Journal of Cyberspace Studies
eISSN: 2588-5502
http://jcss.ut.ac.ir
University of Tehran

Sustainable platform persuasion: A grounded theory of audience persuasion on online film and series streaming platforms in Iran

Padina Rahnamay-Chitsaz[1], Sara Mohamadpour[2*], Mastooreh Ezzatzadeh[1]

1. Department of Media Management, WT.C, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.
2. Department of Social Communication, WT.C, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

(*Corresponding author: ✉ sara.mohamadpour@iau.ir, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1402-1905)

Article Info

Original article

Main Object:
Humanities & Social Sciences

Received: 21 August 2026
Revised: 24 September 2026
Accepted: 25 September 2026
Published online: 04 November 2026

Keywords:
audience engagement,
digital trust,
grounded theory,
Iran,
online streaming platforms,
sustainable platform persuasion.

Abstract

Background: Online film and series streaming platforms rest on a distinctive economic logic: their revenue comes not from a single purchase but from the periodic renewal of subscriptions. Under this logic, audience persuasion is not an event but a condition that must be continuously reproduced. Yet dominant theories of persuasion were built to explain the effect of a single message on a single attitude, and research on subscription continuance has mostly tested predetermined sets of predictors.
Aims: This study explains the components and formation mechanisms of sustainable audience persuasion on subscription video-on-demand platforms in Iran's streaming market.
Methodology: Using a grounded theory design, data were collected through 13 semi-structured interviews with experts in marketing, media management, digital governance and law, and communication, until theoretical saturation was reached. Open, axial, and selective coding yielded 549 initial codes, 10 main categories with 37 subcategories, and a single core category, "sustainable platform persuasion".
Findings: The resulting paradigm model comprises five causal conditions, eight contextual conditions, six intervening conditions, 10 strategy categories, and three sets of consequences. Sustainable persuasion is not confined to message-level tactics but takes shape through the interaction of individual, communicative, technological, structural, and institutional factors. Users' resistance, rooted in their knowledge of persuasion tactics, emerged as a structural condition rather than a temporary obstacle, and institutional legitimacy as part of a platform's persuasive capital.
Conclusion: The model treats persuasion not as an advertising tool but as a strategic mechanism for building a durable relationship between platform and audience.

Cite this article: Rahnamay-Chitsaz P, Mohamadpour S, Ezzatzadeh M. (????). "Sustainable platform persuasion: A grounded theory of audience persuasion on online film and series streaming platforms in Iran". *Cyberspace Studies*. ?(?): 1-26. doi: https://doi.org/10.22059/jcss.2026.421335.1280.

Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License
Website: https://jcss.ut.ac.ir/| Email: jcss@ut.ac.ir |
EISSN: 2588-5502
Publisher: University of Tehran

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

1. Introduction

In less than a decade, online film and series streaming platforms have grown from a marginal service into one of the main channels of cultural consumption, transforming long-established patterns of television viewing (Lotz, 2017). This transformation is part of a broader shift in which the platform has become the dominant organizational form of the contemporary digital economy, restructuring how value is created, exchanged, and captured across industries (Parker et al., 2016; Xue et al., 2020). In Iran, too, subscription video-on-demand has in recent years grown into a market with several major players (Falaki, 2025; Salamati, 2022) and intense competition, one in which platforms compete not only for viewing share but also for cultural standing and editorial authority.

What distinguishes these platforms from the perspective of persuasion studies is their particular economic logic. A traditional firm sells a discrete product and may never deal with the buyer again, whereas a subscription-based platform earns its revenue from a decision the audience makes anew every month (Lotz, 2022). More precisely, in this business model every subscription period is a distinct persuasive event: the audience must once again be convinced that staying is preferable to leaving. Subscriber churn is therefore regarded not as an operational disruption but as the central indicator of business health, and the research literature has rightly made "continuance intention" the core problem of the field (Menon, 2022; Pereira & Tam, 2021). The persuasive challenge this creates can be stated as follows: it is not enough to convince a user to sign up or buy a subscription once; the platform must sustain persuasion across an entire relationship, often over months or years, in an environment where a competing platform is only one tap away and canceling a subscription costs virtually nothing.

Much of what is known about persuasion, however, was developed for settings quite different from this one. The elaboration likelihood model, still among the most widely applied frameworks in the field, was built to explain how a single message is processed either through careful, effortful reasoning or through a mental shortcut based on peripheral cues (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Fogg's (2003) foundational work in what he termed "captology" extended persuasion theory to interactive technologies, showing that computer systems themselves, not just the messages they carry, can be designed to shape belief and behavior. In the marketing literature, Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment-trust theory showed that durable exchange relationships depend on the joint presence of trust and commitment between two parties. Each of these traditions supplies essential building blocks, yet none was designed to explain persuasion in a setting where a single actor must sustain trust and commitment not with one counterpart but with a large, heterogeneous, and constantly shifting audience, using tools that simultaneously span message design, user-interface

UT Press

architecture, content policy, recommender algorithms, and institutional signaling.

As the industry has matured, sustaining persuasion has become harder, not easier. Decades of research on information overload show that as the volume of information competing for attention grows, the capacity to process any single item declines and the quality of decisions suffers (Eppler & Mengis, 2004); every additional persuasive appeal must therefore compete for a shrinking reserve of attention. At the same time, the business model that makes platforms profitable, namely the systematic conversion of user behavior into data used to predict and, in Zuboff's (2019) account, even to modify that same behavior, has given audiences reason to become warier rather than more receptive. More importantly, this wariness has now taken on an epistemic form: users have accumulated knowledge about the persuasion process itself and know which tactics they are facing. Friestad and Wright (1994) termed this "persuasion knowledge" and showed that its activation changes how audiences interpret and respond to any persuasion attempt. In platform settings, this knowledge takes a more specific form, which Bucher (2017) calls the "algorithmic imaginary": users' ideas about how the algorithm works and why a particular piece of content has been recommended to them. Increasingly, users see the platform not as a neutral conduit but as an active, self-interested party in the persuasion process, and this very recognition erodes the kind of trust that Pavlou (2003) showed to be central to consumers' willingness to transact online.

Existing research has responded to these pressures piecemeal rather than in an integrated way. Most of the literature on online streaming platforms has taken the form of variance-based models: researchers select a set of predictors from theories such as the expectation-confirmation model, the technology acceptance model, or the uses and gratifications approach, and test their effects on satisfaction and continuance intention (Menon, 2022; Pereira & Tam, 2021; Samudro et al., 2024). These studies are highly effective at establishing what correlates with subscription continuance, but they are less able to reconstruct how continuance comes about, that is, the sequence and mechanisms through which these factors become linked to one another. Because they fix the list of variables before entering the field, they leave out of the analysis any factors that did not fit the initial theoretical framework. In particular, institutional, legal, and governance factors, which can play a decisive role in platform acceptance in actively regulated settings, have rarely found their way into these models. In Iran, the few studies that have addressed this area have focused mainly on viewing motivations from the audience's perspective (Mahmoudi & Malekpaeen, 2024) and have seldom attempted to reconstruct the persuasion process at the level of platform strategy and design. Taken together, this situation leaves a clear gap: the absence of an integrated,

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

data-grounded model showing how causal triggers, structural context, audience psychology, deliberate strategy, and downstream outcomes combine into a single, sustained process of persuasion.

