-La hotels and resorts, and Thomas Cook whereas Volvo automobile company also offered VR-based test drives. Nevertheless, Carrefour is a VR-stimulated brand that allows products to be experienced in virtual environments whereas IKEA offers customers to organise the layout of their room, for example (Loureiro et al., 2019). These all brands are using VR in marketing to improve customer exchanges and interactions after the actual

purchase considering the engagement, consumption, service recovery, post-purchase services, and customer engagement processes through online reviews and brand communities (Hollebeek et al., 2020). These virtual flagships in the virtual world contribute to the promotion of brands using virtual worlds and online platforms (Loureiro et al., 2019). However, Alves and Luis Reis (2020) showed that VR is increasingly being used in people's daily lives, particularly people who are part of the Millennial and Generation Z generation. This is mostly through video games, to the point where users make purchases through the platform of VR-based e-commerce convenient website. Therefore, to offer such experiences the three applications including IKEA Catalog APP, IKEA Place, and IKEA Store APP are used to provide an AR experience allowing faster product search and making decisions identifying the shopping list items features through VR scanning (Alves and Luís Reis, 2020). Consequently, it is worth noting that VR creates emotional experiences for the consumers pushing the in-person interaction and user engagement to the next level making marketing for brands much more fruitful. For example, footwear brands such as Nike and Gucci allow users to try on shoes virtually to alleviate fitting concerns (Soni et al., 2020).

2.3 The Impact of Virtual Reality in Marketing

Yung et al., (2021) explained that technology can generate an exceptional experience for customers looking to get the desired product. The researchers indicated the need for conducting empirical research into the consequences and determinants of experience specifically in the marketing domain. This study's main objective was to assess the value of VR in travel marketing. In this study, seventy-three participants interacted with virtual cruise ship surroundings. The experiences were delivered via video, images, and virtual reality. The findings show that VR is more successful than traditional media at evoking emotional reactions to the product. It eventually enables customers to experience a high-quality simulation of the product, thereby reducing the chances of the product return. The researchers concluded that VR can emotionally attract customers to a particular product, thereby leading to exceptional marketing results.

Nezamova and Olentsova (2020), further argued that VR technology helps in providing an exceptional experience to consumers. By using the same language that the customer use in the VR simulation, it becomes possible to gain the trust of the customer. A high-quality experience can be ensured by using VR simulation. The VR technology positively affects the customer perception of the product and helps in giving a proper explanation about the product or service.

2.3.1 The Opportunities Virtual Reality Offers in Marketing

Cowan & Ketron (2019) argued that VR has gained popularity among marketers as it can be utilized for shaping and exploring consumer-brand engagement and high-quality product experience. The major VR themes evaluated by the researchers include interactivity, application quality, and avatar. Every application can produce flow and allow customers to experience the desired products in a virtual environment. The researchers concluded that VR applications must be treated uniquely. Before making the sale contract, the customers should be asked to take a virtual tour of the service or product that can significantly increase the interest of consumers in the product. VR technology can provide a real-life experience to the customers, which can eventually result in increased sales and profitability.

Loureiro et al., (2019) focused on highlighting the most-relevant research in simulated realities with core attention focused on marketing and VR. The researchers adopted a text-mining approach through the utilization of a Bayesian statistical model called Dirichlet allocation to conduct the analysis of research articles. The results revealed that VR is an exceptional tool for improving marketing and increasing sales. The focus on using the customer language when providing the experience through the VR tool is also an effective strategy for engaging the customer and delivering an exceptional experience. The findings further revealed that simulated realities can invoke emotions among the customers about the product and they get attracted to purchase the product. Provision of quality experience through language adaptation helps in gaining the trust of consumers as they start trusting the company's credibility and authenticity.

2.3.2 The barriers of VR in marketing

According to Laurell C. et al. (2019), adopting VR in the daily lives of both consumers and businesses has been complicated and sales figures have not been as high as expected, even though it is an eye-catching technology, and despite it being a particularly useful way to share multimedia content in an immersive way. It is therefore essential to understand the barriers that have so far complicated the adoption of this technology, from the point of view of both the consumer and the companies interested in adopting VR in their marketing efforts.

As mentioned in their study Laurell C. et al. (2019) the obstacles that slow down the pace of adoption of new technologies are referred to as 'emergence challenges'. These challenges are inherent to the ecosystem that need to be resolved for diffusion to take off.

Jung et al., (2016) evaluated the influence of AR and VR on the visitor experience in the museum context. Previously, there had been limited attempts for evaluating elements that improve the visitor's experience using emerging and new technologies. This research evaluated the influence of presence on the customer experience in a mixed (AR and VR) environment. The participants were given questionnaires, which revealed that social presence within the AR and VR environments tend to be a major predictor of four realms of the experience economy. Moreover, every aspect of the experience economy tends to have a major impact on the visitor experience that induce the intentions of customers to visit the museum again. The findings suggest that both AR and VR can improve the experience of customers to a considerable degree. Hence, a mixed VR and AR environment for customers can significantly increase customers and improve the product experience. Both AR and VR can be utilized for ensuring that customers gain an exceptional experience with the product.

2.4 Impacts of virtual reality on consumer-brand interaction

Abrar (2018) focused on evaluating the impact of VR on developing customer-brand engagement and buying intention. The core objective of the research involved exploring the influence of VR in the generation of purchase intention and customer brand engagement. The results revealed the evident association of AR with customer-brand interaction and buying interaction with significant and partial mediating effects. The research further predicted that VR devices and applications may be utilized as a creative tool for spreading awareness and attracting consumers. Customers may get an insight into the product offered by the brand with dimensions, full reviews, uses, and benefits also. The customer must have enough knowledge of handling applications and smart devices.

Violante et al., (2019) focused on evaluating how the VR experience may influence customer engagement. The VR environment demonstrates the virtual supermarket in the kind of 360 degree-video capable of generating a highly immersive sensory experience, which promotes the consumers' subjective presence and stimulates their minds. The findings demonstrate that the application of virtual technology to marketing activities enables marketers to respond and determine opportunities through innovative technologies that are more effective and faster.

McLean & Wilson (2019) revealed that while VR and AR in the consumer markets are still in development, some innovative marketers have applied AR technology in their mobile

apps. A survey of 441 consumers was conducted and the researchers created the variables impacting the brand engagement through the mobile applications of retailers and the results of AR-related to brand engagement. The research focuses on introducing a new set of AR attributes, including AR interactivity, AR novelty, and AR vividness. The AR technology positively impacts brand engagement through the AR mobile app of the retailer. The results further highlight that AR-enabled brand interaction leads to increased satisfaction with the future brand use intent and application experience. Both VR and AR have the potential to increase the interest of customers in the brand. The consumers should also be allowed to give feedback about the virtual tour so that companies can improve their marketing practices. The feedback system can also help marketers include innovative elements in VR and AR marketing.

Jung et al., (2021) further explored the importance of VR marketing in improving brand value and consumer-brand interaction. The use of innovative strategies utilized by marketers about VR help in improving the experience of consumers. Consumers are attracted to the brand if they feel satisfied with the product. The VR helps in gaining the trust of consumers so that they can purchase the product successfully. The use of a simulated environment provides an experience that allows the customer to assess the product from different viewpoints. It helps in improving the brand experience and increases consumer-brand interaction. Marketers are encouraged to use VR technology to attract more customers and increase sales. VR technology further helps the brand interact with the consumers by providing a virtual simulation.

