
A Study of Smart Online Buyer Behaviour

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Abstract:

In the contemporary landscape, the nature of shopping is rapidly evolving, largely driven by technological advancements and the ubiquity of the internet. Traditional modes of commerce have given way to the convenience and accessibility of online shopping, facilitated by the proliferation of mobile devices and e-commerce platforms. However, this transition has brought about new challenges, particularly concerning the absence of face-to-face interaction between buyers and sellers. Trust, a cornerstone of conventional shopping, is now established through online platforms and brands rather than interpersonal relationships. Consequently, the importance of smart online buyer behavior cannot be overstated, as uninformed decisions in the digital marketplace can lead to financial losses. This research aims to delve into the characteristics of smart buyers in the online sphere, with a specific focus on their attention to offers, product comparisons, and ability to stay updated on market trends. Through a thorough examination of these factors, this study seeks to provide insights into the behaviors and preferences of online consumers and empower them to make informed purchasing decisions. Data has been collected from 100 females and 100 males from a higher educational institute on a random basis through a questionnaire. The collected data has been analyzed based on frequency and percentage.

Key Words – Smart online buyer, Smart buyer behavior, e-Commerce, shopping apps.

Introduction:

The evolution of shopping behavior mirrors the broader societal shift towards digitalization. Gone are the days when consumers relied solely on physical stores to fulfill their needs and desires. Today, the advent of e-commerce has revolutionized the shopping experience, offering unparalleled convenience and choice to consumers worldwide (Mahmud, M. et al. 2022). However, this newfound convenience comes with its own set of challenges, chief among them being the complexity of online shopping (Chopdar, P.K. et al. 2022).

Traditionally, shopping was a tactile experience, characterized by face-to-face interactions with shopkeepers and the ability to physically inspect products before making a purchase (Ketanbhai, M. D. 2020). Trust was established through these interpersonal relationships, with buyers confident in the quality and authenticity of the goods they were purchasing. However, the rise of online shopping has disrupted this dynamic, replacing personal interactions with digital transactions. In this new paradigm, trust is no longer built on interpersonal relationships but rather on the reputation of online platforms and brands (Davis, F. et al. 2021).

This shift has profound implications for consumers, who must navigate a myriad of choices and considerations when making online purchases (Ramachandran, S. and Basariya, S. R. 2020). Smart buyer behavior is essential in this context, as it enables consumers to make informed decisions and avoid potential pitfalls such as overpaying for products or falling victim to scams. In essence, smart buyers are those who approach online shopping with caution and discernment, taking advantage of available resources such as offers, product comparisons, and market trends to make the best possible choices (Chilka, A. and Chauhan, S. 2018).

Objectives:

To study the smart online buyer behavior with reference to -

- a. Selection of attractive offers**
- b. Staying updated on the latest trends of products**
- c. The comparison of products on different online shopping apps**

Review of Literature:

Rannos, T.K. and Chatzoglou, P.D. (2017) identified that the purchasing decisions of buyers are significantly swayed by comparing products across different online shopping applications. They highlighted the pivotal roles played by perceived usefulness and ease of use in the utilization of product comparison websites.

Mishra, V. and Vashisht, A. (2019) delved into the multifaceted influences on online buyer behavior, highlighting factors such as refund policies, perceived risk, and trust. Their research underscored the extensive product and company research conducted by consumers, emphasizing the significance of perceived usefulness and convenience in their decision-making processes.

