

IMPACT OF PRODUCT REVIEWS AND RATING ON CONSUMER DECISION MAKING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ONLINE PURCHASE IN TUMKUR

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ABSTRACT

In the digital era, online shopping has become an integral part of consumer behavior, with product reviews and rating emerging as crucial determinants in the decision making process. This study explores the influence of online product reviews and ratings on consumer purchase decisions, focusing specifically on the city of Tumkur. Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research investigates how consumers in Tumkur perceive and respond to online feedback, the extent to which it affects their trust and purchase intention, and whether demographic factors play a role in moderating this impact. Findings indicate that positive reviews and higher rating significantly enhance consumer confidence, while negative feedback often deters purchase intent. The study highlights the growing reliance on digital word of mouth and suggests that e-commerce platforms and sellers should actively manage their online reputation to influence buying behavior in Tumkur.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of e-commerce has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behavior across the globe. As consumer increasingly turn to online platforms for their shopping needs the availability of user-generated content such as product reviews and rating has become a critical component of the online decision-making process. These reviews provide valuable insights into product quality usability and customer satisfaction often serving as digital word- of-mouth that can influence prospecting buyers.

In India, the rise of internet penetration and smart phone usage has accelerated the adoption of online shopping, even in semi urban and smaller cities. Tumkur a fast developing city in Karnataka represents a unique blend of traditional and modern consumer behavior, making it an ideal location to study the impact of digital reviews and ratings on online purchasing patterns.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Rajendra S Godara, Dharmendra Yadav, mandaputi Sagar, Rahul Disari et.al 2024

Rajendra S Godara et.al: 2024 conveys in their paper that today's digitally interconnected world customer reviews wield significant influence over consumer behavior and purchasing decision. They also opine that Positive reviews can serve as powerful endorsements, fostering trust and confidence among potential customers. They express reviews shape perceptions, influence trust and ultimately impact the purchase decisions of consumers.

2. Semila Fernandes, Rajesh Panda, VG Venkatesh, Biranchi Narayan Swar, 2022

Semila Fernandes et.al:2022 The current paper aims to develop and validate a scale to understand the impact of online reviews on consumer purchase decisions. The initial exploratory factors analysis (EFA) results helped identify four factors, viz, source credibility, volume, language and comprehension, and relevance which constitute the scale. The scale was validated by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

3. Tao Chen, Premaratne Samaranayake, Xiong Ying Cen, Meng Qi 2022

Tao Chen et.al:2022 This study investigated the impact of online product reviews on consumers purchasing decisions by using eye-tracking. The research methodology involved (1) development of a conceptual framework of online product review and purchasing intention through the moderation role of gender and visual attention in comments, and (2) empirical investigation into the region of interest (ROI) analysis of consumer's fixation during the purchase decision process and behavioral analysis.

4. Abdulaziz Elwalda, Kevin Lu 2016

Online customer reviews (OCRs) This paper, thus examines the latest understandings in the links and relationships between OCrs and customer's purchase intentions. It reviews the main dimensions of the OCrs and how they affect customers purchase intentions. It also addresses the issues of credibility's, roles, antecedents, helpfulness, measures and consequences of OCrs.

5. Shaurya Bhushan Tyagi 2012

The increasing penetration rate of internet has made the consumer more informed and known about the choices they have in terms of product range. A typical internet user in an Indian household is a male student who is studying in graduation post graduation and is aged between 19-25 years. In their continued effort to connect more closely with the consumers, the marketing budgets of various brands are shifting from the traditional channels to those which are not only different from the usual but also effectively generate enough word of mouth about the brand in all the necessary platforms.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study of primary data takes the surveys. By using Google form by framing the questionnaire related to the study objectives. The secondary data takes place through surveys, papers and books respectively. The practical sampling technique is used to collect data from the 101respondents. The data that was acquired is shown in the tables.

LIMITATION:

Time constraints

Sample size of the survey is limited to 101 only

OBJECTIVES:

- To access the impact of product reviews and rating on consumer decision.
- To study the role of the quality of reviews in influencing online purchase.
- To assess how product reviews affect first time buyers versus repeat buyers.
- To identify whether positive or negative reviews have a stronger effect on consumer decision.