2.5 Comparing virtual reality in marketing with augmented reality

According to Xiong et al. (2021) currently technological advances such as virtual reality (VR) headsets and augmented reality (AR) have emerged as the interactive displays for the new generations as they have the ability to offer new highly realistic three-dimensional (3D) visual experiences. Education, healthcare, real estate, engineering, and gaming are just a few examples of their valuable applications. While VR fosters a fully immersive experience, AR combines digital information and the real world.

Wei (2019) evaluated the major developments of AR and VR in tourism and hospitality marketing. It further focuses on pointing out positive directions for marketing research on AR and VR applications. The findings revealed that both VR and AR have their significance in marketing. On the one hand, AR uses the existing real-world environment and VR is completely virtual. On the other hand, VR users are usually controlled by the system, while AR users can control their presence within the real world. Finally, AR can be accessed with a

smartphone or any other type of device; however, VR requires a device consisting of glasses and headset, which can be sold as a single product or separately. These elements indicate that AR can be preferred in marketing over VR, especially for the low cost. The AR customers can control themselves while in VR they simply have to see what the system shows them, requiring a large amount of content.

Wedel et al., (2020) argued that AR and VR technologies are having a positive influence on a range of marketing practices. The researchers compared AR and VR and evaluated the applications of these technologies in marketing. The researchers proposed a model for the AR/VR research within consumer marketing that tends to center around the consumer experience. The researchers found that AR is better as compared to VR when it comes to marketing. VR does not allow full control of the customer and is just a virtual simulation. Contrarily, AR provides limited control to consumers when they are experiencing the simulation. This major difference indicates that AR can be preferred over VR in some cases since it enables marketers to provide an exceptional experience to the consumers. However, VR has the capability of providing a high-quality experience to the customers, AR improves the experience further by providing some control. Furthermore, AR improves both the real and virtual world, thereby enabling consumers to gain an exceptional experience. The research highlights that both AR and VR are currently in utilization among marketers worldwide. By assuring a high-quality immersive experience to consumers, such technologies help in boosting sales and brand recognition for the firm.

2.6 Summary

The usage of virtual reality is becoming more significant as its adoption grows, making user experiences more dynamic, capturing behavioural involvement and psychological presence. This chapter presented an overview of how previous researchers have investigated the impact of VR in enhancing consumer-based experiences by the effective use of marketing strategies. It was observed that studies such as Hollebeek et al. (2020) that leading international brands such as IKEA, Coca-Cola, and McDonald's, for example, are increasingly using virtual reality (VR) to strengthen customer interactions, with VR being hailed as the most distinctive and fastest type of video traffic. However, a gap was observed concerning explaining how the role of technology and language adaptation in developing high-quality experiences. Therefore, a recent study was carried out aimed at determining the impact of language adaptation and its role in enhancing the experiences of users of online shopping. Hence, the identified gap was catered to in the current study via qualitative research through the conduct of interviews. This

chapter discusses about virtual reality and how important it is in terms of marketing. Its impacts and role technology and adoption of language plays in developing of high-quality experience, the opportunities VR provides in marketing. Additionally, VR impact on consumer its brand interaction has been talked about.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

According to Goundar S. (2012), research methodology pertains to the critical description of the steps and methods used by the researcher to conduct a scientific study. It encompasses elements such as the design and approach of the research, the underlying philosophy of the design, type of data collected, type of analysis conducted, study sampling for data collection, and ethical considerations during the study. IN this respect, the current chapter is designated for this purpose, in which the researcher has explicated their choice for the above aspects. This study is to investigate the significance of Virtual Reality in Marketing. The method which is used in the research strategy is semi-structured method. This interview session will be conducted for an hour with an individual person. Qualitative method will be used in this study to collect data. Qualitative method referring to those studies which cannot be measured while can be observed.

3.2 Research philosophy

According to Kumar (2019), there are four major research philosophies used by researchers: pragmatism, positivism, realism, and interpretivism. The research philosophy of positivism, according to Flick (2015), is founded on the concept that logical knowledge gathered via observation and measurement may give suitable research findings. However, according to Ledford and Gast (2014), positivism's research basis emphasises the collection of numerical or measurable data in order to create objective results. Choy (2014), on the other hand, claimed that interpretivism's research philosophy is built on incorporating human interests into the study.

The research philosophy used in this study was based on interpretivism since it enabled the researcher to incorporate findings from the literature review in the final outcomes of the research. Interpretivism holds that knowledge has an inherent component which depends upon human interpretation. In this essence, the current research was appropriate through this philosophical standpoint as it aimed to investigate marketing experiences of consumers. Since marketing experiences are subjective and qualitative phenomenon, it follows that the research philosophy required room for subjective interpretation. Hence, interpretivism aided in broadening the scope of the study.

3.3 Research Strategy

A research strategy is a series of actions to be carried out in order to achieve certain goals and objectives. A research plan enables the researcher to achieve his/her study goals and objectives and to answer his/her research questions. Consequently, the choice of a particular research method will be determined by the objectives of the study, the type of research question, the researcher's perspective on what constitutes a good study, as well as data availability and time constraints (Denscombe, 2017). The research strategy which is used in this study is based on semi-structured interviews. Agarwal (2020) describes semi-structured interviews as a meeting in which the interviewer does not strictly follow the list of formal questions. This approach to interviewing allows for more open-ended questions which facilitate a discussion with the interviewee instead of straightforward format of question and answer. It is the method of data collection which completely depend upon asking questions in a programmed thematic context.

3.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

In accordance with Goundar S. (2012), certain aspects must be considered when doing a lengthy interview in order to have a relevant, rich, and interesting dialogue. First, researchers must guarantee that contextual influences do not interfere with respondents' ability to articulate their thoughts and emotions. Saunders, et al. (2012) suggest that both interviewers and interviewees must be in a secure and relaxing environment. It is important that respondents identify where the interview will take place to reinforce this point. Semi-structured interviews are distinguished by a loose interview framework, which includes a pre-determined set of questions formulated in a way that allows for open and thorough responses. The dialogue is consistent but adaptable, allowing researchers to respond to new information from the subject by asking follow-up questions (Blaxter, et al., 2010). The interviewer can also change the order of the questions to suit the flow of the conversation. The main structure and terminology, however, is retained between interviews. These characteristics of the semi-structured interview were thought to be relevant to research aims, research questions, and techniques. By allowing respondents to speak openly about VR, this study hoped to capture the existing lack of awareness of the technology and consumer sentiments.

However, in order to reduce the risk of a strong impact, the precise goal of the investigation has been hidden. Furthermore, it was told to all respondents that the data collection was confidential and that interviews might be paused or cancelled at any time. All

interviews took place in English. These aspects were confirmed with each interviewee prior to each interview being conducted.

When this research had through transcribed each interview, this study advised that send it to each respondent to ensure that the information was properly comprehended (Collis, et al., 2014). A three-interview pilot survey was done to examine the structure and flow of the interview guide. The pilot survey was designed to determine whether the question was misinterpreted or did not elicit responses from respondents.

