Article

Over-the-Top (OTT) video streaming services' continuance adoption during and after Covid-19 pandemic: Mediation analysis combining two research frameworks

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Abstract: During and after the Covid-19 outbreak, people's precautionary measures of not visiting public venues like cinema halls or multiplexes were replaced by watching treasured videos or films in private settings. People are able to watch their favourite video contents on a variety of internet-connected gadgets thanks to advanced technologies. As a result, it appears that the Covid-19 outbreak has had a substantial impact on people's inclination to continue using video streaming services. This study attempted to establish an integrated framework that describes how people change their health behaviours during pandemic conditions using the health belief model (HBM), as well as the mediating effect of HBM constructs over ECM constructs such as continuous intention to subscribe to OTT video streaming services among subscribers. The study looked at the impact of three perceived constructs, susceptibility, severity, and self-efficacy, on the confirmation/adoption of over-the-top (OTT) video streaming services during the lethal pandemic (Covid-19). The study focused on new OTT video streaming service subscribers, and 473 valid replies were collected. Path analysis and multivariate analytical methods, such as structural equation modelling (SEM), were used to estimate construct linkages in the integrated framework. Perceived severity has been identified as the most influential factor in confirmation/adoption, followed by perceived susceptibility. The results also showed that satisfied users/subscribers are more likely to use OTT video streaming services. The mediators, confirmation/adoption, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction were used to validate the influence of perceived susceptibility on continuance intention. Furthermore, contactless entertainment enhances security for users/subscribers by allowing them to be amused across several internet-based venues while adhering to social distance norms.

Keywords: perceived susceptibility; perceived severity; self-efficacy; perceived usefulness; Covid-19 pandemic; health belief model; OTT services; video streaming platforms

1. Introduction

India, the world's second largest country by population, with 130 million people, was hit by the devastating second wave of Covid-19 in February 2021, with 414,188 persons testing positive, with the maximum test positivity rate of 21% on 7 May 2021 (Dutta, 2021). The Government of India (GOI) implemented a number of measures to reduce and mitigate the risk of the pandemic spreading. As the country became more vulnerable to the coronavirus, people continued to practice social distance, travel restrictions, and wearing face masks. The second wave spread quickly and reached

both urban and rural regions at the same time, causing extensive damage, which was exacerbated by inadequate healthcare services on the ground. As the first wave of the epidemic began in India, the much-anticipated recession impacted the Indian economy hard, as did the rest of the world's economies. Since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a destructive and fatal pandemic in March 2020, the entire globe has been anxiously waiting for the development of a vaccine to alleviate the pandemic's threat and revive the global economy. Several vaccines (Sputnik V and Pfizer-BioNTech) have been developed and approved for international manufacture, but mass production and distribution of vaccinations to the world's population remains a daunting problem. The pandemic has had a negative influence on the economy, human health, and the environment (Ghosh et al., 2020). As a result, measures such as the mandatory use of quality face masks were adopted statewide and implemented as soon as feasible (Eikenberry et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2012). Specifically, the government's social distancing methods (Chinazzi et al., 2020) and complete public consent remained an effective strategy to control the virus's spread (Chang et al., 2020). As the Indian government had no other option, a 40-day countrywide lockdown was approved in the first wave, which definitely extended the peak infection volume while negatively impacting socioeconomic variables. Following the first wave of lockdowns, social isolation, travel control, and sanitation in public venues and workplaces became critical (Pai et al., 2020).

Following the lockdown, businesses observed major changes in industry sectors connected to customer behaviour, corporate conduct, and business ethics, and have made steps to make it less intense for stakeholders (Donthu and Gustafsson, 2020). Innovative ideas are developed among themselves to overcome the crisis and maintain business operations in order to survive. On the other hand, it was clear that the people's purchasing or shopping habits had changed as a result of the forced lockdown (Daragmeh et al., 2021). They grew willing to adapt to new technology and accepted "new normal" ways of dealing with working from home, entertainment from home, and studying at home (Sheth, 2020). People began to go digital to satisfy their want for shopping, entertainment, and leisure while avoiding physical interaction by distancing, sterilizing, and masking. People's demand for shopping has hastened the adoption of online shopping, mobile banking, and web workouts (Cronshaw, 2021; Sreelakshmi and Pratap, 2020), while their desire for entertainment has resulted in an increase in subscriptions to Over the Top (OTT) video streaming services.

At the advent of OTT video streaming services, service providers emphasized it as a handy medium of entertainment that aligned with consumer preferences. In actuality, the ban on the opening of theatres and cinema halls during the pandemic has increased the number of people who subscribe to and consume OTT video streaming services. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in the first and second waves has caused worry and concern among people to go out and spend time during and after the pandemic. The prohibitions were ultimately lifted, but the general public's access to safe entertainment was limited. Coincidentally, consumers who used mobile banking and online shopping found it easier to subscribe to OTT video streaming services. The increased viewership of OTT video streaming services (Sheth, 2020), as well as the arrangements made by video content producers and movie stars to release their creative work on OTT video streaming platforms, have accelerated subscriptions to

OTT video streaming services and shaken up traditional multichannel Pay TV providers' businesses. These variations in customer behaviour reinforce the arguments that traditional TV providers' business models are under threat, with the rapid expansion of the video content streaming market as a "new beast" gains technological advantages (Banerjee et al., 2014; Fagerjord and Kueng, 2019; Sanson and Steirer, 2019). Furthermore, lockout limits have caused customers to shift their movie-watching experience from cinema halls/theatres with friends and family to their personal places at their leisure.