SOURCE OF DATA:

Primary data

Sample size 101 respondents make up the sample

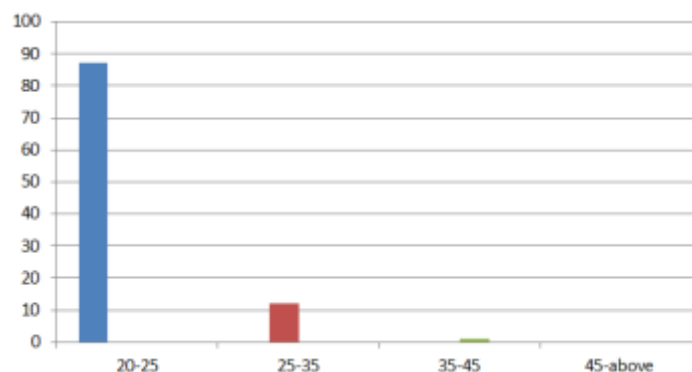
4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Table showing the age group of the respondents

SL NO	Age factor (year)	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	20-25	88	87
2	25-35	12	12
3	35-45	1	1
4	45-above	0	0
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table analysis reveals that 87% of the respondents fall within the age group of 20–25 years.



Graph 1: Graph showing the age group of the respondents

INTERPRETATION:

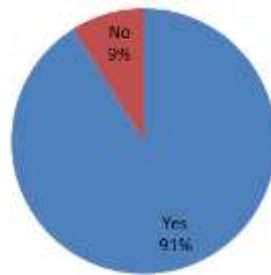
The graph indicates that the majority of respondents fall within the 20–25 age group.

Table 2: Table showing do you check product reviews before buying on online

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	92	91
2	No	9	9
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table shows that 91% of respondents belong to Yes.



Graph 2: Graph showing do you check product reviews before buying on online

INTERPRETATION:

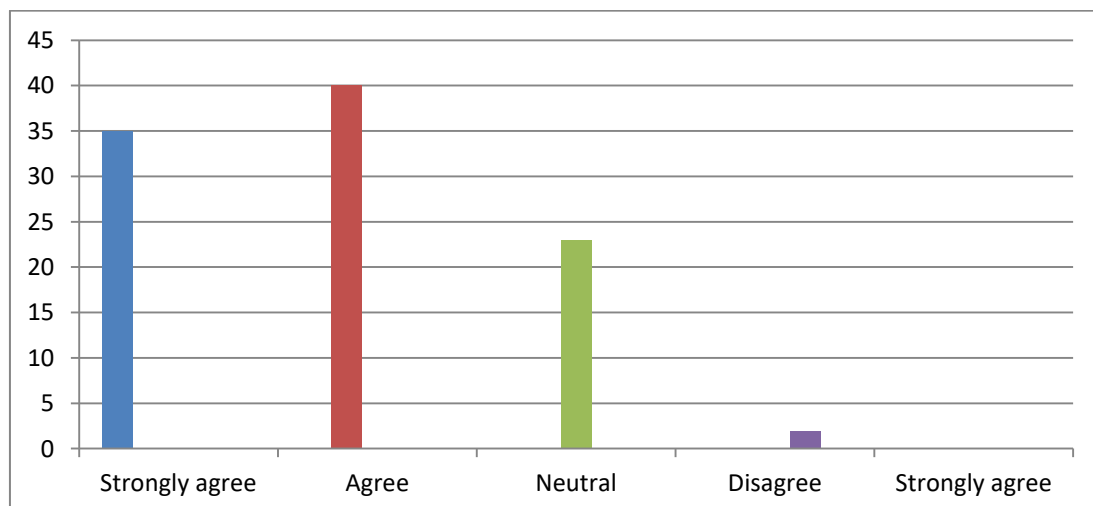
The graph shows that most respondents check product reviews before making online purchases. This highlights the crucial role of online reviews in shaping consumer buying decisions. Therefore, businesses should focus on maintaining positive feedback and managing their online reputation, as it greatly influences potential customers.