Pilot surveys are a common tool for identifying flaws in the survey approach of choice and identifying questions that generate uninteresting answers (Crewell, 2013). This study discovered that certain questions needed to be revised after the first three interviews either respondents did not provide enough information, or the language was too difficult. It was also discovered that several questions received remarkably similar responses. As suggested by Collis et al (2014) questions that were judged redundant were completely eliminated during the revising process. Interviewees were given a VR headset during the interview, and while wearing the headset, interviewees were asked questions about not only the apartment (e.g., size, layout, lighting) but also the experienced feelings throughout VR. As a result of the comments, we changed the structure of the interview. As a result, they asked more questions while the respondents were still experiencing VR.

3.4 Research Methods

This study employs an exploratory research design in accordance with our research questions and qualitative methodologies. The exploratory study approach is appropriate for studies that demand a deeper understanding of problems and phenomena whose exact nature is unknown (Bryman, et al., 2011). Existing quantitative data point to a telepresence framework with five variables (depth, width, velocity, range, and mapping), but the subjective influence of telepresence remains limited. Unknown. The advantage of exploratory research is its emphasis on flexibility and data collection. As a result, these designs are ideal when you need free-form questions to gather additional insights on a specific issue. This is consistent with the qualitative approach. The processes or techniques and the strategies which is utilized for data collection or evidence of the study to uncover more data or to develop a topic for better understanding are known as research method. Different tools or method to collect data is used by the different research methods. Research method are of three type qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method. In sociology, qualitative research has an extensive history and has been

employed for as long as the field has existed (Mohajan, 2018). Social scientists have long been interested in this type of research as it allows them to examine the meanings that people attach to their actions, relationships, and behaviours. Qualitative research aims to uncover the underlying meaning of actions or outcomes that quantitative research usually measures. Accordingly, qualitative researchers must examine meaning, symbols, interpretations, social practices, and relationships (Aspers and Corte, 2019). Using their own eyes, ears and brains, qualitative researchers gather in-depth opinions and assessments of certain places, people, and events. The method which is used in this case is qualitative method. Qualitative research can be explained as a market research method which focuses on gaining data by open-ended and informal communication. According to Austin and Sutton (2014), the qualitative study would be used to finding perception and views.

3.4.1 Qualitative v Quantitative Vs Mixed Methods

The two primary research approaches are quantitative and qualitative. The third method is to lay the framework for enhancing and highlighting research outcomes. To assess data, quantitative approaches derived from scientific methods rely on statistical procedures. Qualitative approaches, on the other hand, focus on descriptive narrative to analyse data (Bryman, et al., 2011). The research literature is dominated by quantitative research, which has a long tradition. However, qualitative research is increasingly becoming recognised as a valuable source of information. A mixed strategy has recently arisen that offers a novel technique by integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches. Research questions heavily impact methodological choices. Study questions are broad inquiries that lead academics away from the observation dilemma and into exploratory research. Management questions can be divided into three categories: (1) aim or goal selection, (2) solution production and evaluation, and (3) control situation troubleshooting. When designing data collecting and analysis, appropriate research questions provide direction and focus. Method. The structured interview method is used to collect data in this study. The quantitative method employed a structured interview in which the identical question was asked to each interviewee without variation. Structured interview questions are designed to preserve uniformity and eliminate bias. Statistics employ sampling to extract information from a wider population.

3.4.2 Qualitative Methods

Studies involving people, the interactions between people and their environment, and human behaviour and the motives that underpin it can all be conducted using qualitative approaches (Blaxter, et al., 2010). Similar to quantitative methods, qualitative methods do not

impose rigid guidelines or procedures. Qualitative approaches take their research methodology directly from the data. Typically, the procedure results in the creation of the next step. Since they offer in-depth information in the experience of natural language, qualitative approaches let people "achieve a personal experience." This enables to acknowledge prejudice, reflect on your experience in the context of the natural world, and employ the judgment of key researchers to classify the data.

3.5 Data Collection Method

Data collection pertains to the collection of relevant data required to explore the objectives or test the hypothesis. Data collection can be bifurcated in two distinct categories; primary data collection and secondary data collection (Rhodes et al., 2014). In the current research, the researcher focused on primary data which was collected through interviewee. Detailed interview questions were the tools used to gather the responses, in which the questions were structured. Questions were formed by thorough examination of the literature and identification of dimensions that were necessary to meet the objectives of the research. Moreover, data was completely qualitative, comprised of verbal responses of the interviewees, which were first recorded through an audio device and then transcribed in document forms. The qualitative nature of data fits best with exploratory design of the study since it facilitated the researcher in gaining more room for exploration through interpretation which would not have been possible with a quantitative data. Although quantitative data would have added more validity and reliability of the outcomes, their translation into meaningful theorisation would have been arduous due to the lack of prior theoretical basis of this research paradigm of marketing.

3.6 Sampling Strategy

The rescuer opted for marketers and brand's managers as the target interviewee population for this study. The initial few interviewees were contacted, and then non-probabilistic convenience sampling technique was used to include more interviewees. A total of 10 marketers were reached in light of the exposition on methodology by Fugard et al. (2015).

3.7 Interviewees' Information

	Job title	Sector
Interview 1	Brand Manger	Tech
Interview 2	Product manager	Fashion
Interview 3	Marketing manager	Education
Interview 4	Sales manager	Leasing
Interview 5	Operations manager	Leasing
Interview 6	Software Developer	Tech
Interview 7	Marketer	Education
Interview 8	Marketer	Entertainment
Interview 9	Software Engineer	Leasing
Interview 10	Marketing manager	Marketing

3.8 Data Analysis

Among a myriad of techniques for analysis, thematic analysis method was selected for the study. The method comprised of forming distinct themes from the objectives, and then designing interview questions in light of those themes. Afterwards, responses of the interviewees were also categorised under respective themes and analysed.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

The interviewee's experiences and feelings are what determine how dependable the experimental results are. Post-experimental interviews are therefore insufficient. Interviewees should keep track of the time spent on each strategy to ensure accuracy. We want to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings by combining interview replies, reactions, internet catalogues, and time spent using virtual reality tools. They had the opportunity to observe the subjects during the experiment and record their response.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher focused on all the ethical aspects of the study including privacy and data protection of the interviewees. Data was protected in the audio device whose access was only available to the researcher. The transcribed responses were coded to conceal names of the interviewees.

3.11 Limitations

All research approaches have their limitations. The few interviews provide a danger of receiving skewed responses from respondents and restrict the applicability of results to other scenarios. However, the current framework can be greatly expanded, as the research builds on previous quantitative analyses in the literature. This may have a gender-specific impact on the analysis. The lack of variety in VR experience is also evident in the sample of respondents. None of the interviewees had much prior VR experience. This makes it difficult to describe the effect of novelty. Additionally, the interview format used (which lets interviewees see the residence through a picture and experience it naturally in VR) has its own restrictions. Therefore, the consistent presentation of the residence may have contributed to the positive attitude shift brought on by VR. Studies reveal that subliminal stimuli might make the mere exposure effect stronger. However, it is undoubtedly possible to learn about its existence in settings that are more overt, such in the interviews.