OTT video streaming platforms emerged as a complementary means of reaching audiences from video content producers. Customers, on the other hand, benefit from the availability of a wide range of video content (from huge stars to debut stars) in one location, with HD (High Definition) quality and no time limit for viewing. Global OTT service providers such as Netflix and Amazon Prime were optimistic about entering the Asian market (Kim et al., 2017) and successfully captured the diverse Indian market by streaming regional language video content (including fiction, history-based, mythological, and thriller stories) to their customers (Nagaraja et al., 2021). Netflix, YouTube, Hulu, and Amazon Prime are the top four worldwide OTT video market participants, competing in a variety of marketplaces with global and regional video content and accounting for around 40% of OTT video market returns each year, according to Lee et al. (2021).

2. Literature review and conceptual framework

Following the widespread infection of people with Covid-19, a significant increase has been reported in research related to the pandemic Covid-19, particularly in the subject area of technology and social sciences (Ruiz-Real et al., 2020), with a subsequent increase noted in research publications. Among the broad categories of COVID-19, research on health sciences dominated (88.23％) with the greatest number of publications (Daragmeh et al., 2021). The protective measure of not enjoying public spaces like cinema halls or multiplexes are substituted with the happiness of watching favourite videos in personal spaces for the people. Moreover, broadband technologies and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) empowered consumers to watch video content of their choice through multiple devices connected to the internet (Lee et al., 2021). But in reality, only a few research studies were conducted on the impact of health-related behavioural changes to overcome and adapt to forced lockdown and social distancing.

As a result, it appears important to determine whether people's continuing intention to subscribe to video streaming services and view video content has increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This study attempted to establish an integrated framework that describes how people change their health behaviour during pandemic circumstances using the health belief model (HBM), as well as the mediating effect of HBM constructs over the ECM construct continuous intention to subscribe to OTT video streaming services among subscribers.

2.1. Health belief model (HBM) and expectation confirmation model (ECM)

This section provides a full explanation of the constructs included in the integrated model being studied. The health belief model (HBM) is widely used to measure the perceived threat of a disease based on perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, and perceived self-efficacy (Becker and Maiman, 1998). Champion (1984) defined "perceived susceptibility" as a person's attitude toward confronting a dangerous circumstance, and "perceived severity" as a person's assessment of the intensity of being influenced by the dangerous scenario. The concept of "perceived self-efficacy" was simply defined as a person's belief in their ability to successfully execute the necessary behaviour for a goal (Bandura, 1997). Previously, researchers used the above HBM constructs described in a variety of health-related studies. The same model was used to investigate women's neutral decisions about removing their ovaries to lower the risk of cancer (Herrmann et al., 2018), and it was discovered that perceived severity and vulnerability influenced women's decisions.

After evaluating the literature on health behavior and technology adoption, the HBM constructs of perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, and perceived self-efficacy predicted the usage of mobile health monitoring applications (Champion and Skinner, 2008; Melzner et al., 2014; Zhao et al., 2018). As a result, in this study the researchers considered perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, and perceived self-efficacy when investigating people's perceptions of the pandemic danger. Next, the expectation confirmation model (ECM) constructs were introduced to the integrated model. Many researchers prior to Bhattacherjee (2001) proposed popular ideas and models of adoption and behavioral changes. Similarly, Davis (1989) proposed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), followed by Ajzen (1991) who proposed the theory of planned behavior (TPB), while the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977) and UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003) have become widely accepted theories to explain people's adoption behavior.

Bhattacherjee (2001) developed and validated the Expectation confirmation model (ECM) to describe people's continuance intentions to use computer network-based services. ECM proposed the interaction between three four constructs, namely, "confirmation/adoption", "perceived usefulness", and "satisfaction", which led to the "continuous intention" to utilize information systems. Further, he defined "confirmation/adoption" as "the user's consciousness of presumed gains of computer network-based system use and the disappointment to achieve expectations". "Perceived usefulness" has been recognized as a cognitive concept that consistently influences a user's intention via an information network, leading the user to believe that he or she benefits from the technology product or service (Davis, 1989; Karahanna et al., 1999). Oliver (1980) termed "satisfaction" as "the summary outline of the emotional state of mind results when the human feeling encircled in disconfirmed a person's expectations is attached with his or her previous emotional state about the consumption experience." Finally, "continuance intention" stated "consumer's intent to proceed with the use of computer-based systems" (Bhattacherjee, 2001).

2.2. Formulation of hypothesis

An integrated approach is adopted to formulate hypotheses for this research by using HBM and ECM constructs. The concept of confirmation/adoption of OTT media video streaming services is used in the current study because the researchers believe it reflects the individual's behaviour of avoiding socializing in public places, which may have helped them reduce their chances of becoming ill with the widespread pandemic. People have subscribed to OTT video streaming services to decrease the impact of the Covid-19 virus by passing it from one sick person to another, but only after they discovered OTT video streaming as an alternative way to enjoy themselves in their personal spaces. On this background, the researchers attempt was to find out the answers for the following research questions:

1) Whether the perceived susceptibility to the Covid-19 pandemic has compelled an individual to subscribe the OTT video streaming services?

2) Whether the perceived severity to the Covid-19 pandemic has compelled an individual to subscribe the OTT video streaming services?

3) Whether the perceived self-efficacy of an individual has compelled an individual to subscribe the OTT video streaming services?

4) Whether the perceived susceptibility to the Covid-19 pandemic has influenced an individual to believe in the perceived usefulness of the OTT video streaming services?

5) Whether the perceived severity to the Covid-19 pandemic has influenced an individual to believe in the perceived usefulness of the OTT video streaming services?

6) Whether the confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services significantly related to the perceived usefulness of OTT video streaming services?

7) Whether the confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services significantly related to the level of satisfaction of OTT video streaming services?

