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### Brand Promotions via Social Media Advocacy: Strategic Implications for Improving Brand Equity

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# **Brand Promotions via Social Media Advocacy: Strategic Implications for Improving Brand Equity**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Social media is all about consumer networks and consumer relations that challenge marketers to leverage social media as a means to develop and improve their connections with consumers. Despite the opportunities available through social media marketing activities, understanding customers and their behavior, and incorporating that information in marketing strategy formulation is critical to successful strategy implementation. This study takes a significant leap forward in this direction. Theoretically grounded in two different fields—the field of sociology in combination with the field of relationship marketing, this study develops a conceptual model of optimizing social media characteristics of customers. The current study uses seemingly unrelated regression (SUR) statistical technique to demonstrate how a customer's engagement and trust on social media, and perception of review helpfulness in their advocacy of the brands, which in turn ultimately influences a brand's equity. This paper concludes with important implications for marketers.

To examine hypotheses, we conducted an online survey of consumers who responded based on their perceptions and opinions about their association with brands. The measurement properties of the scales were evaluated using confirmatory factor (CFA) and reliability analyses. The measurement model fit well with the data. The items loaded strongly on the constructs they were proposed to measure. To evaluate convergent validity and reliability, we computed composite reliability for the constructs and found them to be supported. To assess discriminant validity, we compared the AVE to the squared inter-factor correlations. In all instances, results indicate discriminant validity among the constructs. The findings support our hypotheses, however we found insignificant support for the role of review helpfulness as a determinant of a customer's advocacy of a brand.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Manisha Mathur is an Assistant Professor of Marketing. She earned her Ph.D. in Business Administration (Marketing) from the University of Mississippi and received the Graduate Achievement Award in her MBA program. Her research reflects investigations into practitioner issues with well-grounded theoretical perspectives. She has presented her research work at several conferences and has published her research in top peer-reviewed journals. Her research interests include social media marketing, marketing strategy, brand management, relationship marketing, and business ethics.