Brand Equity (2023) revealed distinct patterns in the purchasing behavior of Indian consumers on online shopping apps. This study yielded significant insights into the shopping behavior of Indian consumers which are following:

- A staggering 81% of Indian buyers engage in product comparisons on online shopping apps before making a purchase, aiming to secure the best price for their desired products. This practice remains prevalent even in the face of inflation, reflecting consumers' commitment to making informed purchasing decisions.
- The study found that 81% of Indian buyers dedicate their time to online product research, highlighting the widespread reliance on digital platforms for shopping needs. Moreover, 80% of Indian buyers reported finding better prices for products online compared to 65% globally, underlining the preference for online shopping due to its cost-effectiveness.
- 71% of Indian buyers exhibit a higher propensity for online shopping compared to the global average of 57%. This indicates a growing preference for the convenience and accessibility offered by online platforms in the Indian market.
- Quality emerges as a top priority for Indian shoppers, with 95% prioritizing product quality, followed closely by 90% prioritizing free shipping, and 89% valuing discounts and coupons. Despite the emphasis on cost-saving measures, consumers do not compromise on product quality.
- The study also revealed unique purchasing patterns among Indian consumers, with 51% purchasing products in advance for holidays or birthdays, a figure higher than the global average of 40%. Additionally, in response to price increases, 74% of Indian shoppers opt to buy essential items in bulk, while 61% strategically plan purchases of high-value items.

Sahu, D. et al. (2024) found that online consumers can optimize their purchasing decisions by conducting thorough product comparisons across diverse e-commerce platforms. This strategic approach empowers consumers to make informed choices, thereby maximizing the value derived from their purchases.

Fokina, M. (2024) emphasized the growing emphasis among businesses on crafting user-friendly and visually appealing online shopping platforms. These efforts are aimed at not only enhancing the shopping experience but also ensuring that consumers remain updated on the latest market trends.

These researches findings indicated that Indian buyers employ a strategic approach to shopping, prioritizing quality while leveraging attractive offers and product comparisons on various online shopping apps to make smart purchasing decisions that align with their budgets and preferences.

Research Methodology:

The aim of the study is to find out the factors that make a buyer smart. A questionnaire was designed to study the smart online buyer behaviour and sent to the concerned groups to collect the data. The sample consists of 200 individuals, 100 females and 100 males. This study is based on the quantitative descriptive survey approach. For data analysis and interpretation, the data has been presented in the form of table and represented as pie chart using frequency and percentage analysis.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

1. To study the smart online buyer behavior with reference to the selection of attractive offers.

Table No. 1

	Overall Sample	Female	Male
Yes	174	92	82
No	26	8	18
Total	200	100	100

Interpretation:

Table No.1 has displayed the smart online buyer behavior with reference to the selection of attractive offers among females and males. The overall sample consists of 200 individuals (100 females and 100 males) in which 174 agreed and 26 disagreed. Among the 100 females, 92 females agreed and 8 disagreed. Among the 100 males, 82 agreed and 18 disagreed.



Figure 1 Selection of Attractive Offers

Interpretation:

Figure 1 displays the smart online buyer behavior with reference to the selection of attractive offers among females and males. The overall sample consists of 200 individuals (100 females and 100 males), of which 87% agreed and 13% disagreed.

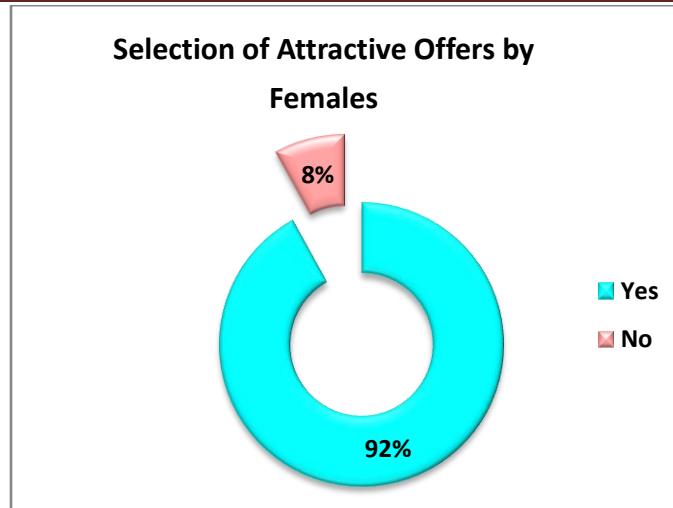


Figure 2 Selection of Attractive Offers by Females

Interpretation:

Figure 2 displays the smart online buyer behavior in relation to the selection of attractive offers by females. Among the 100 females, 92% agreed and 8% disagreed.