8) Whether the perceived usefulness of OTT video streaming services significantly related to the level of satisfaction of OTT video streaming services?

9) Whether perceived usefulness of OTT video streaming services significantly related to the continuance intention of OTT video streaming services?

10) Whether the level of satisfaction of OTT video streaming services is significantly related to the continuance intention of OTT video streaming services?

11) Whether any HBM constructs (perceived susceptibility, perceived severity and perceived self-efficacy) has shown a mediation effect on continuance intention in the model through confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction?

After finalizing the above research questions, the hypotheses were formulated. The first three hypotheses of the study selected to examine the relationship between HBM constructs viz., perceived susceptibility, perceived severity and perceived self-efficacy and confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services.

H1: Perceived Susceptibility to Covid-19 pandemic has a significant influence on confirmation/adoption of OTT Video streaming services.

H2: Perceived severity of Covid-19 pandemic has a significant influence on the confirmation/adoption of OTT Video streaming services.

H3: Perceived self-efficacy is significantly related to the confirmation/adoption of OTT Video streaming services.

It is noticed that previous scholars conducted research on similar concepts related to perceived health threats and perceived usefulness. Dou et al. (2017) conducted research work on consumers' health behavior intention in the containment of chronic health diseases using smartphone health technology and the health IT acceptance model was suggested by Kim and Park (2012). Accordingly, in this scenario, the perceived susceptibility to the pandemic and perceived severity of the pandemic might have created a positive perception to adopt OTT video streaming services and as it has helped them to reduce physical contact in public spaces. On this understanding, the fourth and fifth hypotheses are formulated.

H4: Perceived susceptibility to Covid-19 has a significant influence on the perceived usefulness of OTT Video streaming services.

H5: Perceived severity of Covid-19 has a significant influence on the perceived usefulness of OTT Video streaming services.

The hypotheses from six to ten (given below) indicates the association of antecedents in ECM, highlights the relationship between different constructs in the model, perceived usefulness, confirmation/adoption, perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and continuance intention.

H6: Confirmation/adoption level is significantly related to the perceived usefulness of OTT Video streaming services.

H7: Confirmation/adoption level is significantly related to the satisfaction of OTT Video streaming services.

H8: Perceived usefulness is significantly related to the level of satisfaction of OTT Video streaming services.

H9: Perceived usefulness is significantly related to the continuance intention of OTT Video streaming services.

H10: Users' level of satisfaction is significantly related to the continuance intention of OTT Video streaming services.

Lastly, the research postulates a mediation hypothesis to check whether the continuance intention prolonged intent to use OTT video streaming services is due to the perceived susceptibility, and perceived severity and perceived self-efficacy, which is orderly mediated by confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction (H11).

H11: The effect of perceived susceptibility and perceived severity on continuance intention to use OTT video streaming services is serially intervened through confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction.

Thus, the researchers expected that the results of mediation analysis may disclose the reasons for the confirmation/adoption behavior influenced by perceived threats among of the users/subscribers during and after the pandemic. All hypothesized relations of the proposed model are illustrated in **Figure 1**.
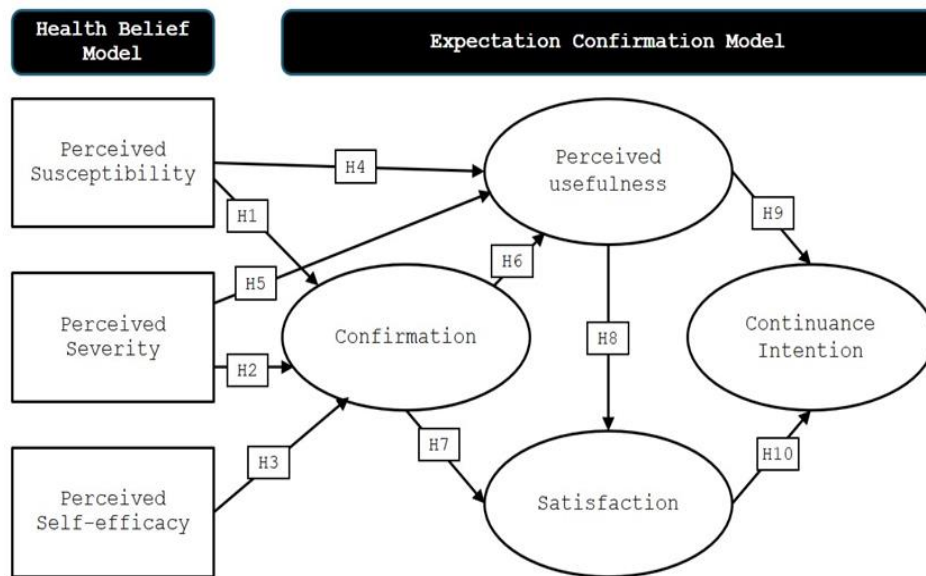
Figure 1. Proposed research model.

3. Data and methods

3.1. Qualitative study

In-depth interviews

Seven in-depth interviews were conducted with the experts from the OTT video streaming business. The respondents included as experts in this study are the members of a facebook community with OTT business experts, International OTT Platform group. This group conducts discussions on the latest changes happens in this OTT business and technology. They share posts to motivate each other and in bringing innovative changes in their business. Two questions were given to them in the interactive session.

i.   What happened in the OTT business during and after Covid -19 pandemic?

ii.   What are the factors you consider as the reason for the wide acceptance of OTT video streaming business in the pandemic situation?