The present study seeks to fill this gap by adopting a qualitative, inductive approach. Rather than testing a predetermined model, it draws on grounded theory to build a model from the data, based on the accounts of experts who manage or study this process and who bring expertise in marketing, media management, law and digital governance, communication, and psychology. The aim of the study is to explain the components and formation mechanisms of sustainable audience persuasion on online film and series streaming platforms and to present them as a coherent paradigm model.

Accordingly, the main research question is formulated as follows: What are the components and formation mechanisms of sustainable audience persuasion on online film and series streaming platforms, and how are they interrelated within a paradigm model?

Answering this question makes both a theoretical and a practical contribution. Theoretically, it offers an empirically grounded model of sustainable persuasion whose unit of analysis is not the message but the relationship. Practically, it enables platform managers and policymakers to see where a platform's persuasive relationship with its audience is strong and where it is at risk.

2. Theoretical background and literature review

2.1. From message-centered to relationship-centered persuasion

Since at least the second half of the twentieth century, the dominant tradition of persuasion research has rested on a specific unit of analysis: the message. The elaboration likelihood model, the most prominent representative of this tradition, frames persuasion in terms of two processing routes: a central route based on careful evaluation of arguments, and a peripheral route that relies on superficial cues such as the attractiveness or apparent credibility of the source (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Other classic frameworks, including Cialdini's (2009) six principles of influence, are largely built on the same logic: identifying which features of a message or situation increase the likelihood of acceptance.

The limitation of this tradition becomes apparent when the object of persuasion is not a single decision but the continuation of a relationship. Message-centered models focus on a one-off encounter and offer few conceptual tools for explaining how today's acceptance is linked to next month's. The relationship marketing literature starts precisely from this point: Morgan and Hunt (1994) showed that the continuation of exchange depends on the joint presence of trust and commitment, not merely on the appeal of an offer in the moment. Service-dominant logic, by redefining value as something co-created by the firm and the customer, likewise sets aside the linear image of "message producer and

In Press

message receiver" (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Together, these two lines of thought lay the groundwork for a shift from message-centered to relationship-centered persuasion, a shift that the present study extends to the platform context.

The third element of this shift is the active agency of the audience itself. Friestad and Wright's (1994) persuasion knowledge model shows that audiences possess accumulated knowledge about persuaders' goals and tactics, and that this knowledge shapes how they interpret and respond to persuasion attempts. In the platform environment, this knowledge concerns not only "advertising" but also less visible mechanisms such as personalization, ranking, and recommendation. Bucher (2017) captures this situation with the concept of the "algorithmic imaginary": the ideas users form about how algorithms work, on the basis of which they adjust their own behavior. The important implication is that audience resistance to persuasion may be more than noise or a failure of message effectiveness; it may be a structural component of the contemporary persuasive situation, a possibility the present study examines empirically.

2.2. The platform as a persuasive actor

Unlike traditional media, a platform is not merely a channel for transmitting messages; it is an actor that sets the rules of engagement. The platform economics literature has shown that these organizations rest on the logic of multi-sided markets and network effects, and that their value is a function of the volume and quality of interaction among the parties involved (Parker et al., 2016; Rochet & Tirole, 2003). This logic places at the platform's disposal a set of persuasive levers that traditional media never had. Before platforms became ubiquitous, Fogg (2003) had argued that interactive technologies can act as persuasive actors, and online streaming platforms offer a clear illustration of this argument: the recommender algorithm and the personalized architecture of the home page (Gomez-Uribe & Hunt, 2016), autoplay of the next episode, and the scheduling of episode releases are all mechanisms that shape viewing behavior without ever taking the form of an explicit message.

Alongside these design levers, the platform also performs a governance function. Gillespie (2018) shows that platforms are inevitably placed in the position of content regulators, and that this very position turns them into political and normative actors. Content policies, age-rating mechanisms, the transparency of terms of use, and the handling of user data all communicate messages about the nature of the platform, and their persuasive effect can exceed that of any advertising campaign. Zuboff (2019) highlights the other side of the same coin: the systematic extraction of behavioral data, although it underpins the revenue model, is at the same time a source of suspicion. The platform thus finds itself in a double bind: the very capability that

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

makes it a more powerful persuader also exposes its legitimacy to threat.

2.3. Subscription continuance as a persuasion problem

In the information systems literature, continued use is a well-established research problem. In proposing the expectation-confirmation model, Bhattacherjee (2001) showed that the decision to continue using an information system differs in nature from the decision to adopt it in the first place: in adoption, expectations play the central role, whereas in continuance what matters is actual experience and the extent to which it confirms those expectations. This distinction is doubly important for online streaming platforms, where the continuance decision takes the form of a recurring and visible event.

Recent research in this area has identified a range of continuance predictors. Pereira and Tam (2021) highlighted the role of perceived enjoyment in the continued use of video-on-demand services; drawing on the uses and gratifications approach, Menon (2022) showed that gratifications such as convenient navigability, entertainment, and relaxation shape intentions both to purchase and to continue subscriptions; and working within the stimulus-organism-response framework, Samudro et al. (2024) traced the path from ease of access to perceived value and entertainment, and from these, through satisfaction, to continuance intention. At a more general level, studies of user engagement on digital platforms have examined how design features shape engagement and how engagement, in turn, sustains continued use (Lehrer et al., 2023; Thapa et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, this body of research shares two limitations. First, its methodological structure is predominantly variance-based: a set of variables is selected in advance and their effects are tested, without reconstructing the process through which the relationship forms. Second, the range of variables selected usually remains confined to the individual and user-experience levels, marginalizing the structural, institutional, and legal factors that can play a decisive role in actively regulated settings. The result is that we have a reasonably good list of the correlates of continuance but no clear picture of the mechanisms that link them together.

2.4. Trust, legitimacy, and the institutional context

Trust is the concept on which both of the preceding traditions converge. By integrating trust and perceived risk into the technology acceptance model, Pavlou (2003) showed that in e-commerce environments trust is not one variable among others but a central driver of consumers' intention to transact, acting both directly and by reducing perceived risk. The trust that matters in the platform context, however, is not merely interpersonal trust or trust in a brand; it also has an institutional layer. By distinguishing among pragmatic, moral, and cognitive

In Press

legitimacy, Suchman (1995) offers a useful conceptual tool for understanding this layer: the highest level of legitimacy is reached when an organization's presence is taken for granted and beyond question.