3.12 Summary

The objective is to investigate how improved telepresence influences consumer perceptions by taking a close look at both frameworks. Our study seeks to significantly advance the use of VR in VR literature and marketing initiatives. To do this, a contemporary extension of the telepresence theoretical framework for the investigation of consumer attitudes is presented. Telepresence has a unique appeal due to its emphasis on the user experience. It can be used with almost any form of media for communication, including written works, visual arts, virtual reality, and augmented reality (AR). As a result, this report also advances knowledge about the use of common immersive marketing techniques in consumer marketing. Among the technologies that our research expands are augmented reality (AR), mixed reality, and interactive video. Finally, with the hope of having management-related effects, this study attempts to assist management in developing successful VR marketing strategies that take the influence of customer attitudes into account.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In this dissertation, the qualitative data is collected to extract the in-depth and more realistic response to the designed research questions and interviews so that effective and reliable results can be computed. Finally, the chapter of the research presents a critical analysis of the data gathered via interviews by conducting a thematic analysis. The themes were developed in line with the research questions and interview questions to explore the influence of virtual reality on consumer-brand interaction and highlight the key aspects of VR in marketing. The designed themes of the thematic analysis incorporate analysis of the importance of VR in marketing, opportunities for new successes via VR application in marketing, the potential barriers for consumers in engaging with VR, and the influence of VR on consumer-brand interaction. Furthermore, a discussion of the current study's findings in comparison with the existing literature has been presented in this chapter to determine how the recent study has contributed to the research area.

4.2 Thematic Analysis

4.2.1 Analysing the importance of virtual reality in marketing

According to the study by Soni et al. (2020), the introduction of VR as an evolving technology enables businesses to provide consumers varied experiences to boost revenue while also providing shopping convenience. Furthermore, VR lets advertisers display products and services while developing a relationship with customers. In this approach, virtual reality allows marketers to track consumers' behaviours in real-time, as well as their nonverbal responses during virtual reality engagements (Grudzewski et al., 2018). Similar views were observed from the primary research conducted as part of this study through interviews with marketing professionals. Interviewee 3 stated:

"As a working marketing manager, I have experienced how then new technologies have modified the way consumers are delivered product information and visual experiences. In addition, social media platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram have already begun to integrate high-quality user experiences, as well as improved brand exposure thanks to significant cost advancements, due to the widespread and affordable nature of such technical advances."

From the above statement, it can be seen that new technologies such as VR and AR allow brands to change the digital experience for users. As a result, these immersive experiences provide efficient values through business model innovation and helps customers to stay up to date on the latest items using immersive experiences (Jung et al., 2021; Boyd and Koles, 2019). Marketers utilise VR technology to promote flexibility, entice customers, and provide a high sensory implication and emotional connection. On the contrary, Chadha and Ahuja (2020) found that it is also vital to improve customer interactions by influencing their emotional, psychological, and user interactions, which motivates people to invest in the brand. In 2019, Prada introduced its interactive VR application, 'Prada x Prada,' to elevate the usage of its scents, including L'Homme and La Femme. Supporting this point Interviewee 2 referred to their: experience working with well-known fashion brands to highlight the uses of VR in marketing (Mazarine, 2022).

"In my VR marketing experience, I have always noted that customers want a memorable experience from a retailer when they opt for online shopping converting potential leads into long-term consumers. For example, the way McDonald's offers a Happy Goggles VR headset to capture children's attention is vital for promoting and increasing customer engagement. Also, I would like to add how in tourism VR has completely changed marketing experiences as big hotels like Marriott International tend to plan their events and make consumers be physically present using VR technology promoting additional sales for events."

Interviewee 4 stated that:

"I have always been fascinated with how automobile sellers and manufacturers use VR to enhance customer experiences as they bring the showroom to the customers. For example, Vroom and BMW use VR to offer customers hand-held experiences. In contrast, Nissan uses Oculus VR to allow customers to design their cars using VR technology. Thus, VR makes it easier for consumers to shop around bridging the gap between action and experience which promote services and products with improved promotion capturing target audience attention."

In the above two statements, it has been noted that the use of VR in marketing is extensive as many brands in multiple sectors are making shopping easier for consumers by letting them experience the product, which also promotes their products and lets consumers provide their honest feedback. This creates consumer loyalty and boosts consumer retention. Consequently, according to Loureiro et al. (2019), using VR in brand communication allows

customers to experience a more comprehensive description of advertising, enhancing their imagination and evoking more favourable sentiments. Furthermore, virtual reality is being used by many industries to increase customer conversations and engagements after a purchase, considering engagement, consumption, service recovery, and post-purchase services.

4.2.2 *The opportunities for new successes via VR application in marketing*

According to Freidman H. (2018) the way people interact with services and commodities in-store and online is being changed by innovative technology in the same way that how companies connect with their consumers is being transformed by the rise of social media. Without a doubt, virtual reality will impact the near future of digital marketing. Many companies are adopting artificial realities as a marketing technique in social applications such as Facebook and Instagram as the technology generates a multisensory environment and provides a truly immersive experience. As a result of this, many firms have become more enticing to consumers by allowing them to try out their items before making a purchase. As a result, the interviewees of the conducted study were inquired about the technology and language aspects of VR-based marketing and explored how these applications lead to enormous successes or have potential benefits. When asked, 'What are your views on opportunities for new successes via VR application in marketing?' Interviewee 3 commented that:

"Marketing techniques rely on marketers' ability to tap into the intuitive part of the brain of customers. So, the better we do it, the more successful our marketing becomes. Now, let's consider a VR system that can adapt to different technology frameworks like PC, Mac, or even as simple as a phone. It can boost our ability to reach customers because it makes it easier for the customer to engage with our products. "

Furthermore, interviewee 4 explicated that:

"By empowering people to use these glasses brands are engaging uniquely with their and changing how people view purchasing. Influencing the customers is a fundamental requirement for VR marketing because the essence of the marketing field is to be flexible in terms of the medium of propagation. "

The above response point toward a critical link between the flexible nature of marketing which drives people's instinctive behaviour, and the opportunities for new successes via VR application in marketing. Furthermore, the responses exhort that technology adaptation options

like easy smartphone connectivity, GUI that is friendly with different sorts of VRs, and VR online stores, would have to be concurrent with the rise of VR marketing.

4.2.3 *The potential barriers for consumers*

As proposed by Laurell C. et al. (2019), the barriers of VR applications in the marketing approaches must be analysed, and for this research it will be done under the expression of the question ‘What are the main barriers that come across in the application of VR in marketing approaches? To provide a justified answer interviewee, 5 responded to the question by saying:

"When making a purchase choice, consumers place a significant emphasis on price as one of the most important factors to consider. In particular, when purchasing a new product, they are looking for the best value that can be found. A similar approach may be used to define virtual reality. However, because virtual reality is still in the early stages of gaining widespread adoption, consumers are unclear about the benefits and opportunities it presents."

Interviewee 7 responded that:

"Even if the prohibitively expensive nature of virtual reality were somehow made more affordable, there are still several fundamental barriers that would hinder its widespread use. One of the most significant challenges that virtual reality (VR) faces is a shortage of content of sufficient quality and lack of sexiness as I think that even the most expensive glasses are not so appealing. "

As described by Laurell C. et al. (2019) when looking for obstacles to this technology, price was found to be a determining factor. Currently, these products are perceived as expensive due to a poor benefit-cost ratio, so it would be beneficial for the companies in charge of producing these products to focus on this consumer perception.

Meanwhile, the response of interviewee 9 was similar in context to the previous response.