3.2. Quantitative study

3.2.1. Sampling and data collection

The primary data collection methods were used to obtain responses from the selected respondents. The selected respondents were the users (subscribers) subscribed to OTT video streaming services in India, after the second wave of the killer pandemic hit the country in March–April 2021. A questionnaire with closed-ended and open-ended questions with 24 items was sent to the respondents (users/subscribers of OTT video streaming services) through online mode and received 473 valid responses. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: 1) the demographic details of the respondents and 2) items for measuring theoretical constructs to examine the continuance intention to use the OTT video streaming services. The content validity of the constructs was ensured with already established construct items selected from previous studies. Four items were identified for measuring perceived severity and three items were found

suitable to measure perceived susceptibility (Kim and Park, 2012). The construct of self-efficacy (four items) was chosen from the research work of Boonsiritomachai and Pitchayadejanant (2017) and Venkatesh et al. (2003). In case of other constructs, three items identified for confirmation, four items for perceived usefulness, four items for satisfaction, and three items for continuance intention, as adapted from Bhattacherjee (2001), constituted the ECM perspectives.

Consumers who had access to video content whenever and wherever they choose to watch through multiple devices such as personal computers, mobile phones, electronic tablets, video gaming consoles, TV sets, and other equipment connected to the Internet (Federal Communication Commission, 2012) are conceived as users/subscribers of OTT video streaming services for the study. Hence, all OTT video streaming service providers in India (international and domestic companies) fall under the discussions of the study. The data used for the analysis were collected from new OTT video streaming users/subscribers only (i.e., those who became subscribers immediately after the second wave of Covid-19 in India), and it is ensured by particularly including a question in the questionnaire related to the time of starting subscription of OTT video streaming services. Thus, the users/subscribers who were subscribed to OTT video streaming services before the second wave of Covid-19 in India were eliminated from the analysis. The study period covered from April–June 2022.

3.2.2. Demographic description of the users/subscribers

The total number of questionnaires satisfactorily filled by OTT streaming services users/subscribers was 473, out of 550 questionnaires shared to the users. The proportion of males and females in the total sample size was 67% and 33% respectively. A large group of users fell under the age group category of 22 to 35 years (45%), followed by the age group category of 36 to 45 years (37%). In the matter of educational competence, 60% of the OTT subscribers were graduates and 28% were postgraduates. All subscribers expressed their essential awareness about internet applications and they had access to digital platforms. Thirty-five percent of the respondents articulated that the usage of OTT video streaming services depends on the streaming start date or release date of the video or movie content on the digital platforms. The majority of the respondents (88%) views movies and series episodes in other languages with the support of subtitles in the video content. A remaining 12% are interested in viewing their regional language movies and series on the OTT platforms. More than 60% of the respondents are subscribers of all four OTT players in Indian market, Amazon Prime, Netflix, Hotstar, and SonyLiv to watch their favorite movies and serials episodes.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Results of in-depth interviews

For the first question, the experts revealed that OTT video streaming business shoot up during Covid-19 pandemic situation globally. The experts also informed that the reason for the wide acceptance of the OTT video streaming services and its increased subscription rates during that time was the fear of the people towards the

pandemic. Thus, the second question's responses from the seven experts have supported the factors like perceived susceptibility and perceived severity. It is found that the satisfaction of the users/subscribers to OTT video streaming services were more during pandemic situation as the people were having limited entertainment opportunities.

4.2. Results of quantitative study

The association and relationships between the chosen constructs under the proposed integrated model analysed with a multivariate analysis technique i.e., structural equation modelling. The analysis was done by using SPSS and Amos-26 software. The multivariate normality of the structural equation modelling was confirmed, based on the recommendation of Anderson and Gerbing (1988), Byrne (2016), and Kline (2011).

The constructs' reliability and validity were established using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Cronbach's Alpha value confirmed the internal consistency and reliability of the items used for the model. Convergent validity was determined by calculating regression loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity, as a subset of total construct validity, was guaranteed by examining the relationship or association between the constructs and comparing the square root of AVE calculated from the data. To establish normality, all construct components in the research framework fall within the desirable bounds of skewness and Kurtosis, which are three and eight, respectively, as indicated by Kline (2011).

4.3. Validation of the measurement model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to test and validate the construct reliability and validity of the measures used in the study. All constructs employed for SEM analysis are listed in the **Table 1** under the heading factors, then, construct items, standardized factor loadings (SFL) for each construct item, average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct and critical ratio (CR) value for each construct are presented. Standardized factor loadings indicate the correlation between the construct and its items whereas AVE values are used to assess convergent validity and CR values are used to determine the validity of the construct items.

All constructs in the framework had a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than the allowed cutoff of 0.70, indicating internal consistency and reliability. The standardized regression coefficients were found to be greater than the approved minimum limit of 0.50, and the AVE value for all constructs in the framework exceeded the minimum limit of 0.5 (ranging from 0.582 for self-efficacy to 0.725 for confirmation). By emphasizing the acceptable level of convergent validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Hair, 2014), construct confirmation contributed to the higher CR value of 0.885 (cut-off value of acceptance: 0.70), while the construct, continuance intention, achieved the lowest CR value of 0.828.

Table 1. Construct reliability and convergent validity of the constructs.