This framework is especially relevant for online streaming platforms in settings such as Iran, where a platform's operation is contingent on a license from a regulatory body, content policies are subject to external oversight (Falaki, 2025; Salamati, 2022), and economic instability and infrastructural constraints directly affect the user experience. In such a setting, legal and institutional legitimacy is not merely an administrative requirement but becomes a persuasive resource: before judging the quality of the content, the audience judges the stability and reliability of the platform itself.

2.5. The Iranian context

Iran's online streaming market has taken shape over the past decade and has rapidly become concentrated: a handful of major domestic platforms hold most of the subscription-based market share, and competition among them has centered mainly on original series production and exclusive distribution rights. International services such as Netflix have not established a presence in the country, an absence that has been linked to Iran's regulatory environment, including a long history of content regulation and state support for domestic platforms, which came to be framed as a national project against piracy (Falaki, 2025; Salamati, 2022). The leading platforms, such as Filimo, Namava, and Filmnet, operate under content regulations that govern the availability and discoverability of both Iranian and foreign titles and impose censorship obligations (Falaki, 2025). At the same time, these platforms have taken on functions beyond entertainment: they have contributed to the diversification of Iranian film culture (Salamati, 2022) and have played a role in reshaping households' media consumption repertoires.

Domestic research on this area remains limited and has mostly been conducted from the audience's perspective. Drawing on the uses and gratifications approach and in-depth interviews with users, Mahmoudi and Malekpaeen (2024) organized the reasons for watching domestic platforms into categories such as appropriate content categorization, affordability, and dubbing quality and censorship considerations. Studies of this kind offer valuable insight into consumption motivations, but they do not answer the question posed by the present study: through which pathways and mechanisms the platform, as an actor, builds a sustainable persuasive relationship, and which factors strengthen or weaken these pathways.

2.6. Synthesis and research gap

The literature review reveals three related gaps. The first is a unit-of-analysis gap: dominant theories of persuasion focus on the message,

UT Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

whereas the problem facing subscription-based platforms is the continuation of a relationship. The second is a methodological gap: the continuance literature mainly tests predetermined predictors and does not reconstruct the process. The third is a scope gap: institutional, legal, and governance factors, which can play a decisive role in actively regulated settings, have rarely been incorporated into existing models. By adopting the qualitative, inductive approach of grounded theory and drawing on the accounts of experts from a range of disciplines, the present study seeks to address all three gaps at once.

3. Methodology

3.1. Approach and research design

The question this study asks is a "how" question: how sustainable audience persuasion forms on online streaming platforms, and how its components are linked to one another. Rather than testing hypotheses derived from an existing theory, a question of this kind requires reconstructing the process from the experience of the actors involved. A qualitative approach, and specifically grounded theory, was therefore chosen as the research strategy. Grounded theory allows concepts and categories to be derived from the data rather than from a predetermined framework, and then organized into a theoretical model (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Among the various versions of grounded theory, the systematic version developed by Strauss and Corbin was adopted, because its paradigm model, which distinguishes among causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, the central phenomenon, strategies, and consequences, provides exactly the differentiation the research question requires: between what initiates the process, what provides its setting, what moderates its intensity, and what results from it. More constructivist versions, such as Charmaz's (2014) approach, although epistemologically more flexible, do not offer a specific paradigm structure for this differentiation.

3.2. Participants and sampling

Participants were selected through purposive sampling on the basis of the following criteria: at least five years of professional or research experience related to platform businesses; practical familiarity with the online streaming market and its mechanisms for acquiring and retaining audiences; and the ability to provide conceptual analysis rather than merely report personal experience. In addition, sampling was designed for maximum variation in order to cover different disciplinary perspectives. This decision rested on a theoretical rationale: if the study assumes that sustainable persuasion is a multilayered phenomenon, then relying on experts from a single discipline would inevitably produce a one-dimensional model.

In total, 13 experts participated in the study, and their areas of

In Press

expertise span four fields relevant to the topic. Table 1 presents these fields together with the focus of the participants in each. As the analysis progressed, theoretical sampling was also employed, meaning that subsequent participants were selected on the basis of categories that the analysis of earlier interviews had identified as requiring further saturation. For example, the prominence of the category of legitimacy and institutional trust in the middle interviews led to the inclusion of experts in law and digital governance at later stages.

Table 1. Participant characteristics

Area of expertise	Participants	Interview focus
Marketing, consumer behavior, and process management	Experts 1, 2, 3, and 8	Value proposition, audience insight, sequencing of execution, behavior change, and localization
Media management, content, and policy	Experts 4, 5, and 10	Content features, competitive environment, environmental challenges, and integrated experience management
Digital governance, law, and institutional studies	Experts 6, 9, and 12	Legal frameworks, data governance, institutional trust, and legitimacy
Communication, sociology, and psychology	Experts 7, 11, and 13	Cultural context, social modeling, psychological resistance, and principles of persuasion

3.3. Data collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interview guide was built on open-ended questions organized around four broad themes: the participant's definition of successful persuasion on online streaming platforms; the factors that facilitate and inhibit it; the practical strategies platforms adopt; and the signs that persuasion has or has not been achieved. The order and depth of questions in each interview were adjusted to the participant's area of expertise and the course of the conversation, and whenever a new concept emerged, follow-up questions were asked to explore it further.

Interviews were conducted in Persian, in person or online, recorded with participants' permission, and transcribed verbatim. Data collection and analysis proceeded concurrently and iteratively, so that the findings of each stage informed adjustments to the guide for the next interview. The criterion for ending data collection was theoretical saturation: no new categories emerged in the final two interviews, and the codes extracted from them only enriched existing categories. This criterion is consistent with existing guidance on sample adequacy in qualitative research (Guest et al., 2006).

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

3.4. Data analysis

The analysis was conducted in three stages, following the procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1998).

In the first stage, open coding, each interview transcript was read line by line, and initial concepts were extracted directly from participants' statements. This stage yielded 549 initial codes across the 13 interviews. The distribution of these codes by interview is shown in Table 2. The marked variation in the number of codes across interviews (from 28 to 55) mainly reflects the conceptual breadth of each participant's field: on average, the experts in digital governance and law and in media management, by the nature of their subject matter, raised a wider range of factors than those in marketing.

Table 2. Distribution of open codes by interviewee

Participant	Number of open codes
Expert 1	30
Expert 2	28
Expert 3	33
Expert 4	53
Expert 5	30
Expert 6	53
Expert 7	46
Expert 8	48
Expert 9	53
Expert 10	55
Expert 11	51
Expert 12	36
Expert 13	33
Total	549

In the second stage, axial coding, codes with similar or related meanings were merged into more abstract categories. This stage identified 10 main categories and 37 subcategories. Table 3 illustrates the path of abstraction, from raw quotation to main category.