"Virtual reality (VR) allows users to thoroughly immerse themselves in any experience they choose by providing them with 360-degree views of the environment. On the other hand, to use this 360-degree programme, you will need a fast Internet connection with a low amount of latency. In terms of both speed and dependability, the current level of Internet connectivity available everywhere in the globe falls short of what is required. "

During this time, the 5G technology is still in the beginning stages of its development. The problem of the inadequate network connection will be solved as soon as the technology required for 5G is accessible. It would be beneficial for virtual reality (VR) developers and manufacturers to evaluate the effect of 3D-image and 3D audio, in addition to the price and network connection challenges.

4.2.4 Analysing the influence of VR on consumer-brand interaction

This is the last core theme of investigation in which the researcher attempted to investigate the direct and indirect influence of VR on consumer interaction with the brand. The first question asked was, 'Do you find VR as a tool for adding value and depth to the consumer-brand interaction.' Interviewee 10 expounded that:

"Until fairly recently, firms used virtual reality showrooms as an effective marketing tool and event crowd-pleaser. A virtual reality (VR) showroom presents a product or service in an immersive environment around all three hundred and sixty degrees. Even though auto shops and luxury fashion manufacturers used virtual showrooms to evaluate their products to attract more attention, customers preferred to make purchasing decisions based on first-hand experience. This was the case even though the virtual showrooms allowed them to highlight their products in a more favourable light. The retail industry saw the potential of virtual reality (VR) showrooms as a viable alternative to traditional in-person shopping during the outbreak."

Meanwhile, interviewee 8 indicated another unique dimension.

"We have observed that VR encourages people to explore a larger variety of products in other companies. Once they experience VR on one product, they want to re-experience it with some other product. So, it increases customer foot traffic in their online stores. But it does not have much impact on their satisfaction."

The responses in this dimension reveal vital information about the applicability benefits of VR. The research thus finds that VR technology enhances customers' buying inclinations.

The next question was regarding customer support. The researcher asked, 'How does VR impact customer support interaction with the brand? To which interviewee 6 explicated that:

"Virtual showrooms are being used more often by firms to organise virtual trade exhibitions, wholesale appointments, and media events. Virtual showrooms are becoming more popular, particularly among retail firms. The desire for things provided by other comparable sellers has risen. Virtual reality (VR) showrooms can give realistic experiences, and they do it at an in-store visit. These features include 3D photos and videos with high quality, explanations that overlay the visuals, zoomed-in views, close-ups of the fabric, and a variety of other customization possibilities. "

Interviewee 1 responded that:

"VR seems to provide the opportunity to extend dealership platforms with other stakeholders. And from my point of view, it reduces the factors like size of the business, product proportions, scale, and all that, and forms partners shops with other sellers. Ultimately it benefits the customer service because, with each new representative, more customers can be managed for their complaints and other concerns. "

The analysis shows that VR plays a significant role in enhancing customer support mechanisms. Customer support is an essential component of the holistic product marketing framework. If VR can solve persistent problems with conventional customer support systems, it will strengthen brand-customer relationships in both the medium and long term.

4.3 Summary

Marketers' ability to get into the instinctual portion of customers' brains is at the heart of marketing tactics. Due to the ubiquitous and cost-effective nature of VR, social media platforms like Snapchat and Instagram have begun to incorporate high-quality user experiences and increase brand visibility through notable cost-effective innovations. As huge hotels like Marriott International design their events and make customers physically present utilising VR technology, it has fundamentally revolutionised marketing experiences, resulting in increased sales. The better it is done; the more effective marketing gets. Consequently, customers will not buy a virtual reality headset if it is priced too much. The cost of virtual reality headsets is prohibitively high. The manufacturer made no mistake when determining the high price of virtual reality headsets. The process of developing a brand-new piece of innovative technology is both arduous and time-consuming. One of the industries transforming is learning, and it is common knowledge that virtual reality (VR) is becoming more popular in this arena. Instructional content must be prioritized in virtual reality software developers' apps if the goal is to provide learners with an immersive learning experience. The creators of virtual reality

(VR) content may choose to develop storylines that document the history of all of the museum's exhibits as an alternative to sending viewers to a museum and allowing them to walk freely around the space. The manufacturers of virtual reality headsets and the creators of virtual reality content must work together to provide high-quality virtual reality content.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 Discussion

After extensive discussion presented in the literature review, it was found that although virtual reality has long been linked with gaming and recreation, it has dozens of applications in other areas. In reality, corporations are predicted to account for two-thirds of VR users until 2023, with marketing as a major priority (Alcañiz, Bigné, and Guixeres, 2019). In comparison, findings from thematic analysis unveiled that VR have been regarded as a bright device that makes a significant impact. People are often eager to try out innovative technologies, and they may usually enter an interactive experience with high hopes. This makes it simple to amaze clients with the goods or solution and establish it in their minds.

Nevertheless, results from the literature uncovered that within the marketing domain, experiencing anything in VR is an excellent approach to understanding how it operates; however, a virtual application is almost as good as the actual object at informing customers about the things the company offers. Moreover, if the company makes the encounter enjoyable and fascinating, a client and a product might establish an emotional attachment (Loureiro et al., 2019). To a similar extent, findings from thematic analysis disclosed that VR had been a powerful tool in experiential marketing, as corporations have been emphasising designing and delivering remarkable encounters for clients in experiential marketing, which became commodities, with financial value in the transformative advantages delivered by the events. Although, from a marketing perspective, literature uncovered that customers are both logical and intuitive and prefer delightful encounters. Marketers may develop integrated solutions that blend individual experiences into a unified complete by using technology, such as VR, as a means for event experience (Walker, 2018).

There have been a lot of studies done on the factors—drivers and obstacles that impact people's propensity to accept new technologies. A willingness to acknowledge technology as both a choice and an aim, as well as a want to use it. Research has also been conducted on the variables that influence the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) (Alcañiz et al., 2019). The information needed for the study was gathered through semi-structured interviews. The results showed that the high requirements for software and hardware, the limited accessibility, and the expensive pricing are the primary barriers to the widespread adoption of virtual reality (VR). According to Adegoke A.S. et al. (2021), through an analysis of the answers consumers of the Oculus Rift and HTC Vive gave on Swedish social

media, it was determined that these customers also had issues (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and blogs).

According to the findings of this study, the broad adoption of virtual reality technology was disadvantaged by three key factors: high demand for both software and hardware, limited accessibility, and low price. The difficulties that Oculus Rift and HTC Vive clients had were brought to light by comments made by users of Swedish social media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and blogs) (Loureiro et al., 2019). According to the findings of a recent study, the technological performance, price, and the number of compliments received are the three most significant barriers to the mainstream adoption of virtual reality.

From the findings of thematic analysis, it was discovered that people might be immediately connected to a cause using VR in a way that seems genuine and intimate. Similarly, results from reviewed literature highlighted that VR had been demonstrated to improve compassion and urge users to modify their behaviour when used to teach individuals about humanitarian concerns (Morozov, 2021). In support of a prior argument, results from literature also unveiled that businesses are starting to see the value of VR and AR in improving their client experience (CX). This occurs at a moment when businesses are looking for new methods to strengthen client relationships, and VR and AR are proven to be intriguing, innovative approaches to do it (Rácz and Zilizi, 2019).

