

## DECIPHERING CULTURAL MYTHS: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ADVERTISEMENTS

**Farwa Aqeel**

Language Instructor

Cantonment Public Girls School & College Peshawar

Email: [farwaaqeel50@gmail.com](mailto:farwaaqeel50@gmail.com)

**Muhammad Waqar Ali (correspondence)**

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Islamia College Peshawar

Email: [waqarali@icp.edu.pk](mailto:waqarali@icp.edu.pk)

### ABSTRACT

*This research analyzes how advertising uses signs to make cultural myths according to Roland Barthes' semiotic theory of myth. Even though scholars examined advertisement aspects before no research existed to prove why specific types of ads create myths. This gap is closed by this study, which focuses on a wide range of commercials. The aim of the study is to uncover the hidden meanings of the indications of advertisements and their role in the creation of myths. It deals with important issues about the types of indicators used, how they create myths, and how their intensity differs according to the product category. The structure and myths promoted by 7 advertisements categorized into three categories: food, cosmetics, and health are analyzed using a qualitative methodology. Advertisements use spoken and visual signals to develop social ideals and normal behavior patterns through carefully crafted cultural narratives. The study builds media literacy and adds to knowledge through giving viewers tools to see through the false methods ads use to reach them.*

**Keywords:** Barthes, Myth, Semiotic Analysis, Advertisements

### INTRODUCTION

Businesses use advertisements both to grab people's notice and push product sales to celebrate their available merchandise and presentation opportunities. They influence how people behave in society and build the rules people must follow while also shaping buyer actions and company choices (Chandler, 2007). Advertisements use every element to build stories that deeply affect viewers when shown to them (Barthes, 1972). The use of culturally appropriate symbols and signs is essential to an advertisement's efficacy since different communities may understand them differently (Saussure, 1983). A cow, for example, may symbolize agriculture in the West but has religious significance in India. Through the use of well-known symbols that represent societal values, advertisements also serve as cultural communicators. Customers create or reinforce societal myths by interpreting these cues according to their ethnic origins. For instance, advertisements for luxury products generally link success to possession, whereas advertisements for beauty products frequently promote irrational standards (Sarkar, 2020; Davidson, 2022). Both cultural stereotypes and consumer ambitions are shaped by these signals.

The study of signals, or semiotics, aids in the explanation of how advertisements create meaning. Saussure argues that the culturally defined link between the signifier (form) and the signified (concept) is what creates meaning (Saussure, 1983). With his division of signs into icons, indices, and symbols (Peirce, 1991), Peirce extended this idea and demonstrated how advertisements employ several sign kinds to influence perception (Colapietro, 1991). Barthes went on to examine how commonplace symbols contribute to societal myths. He maintained that commercials transform things into status and desire symbols by fusing basic meanings with deeper cultural values (Barthes, 1972; Mitchell, 2020; Rodriguez, 2022).

Marketing texts known as advertisements combine economic purposes with societal mindsets to shape consumer actions. Using semiotic analysis and Barthes' idea of myth, this study investigates how cultural myths are created and maintained through advertising. It reveals the hidden meanings in advertising messages and how they affect how customers view goods. This study aims to uncover the larger myth-making process in media and communication, investigate how advertisements shape social reality, and decipher their symbolic implications. The research investigates how commercials both reflect and shape societal norms, reinforcing cultural values and influencing consumer behavior by examining the signs and symbols they use (Davidson, 2022). Additionally, semiotics assists marketers in creating engrossing stories that appeal to consumers' feelings and symbolic connections (Barthes, 1972).

### **Literature Review**

According to Nordquist (2020), semiotic systems are organized sign types such as language, images, logos, sounds, and numbers that convey meaning based on cultural values. Research shows that communication rules determine how language operates as a sign system. The semiotic evaluation system includes all observable signals including colors objects behaviors and physical actions (Mould 2014). German philosopher Johann Heinrich Lambert created the word semiotics in the late 1700s to study signs and meanings. However, in the 20th century, the area became more well known and influenced cultural studies, linguistics, and media. Semiotics holds significant importance in its studies between Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure describes language as a series of connected signs which to create their purpose. His definition of a sign is that it consists of the signified (idea) and the signifier (shape). For example, the meaning of this term can vary from culture to culture, but the term 'tree' (signifier) refers to the idea of a tree (signified). To explain sign meaning Peirce established his Triadic System made up of the Representamen (sign form), the Object (what it signifies), and the Interpretant (how someone understands it). He sorted signs into three types which are symbols (meaning shaped through societal customs), indices (directly associated objects) and icons (visual representations).