In the third stage, selective coding, the core orientation of each interview was first identified separately, and a single core category for the study as a whole was then derived through constant comparison and integration. At this stage, the categories and subcategories produced by axial coding were re-sorted according to their functional role in the persuasion process and assigned to the six components of the paradigm model. This re-sorting added no new codes to the data; what changed

in Press

was the criterion of grouping. In axial coding, codes were grouped by conceptual similarity, whereas in the paradigm model they were positioned according to their function in the process, that is, according to whether they initiate, frame, moderate, enact, or result from persuasion. Because this functional criterion cuts across thematic groupings, the categories of the paradigm model sit at a finer level of abstraction than the 10 main categories and are built largely from the axial subcategories. The main category of user experience, for example, feeds two distinct causal conditions: its subcategory of design and usability underlies quality of user experience, whereas its subcategory of support and responsiveness underlies effective interaction with users (Table 3). The result is a model consisting of five categories positioned as causal conditions, eight as contextual conditions, six as intervening conditions, one central phenomenon, 10 strategy categories, and three sets of consequences.

Table 3. Illustrative path of abstraction in the coding process

Quotation (Example)	Open code	Subcategory	Main category
"A very important point is round-the-clock support" (Expert 1)	Round-the-clock support	Support and responsiveness	User experience
"Very high speed is also necessary to save users' time" (Expert 1)	High system speed	Design and usability	User experience
"Today's user faces not just a shortage of attention but emotional and cognitive saturation" (Expert 11)	Emotional and cognitive saturation	Digital fatigue	Psychological factors and relationship management
"Today's audience is not naive; they know they are being watched, analyzed, and targeted" (Expert 11)	Critical user awareness	User psychological resistance	Psychological factors and relationship management
"A transparent, predictable, and credible legal framework" (Expert 6)	Transparent and predictable laws	Core systemic factors	Institutions and digital governance

3.5. Trustworthiness

The quality of the findings was assessed using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria. Credibility was strengthened in three ways: the researcher's prolonged engagement with the data over several months; member checking, whereby a summary of the extracted categories was returned to five participants and their suggested revisions were incorporated into the analysis; and constant comparison among codes, categories, and raw data at every stage of the analysis. Transferability was supported through thick description of the research context and the participant selection criteria, and through the presentation of direct

IU Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

quotations, so that readers can judge how well the findings fit other settings. Dependability was ensured by keeping an audit trail, including analytic memos and documentation of coding decisions. Finally, to establish confirmability, part of the data was coded independently by a second coder, and discrepancies were discussed until agreement was reached.

3.6. Ethical considerations

Before each interview, the aims of the study and the ways in which the data would be used were explained to the participant, and oral informed consent was obtained for recording the conversation and using it for research purposes. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage and to have any part of their statements removed. To protect confidentiality, the names and organizational affiliations of participants are not reported, and participants are referred to only by identification codes (Expert 1 to Expert 13).

4. Findings

The findings are presented below according to the six components of the paradigm model: causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, the central phenomenon, strategies, and consequences. Interview excerpts were originally in Persian and are presented here in English translation.

4.1. Causal conditions

Causal conditions are the factors that set the persuasion process in motion and bring about the audience's first meaningful encounter with the platform. The analysis identified five categories in this position: value proposition, quality of user experience, effective interaction with users, innovation and continuous development, and trust in and credibility of the communication source.

According to the findings, when a platform's value proposition aligns with the audience's needs and identity and solves a problem for them, the initial groundwork for persuasion is laid (Experts 1, 5). This alignment does not simply mean that content is available; it concerns the fit between what the platform offers and what the audience is looking for. Quality of user experience, meaning the simplicity, speed, and stability of the system, is a precondition for continued interaction and for the acceptance of persuasive messages (Experts 5, 10). Importantly, the experts defined user experience far more broadly than visual design. As the media-management expert noted, "from a managerial perspective, UX is not just page design" (Expert 10); rather, it encompasses the entire chain of the audience's contact with the platform, from first acquaintance to the moment of exit.

Effective interaction, meaning timely responsiveness and two-way dialogue, strengthens the audience's sense of being seen and facilitates

In Press

persuasion (Experts 10, 13). One of the marketing experts stressed that "a very important point is round-the-clock support" (Expert 1), and the media-management expert took the point to a deeper level: "persuasion takes shape when the audience feels that the platform understands them" (Expert 10). Innovation and continuous development, meaning the addition of new features and ongoing improvement, makes the platform appear responsive and growing in the audience's mind (Experts 3, 5), a point one expert formulated as follows: "we must constantly be pursuing innovation and creativity in our products and services" (Expert 3).

Finally, trust in and credibility of the communication source, which derive from the platform's expertise, perceived honesty, and institutional standing, are a necessary condition for the audience to accept its messages (Experts 1, 10, 13). In the words of the communication expert, "the stronger the perceived expertise, honesty, and goodwill of the message source, the greater the likelihood of persuasion" (Expert 13). Notably, in the experts' accounts these five categories appeared not as independent factors but as an interconnected set: a value proposition without a reliable user experience ends in a failed experience, and a good user experience without source credibility remains ineffective.

4.2. Contextual conditions

Contextual conditions represent the broader structural and social setting within which the persuasion process takes shape, without themselves directly bringing it about. With eight categories, this is one of the largest components of the model: structural characteristics of the market, digital governance and the regulatory system, the competitive industry environment, technological and communication infrastructure, economic conditions of society, the digital culture of society, the innovation ecosystem, and the media system. This breadth is itself a meaningful finding: from the experts' perspective, a considerable share of what determines the fate of the persuasive relationship lies outside the platform's direct control.

The size, diversity, and structural complexity of the market constitute the macro-level framework within which a platform business takes shape (Experts 4, 5). Clear rules on data and cybersecurity provide the legal basis a platform needs to operate credibly (Experts 4, 6, 9). The digital-governance expert elaborated on this point explicitly: "audience persuasion in platform businesses is not merely a marketing or technological phenomenon" but "the result of a complex interaction between the regulatory system, institutional trust, national infrastructure, and user behavior in the digital space" (Expert 6). The same expert added that "a transparent, predictable, and credible legal framework" reduces precisely the instability that stands in the way of a long-term relationship (Expert 6).

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

The intensity of competition and market saturation determine how much pressure a platform is under to differentiate its persuasive message (Experts 5, 8); as an expert in international marketing put it, "in a market where global brands are present, persuasion is harder" (Expert 8). Internet quality and digital access are the technical precondition for the audience's encounter with the platform (Experts 4, 6), a point that carries added weight for video platforms, given how sensitive the viewing experience is to bandwidth stability. Purchasing power, household income, and macroeconomic stability likewise shape the audience's capacity to take up the platform's offers (Experts 4, 6, 8). The same international-marketing expert illustrated this difference with an example: "in some countries people are used to paying online, but in some places cash payment or payment on delivery still matters" (Expert 8).

Public trust in technology and digital lifestyles reflects a society's cultural readiness to adopt platforms (Experts 7, 8). As the expert who approached the topic from a sociological perspective put it, "a platform that can represent the language, symbols, and behavioral patterns appropriate to its target society has a greater chance of persuading" (Expert 7). The presence of accelerators, investors, and a start-up network provides the conditions for these businesses to grow and mature (Experts 4, 6). Finally, news coverage and the public image of technology in the media shape the audience's mental image of a platform before any direct interaction (Experts 4, 10, 12). The media-management expert described the density of this environment as follows: "today's audience is bombarded with messages, news, advertising, and competing content" (Expert 10).