Factors	Items	Standardized factor loadings (SFL)	AVE	CR
Perceived susceptibility	PSS1	0.810	0.651	0.882
	PSS2	0.819		
	PSS3	0.742		
	PSS4	0.853		
Perceived severity	PSEV1	0.753	0.655	0.850
	PSEV2	0.867		
	PSEV3	0.803		
Self-efficacy	SE1	0.555	0.582	0.844
	SE2	0.852		
	SE3	0.740		
	SE4	0.863		
Confirmation	CON1	0.965	0.725	0.885
	CON2	0.924		
	CON3	0.625		
Perceived Usefulness	PUSE1	0.775	0.654	0.883
	PUSE2	0.815		
	PUSE3	0.843		
	PUSE4	0.742		
Satisfaction	STFN1	0.750	0.632	0.872
	STFN2	0.825		
	STFN3	0.822		
	STFN4	0.836		
Continuance Intention	CI1	0.765	0.615	0.828
	CI2	0.803		
	CI3	0.785		

After studying the relationships between correlation coefficients between constructs and square root values of AVE, it was discovered that the measured value of the association between variables is less than the square root of AVE obtained for the construct under investigation (**Table 2**). As a result, the square root of AVE values has validated the discriminant validity of the constructs (Fornell and Larcker (1981). The measurement model was then estimated using the minimum cut-off limit confirmed for the fit indices (i.e., the value must be greater than 0.90), including the goodness of fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI), and Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI), as suggested by Hair (2014). According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hair (2014), the RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) criterion and the χ^2 to degrees of freedom ratio must be less than 0.08 and 5 respectively.

The results of the investigation revealed that the proposed measurement model had the following fit indices values: GFI = 0.874, AGFI = 0.839, CFI = 0.919, TLI = 0.905, and NFI = 0.888. The model has a χ^2 to df ratio of 3.223 (χ^2 = 818.546, df = 254) and an RMSEA score of 0.069. The suggested measurement model met the model fit requirements with values of CFI (0.919) and TLI (0.905), χ^2 (3.223), and RMSEA (0.069), indicating a good fit with the study's observational statistics (Hair, 2014).

After confirming the measurement model with all of the fit indices listed above, the statistical analysis moved on to validate the structural model.

Table 2. Discriminant validity confirmation of the constructs.

Latent constructs	CI	PSS	PSEV	SE	PU	CON	SAT
CI	**0.784**						
PSS	0.181	**0.807**					
PSEV	0.012	0.144	**0.809**				
SE	0.107	0.529	0.036	**0.763**			
PUSE	0.197	0.519	0.284	0.596	**0.809**		
CON	0.015	0.143	0.217	0.026	0.198	**0.852**	
STFN	0.036	0.099	0.227	0.063	0.262	0.673	**0.795**

Values appearing in bold are the square root of AVE and values not in bold are inter-construct correlation coefficient.

4.4. Outcomes and confirmation of structural model

The structural equation modeling analysis was utilized to analyze the conceptual elements of HBM and ECM used in this study. We assessed the structural model's goodness of fit using various fit indices recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hair (2014). By doing a path analysis sequentially and computing fit indices values for the structural model, it's possible to determine whether the research framework's indices are suitably fit with the observational study data. To ensure sufficient model fit, the threshold values of GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, and NFI should be greater than 0.90, while the χ^2 and RMSEA values should be less than 5 and 0.08, respectively. The results confirm the postulated framework's appropriate fit with the observational data, with the following values of fit indices: GFI = 0.864, CFI = 0.908, NFI = 0.876, TLI = 0.901, AGFI = 0.831, ratio of χ^2 value to degrees of freedom 3.450 (χ^2 = 903.928, df = 262) and RMSEA value (0.72) as recommended by Hair (2014).

The study's proposed postulates (H1 to H10) were tested using path analysis, which led to structural equation modeling. Path analysis (**Table 3** and **Figure 2**) revealed that HBM constructs, such as perceived severity (β = 0.137, SE = 0.035, p = 0.000) and perceived susceptibility (β = 0.118, SE = 0.051, p = 0.018), had a tacit influence on the confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services. These elements explained 29% of the differences in a confirmation/adoption among users/subscribers. Additionally, perceived severity (β = 0.159, SE = 0.040, p = 0.000) and perceived susceptibility (β = 0.502, SE = 0.051, p = 0.000) had a substantial impact on perceived usefulness. Similarly, the correlations between the ECM constructs, perceived usefulness, confirmation, satisfaction, and intention to continue were assessed for hypothesis conformity.

Confirmation/adoption of OTT streaming services had an impact on perceived usefulness (β = 0.118, SE = 0.052, p = 0.026). Similarly, perceived susceptibility to the pandemic and perceived severity of the pandemic retrieved an R2 value of 34.3% on perceived usefulness. Subscriber satisfaction was predicted using the factors confirmation and perceived usefulness, which obtained an R2 value of 47.3%. As the model does not support the relationship between perceived usefulness and continuance intention (β = −0.025, SE = 0.063, p = 0.696) and points out that subscribers'

satisfaction (β = 0.243, SE = 0.066, p = 0.000) has a greater impact on continuance intention than perceived usefulness.

Table 3. Outcome of path analysis.

Hypotheses	β	SE	CR	*P* value	Resolution
Perceived severity-confirmation	0.137	0.035	3.896	0.000	Approved
Perceived susceptibility-confirmation	0.120	0.051	2.372	0.018	Approved
Perceived self-efficacy-confirmation	−0.041	0.039	−1.048	0.293	Not Approved
Perceived severity-perceived usefulness	0.147	0.039	3.750	0.000	Approved
Perceived susceptibility-perceived usefulness	0.504	0.050	10.039	0.000	Approved
Confirmation-perceived usefulness	0.118	0.052	2.318	0.026	Approved
Confirmation-satisfaction	0.813	0.075	10.790	0.000	Approved
Perceived usefulness-satisfaction	0.203	0.063	3.231	0.001	Approved
Perceived usefulness-continuance intention	−0.025	0.063	−0.391	0.696	Not Approved
Satisfaction-continuance intention	0.243	0.066	3.690	0.000	Approved