Through studying myth production in media and ads Roland Barthes added to semiotic theories. He distinguished cultural and emotional meaning from actual or logical meaning. For example, an advertisement for a premium car can say a car, but also success or status. Barthes revealed that media symbols turn ordinary beliefs into accepted logic. From Lambert's beginning work to Barthes' final development semiotics became an important tool to analyze how meaning spreads throughout modern society.

### **Classification of Signs**

To communicate you need to use marks such as noises sounds visual words and body language. Semiotics analyzes signs to show how different elements present and represent the cultural values in use. Peirce categorized signs into three types: icons, indices, and symbols. White paper loo designs directly show what they symbolize while image of kitties stands for actual cats (Bradley 2016). On the other hand, indexes are based on a cause and effect relationship, for example, smoke indicates a fire or footprints indicate the presence of a person (Lanir, 2019). Symbols are different from images and indexes in that they depend on learnt connections and cultural norms. For example, a national flag represents a nation's identity and the heart form (♥□) represents love (Bradley, 2016). Disciplines studying media and advertising fields should understand these sign distinctions because their work analyzes how signs alter our understanding of our environment (Lanir, 2019).

## **Roland Barthes and The Concept of Myth**

The idea of myth as a medium of communication that converts culturally particular meanings into universal truths was first proposed by Roland Barthes in 1972. He maintained that myths serve as a second-order semiotic system in which ideological messages that uphold prevailing social norms are produced through the reuse of signals (signifier and signified). By portraying cultural ideals as inherent, these myths—which are created rather than innate—influence how we perceive the world (Barthes, 1972). Myths are socially constructed and can be expressed through words, pictures, and gestures, claims Hammouri (2020). Over time, they change to conform to emerging cultural trends.

According to Strelnik (2017), Barthes also made a distinction between signals' denotation, or literal meaning, and connotation, or cultural or emotional meaning. For instance, even though a rose is a flower, it symbolizes love. According to Yan and Ming (2015), he established First Order and Second Order Signification, where First Order refers to the fundamental meaning of a sign and Second Order adds cultural relevance. By redefining preexisting meanings to conceal their manufactured nature and present them as natural facts, myths work through metalanguage. By incorporating ideological messages into common symbols, the media, advertising, and politics are important venues for the spread of these myths (Yan & Ming, 2015). Myths are employed in politics and advertising to influence public opinion. While political campaigns employ national symbols to inspire solidarity, luxury businesses link their products to symbols of affluence. Barthes' theory of myth is still useful for examining the propagation and upkeep of cultural beliefs in society.

Fikriyah (2011) studied ads to see how Barthes' semiotic theory explains the inclusion of ideological beliefs. Through ads cultural norms get established as hard truths that redirect public perception about gender behaviors, shopping habits, and loyalty towards their nation. Beer advertisements display emotional pictures and symbols to associate products with preferred life frameworks (Sarkar, 2020). Nationalist beliefs about success and environmental protection combine with other ideas to promote products through marketing materials. Davidson explored through his research how modern ads use Barthes' myth concept to shape popular social expectations. Especially for Barthes who sees myths as society's opinions made into everyday wisdom Allen (2012) found that advertising produces desired beliefs through product symbolism of lifestyle in social media endorsements. Rodriguez (2022) demonstrated the disconnect between theory and audience interpretation by revealing that although Barthes considered myths to be deceptive, many customers acquiesce passively to advertisements. In support of Barthes' argument that myths conflate ideology and common sense, Mitchell (2020) examined how companies produce symbolic meanings outside the object, particularly in advertisements for fashion and technology.

## **Color Psychology in Semiotics**

Scientists discover that brand success depends mainly on how colors affect customer behavior and feelings. Studies found by Straits Research in 2024 show that colors enhance emotional attachments between brands and consumers which builds brand recognition and motivates customers to purchase. Research shows red expresses feelings of excitement and speed whereas green fits products related to sustainability and well-being yet blue appears in many financial and technological brands because it conveys security (InVerve Marketing, 2021).

Clearly stated in Barthes' 1972 semiotic analysis color and visual elements in ads do not simply exist but carry cultural meanings that aid ideological beliefs. For instance, red is used in food advertisements to create a connection between pleasure and gluttony. Gold is also used in luxury branding to represent success and riches, which perpetuates stereotypes about

the way of life of the rich. Research proves that the color meanings in a culture stand distant from other societies. For example, white is associated with mourning in some Asian cultures, but with purity in Western cultures (Swarnakar, 2024; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2002). Advertisers target specific groups through color choice because they want to use emotional and cultural ties that match each audience.