4.3. Intervening conditions

Intervening conditions are factors that amplify or weaken the effect of causal and contextual conditions without themselves initiating persuasion. Six categories were identified in this position: trust in and credibility of oversight institutions, digital fatigue, audience psychological traits, user psychological resistance, influence of reference groups, and competitive pressure and standards.

The credibility of oversight institutions, meaning the extent to which regulatory bodies are trusted to oversee the digital space, moderates how strongly the other persuasive factors take effect (Experts 6, 9, 12). The legal expert made this dependence clear: persuasion is tied to "the level of public trust in the judicial system and oversight bodies" (Expert 9). The same expert warned that "if enforcement is weak or there is public distrust," the persuasive effect of even a sound legal position "diminishes" (Expert 9). This point carries an important implication: a platform can comply with every legal requirement and still derive no persuasive benefit from that compliance, because of public distrust in the regulator itself.

UNDER PEER REVIEW

Digital fatigue, meaning the emotional and cognitive saturation that results from repeated exposure to content, lowers the audience's tolerance for persuasive messages (Expert 11). The management-psychology expert framed this phenomenon as follows: "today's user faces not just a shortage of attention but emotional and cognitive saturation," and under such conditions "persuasion no longer means capturing attention; it means respecting attention" (Expert 11). Audience psychological traits, such as the level of risk-taking and need for cognition, also change the type and intensity of the response to persuasive messages (Experts 8, 13).

User psychological resistance, which stems from prior experiences, critical awareness, and knowledge of how algorithms and advertising work, was the most frequently referenced category in this component, appearing in the accounts of six experts from different fields (Experts 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13). In the words of the management-psychology expert, "today's audience is not naive; they know they are being watched, analyzed, and targeted" (Expert 11). The influence of reference groups, that is, the endorsement or rejection of a message by influencers and other reference groups, likewise amplifies or neutralizes the effect of the platform's persuasive message (Experts 5, 7, 8). The sociological expert called this mechanism "social modeling based on influential individuals" and pointed to the role of "influencers, reference groups, and high-influence users" (Expert 7). Finally, competitive pressure and standards, that is, the presence of competing benchmarks in the market, raise audience expectations and the bar the platform's messages must clear to be accepted (Experts 5, 12).

4.4. The central phenomenon: Sustainable platform persuasion

Selective coding integrated the 13 interview-specific orientations, which ranged from value-driven (Expert 1) and process-oriented (Expert 2) views to governance-centered (Expert 6), sociological (Expert 7), legal (Expert 9), and communicative (Expert 13) perspectives, around a single core category: "sustainable platform persuasion." The significance of this category lies in the fact that it draws together accounts given from quite different professional vantage points by participants who were interviewed separately.

The substance of this category is as follows. Audience persuasion on online streaming platforms is not a one-off event, not merely the product of advertising messages, and not simply a function of technological appeal; it is a dynamic, layered, and gradual process that emerges from the synergy of value proposition, user experience, trust, interaction, legal and media legitimacy, cultural fit, and transparent governance. This synergy operates across eight layers: a content-marketing layer, based on emotional, personalized, and transparent content; a process layer, grounded in the correct and complete sequencing of execution, from understanding the audience and in-depth

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

analysis through strategy design and precise execution to continuous monitoring; a behavioral-functional layer, which treats behavior change as the ultimate criterion of success; a psychological layer, centered on identity stability, balance of power, and respect for user attention; a socio-cultural layer, concerned with alignment with norms, social capital, and collective identity; an institutional-governance layer, based on legal legitimacy, transparent data governance, and institutional trust; a communicative layer, resting on source credibility, message coherence, and two-way interaction; and a media-management layer, based on media credibility, editorial authority, and integrated management of the user experience from first contact to final exit.

Two features distinguish this category from similar concepts. The first is its cumulative nature: no layer is sufficient on its own, and weakness in one layer can neutralize the effect of the others. The second is its temporality: sustainable platform persuasion is not achieved in a single moment; it is built through repeated successful encounters and collapses through repeated unsuccessful ones. In this sense, sustainable platform persuasion is the mechanism that converts a platform's value proposition into acceptance, sustained engagement, loyalty, and an enduring relationship between audience and platform, the point around which every other category in the model is organized.

4.5. Strategies

Strategies are the deliberate actions a platform takes, in response to causal, contextual, and intervening conditions, to manage the persuasion process. This is the most diverse component of the model, comprising 10 categories: marketing and localization, architecture and user experience, content, communication, social, network, trust-building, institutional, legal, and psychological strategies.

Marketing and localization strategies, built on strategically designed and localized marketing, align the persuasive message with the local context and the target audience (Experts 1, 2, 8); the international-marketing expert summed up this principle in a slogan: "think global, act local" (Expert 8). Architecture and user-experience strategies, such as user behavior analysis, personalization, and gamification, make users' interaction with the platform deeper and more enjoyable (Experts 1, 5, 10). Content strategies, namely intelligent content policy and coordination between message and experience, increase the appeal and coherence of content (Experts 10, 13). Communication strategies, including persuasion-oriented audience segmentation, narrative-based persuasion, and the cultivation of communicative empathy, strengthen two-way interaction and emotional connection (Expert 13).

Social strategies, such as creating forums and groups and drawing on users' opinions, strengthen users' sense of belonging to the platform (Expert 7), while network strategies, namely value co-creation and encouraging user participation, turn users from mere consumers into

UHK Press

active players in the network (Experts 7, 13). Trust-building strategies, grounded in information transparency and adherence to ethical principles, lay the foundation for lasting trust between user and platform (Experts 6, 9). Institutional strategies turn the platform into an enduring, meaning-making actor in the public arena (Expert 12). The institutional-studies expert described this strategy as "media institution-building" and "producing meaning rather than merely producing content," achieved through "managing legitimacy through structural transparency" (Expert 12).

Legal strategies, namely the proactive design of user-protection mechanisms and voluntary adherence to data protection standards, build legal trust through transparency and accountability (Expert 9). Finally, psychological strategies, which include respecting user attention, managing silence and absence, and balancing power between platform and user, are perhaps the most unexpected part of this component. The management-psychology expert explained this approach by noting that "the primary persuasion strategy is the gradual reduction of the need for direct persuasion," achieved in part through "institutionalizing perceived fairness" (Expert 11). In other words, from this expert's perspective, the most successful persuasion strategy is one that does not present itself as persuasion.

4.6. Consequences

Consequences are the practical outcomes of successful, sustained persuasion and comprise three categories: communicative-behavioral, economic-operational, and institutional consequences. These three sets are ordered by the level at which they materialize, from changes in individual user behavior to the consolidation of the platform's position in the public sphere.