Table 3: Table showing do you agree product rating is important in your purchase decision

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	36	35
2	Agree	40	40
3	Neutral	23	23
4	Disagree	2	2
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table shows that 40% of respondents belong to Agree and 35% of respondents belong to Strongly Agree.



Graph 3: Graph showing depicting whether consumers consider product rating important when making purchase decisions

INTERPRETATION:

From the above graph it can be interpreted that the majority of the respondents are agreeing product rating is important in their purchase decision. This suggests that businesses and online platforms should ensure that ratings and reviews are visible, reliable, and genuine, as they strongly influence buying behavior.

Table 4: Table showing which of the following influences you the most before buying a product

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Product rating	19	19
2	Customer reviews	45	44
3	Price	22	22
4	Brand reputation	13	13
5	Recommendation from family/friends	2	2
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table analysis indicates that 44% of respondents fall under the category of Customer reviews.



Graph 4: Graph showing which of the following influences you the most before buying a product

INTERPRETATION:

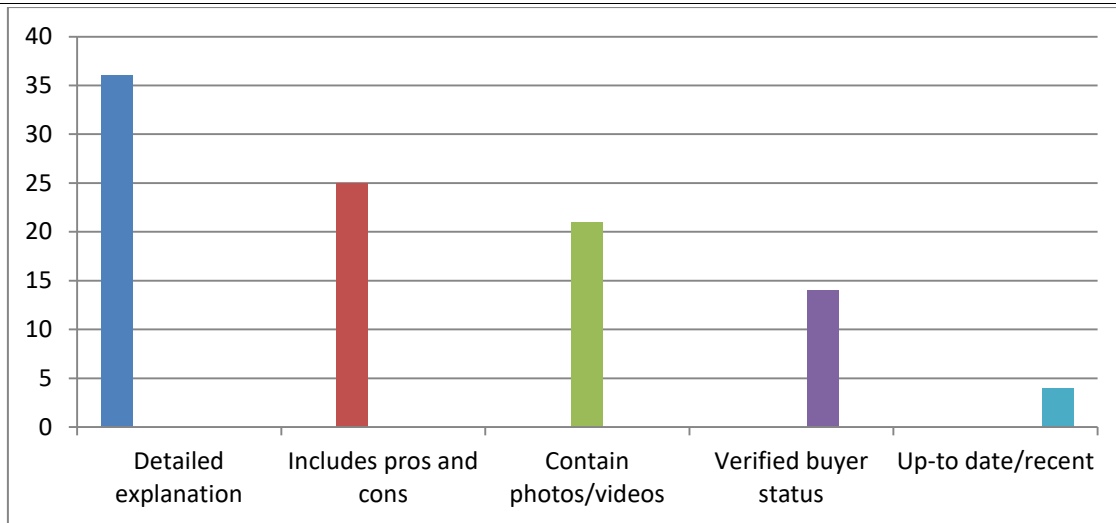
The graph suggests that most respondents rely on customer reviews, which strongly influence their purchase decision. Businesses should focus on maintaining a strong online presence, encouraging genuine reviews, and offering competitive pricing to appeal to consumers.

Table 5: Table showing which aspects define a high-quality review for you

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Detailed explanation	37	36
2	Includes pros and cons	25	25
3	Contain photos/videos	21	21
4	Verified buyer status	14	14
5	Up-to date/recent	4	4
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table shows that 36% of respondents belong to Detailed explanation and 25% of respondents belong to Includes pros and cons.