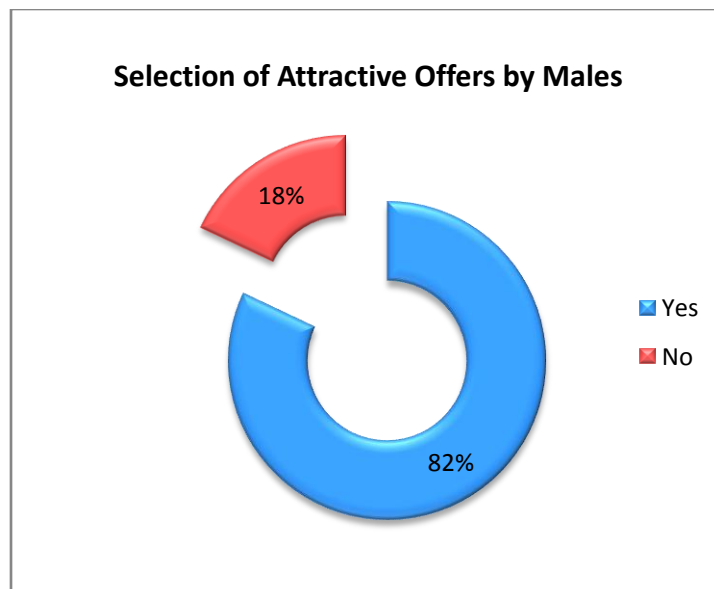


Figure 3 Selection of Attractive Offers by Males

Interpretation:

Figure 3 displays the smart online buyer behavior in relation to the selection of attractive offers by males. Among the 100 males, 82% agreed and 18% disagreed.

2. To study the smart online buyer behavior with reference to staying updated on the latest trends of products.

Table No. 2

	Overall Sample	Female	Male
Yes	150	75	75
No	50	25	25
Total	200	100	100

Interpretation:

Table No.2 has displayed the smart online buyer behavior with reference to staying updated on the latest trends of products. The overall sample consists of 200 individuals (100 females and 100 males) in which 150 agreed and 50 disagreed. Among the 100 females, 75 females agreed and 25 disagreed. Among the 100 males, 75 agreed and 25 disagreed.

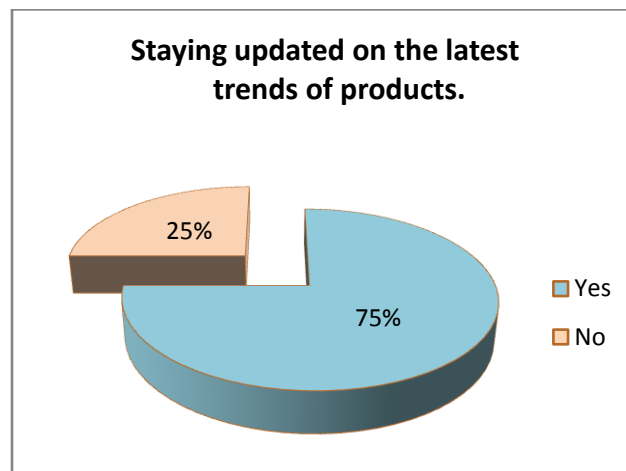


Figure 4 Staying updated on the latest trends of products

Interpretation:

Figure 4 displays the smart online buyer behavior in relation to staying updated on the latest product trends. The overall sample consists of 200 individuals (100 females and 100 males), of which 75% agreed and 25% disagreed.