At the communicative-behavioral level, loyal users become advocates of the brand and communicative reference points for it, helping to consolidate the platform by producing content voluntarily (Experts 3, 10, 13). The behavioral expert described this process as follows: "our audience, while using these services, unconsciously becomes a promoter of the platform" (Expert 3). The media-management expert took it a step further: "persuasion leads to the audience becoming a loyal user and then a defender of the platform" (Expert 10).

At the economic-operational level, sustainable persuasion reduces audience acquisition costs, increases user retention time, and leads to revenue stability (Experts 3, 10). This pathway is particularly important in a subscription-based business model, because a lower churn rate translates directly into higher customer lifetime value. At the institutional level, growing social and legal legitimacy turns the platform into an institutionalized, taken-for-granted part of the audience's everyday life (Experts 6, 9, 12). The institutional-studies

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

expert described the highest level of this consequence as follows: successful persuasion "leads to the institutionalization of the platform in the public sphere, such that its presence comes to be regarded as self-evident and natural" (Expert 12).

Table 4. Summary of the paradigm model of sustainable platform persuasion

Component	Categories
Causal conditions (5 categories)	Value proposition; quality of user experience; effective interaction with users; innovation and continuous development; trust in and credibility of the communication source
Contextual conditions (8 categories)	Structural characteristics of the market; digital governance and the regulatory system; competitive industry environment; technological and communication infrastructure; economic conditions of society; digital culture of society; innovation ecosystem; media system
Intervening conditions (6 categories)	Trust in and credibility of oversight institutions; digital fatigue; audience psychological traits; user psychological resistance; influence of reference groups; competitive pressure and standards
Central phenomenon	Sustainable platform persuasion (a cumulative, temporal process operating across eight interacting layers)
Strategies (10 categories)	Marketing and localization; architecture and user experience; content; communication; social; network; trust-building; institutional; legal; psychological
Consequences (3 sets)	Communicative-behavioral; economic-operational; institutional

The paradigm model shows that the formation of a sustainable relationship between audience and platform results from the interaction of a set of factors operating at different levels. Value proposition, user experience, and source credibility initiate the persuasion process; the process unfolds within contextual conditions such as digital governance, digital culture, market structure, the media system, and technological infrastructure; and it is moderated by intervening conditions such as users' psychological resistance, digital fatigue, and competitive pressure. In response to this configuration, the platform adopts strategies in 10 areas, and the consequences of the process become manifest at three levels: communicative-behavioral, economic-operational, and institutional. Figure 1 presents these relationships in the conventional form of a paradigm model.

in press

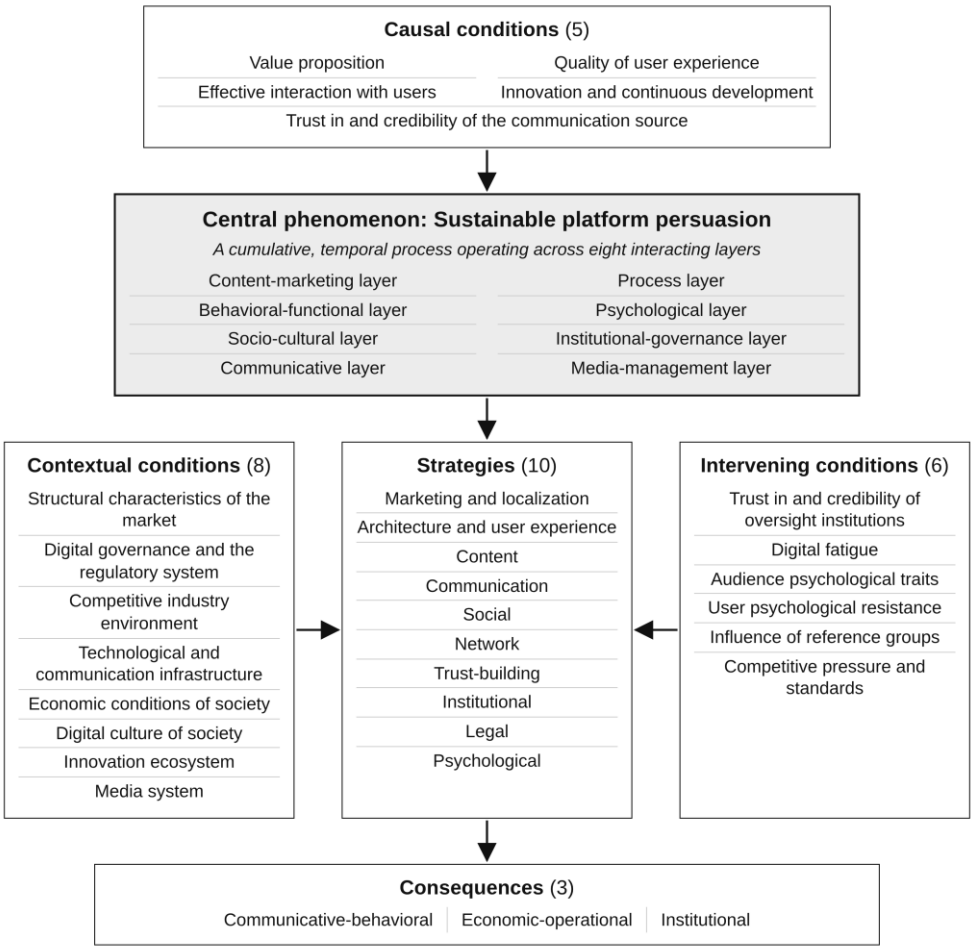


Figure 1. Paradigm model of sustainable platform persuasion

Note. Arrows indicate the analytic relationships among the components of the paradigm model (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) rather than statistically tested causal effects. Numbers in parentheses give the number of categories in each component.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study can be framed in dialogue with the four theoretical lines set out in the theoretical background.

5.1. From message to relationship: A shift in the unit of analysis

The first and most fundamental implication of the model is a shift in the unit of analysis. The elaboration likelihood model frames persuasion as the processing of a single message, and its central question is whether the audience processes an argument via the central or the peripheral route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The present findings show that, in the context of a subscription-based platform, this question, though valid, is insufficient. The core category derived here, "sustainable platform

persuasion", is a phenomenon built through repeated encounters rather than a single one, and it is precisely this temporality that brings into the equation variables that have no place in a message-centered framework: the stability of the platform's identity over time, the consistency between what is promised and what is experienced, and the gradual accumulation of trust or distrust.

More precisely, what takes the place of "argument strength" in the present model is "relational robustness". This shift brings the model closer to the relationship marketing tradition (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), though with one important difference, examined in the next section. The network strategies of value co-creation and user participation identified in the model likewise echo service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004): in a relationship-centered frame, the audience is not only the target of persuasion but also a participant in producing the value that keeps the relationship going. In addition, the prominence of user experience as a causal condition supports Fogg's (2003) argument that the system itself, and not only the messages it carries, is a persuasive actor; one expert's insistence that user experience "is not just page design" (Expert 10) expresses exactly this broadening of scope.