Furthermore, the path analysis found no evidence for a link between perceived self-efficacy and confirmation/adoption, as well as perceived usefulness and intention to continue. To begin, the denied influence of perceived self-efficacy on the confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services demonstrated that, of the three HBM constructs, subscriber's perceived self-efficacy behaviour had no influence on the respondent's decision to adopt OTT video streaming services. Second, the construct perceived usefulness did not influence the continuing intention to use OTT video streaming services, however the construct satisfaction did. As a result, a mediation analysis was done between the integrated framework's HBM constructs perceived susceptibility and perceived severity and the ECM construct, continuance intention.
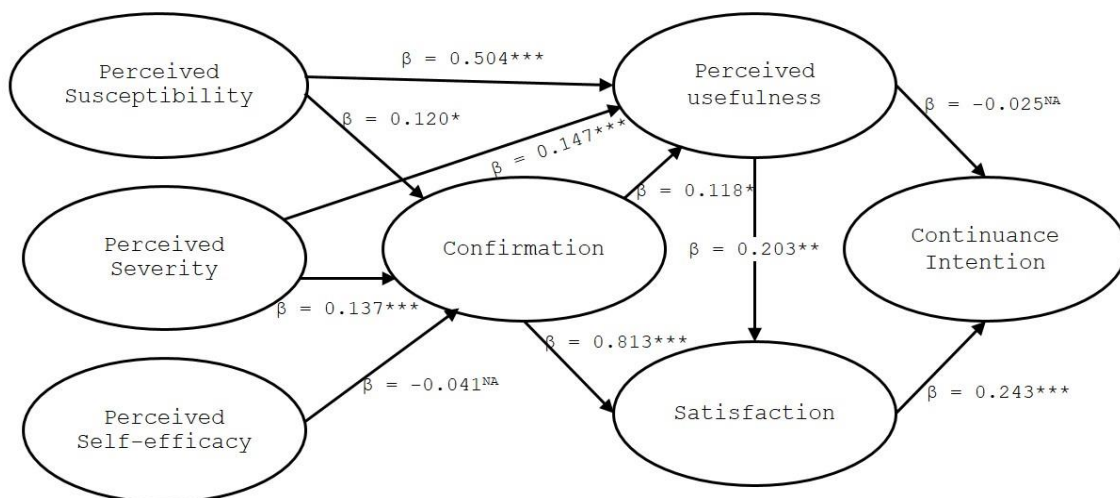

Figure 2. Confirmed research model.

4.5. Validation of serial mediation in the combined framework

Typically, a statistical mediation technique was used to determine the role of a third construct and its influence on the interconnection of two other constructs. At this point, the suggested serial mediator model incorporates three mediator variables: confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction, to examine the indirect impact of perceived susceptibility and perceived severity on continuing intention.

The mediation analysis was performed independently for perceived susceptibility and perceived severity in the combined framework. The results revealed the presence of the mediation effect of perceived susceptibility through confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction on continuance intention in the model, whereas the mediation effect of perceived severity had an insignificant mediation effect on continuance intention. **Table 4** and **Figure 3** reports the mediation impact of confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction on perceived susceptibility to the Covid-19 epidemic and continuance intention to utilize OTT streaming services.

The independent variable (IV) can have three possible impacts on the dependent variable (DV) via a mediator variable. Full mediation by a mediator variable can only be confirmed if it fully explains the relationship between IV and DV. Partial mediation can be established if the IV partially explains its relationship with the DV, which means that part of its impact is exerted directly on the DV while the remaining impact is exerted through the mediator. In both circumstances, the mediator factors' total indirect effect should be statistically significant. If the indirect effect of the mediator variables is determined to be insignificant, there is no evidence to support the mediation effect. The current study found a significant overall effect of perceived susceptibility on continuance intention (β = 0.2182, SE = 0.0632, CI95 [0.0940, 0.3423]), as well as a total indirect effect of PSS (β = 0.0794, SE = 0.0367, CI95 [0.0085, 0.1548]), confirming a full mediation with insignificant direct effects of the mediator variables.

Table 4. Serial mediating effect of confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction on the relationship between perceived susceptibility and continuance intention.

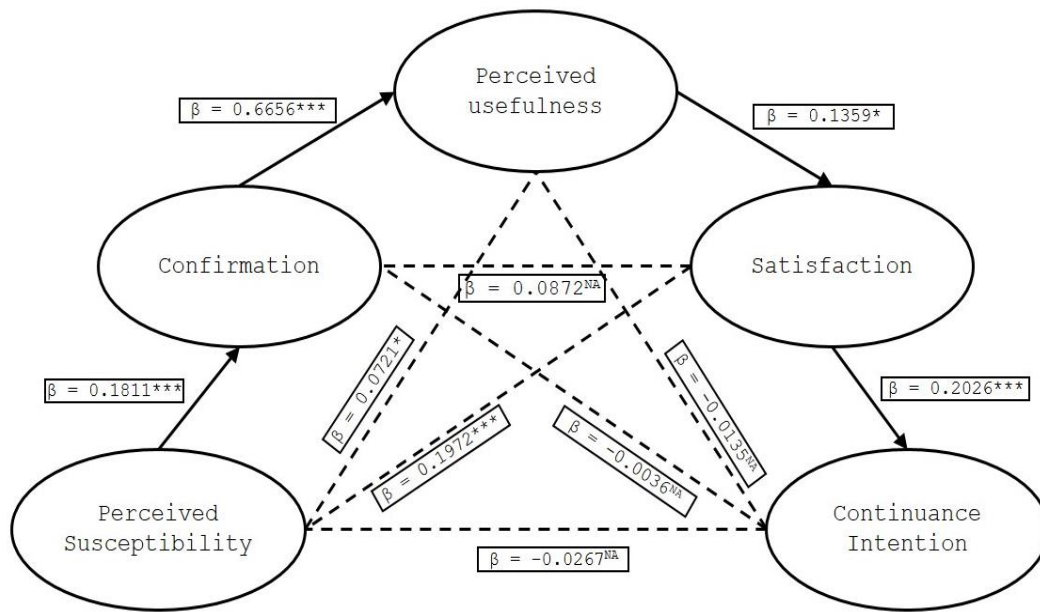| Effects of Perceived Susceptibility (PSS)	B	SE	CI95
Total effect of PSS on CI	0.2182***	0.0632	[0.0940, 0.3423]
Direct effect of PSS on CI	0.1388[N.A]	0.0715	[−0.0017, 0.2793]
Total indirect effect (Bootstrap)	0.0794***	0.0367	[0.0085, 0.1548]
Indirect effect paths	**β (SE)**	**CI95**	**Mediation acceptable or not**
PSS-CON-CI	0.0007 (0.0156)	[−0.0303, 0.0318]	Not Acceptable
PSS-PUSE-CI	−0.0010 (0.0060)	[−0.0148,0.0098]	Not Acceptable
PSS-SAT-CI	0.0400 (0.0154)	[0.0143, 0.0735]	Full Mediation
PSS-CON-PUSE-CI	−0.0017 (0.0096)	[−0.0211, 0.0180]	Not Acceptable
PSS-CON-SAT-CI	0.0034 (0.0031)	[−0.0017, 0.0109]	Not Acceptable
PSS-PUSE-SAT-CI	0.0020 (0.0015)	[−0.0001, 0.0056]	Not Acceptable
PSS-CON-PUSE-SAT-CI	0.0105 (0.0022)	[0.0002, 0.0089]	Full Mediation