Nevertheless, it was found from the results of a thematic analysis that VR delivers an engaging interaction with a powerful perceptual effect and a deep emotive engagement with consumers. Companies could use this linkage to interact with clients in new and useful forms. To a similar extent, results from literature revealed that buyers are more inclined to make recurring purchases and remain lifetime brand advocates when they are passionately connected with a brand (Alcañiz, et al., 2019). To summarise, the above analysis offered sufficient proof that VR has a significant impact on consumer-brand interaction since it enables customers to have a holistic purchasing experience that makes them feel as though they are and mentally connected with a business.

5.2 Limitations

Although this study was carefully elaborated, it should be understood that it encountered several limitations that will be mentioned below and that must be overcome in future research. In addition, it is essential to mention that the study's conclusions are subject to a series of reservations.

The primary limitations found in the study were the lack of sufficient time for an in-depth investigation and the small number of participants. As a result, the results could vary with more participants in the sample and a more extended period.

Firstly, for this research, it was complicated to find people who were actively related to VR technology, in addition to the fact that the participants of this study come from different fields and positions, so their knowledge and opinions could differ from each other. On the other hand, it is essential to mention that not all interviewees had the same communication skills, so some performed better in the interviews than others, so not all participants expressed themselves.

Secondly, according to Freidman H. (2018), current Virtual Reality technology is still an emerging technology, so very few people are aware of it. This effect was reflected in the research as some interviewees were unaware that VR technology is being used outside the gamer world, so after receiving the invitation to such an interview, some participants decided to conduct their research without being asked for it.

Thirdly, the scope of this research was also limited to some extent to the literary resources available due to the limited time available. Although every effort was made to conduct a solid literature review, it is essential to mention that there are a large number of studies related to VR technology, so there may be biases in the literature studied in this research. An example of this is that in this study, Mixed Reality technologies were not considered as this study is focused more on Virtual Reality and on differentiating VR from Augmented Reality as they are often confused with each other. In addition, interpretation errors cannot be excluded, which could lead to divergent perspectives.

On the other hand, in the present work, only qualitative methods were used, so it would be helpful for future research to apply quantitative methods to analyse the different dimensions that can be found by combining both research methods.

Finally, no metrics, such as return on investment (ROI) or customer acquisition cost (CAC), were used for this research and for these reasons, no numerical data were found for the campaigns mentioned, so the concrete results of the campaigns as well as their impact within their respective brands are unknown.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summarised Findings

This research finding aimed to assess the marketing potential of virtual reality experiences. Finding out the value and function of virtual reality in marketing was the study's primary goal. The aggregate findings demonstrate that the world's largest firms understood the importance of virtual reality, which has contributed to further advancement in this field of technology (Alves, C. et al., 2020, Morozov, 2021). It is presently among the most rapidly emerging IT alternatives, and it is incredibly essential from the standpoint of the average client, as the popularisation and advancement of VR makes this technology more accessible to everyone, thereby making the hardware required to deliver a VR experience more affordable. As a result, virtual reality avoids being a technology reserved for academics and IT experts and becomes accessible to the public. As a result, businesses are becoming more eager and inclined to utilise this medium for marketing interactions. VR stands out being one of the few new and specially designed instruments in a globe overflowed with advertising materials, and its multimedia display skills are unexpected and thrilling for receivers (Morozov, 2021).

The second objective of this research was to explore how technology and language adaptation is necessary for developing high-quality experiences. Results from thematic analysis revealed that technology and language adoption gave rise to immersion. Immersion was described as a consumers existence in a virtual scenario throughout which their sense of space and the real world is generally dissociated, which leads to a feeling of living in the digital environment. Furthermore, thematic analysis revealed VR as a technology of immersion as well as the sensation of being present in non-physical environment by submerging the user of a VR device with imagery, music, or other inputs, offering a perception that the individual is genuinely present in that setting. In support of the aforementioned premise, results from the literature showed that current technologies, such as VR and language adoption, are critical for creating high-quality encounters, particularly in marketing activities (Rach, M. and Scott, R. 2020).

The third objective of this research was to contrast augmented reality with virtual reality in marketing. In terms of results, it was found that AR and VR are gadgets that add to or combine a practical life interaction with a digital one. However, results from the studied literature revealed that AR improves a person's surroundings by adding virtual characteristics to a realistic vision, often using a smartphone's camera, but VR is a completely immersed

experience that replaces the actual reality with a model rendition. Likewise, analysis revealed that with AR, a virtual environment is created to coexist with real-world reality having a goal of being enlightening and providing complementary details regarding the physical world that an individual can access without having to glance at it. According to research (Loureiro et al., 2019), VR refers to a thorough realistic representation wherein a user's natural environment is superseded with virtual ones. Since they are artificial, such virtual surroundings are usually constructed to be larger than reality.

The fourth and fifth objective of this study was to investigate the impacts of virtual reality on consumer-brand interaction, especially in marketing. After conducting in-depth analysis, it was discovered that VR creates a completely immersive experience with a strong sensory impact and a strong emotional connection with customers. Companies might leverage this connection to communicate with customers in new and productive ways. In a similar vein, research shows that purchasers who are strongly linked to a brand are more likely to make recurrent purchases and be lifetime brand customers (Abrar K., 2018).

The sixth objective of this research was to investigate potential barriers that consumers may encounter when using VR. This study found that VR technology has some barriers that currently prevent the technology from being exploited effectively. These barriers are represented by price, low awareness among businesses and potential consumers, and limited content. Despite this, it should be borne in mind that VR is still in its early stages and there is still room to overcome these barriers.

To summarise, the above analysis provided ample evidence that virtual reality enhances substantially the influence on consumer-brand interaction as it allows customers to have a full shopping experience that helps them feel physically and intellectually linked to a company.

5.2 Recommendations

In light of above result summary, this research offers some of the critical recommendations centred on adequate use of VR in marketing activities:

- Owing to the capabilities of AI-based chatbots and digital support, customer care departments have grown significantly over the last decade. However, incorporating VR into client care has proven to be a game-changer (Alcañiz et al., 2019). Chatbots struggle with distant assistance, which is a challenging component of

customer care to do correctly (Loureiro et al., 2019). However, when both sides can understand what the other is seeing and experiencing, even basic and difficult situations may be handled in less timeframe. There is no greater approach for marketers to demonstrate their commitment to their consumers than to create efficient customer service efforts, and virtual reality is the most advanced form of this (Walker, 2018). Therefore, this study recommends that marketers must harness the capacity of VR to enhance customer care services.

- Users instinctively connect to VR on an intimate sense as they do their actual world since it provides them with a very authentic amount of immersion. To display commodities in innovative manner, marketers may create a variety of thrilling, stimulating, terrifying, and even emotive VR commercials (Morozov, 2021). The North Face, for instance, offered an engaging VR simulation of the Nepal terrain to help buyers connect with the brand ethos. Effective marketing strategies appeal to a certain human feeling: when consumers can relate to a brand or object on an emotive dimension, they are much more likely to buy it (RÁCZ and Zilizi, 2019). Hence, this study recommends marketers to use VR for product or service display that can deliver immersive experience to customer, as by doing this, marketers would be able to capture their value.