5.2. Trust in a one-to-many relationship

Commitment-trust theory is built on a dyadic relationship between two parties to an exchange (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The findings of this study indicate that extending the theory to the platform context requires a revision: the platform is in a relationship not with a single counterpart but with a heterogeneous mass of users, and it cannot build trust through personal interaction. According to the findings, this gap is filled by a different mechanism: institutional signaling. In the experts' accounts, legal legitimacy, transparent data governance, and institutional trust, the three elements of the institutional-governance layer, perform precisely the function that personal experience performs in a dyadic relationship. The institutional-studies expert stated this difference explicitly, describing institutional trust as something "beyond individual experience" (Expert 12).

This finding is consistent with Suchman's (1995) framework of levels of legitimacy. What the same expert described as the highest consequence of persuasion, a state in which the platform's presence comes to be "regarded as self-evident and natural" (Expert 12), is in effect what Suchman calls cognitive legitimacy. This correspondence has a notable implication for persuasion theory: at its ultimate level, successful persuasion shows itself not as active acceptance of a message but as the cessation of questioning. This is what the management-psychology expert had described as "the gradual reduction of the need for direct persuasion" (Expert 11). Two experts from different disciplines, interviewed separately, thus arrived at the same conclusion by independent routes.

In Press

5.3. Resistance as a structural condition, not a disruption

The third implication of the model concerns the place of audience resistance. In message-centered frameworks, resistance is usually treated as an obstacle to message effectiveness, something that can be overcome. In the present model, however, user psychological resistance appears as one of the intervening conditions, and indeed as the most frequently referenced category in that component (present in the accounts of six experts from different fields). Its position as a standing condition that moderates every persuasive effort, rather than as a problem addressed by any single strategy, marks it as a structural feature of the field rather than a temporary shortcoming.

This finding is in line with Friestad and Wright's (1994) persuasion knowledge model and extends it to the platform context. The management-psychology expert's statement that "today's audience is not naive; they know they are being watched, analyzed, and targeted" (Expert 11) is a precise description of persuasion knowledge being activated in an environment whose persuasive mechanisms, unlike those of classic advertising, are hidden and embedded in its structure. This situation is close to what Bucher (2017) calls the "algorithmic imaginary": users have a notion not only of the existence of persuasion but also of its algorithmic mechanism, and they adjust their behavior accordingly. Zuboff's (2019) analysis also connects with the findings at this point: the same data extraction that makes a platform more capable of personalization is also a source of suspicion.

The strategic implication of this finding is the most important practical contribution of the present model. If resistance is a structural feature of the field, then strategies based on intensifying persuasive pressure, that is, increasing the frequency of messages, notifications, and suggestions, are likely to backfire, because they further activate the very persuasion knowledge that stands in the way of acceptance. The strategies the experts considered effective point in the opposite direction: respecting user attention, managing silence and absence, balancing power between platform and user, and institutionalizing perceived fairness. These are all strategies that, rather than intensifying persuasion, create conditions in which the need for persuasion declines.

5.4. Institutional legitimacy as a precondition for persuasion

The fourth finding worth reflecting on is the extensive presence of institutional and structural factors in the model. Of the categories identified as contextual and intervening conditions, most, from digital governance and the regulatory system to trust in oversight institutions and the economic conditions of society, lie outside the platform's direct control. This distribution complements the prevailing literature on subscription continuance, which focuses mainly on individual-level and user-experience variables (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Menon, 2022; Pereira & Tam, 2021; Samudro et al., 2024).

In Press

Cyberspace Studies, Vol ?, No ?, ????

The legal expert's warning is especially telling in this respect: the persuasive effect of a sound legal position diminishes "if enforcement is weak or there is public distrust" (Expert 9). The implication of this statement is that the relationship between legal compliance and user trust is not direct but passes through public trust in the regulatory system itself. This finding is consistent with Gillespie's (2018) argument about the unavoidable governance role of platforms, and it shows that in actively regulated settings, institutional legitimacy is not an external requirement but part of a platform's persuasive capital.

5.5. Theoretical and practical implications

Theoretically, this study makes three contributions. First, it offers a model that shifts the unit of analysis of persuasion from the message to the relationship, which makes it better suited than message-centered frameworks to continuance-based settings such as subscription services. Second, it systematically brings into the model institutional and legal factors that are underrepresented in the continuance literature. Third, it moves audience resistance from the status of an obstacle to that of a structural condition, thereby establishing a link between the persuasion knowledge model and the platform literature.

Practically, the model can serve as a framework for diagnosing the state of a platform's persuasive relationship. For platform managers, its most important implication is that investment in the content and user-experience layers, although necessary, will not pay off if the institutional and communicative layers are weak, and that strategies based on intensifying persuasion may backfire in an environment where the audience has a high level of persuasion knowledge. For policymakers, the important finding is that the transparency and predictability of the regulatory system, in addition to serving a supervisory function, help domestic platforms develop sustainable relationships with their audiences.

6. Conclusion

Drawing on a qualitative analysis of 13 expert interviews and three stages of open, axial, and selective coding, this study derived 549 initial codes, 10 main categories, 37 subcategories, and, ultimately, a single core category: "sustainable platform persuasion." In answer to the research question, the components and formation mechanisms of sustainable audience persuasion were formulated as a paradigm model comprising five causal conditions, eight contextual conditions, six intervening conditions, one central phenomenon, 10 strategy categories, and three sets of consequences.

Four main conclusions can be drawn from these findings. First, the multilayered nature of persuasion: sustainable persuasion on online streaming platforms is not merely a marketing or technological phenomenon but results from the synergy of eight layers, namely the

In Press

content-marketing, process, behavioral-functional, psychological, socio-cultural, institutional-governance, communicative, and media-management layers, and weakness in any one layer can neutralize the effect of the others. Second, the importance of sequence: successful persuasion requires following a specific order, from understanding the audience and in-depth analysis to strategy design, precise execution, and continuous monitoring; according to the experts, jumping from the initial stages straight to execution does not produce lasting results.

Third, the decisive role of macro-level infrastructure: transparent governance, political and economic stability, social capital, technical infrastructure, and a robust legal framework provide the foundation without which sustainable persuasion essentially cannot take shape. The prominence of these factors in the accounts of experts from diverse disciplines shows that a considerable part of the fate of the persuasive relationship is decided outside the platform's direct control. Fourth, the superiority of structural over tactical strategies: media institution-building, structural transparency, producing meaning rather than merely producing content, and institutionalizing perceived fairness were judged in the experts' accounts to be more effective than individual campaigns and messages.

Overall, in the proposed model persuasion is neither an advertising tool nor a function of technological appeal, but a strategic mechanism for creating a sustainable relationship, shaping audience loyalty, and achieving competitive advantage. For a platform whose revenue hinges on the audience's monthly decision to renew, this distinction is not merely theoretical: the difference between persuasion that has to be won anew every month and persuasion that has become a relationship is the difference between two distinct business models.

