

The Metaverse and the Reconsideration of Pure Reason: Identity and Ethical Crises in Relation to Women and Family from a Psychological Perspective

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning with “The philosophical roots of these tensions can be traced...”, the integration of Kantian philosophy is intellectually valuable but insufficiently bridged to empirical psychology. The authors should explicitly articulate the mechanism through which Kantian epistemology informs observable identity processes in digital environments to avoid appearing philosophically ornamental rather than analytically functional.

In the paragraph discussing identity multiplicity (“From a psychological standpoint, identity has traditionally...”), the authors rely heavily on recent digital identity literature but do not sufficiently engage with classical identity theories (e.g., Eriksonian or narrative identity frameworks). This creates a theoretical imbalance that limits the depth of psychological interpretation.

The statement “having at least one year of active engagement in virtual environments...” is vague. The authors should operationalize “active engagement” (e.g., hours per week, types of interaction) to enhance replicability and methodological transparency.

In the “Measures” section, while the authors mention semi-structured interviews, they do not provide sample questions or thematic domains. Including at least a brief outline of the interview guide would significantly improve methodological rigor and reproducibility.

The manuscript lacks any discussion of researcher positionality. Given the interpretive paradigm, the absence of reflexivity (e.g., researchers’ assumptions or biases) is a methodological limitation that should be explicitly addressed.

In the “Data Analysis” section, the authors state “open coding... axial coding... selective coding”, which aligns more with grounded theory than Braun and Clarke’s thematic analysis. This methodological inconsistency should be clarified or corrected to maintain epistemological coherence.

In the paragraph beginning “The analysis of demographic characteristics indicated...”, the authors describe sample characteristics but do not analytically link them to findings. For example, potential gender or marital differences in themes are not explored, representing a missed analytical opportunity.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph starting with “In addition to identity-related challenges...”, the concept of “ethical relativism” is introduced without defining its epistemological or normative boundaries. The authors should clarify whether this is used descriptively (observed behavior) or normatively (philosophical stance), as this ambiguity affects interpretation of findings.

In the paragraph “The implications of these developments are particularly significant in relation to gender...”, the discussion of women’s vulnerability and empowerment remains largely descriptive. The manuscript would benefit from incorporating feminist psychological or sociological frameworks to deepen the analytical rigor of gender-related claims.

In the paragraph addressing family dynamics (“Similarly, the impact of the metaverse on family dynamics...”), the authors mention attachment and relational theories but do not explicitly apply them. A clearer theoretical mapping (e.g., how attachment insecurity manifests in metaverse engagement) would strengthen conceptual coherence.

In the paragraph “Despite the growing body of research...”, the claim of a research gap in Iranian cultural context is appropriate but insufficiently substantiated. The authors should cite specific studies or lack thereof to empirically justify the identified gap rather than relying on general statements.

In the “Study Design and Participants” section, the sentence “a total of 24 participants... were selected” lacks methodological justification. The authors should explain why 24 participants were sufficient for theoretical saturation and provide evidence (e.g., saturation grid or coding redundancy indicators).

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.