[N.A]—Not Acceptable.

Figure 3. Confirmed serial mediation—Indirect effect of perceived susceptibility.

The serial mediation model's chain connections attempted to establish the seven indirect effects. The path between perceived susceptibility to continuance intention (PSEV-SAT-CI, $\beta = 0.0400$, SE = 0.0154, [0.0143, 0.0735]) through satisfaction found significant with full mediation. The serial mediation path (PSEV-CON-PUSE-SAT-CI, $\beta = 0.0105$, SE = 0.0022, [0.0002, 0.0089]) confirmed full mediation and validated the H11 regarding perceived susceptibility.

As an outcome, the findings revealed that an individual's impression of the pandemic's possible susceptibility led to the widespread confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services. After using the OTT video streaming services, users/subscribers may have formed opinions about the service's quality and performance, and the satisfaction felt by the users may have resulted in a continued intention to use these services again. The total effect of perceived severity on continuance intention ($\beta = 0.0201$, SE = 0.0496, CI95 [−0.0773, 0.1176]) and direct effect ($\beta = −0.0267$, SE = 0.0515, CI95 [−0.1279, 0.0745]) in serially mediating variables were found to be insignificant. As a result, the current study was unable to determine the presence of perceived severity mediation in the framework. In short, the path analysis established the direct influence of perceived sustainability and perceived severity on confirmation/adoption, but the influence of perceived severity on continuance intention through mediators (PSEV-CON-PUSE-SAT-CI) could not be established.

As a result of the pandemic, the adoption of handheld smart phones and internet access has accelerated the expansion of OTT video streaming businesses among the worldwide population (Gupta and Singharia, 2021). Similarly, the expansion of the Covid-19 epidemic has caused significant changes in the media and entertainment industries in Asian countries (Kim et al., 2017) and has accelerated the adoption of OTT video streaming services among the general public in India (Yeole et al., 2022; Patnaik et al., 2024). To determine whether the pandemic situation has caused any fear among the Indian population to subscribe the OTT video streaming services, the

researchers used integrated frameworks using HBM and ECM variables to establish linkages between the constructs. Furthermore, the research found that the intention to renew the membership of OTT video streaming services and to watch the video content on OTT platforms was partly influenced by the satisfaction obtained by the subscribers. In short, the statistical analysis's results and interpretations have confirmed the most of the presented hypotheses under investigation, with the exception of the relationship between perceived self-efficacy and confirmation and perceived usefulness and continuous intention.

While considering the results of each hypothesis separately, the relationship between perceived susceptibility and perceived severity on confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services (the first two hypotheses, H1 and H2, formulated earlier under the proposed model) clearly revealed its influence over the dependent variable, confirmation/adoption, and was accepted. On the other side, the influence of perceived self-efficacy over the confirmation/adoption of OTT video streaming services has been rejected. This finding demonstrated that the above-mentioned characteristics (perceived susceptibility and perceived severity) accounted 34% of the variance in confirmation of adoption of OTT video streaming services, with perceived severity having the greatest influence on adoption/confirmation, followed by perceived susceptibility. The model's computed magnitude of perceived severity indicates the most likely reason of fear about becoming infected with Covid-19 and its awful fatality rate. So, their decision to avail OTT video streaming services has not much influenced by their self-efficacy.

After the first 51-day enforced lockdown in India (in March 2020), there was a noticeable shift in customer behavior towards various technology-based mediums (Pratap and Sreelakshmi, 2020) as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and technology penetration (Centre for Financial Inclusion, 2020; Emara and Zhang, 2021). Later, the nation's plan of total lockdown was changed to regional lockdown, and the majority of Indian states were closed to prevent the spread of the dangerous disease throughout the country. People grew increasingly concerned about their health and recognized the health dangers associated with increased personal interaction in public places. As a result, the current societal circumstances have driven people to look for safe entertainment options. Users/subscribers who expected higher perceived usefulness from OTT video streaming services may have assumed that these subscriptions would help them cope with social alienation. Subsequently, users/subscribers with the aforementioned behavioural changes confirmed the association between perceived severity and perceived susceptibility to the perceived usefulness of OTT video streaming services and supported the hypothesized relationships (H4 and H5), consistent with the previous research (Daragmeh et al., 2021; Dou et al., 2017; Pratap and Sreelakshmi, 2020). Moreover, the research findings verified people's perceptions of the health hazard or health concerns that have led to the acceptance of OTT platforms for watching video content online during the pandemic's first and second waves (Sheng et al., 2021). Finally, the researchers established that HBM constructs such as perceived susceptibility and perceived severity have resulted in preventative health behavior among the people.