Graph 5: Graph showing which aspects define a high-quality review for you

INTERPRETATION:

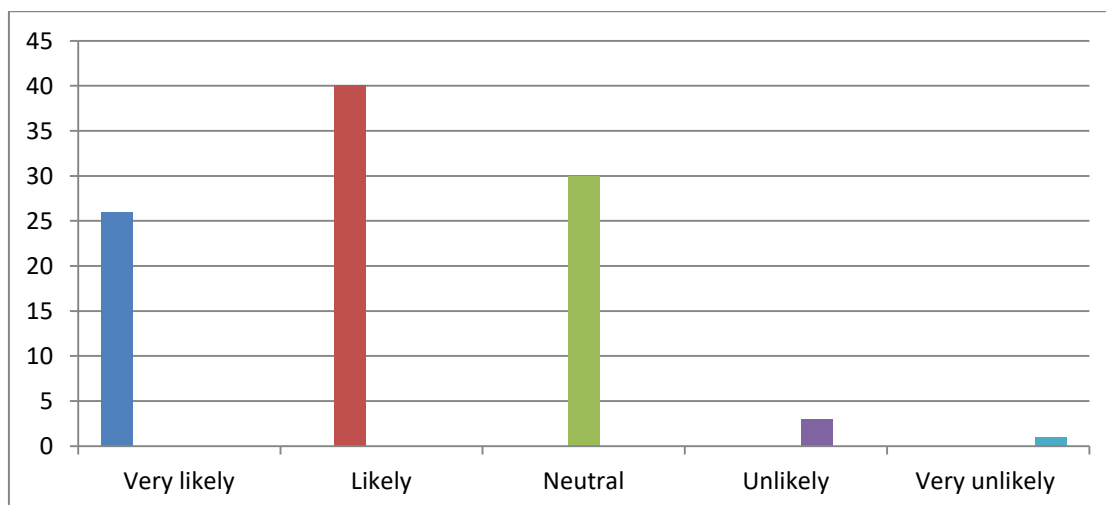
The graph shows that most respondents prefer detailed explanations, of high-quality reviews. This insight can help platforms and reviewers prioritize detailed, balanced, and visually supported content to meet user expectations of review quality.

Table 6: Table showing the extent to which respondents trust reviews that provides little or no explanation

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Very likely	26	26
2	Likely	41	40
3	Neutral	30	30
4	Unlikely	3	3
5	Very unlikely	1	1
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table analysis indicates that 40% of respondents fall under the Likely category, while 30% are categorized as Neutral.



Graph 6: Graph showing the extent to which respondents trust reviews with little or no explanation

INTERPRETATION:

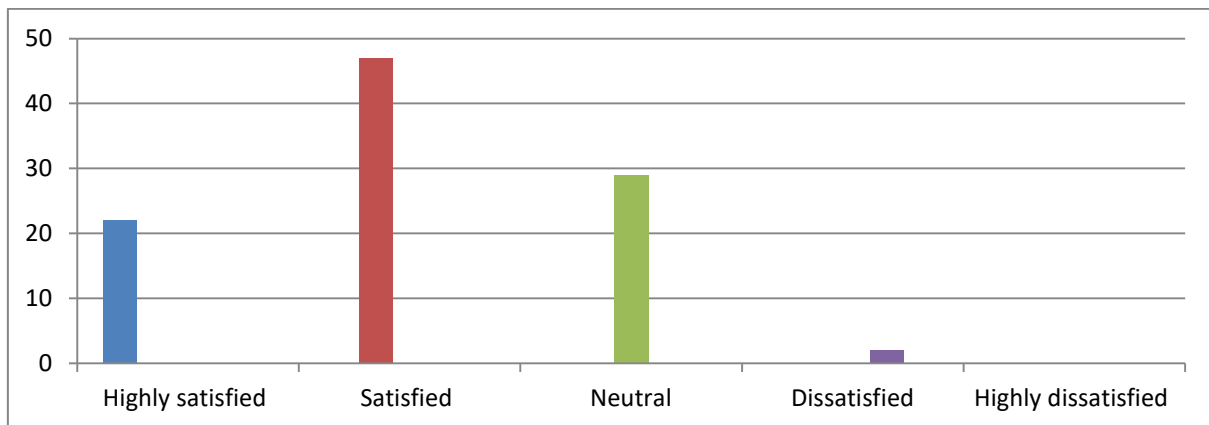
The graph indicates that most respondents are likely to trust reviews even when they lack detail or explanation. While the overall trend suggests a general willingness to trust brief or vague reviews, a substantial proportion of users remain either neutral or skeptical.