The development of gender identities is also intimately linked to the manipulation of color in advertising. While darker, more authoritative colors like black and navy blue are linked to masculinity in grooming advertisements, feminine colors like pastel pink are utilized in beauty and childcare advertisements to express softness and tenderness (Bouzida, 2014). This affects consumer behavior and perpetuates gender stereotypes in society. According to Barthes, advertising creates and normalizes cultural myths through color, giving the impression that these messages are undeniable and natural (Oswald, 2012). For instance, companies like Apple and Coca-Cola employ color as a component of their myth-making strategy to evoke strong feelings in customers and support their brand identities as intelligent or vivacious.

All things considered, color serves as a semiotic instrument in branding and advertising, conveying ideological signals that influence social values and consumer identities. Marketers may create more successful and culturally appropriate advertising that reinforce the cultural beliefs that influence customer behavior by knowing how color functions as a signifier in various cultural contexts.

Turkcan (2013) performed a Peirce-based semiotic analysis of school children's drawings. The study found that children from lower income families most often used icons, and the approach was effective in determining how mentally healthy they were. Jakarta (2010) combined Peirce and Saussure theories to examine Coca-Cola advertisement material. The study says that red signs and symbols are often used to convey deeper meanings than just selling products. Persada (2019) conducted a semiotic analysis of the Gundala movie poster following Saussurean principles. After interpreting the denotative and connotative meanings, the study concluded that the film's message was successfully communicated through visual features.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

Through a qualitative study this research analyzes how commercials sustain cultural myths both semiotically and using a descriptive approach. Research approached qualitatively allows us to uncover the hidden meanings of textual and visual content since its primary focus is understanding subjective meaning (2018: Denzin & Lincoln) (Chandler 2007). The semiotic examination goes beyond normal description to show how text, images, and spoken words combine to communicate cultural values that shape customer perspective according to Barthes (1972), Williamson (1978), and Hall (1997).

Through advertisements brands present and strengthen common societal standards and both serve practical business purposes and disseminate ideas about the consumer experience (Jhally 1990). This method shows exactly how marketers use multiple signals to influence customers and why their methods stick according to Gill (2007). The study aims to break down advertising messages through detailed research of their meaning based on different cultures and personal backgrounds (Goffman, 1979; Hall, 2013). Through this approach the research shows advertising plays a vital role in generating and upholding societal myths as Barthes (1972) explains.



### Data Selection

The study relies on purposive sampling that lets us pick ads that are full of meaning and match the research subject (Palinkas et al., 2015). Using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework ensures our selected cases will show effective results as they demonstrate how commercials create myths through their verbal, visual, and symbolic means. The researchers chose specific advertisements according to established criteria instead of selecting them randomly. Ads with powerful cultural signals, language elements and myth-based imagery received top advertising choices (Campbell et al., 2020). Advertising uses selected materials to show how advertising shapes how people think about products while spreading existing beliefs. Our sample consists of 7 promotions given to public persuasion as the food beauty and health industries often make marketing myths according to Stafford's 1998 research. Our selected advertisements represent the years 2015 to 2023 because they align with current cultural factors and advertising patterns. The way Barthes explains myths operating as higher-level sign systems matches exactly how we selected our advertisement samples. The chosen advertising materials yielded their ideological messages from a joint interpretation of their literal and symbolic meanings. By applying this perspective, we learn how advertisements keep using stereotypes to push consumerism and maintain social trends within society (Barthes, 1972).

### Data Analysis

This study depends on Roland Barthes' theory of myth for its analysis. Our research methodology will deeply examine both spoken and visual parts of advertisements through descriptive analysis. We will spot critical semiotic aspects in every advertisement and view their symbolic levels through our evaluation to see how they develop cultural myths. To track product types the advertisements will be broken into Food, Cosmetics, and Health groups. Through structured research advertisers can better understand their use of hidden signals to shape customer views while contributing to shared cultural themes.

### Results

This section utilizes Barthes' semiotic theory especially his theory of myth as a second meaning system to analyze multiple commercials. It studies how ads build and sustain myths using word, image, and symbol components. Through a qualitative study of denotative and connotative meanings the research team analyzes the advertisements today. Every commercial analysis starts with technical identification and evaluation of semiotic elements like text, gestures, colors and images before linking their basic and sophisticated cultural meaning structures.

#### Nestle Bunyad: Good Mother Purchases Nestle Bunyad

The commercial shows a cheerful mother and child at home as their toddler points out a Nestlé Bunyad packet that she holds. The product package shows Nestle's logo plus the German "Bunyad" name along with many detailed nutritional facts. The scene reflects maternal care norms in families by showing the home environment. In Urdu the sentence describes how good nutrition creates a solid life base. Nestlé Bunyad logo appears first in the top left part of the packaging which supports visual hierarchy by helping customers recognize the brand quickly and read English from left to right. The ad follows Barthes' semiotic concept by skillfully placing the Bunyad logo at the top left corner because this strategic technique serves to associate the brand with fundamental needs and reliability.