Furthermore, the current study demonstrated a consistent relationship between satisfaction and continuance intention, which was also verified in earlier studies

(Foroughi et al., 2019; Ghani and Rahi, 2019; Susanto et al., 2016). As a result, it is possible to conclude that satisfied consumers of OTT video streaming services have consistently expressed a desire to utilize the video streaming services. Talwar et al. (2020) found no evidence of a positive relationship between satisfaction and continued intention in their mobile payment study, alternatively, this study found a link between confirmation of usage, perceived usefulness, and customer satisfaction. Likewise, the significant positive interconnection between perceived usefulness and satisfaction was found evident in this study, though Bhattacherjee et al. (2008) chose to abort the relationship between these constructs. Daragmeh et al. (2021) supported confirmation and perceived usefulness were the significant variables, besides, the relationships between these variables led to customer satisfaction confirmed by previous researchers (Chiu et al., 2020; Rahi et al., 2020; Shiau et al., 2020; Susanto et al., 2016). Chen et al. (2012) with their study established the validity of a cause-and-effect model with satisfaction and continuance intention and the results confirmed the influence of customer satisfaction over the continuance intention of Web 2.0 (various digital media and networking spaces) users. Next, Ambalov (2018) validated the link between perceived usefulness and satisfaction hence, aligned with the findings of the current study. Similarly, Mouakket (2015) investigated and confirmed the relationships between perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and continuance intention among social networking site (SNS) users. In addition to the aforementioned research findings scholars Oghuma et al. (2016) confirmed the ECM framework based on similar findings from their own investigations. The interpretations of the outcomes of ECM constructs developed in the current study model confirmed assumptions H6 to H10 based on ongoing debates and supporting evidence from the many studies indicated in this discussion here.

The influence of perceived susceptibility and severity on continuance intention to use OTT video streaming services were tested first, followed by the mediation analysis with confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction to determine continuance intention. The study results confirmed the influence of perceived susceptibility on the adoption of OTT video streaming services during Covid-19, and might not be the meagre reason for the users to continue their subscription to OTT video streaming services, similar to the outcomes in the previous research studies (Pratap and Sreelakshmi, 2020; Scarinci et al., 2021; Vogel et al., 2021). Furthermore, in related research on post-covid consumer behaviour, Li and Qian (2021) found that perceived threat influences customers' willingness to pay for items and services. Moreover, the current study found that perceived susceptibility had a reduced impact on continuance intention and rejected it as a mediating construct, comparable to the findings of Becker and Janz (1984) and Tzengand (2022). The findings highlight the public's concern of the perceived severity of the Covid-19 sickness, which has resulted in a large number of deaths. Besides, El-Toukhy (2015) noted that perceived susceptibility and perceived severity are negatively associated and regarded as distinct notions separated by risk characteristics (DeDonno et al., 2022). In practice, the continuance intention is determined by a variety of other factors, such as OTT video streaming service providers' service performance and quality; if users receive the expected quality and service performance, they will be satisfied with the service and will continue to resubscribe to OTT video streaming services.

5. Conclusion and policy implications

Finally, we must concur that people's perceived susceptibility to the epidemic forced them to subscribe to OTT video streaming services, which resulted in a continued purpose to utilize the services after recognizing their utility and enjoyment. Furthermore, service providers should add more appealing and interesting features to the OTT video streaming platforms to increase the number of subscribers and maintain users' willingness to continue with OTT video streaming services even after the perceived susceptibility of the covid-19 pandemic has faded.

Policymakers can encourage individuals to use OTT video streaming services as an alternative source of entertainment in order to reduce the spread of lethal pandemics to the general public or similar pandemics in the future. Even years after the lockdown was lifted and cinema halls and theatres were opened in India, people were feeling uneasy assembling in public places for enjoyment if news of any contagious illness spread is broadcasted in the media. As a result, OTT video streaming services remain the greatest option for private leisure while preserving social distancing measures. As a result, user expectations for OTT video streaming services may improve in terms of service quality, user interface content quality, and overall performance. For example, if the user's real performance experience exceeds his expectations, this may result in customer satisfaction and an inclination to continue using the services. Similarly, service providers can improve quality by providing more features, offers, and discounts to increase the perceived usefulness of OTT media video streaming services and have a favorable impact on customer happiness to assure continued service usage.

Similarly, other findings from the current study suggest that users' preference for OTT video streaming media services as a preventive health behaviour during Covid-19 conditions may be useful for service providers in developing appropriate strategies to increase their customer base in the market. Finally, it provides several prospects for performing professionals and supporting technicians involved with video content development. Furthermore, this may drive them to develop higher-quality videos in order to increase the country's OTT video streaming service adoption rate by instilling a long-term commitment to maintaining stronger service provider-user connections.

Despite the research's practical perceptive and speculative conclusions, it is not without limitations. This study is limited to the pandemic context or is related to the Covid-19 situation, in which the government's restrictions on crowding in public places/social distancing measures, as well as limiting physical contact, insisting on wearing face masks, sanitizing hands or using gloves, etc., served as a major control mechanism against the pandemic. The study found that OTT video streaming services have been adopted, but the outcome may change after people are freed of the perceived threat of the pandemic, which is similar to the current global situation.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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