5.3 Conclusion

This research was emphasised on exploring the significance as well as role of VR in market. The fundamental focus of this study was on assessing how technology and language adaptation are necessary for developing high-quality experiences for customers while determining the distinct role played by VR and AR in marketing. After outlining insights from the primary research conducted it was uncovered that VR has proven to be a successful marketing instrument, as customers are drawn into the newer world by the holistic environment, which improves engagement via technologies. As a result, it can be claimed that VR is an immersive technology that was considered useful in marketing operations. This digital technology provided a remarkable interaction and increased client loyalty. Furthermore, VR allows company managers to present a distinctive image of their brand to clients. As a result, VR provides sustainable benefits via novel commercial structures and helps customers to stay up to date on the newest items through virtual experiences. In addition, VR delivers a fully engaging journey with a high perceptual effect and psychological link with users. Businesses

may be able to use this relationship to engage with clients in unique and effective manners. Likewise, research suggests that customers who have a deep emotional attachment to a brand are more likely to make recurring transactions and become brand ambassadors for lifetime. To conclude, both the primary and secondary research conducted point to VR having a significant impact on consumer-brand engagement since it helps buyers to have a comprehensive buying experience that makes them sense and cognitively attached to a firm demonstrating its enormous potential despite the fact that the technology is still at an early stage.

5.4 Future Implications

In terms of future implications, the author indicates rather than concentrating on qualitative information, future researchers should use primary quantitative data collection strategies, including a closed-ended survey, to acquire objective and quantifiable data, as this will offer a more in-depth understanding on the impact of VR on marketing. To elaborate, the thematic analysis of the small data showed enormous or opinionated discoveries predicated on how technology and language adaption are required for generating high-quality encounters. As a result, future research must emphasise on obtaining primary data using closed-ended survey questionnaires in examine a much more meaningful population that can give specific findings on essential aspects of VR that contribute to marketing effort improvements. For instance, a comparison of virtual reality and augmented reality in marketing activities, as well as their impact on consumer-brand interaction.

Lastly, to enhance the knowledge gained from this research and to improve the quality of marketing efforts that can potentially use this technology, future research must measure the ethical impact of such technology on the marketing industry and the consumer.

References

- Abrar, K. (2018) 'Impact of augmented reality on consumer purchase intention with the mediating role of customer brand engagement: Moderating role of interactivity in online shopping.' *Bahria University Journal of Management & Technology*, 1(2), 64-80 Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/33109730_9_Impact_of_Augmented_Reality_on_Consumer_Purchase_Intention_with_the_Mediating_role_of_Customer_Brand_Engagement_Moderating_role_of_Interactivity_in_Online_Shopping [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Adegoke, A.S., Oladokun, T.T., Ayodele, T.O., Agbato, S.E. and Jinadu, A.A. (2021), 'DEMATEL method of analysing the factors influencing the decision to adopt virtual reality technology by real estate firms in Lagos property market', *Smart and Sustainable Built Environment*, Emerald Insight. Available at: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/SASBE-09-2020-0135/full/html> [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Agarwal, V. (2020) *The semi-structured interviewing method in a qualitative study examining complementary and alternative medicine providers knowledge discourse*. SAGE Research Methods Cases: Medicine and Health. DOI:10.4135/9781529715989 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Alcañiz, M., Bigné, E. and Guixeres J. (2019) 'Virtual reality in marketing: a framework, review, and research agenda.' *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01530 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Alves, C., and Reis, J.L., (2020), 'The Intention to Use E-Commerce Using Augmented Reality - The Case of IKEA Place'. In *International conference on information technology & systems* (pp. 114-123). ICITS 2020. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, vol 1137. Springer, Cham. DOI:10.1007/978-3-030-40690-5_12 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Angeloni, S., and Rossi, C. (2021). 'An analytical model for comparing the profitability of competing online marketing channels: Search engine marketing versus e-commerce marketplace.' *Journal Of Marketing Theory And Practice*, 29(4), pp. 534-549. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2021.1879656> [Accessed 13 August 2022].

- Aspers, P. and Corte, U., (2019) 'What is qualitative in qualitative research.' *Qualitative sociology*, 42(2), pp.139-160, Springer. DOI:10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Austin, Z. and Sutton, J. (2014) Qualitative research: Getting started. *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy*, 67(6), p.436. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (2010) *How to Research*, 4th. Berkshire, UK :Open University Press. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Bonetti, F., Warnaby, G., and Quinn, L. (2018). 'Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality in Physical and Online Retailing: A Review, Synthesis and Research Agenda.' In Jung T. and Dieck, M. (eds) *Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality. Progress in IS*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64027-3_9 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Boyd, D.E. and Koles, B. (2019) 'An introduction to the special issue "virtual reality in marketing": definition, theory, and practice.' *Journal of Business Research*. July, 2019, Vol. 100, 441. DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.04.023 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011) *Business Research Methods*, 3rd edn. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Burke, R. R. (2018) 'Virtual Reality for Marketing Research.' In: Moutinho, L., Sokele, M. (eds) *Innovative Research Methodologies in Management*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64400-4_3 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Chadha, K. and Ahuja, Y. (2020) 'Luxury fashion brands embracing the digital: An exploratory study to unfold the success strategy.' *MANTHAN: Journal of Commerce and Management*, Vol. 7 Issue 1, p60-75. 16p. DOI: 10.17492/manthan.v7i1.195705. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Choy, L.T. (2014) 'The strengths and weaknesses of research methodology: Comparison and complimentary between qualitative and quantitative approaches.' *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), pp.99-104. DOI:10.9790/0837-194399104 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Collis, J. and Hussey, R. (2014) *Business Research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*, 4th edn. Palgrave Macmillan. [Accessed 13 August 2022].

- Cowan, K., and Ketron, S. (2019) 'Prioritizing marketing research in virtual reality: Development of an immersion/fantasy typology.' *European Journal of Marketing*, 53(8), 1585-1611, Emerald Insight. DOI: 10.1108/EJM-10-2017-0733 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th edn. London, UK: Sage Publications, Inc. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Denscombe, M. (2017) *The good research guide: For small-scale social research projects*. 6th edn. London, UK: Open University Press. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Finlay, J.M., Kler, J.S., O'Shea, B.Q., Eastman, M.R., Vinson, Y.R. and Kobayashi, L.C. (2021) 'Coping during the COVID-19 pandemic: a qualitative study of older adults across the United States.' *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9, Directory of Open Access Journals. DOI: 10.3389/fpubh.2021.643807 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Flick, U. (2015) *Introducing research methodology: A beginner's guide to doing a research project*. 2nd edn. London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Freidman H. (2018) *Blockchain and VR: Diving in the Blue Ocean*. Available at: <https://medium.com/rule-over-the-robots/blockchain-and-vr-swimming-in-the-blue-ocean-1136a9aed127> [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Goundar, S. (2012). 'Chapter 3 - Research Methodology and Research Method.' In *Cloud Computing*. ResearchGate. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333015026_Chapter_3_-_Research_Methodology_and_Research_Method [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Grudzewski, F., Awdziej, M., Mazurek, G. and Piotrowska, K. (2018) 'Virtual reality in marketing communication—the impact on the message, technology and offer perception—empirical study.' *Economics & Business Review*. 2018, Vol. 4 Issue 3, p36-50. 15p. Business Source Ultimate. DOI: 10.18559/ebr.2018.3.4. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Hollebeek, L.D., Clark, M.K., Andreassen, T.W., Sigurdsson, V. and Smith, D. (2020) 'Virtual reality through the customer journey: Framework and propositions.' *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55, p.102056, ScienceDirect. DOI: 10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102056 [Accessed 13 August 2022].