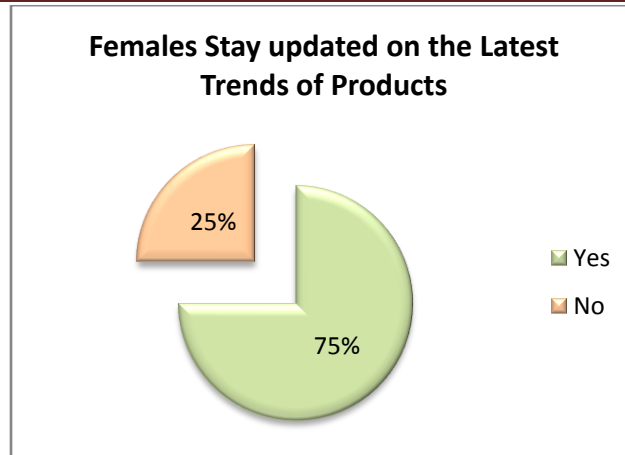


Figure 5 Females stay updated on the Latest Trends of Products

Interpretation:

Figure 5 displays the smart online buying behavior of females in staying updated on the latest product trends. Among the 100 females, 75% agreed and 25% disagreed.

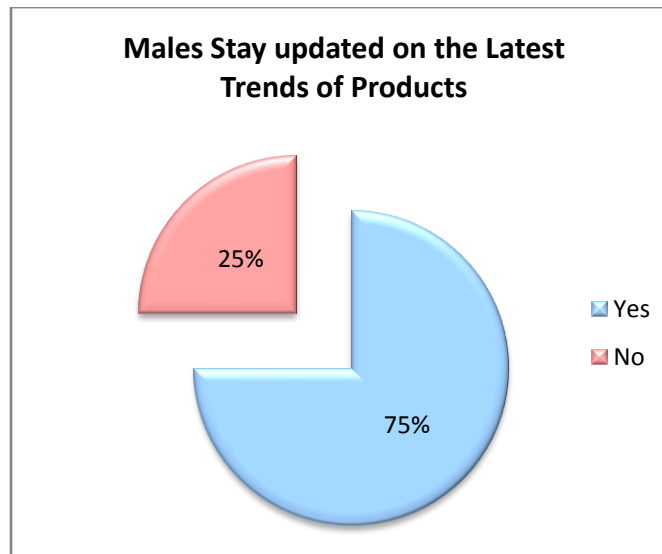


Figure 6 Males stay updated on the Latest Trends of Products

Interpretation:

Figure 6 displays the smart online buyer behavior of males in terms of staying updated on the latest product trends. Out of the 100 males surveyed, 75% agreed and 25% disagreed.

3. To study the smart online buyer behavior with reference to the comparison of products on different online shopping apps.

Table No. 3

	Overall Sample	Female	Male
Yes	138	71	67
No	62	29	33
Total	200	100	100

Interpretation:

Table No.3 has displayed the smart online buyer behavior with reference to the comparison of products on different online shopping apps. The overall sample consists of 200 individuals (100 females and 100 males) in which 138 agreed and 62 disagreed. Among the 100 females, 71 females agreed and 29 disagreed. Among the 100 males, 67 agreed and 33 disagreed.

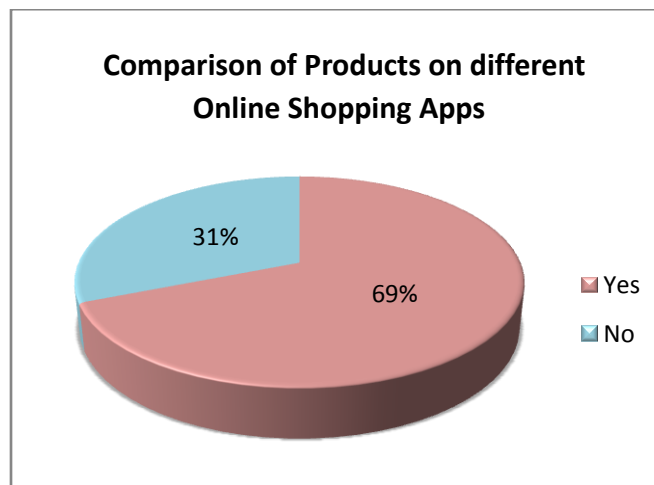


Figure 7 Comparison of products on different online Shopping Apps

Interpretation:

Figure 7 displays the smart online buyer behavior in relation to the comparison of products on various online shopping apps. The total sample comprises 200 individuals (100 females and 100 males), with 69% agreeing and 31% disagreeing.