Beyond showing the product this picture contains both social and cultural meaning. Through her dress and the way, she handles her child the mother shows her peace of mind and how her family functions while representing her cultural roots. The child's smiles and pointer movements show both his acceptance and attraction to the product. The image displays the mother's maternity role through this setting when blue and white colors represent healthy and faithful quality. Through these visual elements plus the tagline the message emerges that proper child nutritional foundation leads to better results not only as supplementation but also acts as a symbol of responsible motherhood.



*Picture 1 Nestlé Bunyad (Source Google Images)*

The commercial creates a compelling story about mother responsibility at the mythological level. It suggests that by selecting Nestlé Bunyad, a "good mother" secures her child's destiny. This supports the brand's reputation as a reliable remedy for health and developmental issues and is in line with wider societal concerns around malnutrition in Pakistan. Additionally, the commercial perpetuates the fallacy that contemporary, branded nutrition is better than conventional meals, mirroring a broader advertising narrative that commodifies parenting and portrays corporate goods as essential to raising children.

According to Barthes, the commercial uses a second-order semiological system, in which signs promote cultural ideas by transcending their denotative meanings. Together, the symbol (logo and slogan), index (gestures and expressions), and icon (mother and child) create the brand's authority. The notion that Nestlé Bunyad is essential to a child's development and success becomes the signifier, while the image of a happy family becomes the signified. This reinforces traditional gender roles and consumerist ideas by promoting the myth that corporate nourishment is the best way to exhibit maternal love.

These connotations are further strengthened by the color scheme of red, white, and blue. The color blue, which is featured in the apparel, represents reliability, calmness, and trust. Red components in the logo and text draw attention and convey strength and urgency, while white accents stand for purity and health. Visual hints in the advertisement support the message that

children require Nestlé Bunyad as an essential and timely form of care. The backlit warm atmosphere lets the advertisement create a sense of comfort that supports its emotional appeal. The promotion builds a societal belief that supports buying from businesses as a core aspect of effective parenting and shapes what customers think and follow.

### **Panadol Night: Pills Equal Peace and Productivity**

The advertisement shows the full relaxation of a content man who appears calm through his facial expression. Panadol Night appears front and center in the bottom right quadrant while the soft background promotes a sense of relaxation toward the man featured in the ad. The Haleon brand name appears in the top right corner to show its authority and reliability. The use of purple and blue colors creates an atmosphere that makes users feel peaceful and ready to rest at night.

This therapy delivers pain relief that must be used nightly to get restful sleep according to the



*Picture 2 Panadol Night (Source Google Images)*

product information. The ad shows an obvious transition from pain to peaceful tranquility through the clear topical element and its hazy background. The advertisement shows us that the medicine brings a comfortable sense of relaxation to people.

In mythological terms the advertisement shows that medicine is essential for modern people to be both healthy and satisfied. It shows that people need Panadol Night to preserve their healthy routines and suggests this product as essential for proper sleep. Through this advertisement, the happy man showcases successful medication treatment that helps people handle daily stress instead of treating it as regular medicine. Our message stays strong because blue signals trust and peace, white shows ease of understanding, and purple produces a restful impression. Through its message the advertisement convinces people that everyday success demands medicine by showing how it delivers comfort and productivity.

### **Lifebuoy Shampoo: Well-groomed Child Shows a Mother's Responsibility**

A trained professional and her child appear in the film while the daughter displays neatly braided hair. The backdrop of green and white highlights nature and freshness. The Lifebuoy Shampoo package prominently features its two main ingredients, milk protein and aloe vera, and emphasizes maternal care and nourishment with the tagline "Maa Banaye Jarh Se Mazboot" (A mother makes [hair] strong from the roots). The advertisement serves as a symbolic reminder that being a mother entails caring for and safeguarding others. The traditional view that women bear primary responsibility for their children's welfare is reflected in the mother's role in ensuring her daughter has good hair. The representation of long, thick hair as a sign of health and beauty also relates to social norms, implying that moms can guarantee their children's strength and beauty by using this shampoo.