Table 7: Table showing rate your satisfaction with the method of reviewing the product

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Highly satisfied	22	22
2	Satisfied	48	47
3	Neutral	29	29
4	Dissatisfied	2	2
5	Highly dissatisfied	0	0
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table analysis reveals that 47% of respondents fall under the Satisfied category while 29% are categorized as Neutral.



Graph 7: Graph showing rate your satisfaction with the method of reviewing the product

INTERPRETATION:

The graph shows that most respondents are satisfied with the current method of product reviewing. The findings suggest that this approach is generally well-accepted, with the majority expressing satisfaction or high satisfaction. Although a minor proportion of neutral and dissatisfied responses highlight areas for improvement, the overall perception remains positive, indicating the method's effectiveness.

Table 8: Table showing the impact of negative reviews on consumers purchase avoidance decisions

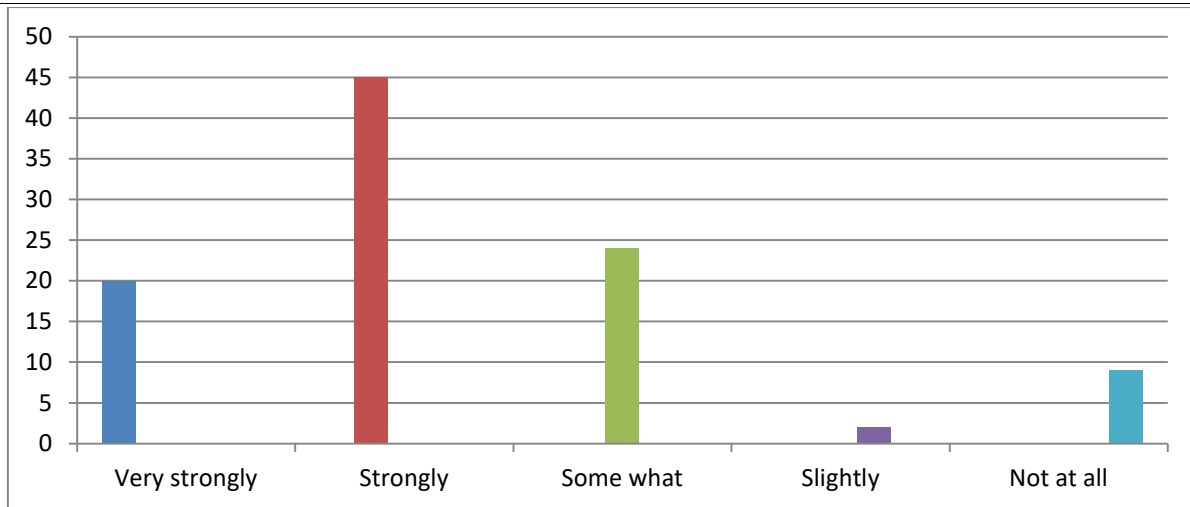
SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Very strongly	20	20
2	Strongly	46	45
3	Some what	24	24
4	Slightly	2	2
5	Not at all	9	9
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table shows that 45% of respondents belong to Strongly and 24% of respondents belong to Somewhat.

INTERPRETATION:

The graph suggests that most respondents are strongly influenced by negative reviews, which often discourage them from purchasing a product. This highlights the significant role of unfavorable online feedback in shaping consumer decisions. Hence, businesses should carefully manage their online reputation and address customer feedback to minimize potential sales loss.



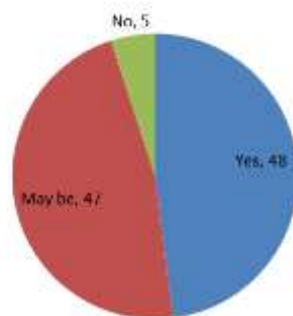
Graph 8: Graph showing how strongly negative reviews impact consumer's decision not to buy a product

Table 9: Table showing respondents views on recommending product reviewing to others

SL NO	Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	48	48
2	May be	48	47
3	No	5	5
	Total	101	100

ANALYSIS:

The table shows that 48% of respondents belong to Yes and 47% of respondents belong to May be.