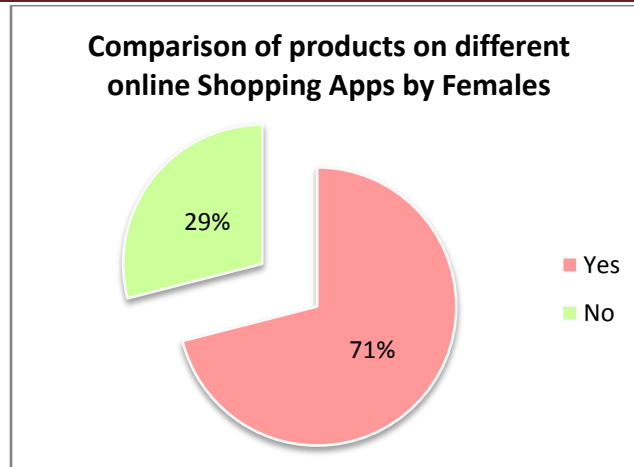


Figure 8 Comparison of products on different online Shopping Apps by Females

Interpretation:

Figure 8 displays the smart online buyer behavior in relation to the comparison of products on different online shopping apps by females. Among the 100 females, 71% agreed and 29% disagreed.

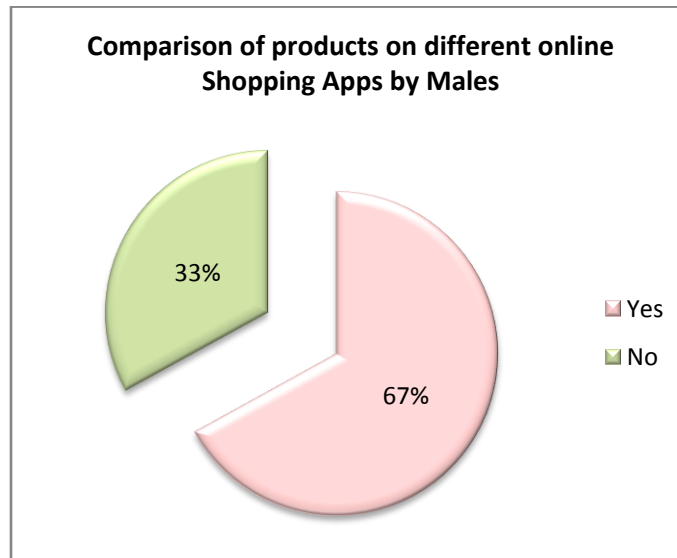


Figure 9 Comparison of products on different online Shopping Apps by Males

Interpretation:

Figure 9 displays the smart online buyer behavior in relation to the comparison of products on different online shopping apps by males. Among the 100 males, 67% agreed and 33% disagreed.

Results and Discussion:

This study aimed to evaluate whether online buyers are smart and identify the factors contributing to smart online buying behavior. The results were analyzed based on three key aspects: the selection of attractive offers, staying updated on the latest product trends, and comparing products on different online shopping apps.

1. Smart online buyer behavior with reference to the selection of attractive offers:-

Regarding the selection of attractive offers, the data indicated that out of a total sample of 200 individuals, 174 individuals were proactive in selecting the best deals before making a purchase, while 26 individuals did not consider any offers. Specifically, 87% of the overall sample selected attractive offers, with a breakdown showing 92% of females and 82% of males engaging in this behavior. This finding aligns with the research by Tripathi and Dubey (2024), which highlighted that organizations focus on developing efficient discount strategies to maintain customer loyalty and increase revenue, taking into account customers' habits, tastes, and behaviors. Discount offers are instrumental in retaining customers over the long term.

