

Topic : Online Vs Offline Shopping

Introduction :

With the outbreak of Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdown imposed everywhere, the world was kept on a pause for months. The entire world and all the domains of life were affected by its impact but However with the vaccines coming into the scene now, the world is regaining hopes. Our life during this period has been dependent on e-commerce a lot as being locked up inside for our safety we couldn't always go out for shopping and also because at times the shops nearby ran out of stock of certain materials that were needed. Considering this aspect, E-commerce has been a real time saviour in this phase as well as on other times too.

Online Shopping can be both a benefit and an affliction. A benefit in the sense, that now people can shop anything and everything from the comfort of their homes without any persuasion from a salesperson. Online stores are highly competitive to other stores, cutting down prices and making everything affordable to the consumers. But as we know, every coin has two sides and the other side also waits for its turn. Online shopping increases the consumption of products only with a condition that is, if the price of the product is less than the market, but the risk of quality of product in Offline Shopping is less since one is able to touch and see the product in person before buying it.

Therefore, Both Online and Offline shopping has their own pros and cons to deal with. Let us now dig deeper into some aspects to learn better which mode of shopping can suit us better as a consumer.

- **Convenience regarding accessing the product :** This here means how easily the product is accessible to us as a consumer. As discussed above, in online shopping we can sit back and scroll the items of our need and buy it from anywhere in the world. Added to that we can also switch on to different websites and have a

limitless choice of the product. But the delivery of the product may take longer duration specially purchases that are done overseas. In terms of offline shopping, it takes a little more effort to wake up and go out to look for the item we want to purchase but on the brighter side we can have the product in our hand in no time and ensure it's quality and make a standard bargain for it at the same time there is the downside that the offerings of products in physical shops are limited.

- **Paying Same or More?** : Of all the things, talking about the money is the most important one because everything we do at the end is about saving money even if it's a penny. The question often arises when we see a delivery charge in the billing section while making an online purchase. If we fairly weigh it against the offline method, the delivery fee is equivalent to how much we would spend if we had to go the physical shop itself but the only difference is that we will be making our own delivery which will again have it's own cost. Example : the travelling charges, etc. With all this, we again have a catch here and that is, there are often sale days offered by the online stores when the delivery charges are free with a reduction in the product upto 50% and more. Also there are certain coupons, discount codes or cashback wallet money that can be used to comfort our finances when making the swipe via internet.

- **Shopping is a Fun thing** : Shopping means Fun. Shopping is not going out for buying things that we need but it also is a recreational activity and enjoyment for some people. We often love going shopping with our buddies more than anyone else. It's not just being happy but also is a way to save money. In offline shopping, there is a provision of splitting costs to carpool to the malls and take advantage of deals such as the "buy two get one free". Also we can take suggestions from our friends after the trial of the outfit and accordingly make our purchase. Alternatively, In online shopping we too can purchase with our friends and split the delivery fee but in the fun aspect of shopping offline stores gain an extra point.

- **The Technological Round in Shopping :** With the world going digital now, shopping has become easier both in terms of Online and Offline store. Technology is very reason for the existence of these two methods. In Online shopping there are different payment methods available ranging from Cash on Delivery (COD) to Internet Banking. However there are sites which don't offer COD's and we, the consumers are left with only one mode of payment i. e; the Internet banking facility for which stable internet connection is a necessity for Online shopping. If connectivity issue arises, there may be breakdown during the payment procedure and entire process may need to be restarted. This can be of great pain if the purchase being done is from another country. Talking about the offline shopping, There are a number of ways available for payment from the traditional mode of paying cash directly to just swiping our cards shopping experiences have enhanced. However, also sometimes the payment terminals can go offline and we would have to end up searching for an ATM just to clear the bill.

Another important aspect to look upon is that during online shopping the prepaid orders at times may not get delivered to the customer and also there are cases of mistakes in placement of orders which makes online shopping questionable sometimes. However, to conclude with just like everything comes with a price, both Online and Offline shopping has their own pros and cons. Online Shopping is great on days when you don't want to step out of your comfort zone for making some minimal purchases, while Offline shopping can be a better option while buying any gadgets or items that needs to be tested before bringing them home.

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