Graph 9: Graph showing would you recommend the method of reviewing the product to other

INTERPRETATION:

The above graph indicates that most respondents recommend the practice of product reviewing to others. This suggests that the review method is largely trusted or accepted by users. However, the nearly equal percentage between "Yes" and "Maybe" suggests that while many are supportive, there may still be some reservations or conditions to full endorsement.

Hypothesis

HO : There is no impact of product reviews and rating on consumer decision making with special reference to online purchase.

H1 : There is a impact of product reviews and rating on customer decision making with special reference to online purchase.

SL NO	FACTORS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
1	Strongly agree	36	15.8	249.64	12.35
2	Agree	40	19.8	392.04	19.40
3	Neutral	23	2.8	7.84	0.388

4	Disagree	2	-18.2	331.24	16.39
5	Strongly disagree	0	-20.2	408.04	20.2
	Total	101			68.72

$$E = 101/5 = 20.2$$

Degree of freedom (df) = [n-1]

$$5-1=4$$

Critical values of the Chi-square distribution with d degrees of freedom							
Probability of exceeding the critical value							
d	0.05	0.01	0.001	d	0.05	0.01	0.001
1	3.841	6.635	10.828	11	19.675	24.725	31.264
2	5.991	9.210	13.816	12	21.026	26.217	32.910
3	7.815	11.345	16.266	13	22.362	27.688	34.528
4	9.488	13.277	18.467	14	23.685	29.141	36.123
5	11.070	15.086	20.515	15	24.996	30.578	37.697
6	12.592	16.812	22.458	16	26.296	32.000	39.252
7	14.067	18.475	24.322	17	27.587	33.409	40.790
8	15.507	20.090	26.125	18	28.869	34.805	42.312
9	16.919	21.666	27.877	19	30.144	36.191	43.820
10	18.307	23.209	29.588	20	31.410	37.566	45.315

INTRODUCTION TO POPULATION GENETICS, Table D.1
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For 4% degree of freedom, the value from the table at the degree of 4 is 9.488 and the calculated value is 68.72, here calculated value is greater than the critical value hence the null hypothesis formulated is rejected.

5. FINDING

- It was found that 87% of respondents are from the 20-25 age groups.
- It was clear that 91% of people are checking product reviews before buying on online.
- It was observed that 40% of respondents are agreeing product rating is important in their purchase decision.
- It was very clear that 44% of respondents are influences customer reviews is most important to before buying a product.
- The findings show that 36% of respondents consider a detailed explanation about the product as an essential factor for a high-quality review.
- It was observed that 40% of peoples are likely to trust that lack of detail or explanation.
- The results clearly indicate that 47% of respondents are satisfied with the existing product review system.
- Additionally, 45% of respondents strongly agreed that negative reviews impact their purchase decisions, often leading them to avoid buying a product.
- It was clear that 48% of peoples are recommended the method of reviewing the product to others.

6. SUGGESTION

- Word of mouth has long been a powerful factor in shaping consumer decisions. In recent years, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has emerged as a prominent communication channel. It refers to informal, internet-based communication where consumers share their experiences and opinions through various online platforms such as review sites, social media, and blogs.
- This study seeks to develop a structured scale for assessing online reviews. The need for such a scale arises because online reviews play a crucial role in influencing product and brand performance, especially with the rapid growth of e-commerce. Today, consumers increasingly rely on the opinions and feedback shared by other buyers on shopping websites, digital platforms, and forums before making purchase decisions.

7. CONCLUSION

The research indicates that product reviews and ratings greatly influence consumer decision-making, especially in the context of online shopping in Tumkur. A majority of respondents consider reviews and ratings as trustworthy source

of information that help reduce the uncertainty associated with online buying. Positive reviews often influence consumers to proceed with purchases, while negative feedback may deter them or push them to explore alternatives. Furthermore, the credibility regency and volume of reviews significantly affect consumer trust and perceptions. With the increasing penetration of internet and smart phone's in tumkur, consumers are becoming more informed and reliant on digital feedback before making purchase decisions.

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