2. Smart online buyer behavior with reference to staying updated on the latest trends of products: -

The study examined the behavior of staying updated on the latest product trends. The results showed that 150 out of 200 individuals kept themselves informed about the latest trends, while 50 did not. Both males and females showed equal levels of engagement in this area, with 75% of each group staying updated. Suman et al. (2019) support these findings by noting that online consumers are significantly influenced by substantial discount offers and a reputable brand image. The availability of trendy products at discounted prices acts as a strong motivator for online shopping.

3. Smart online buyer behavior with reference to the comparison of products on different online shopping apps:-

The study explored the behavior of comparing products on different online shopping apps. It was found that 138 out of 200 individuals engaged in product comparison, while 62 did not. Specifically, 69% of the overall sample compared products, with 71% of females and 67% of males participating in this behavior. Researches by Kumar, A. et al. (2021), Rayalla, P.S. et al. (2023) and Sowmiya et al. (2023) corroborates these results, suggesting that comparing products on various e-commerce websites helps consumers find the best prices and deals, ultimately saving them time and energy.

The findings from this study indicate that the majority of online buyers are indeed smart. They make informed decisions by selecting attractive offers, staying updated on the latest product trends, and comparing products across different online shopping platforms. These behaviors contribute to more strategic and value-driven purchasing decisions.

Conclusion:

This study comprehensively analyzed the behavior of smart online buyers, focusing on three main areas: the selection of attractive offers, staying updated on the latest product trends, and comparing products on different online shopping apps. The results clearly demonstrate that modern online buyers are well-informed and strategic. They actively seek out the best deals, stay current with market trends, and perform thorough comparisons before making purchases. These findings underscore the evolution of consumer behavior in the digital age, where access to information and strategic decision-making tools empowers buyers to optimize their online shopping experiences.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study on smart online buyer behavior, several recommendations can be made for both consumers and businesses to optimize the online shopping experience:

For Consumers:

Utilize Discount Offers: Consumers should consistently seek and utilize attractive offers and discounts available on online shopping platforms. Subscribing to newsletters and following brands on social media can help stay informed about the latest deals and promotions.

Stay Informed: It is essential for consumers to stay updated on the latest product trends. This can be achieved by regularly browsing e-commerce websites, reading product reviews, and engaging in online forums related to specific product categories.

Compare Products: Before making a purchase, consumers should compare products across different online shopping apps. This practice can help identify the best prices, features, and quality, ensuring value for money. Utilizing comparison websites and tools can further streamline this process.

Read Reviews: Paying attention to customer reviews can provide valuable insights into product quality and user experiences. Consumers should take the time to read both positive and negative reviews to make well-informed decisions.



Plan Purchases: For high-value items or bulk purchases, consumers should plan ahead and monitor price fluctuations. Waiting for sales events such as Black Friday, Cyber Monday, or seasonal sales can lead to significant savings.

For Businesses:

Develop Effective Discount Strategies: Businesses should continue to develop and implement efficient discount strategies that cater to the habits, tastes, and behaviors of their target customers. Personalized offers and loyalty programs can enhance customer retention.

Enhance User Experience: Creating user-friendly and attractive online shopping platforms is crucial. Businesses should focus on improving website navigation, speed, and overall user experience to capture and retain consumer attention.

Provide Detailed Product Information: Offering comprehensive product descriptions, specifications, and high-quality images can help consumers make informed decisions. Including customer reviews and ratings prominently on product pages can build trust and credibility.

Leverage Digital Marketing: Businesses should invest in digital marketing strategies to keep consumers updated on the latest trends and product launches. Utilizing social media, email marketing, and influencer partnerships can effectively reach and engage the target audience.

Facilitate Easy Comparison: E-commerce platforms should provide features that facilitate easy comparison of products. This can include comparison charts, filters, and recommendation engines that suggest similar or complementary products.

Promote Consumer Education: Policymakers and consumer protection agencies should promote initiatives that educate consumers about smart online shopping practices. Workshops, webinars, and informational campaigns can help consumers navigate the digital marketplace safely and effectively.

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