6.1. Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has several limitations that should be kept in mind when interpreting the model. First, the model was reconstructed from the accounts of experts rather than from the experiences or behavior of audiences; it therefore captures how those who design, manage, regulate, and study platforms understand persuasion, and it may overstate the coherence and intentionality of platform strategy. Second, although the 13 participants came from varied disciplines, the study was set in a single national market with a distinctive regulatory structure, so the prominence of institutional and legal factors may partly reflect the Iranian setting. Third, in keeping with the logic of the paradigm model, the labels causal, contextual, and intervening denote the analytic position of categories in participants' accounts rather than effects established through statistical testing; the relationships the model proposes are therefore best treated as propositions for further empirical examination. Fourth, the data were collected at a single point in time, so the temporal dynamics that the model attributes to sustainable

IU Press

persuasion were inferred from participants' retrospective accounts rather than observed as they unfolded.

The model presented in this study opens several clear avenues for future research. The first is to complete the picture from the perspective of audiences themselves. The mechanisms identified in this study, including institutional legitimacy, data governance, and the platform's strategic logic, have been reconstructed from the standpoint of the actors who manage this process; examining how users interpret these signals and what form psychological resistance takes in their lived experience could add a complementary layer to this picture.

The second avenue is a longitudinal study of the platform-audience relationship. Because the model defines sustainable persuasion as a temporal phenomenon built through repeated encounters, directly observing how it forms and erodes over time could demonstrate this temporality empirically. Finally, survey-based studies could test the relationships the model proposes, and comparative studies in markets with different regulatory and cultural structures could clarify the boundaries of its transferability and help enrich the model.

Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

Ethical considerations

The authors have completely considered ethical issues, including informed consent, plagiarism, data fabrication, misconduct, and/or falsification, double publication and/or redundancy, submission, etc. This article was not authored by artificial intelligence.

Data availability

The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the author on reasonable request.

Funding

This research did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or non-profit sectors.

References

Bhattacherjee, A. (2001). "Understanding information systems continuance: An expectation-confirmation model". *MIS Quarterly*. 25(3): 351-370. https://doi.org/10.2307/3250921.

Bucher, T. (2017). "The algorithmic imaginary: Exploring the ordinary affects of Facebook algorithms". *Information, Communication & Society*. 20(1): 30-44. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1154086.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory.* 2nd ed. Sage Publications.

Cialdini, R.B. (2009). *Influence: Science and Practice.* 5th ed. Pearson Education.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. 4th ed. Sage Publications.

In Press

Eppler, M.J. & Mengis, J. (2004). "The concept of information overload: A review of literature from organization science, accounting, marketing, MIS, and related disciplines". *The Information Society*. 20(5): 325-344. https://doi.org/10.1080/01972240490507974.

Falaki, A. (2025). "Subscription video on demand and video content regulation in Iran". *Studies in World Cinema*.. https://doi.org/10.1163/26659891-bja10059.

Fogg, B.J. (2003). *Persuasive Technology: Using Computers to Change What We Think and Do*. Morgan Kaufmann Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-1-55860-643-2.X5000-8.

Friestad, M. & Wright, P. (1994). "The persuasion knowledge model: How people cope with persuasion attempts". *Journal of Consumer Research*. 21(1): 1-31. https://doi.org/10.1086/209380.

Gillespie, T. (2018). *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions that Shape Social Media*. Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300235029.

Gomez-Uribe, C.A. & Hunt, N. (2016). "The Netflix recommender system: Algorithms, business value, and innovation". *ACM Transactions on Management Information Systems*. 6(4). https://doi.org/10.1145/2843948.

Guest, G.; Bunce, A. & Johnson, L. (2006). "How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability". *Field Methods*. 18(1): 59-82. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903.

Lehrer, C.; Constantiou, I.; Matt, C. & Hess, T. (2023). "How ephemerality features affect user engagement with social media platforms". *MIS Quarterly*. 47(4): 1663-1678. https://doi.org/10.25300/MISQ/2023/17085.

Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.

Lotz, A.D. (2022). *Netflix and Streaming Video: The Business of Subscriber-Funded Video on Demand*. Polity Press.

----------. (2017). *Portals: A Treatise on Internet-Distributed Television*. Maize Books. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.9699689.

Mahmoudi, B. & Malekpaeen, F. (2024). "Studying how and why Iranian users use internal VOD". *Society Culture Media*. 13(51): 69-98. https://doi.org/10.22034/scm.2024.434448.1712. [in Persian]

Menon, D. (2022). "Purchase and continuation intentions of over-the-top (OTT) video streaming platform subscriptions: A uses and gratification theory perspective". *Telematics and Informatics Reports*. 5. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teler.2022.100006.

Morgan, R.M. & Hunt, S.D. (1994). "The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing". *Journal of Marketing*. 58(3): 20-38. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299405800302.

Parker, G.G.; Van Alstyne, M.W. & Choudary, S.P. (2016). *Platform Revolution: How Networked Markets Are Transforming the Economy and How to Make Them Work for You*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Pavlou, P.A. (2003). "Consumer acceptance of electronic commerce: Integrating trust and risk with the technology acceptance model". *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*. 7(3): 101-134. https://doi.org/10.1080/10864415.2003.11044275.

Pereira, R. & Tam, C. (2021). "Impact of enjoyment on the usage continuance intention of video-on-demand services". *Information & Management*. 58(7): Article 103501. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2021.103501.

Petty, R.E. & Cacioppo, J.T. (1986). *Communication and Persuasion: Central and Peripheral Routes to Attitude Change*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4612-4964-1.

Rochet, J.C. & Tirole, J. (2003). "Platform competition in two-sided markets". *Journal of the European Economic Association*. 1(4): 990-1029. https://doi.org/10.1162/154247603322493212.

Salamati, M. (2022). "The politics of video on demand platforms in Iran: In between formal and informal distribution". *Studies in World Cinema*. 2(1-2): 161-184. https://doi.org/10.1163/26659891-bja10021.

In Press

Samudro, B.; Susilo, M.H.; Armadito, M.R.; Handayani, P.W. & Fitriani, H. (2024). "Users' satisfaction regarding continuance intention of subscription video-on-demand platforms for watching football matches: A stimulus-organism-response perspective". *Sage Open*. 14(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241289685.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications.

Suchman, M.C. (1995). "Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches". *Academy of Management Review*. 20(3): 571-610. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9508080331.

Thapa, S.; Panda, S.; Ghimire, A. & Kim, D.J. (2024). "From engagement to retention: Unveiling factors driving user engagement and continued usage of mobile trading apps". *Decision Support Systems*. 183. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2024.114265.

Vargo, S.L. & Lusch, R.F. (2004). "Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing". *Journal of Marketing*. 68(1): 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.68.1.1.24036.

Xue, C.; Tian, W. & Zhao, X. (2020). "The literature review of platform economy". *Scientific Programming.* Article 8877128. https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/8877128.

Zuboff, S. (2019). *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. PublicAffairs.

in Press