- Jung, J., Yu, J., Seo, Y. and Ko, E. (2021) ‘Consumer experiences of virtual reality: Insights from VR luxury brand fashion shows.’ *Journal of Business Research*, 130, pp.517-524, ScienceDirect DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.10.038 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Jung, T., Dieck, M., Lee, H., and Chung, N. (2016) ‘Effects of virtual reality and augmented reality on visitor experiences in museum.’ *Information and communication technologies in tourism 2016* (pp. 621-635), Springer International Publishing. DOI:10.1007/978-3-319-28231-2_45 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Kumar, R. (2019) *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. 5th edn. London, UK: Sage Publications Limited. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Laurell C., Sandström C., Berthold A., and Larsson D (2019) ‘Exploring barriers to adoption of Virtual Reality through Social Media Analytics and Machine Learning – An assessment of technology, network, price and trialability’, *Journal of Business Research*, 100, pp. 469-474, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.01.017>.
- Ledford, J.R. and Gast, D.L. eds., (2018) *Single case research methodology: Applications in special education and behavioral sciences*. 3rd edn. Routledge. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Li, D., & Han, X. (2021). ‘Assessing the influence of goal pursuit and emotional attachment on customer engagement behaviors.’ *Journal Of Retailing And Consumer Services*, 59, pp. 102355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102355>
- Loureiro, S.M.C., Guerreiro, J., Eloy, S., Langaro, D. and Panchapakesan, P. (2019) ‘Understanding the use of Virtual Reality in Marketing: A text mining-based review.’ *Journal of Business Research*, 100:514-530, ScienceDirect. DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres .2018.10.055 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Mazarine (2022) *Digital experiences innovation VR*. Available at: <https://www.mazarine.com/en/prada-experience-digital-augmented-reality-fashion>
- McLean, G., and Wilson, A. (2019) ‘Shopping in the digital world: Examining customer engagement through augmented reality mobile applications.’ *Computers in Human Behavior*, 101, 210-224, ScienceDirect. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2019.07.002 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Meinhold R. (2020) ‘Virtual Reality.’ Salem Press Encyclopedia of Science, 2020. 6p. Research Starters.

- Mohajan, H.K. (2018) 'Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related subjects.' *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 7(1), pp.23-48, Business Source Ultimate. DOI: 10.26458/jedep.v7i1.571. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Morozov, M. (2021) *All You Need to Know about Virtual Reality in Marketing*. Available at: <https://jasoren.com/virtual-reality-in-marketing/> [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Nezamova, O.A. and Olentsova, J.A. (2020) 'Innovative marketing technologies in the markets of the Krasnoyarsk region.' *Азимут научных исследований: экономика и управление*, 9(2), pp.247-250. DOI: 10.26140/anie-2020-0902-0057 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Poetker B. (2019) *The Very Real History of Virtual Reality (+A Look Ahead)*. Available at: <https://www.g2.com/articles/history-of-virtual-reality>
- Prins, N., and Kingdom, F.A. (2018) 'Applying the model-comparison approach to test specific research hypotheses in psychophysical research using the Palamedes toolbox.' *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, p.1250, Directory of Open Access Journals. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01250 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Rach, M. and Scott, R. (2020). 'The Use of Virtual Reality in Marketing: Exploring the Need for Technology and Language Adaptation to Create High Quality Immersive Experiences.' In *Rocha, Á., Reis, J., Peter, M. and Bogdanović, Z. (eds) Marketing and Smart Technologies. Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies*, vol 167. Singapore, 29 November 2019, pp. 67-74. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-1564-4_8 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Rącz, A. and Zilizi, G. (2019) Virtual reality aided tourism. In *2019 Smart City Symposium Prague (SCSP)* (pp. 1-5). Research Gate. DOI: 10.1109/SCSP. 2019.8805727 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Rhodes, J.D., Upshaw, C.R., Harris, C.B., Meehan, C.M., Walling, D.A., Navrátil, P.A., Beck, A.L., Nagasawa, K., Fares, R.L., Cole, W.J. and Kumar, H., Duncan, Roger D., Holcomb, C.L., Edgar, T. F., Kwasinski, A., Webber M. E. (2014) 'Experimental and data collection methods for a large-scale smart grid deployment: Methods and first results.' *Energy*, 65, pp.462-471, Gale Academic OneFile. DOI: 10.1016/j.energy.2013.11.004 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. (2012) *Research Methods for Business Students*, 6th edn. Harlow UK: Pearson Education Limited. [Accessed 13 August 2022].

- Soni, S., Shukla, K., Yadav U., and Ahluwalia, H.S. (2022) *Virtual Reality in Social Media Marketing: The New Age Potential. Multimedia Computing Systems and Virtual Reality*, Boca Raton: CRC Press. [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Tuohy, D., Cooney, A., Dowling, M., Murphy, K. and Sixsmith, J. (2013) 'An overview of interpretive phenomenology as a research methodology.' *Nurse researcher*, 20(6) 20(6):17-20, RCN Publishing. DOI:10.7748/nr2013.07.20.6.17.e315 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Violante, M. G., Vezzetti, E., and Piazzolla, P. (2019) 'How to design a virtual reality experience that impacts the consumer engagement: the case of the virtual supermarket.' *International Journal on Interactive Design and Manufacturing (IJIDeM)*, 13(1), 243-262, Springer. DOI:10.1007/s12008-018-00528-5 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Walker, S. (2018) *Virtual Reality Marketing: Is The Next Big Opportunity Already Here? Digital Doughnut*. Available at: <https://www.digitaldoughnut.com/articles /2018/august/virtual-reality-marketing-is-it-already-here> [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Wedel, M., Bigné, E., and Zhang, J. (2020) 'Virtual and augmented reality: Advancing research in consumer marketing.' *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 37(3), 443-465, ScienceDirect. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijresmar.2020.04.004
- Wei, W. (2019) 'Research progress on virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) in tourism and hospitality: A critical review of publications from 2000 to 2018.' *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*. Vol. 10, Issue 4, pp. 539-570, Emerald Insight. DOI: 10.1108/JHTT-04-2018-0030 [Accessed 13 August 2022].
- Xiong, J., Hsiang, EL., He, Z. Zhan T., and Wu S.T. (2021) 'Augmented reality and virtual reality displays: emerging technologies and future perspectives.' *Light Sci Appl*. Vol. 10, 216 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41377-021-00658-8>
- Yung, R., Khoo-Lattimore, C., and Potter, L. E. (2021) 'VR the world: Experimenting with emotion and presence for tourism marketing.' *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 46, 160-171, ScienceDirect. DOI: 10.1016/j.jhtm.2020.11.009 [Accessed 13 August 2022].

Appendix

Interview Questions

1. How virtual reality has become an important aspect in marketing?
2. How virtual reality is used in marketing by renowned brands, give examples?
3. What are your views on opportunities of new successes via VR application in marketing?
4. Do you find VR as a tool of adding value and depth to the consumer-brand interaction?
5. Are the marketers showing interest in using the VR for their improved strategies?
6. What are the main barriers that comes across in the application of VR in marketing approaches?
7. Were the marketers applying it effectively into a marketing plan?
8. Do you believe that there are marketing experts who did not know how to measure the success of VR in the domain?