*Picture 3 Life Bouy Shampoo (Source Google Images)*

By emphasizing the shampoo's natural ingredients, the advertising complies with the global trend towards natural products, and the green hue furthers this link to the natural world. The idea that a mother's care affects a child's performance and appearance is further supported by the daughter's school uniform, which gently suggests that neat hair is a component of a respectable image. The ad promotes the mythical notion that moms are the finest carers, in charge of their children's well-being and looks. By stressing that women should take care of their families' welfare, especially through looks, it upholds conventional gender norms. The advertisement also links a mother's love and care to the idea that having beautiful, healthy hair is a sign of a healthy upbringing. Additionally, by endorsing branded goods as necessary for preserving health and beauty, the advertisement quietly upholds a consumerist ideal. The advertisement implies that a mother's responsibility to ensure her child's wellbeing includes buying branded products by associating Lifebuoy Shampoo with maternal care and conventional beauty standards.

The image is a picture of a mother and daughter together with healthy hair, signifying protection and nurturing. While the green and white color palette stands for cleanliness, health, and nature, the red Lifebuoy logo reinforces trust. The misconception is that utilizing the correct items is essential to fulfilling social and familial standards of appearance.

### **Lemon Max Dishwash Bar: Efficient Cleaning Reflect a Caring Woman**

Two dishwashing products are vividly compared in this commercial. The durability of the green bar labelled Lemon Max is demonstrated by the fact that it stays intact when water is applied, whereas the beige bar labelled "عام بار" (average bar) breaks apart. The Lemon Max



bar is held up by a happy woman wearing bright yellow clothing, who clearly believes in the product. The claim that Lemon Max lasts longer is supported by the phrase "کم گھلے، زیادہ چلے" (Less used, lasts longer). The branding's usage of lemons and the immaculate kitchen background convey a sense of freshness.

The commercial presents Lemon Max as a superior product that outlasts rivals, going beyond a simple comparison. The woman's colorful attire represents the ideal housewife, indicating that families would be wise to choose Lemon Max. The product is associated with freshness and cleanliness through the use of green and lemon imagery, while modernity and purity are emphasized by the plain background.



Picture 4 Lemon Max Dishwash Bar (Source Google Images)

On a mythological level, the advertisement upholds the cultural presumption that women must keep the home tidy and functional in accordance with conventional gender stereotypes. The woman's vivid yellow outfit conveys warmth and joy, emphasizing that a "good" housewife is one who maintains a tidy and functional household. The idea that using the proper cleaning solution is essential to keeping a clean and healthy home is reinforced by the imagery of lemons, which are connected to purity and hygiene.

Freshness and cleanliness are symbolized by the bright yellow Lemon Max bar with citrus images in the marketing. The index, which shows how well the product removes stains and grease, is the shining dishes. The brand's tagline and emblem stand for effectiveness and trust. The promotional content explains that true cleanliness and strong results emerge from natural ingredients specifically lemon. The red logo stands out because it shows how well the product cleans while all the vibrant green and yellow colors express energy, cleanliness, and freshness.

#### Surf Excel Detergent: Dirt is Good

The commercial displays a child of this age playing energetically in a park while the camera shows their dirty white clothes before and after treatment with Surf Excel. Despite stains showing on their clothes the child happily uses the brand product. No Cause for Fear When You Have Surf Excel (Our detergent handles tough stains no problem) appears as the main slogan. The tagline (Surf Excel is now usable) appears below the image. The detergent packet appears prominently and the lush green scenery indicates a setting that feels hygienic and healthy. Besides showing things accurately the ad also touches on cleanliness topics related to parenting and child development. The advertisement represents stains on children's clothes as

evidence of their enjoyment and learning experiences. The relaxed child shows the importance of letting children explore nature freely. The clean fabric shows how the detergent brings back cleanliness while white clothing symbolizes the innocence of the subject.

The commercial disputes the belief that dirt brings harm to people. The advertisement presents dirt as a standard part of infants' growth that helps them learn and appreciate life. The advertisement promotes willful play for children by demonstrating the current learning-through-exploration approach over structured education. Through subtle messages Surf Excel



*Picture 5 Surf Excel Detergent (Source Google Images)*

suggests that mothers should handle child clothing stain removal as their duty.

Through this advertisement dirt becomes a symbol of child development instead of something to worry about. The brand promotes Surf Excel to help mothers easily accept their children's mess by matching its "Dirt is Good" slogan. The advertisement highlights Surf Excel as a tool to help kids explore freely and showcases a happy youngster who enjoys being dirty in their play. Vibrant hues like pink, white, and green are used in the advertisement to accentuate the message. Green signifies freshness and safety, white purity and cleanliness, and brilliant pink humor and life. Surf Excel's ability to remove even the most stubborn stains is demonstrated by the contrast between the child's dirty clothes and the bright, immaculate product packaging.

### **Fair & Lovely BB Cream: Fair and Flawless Skin is Ideal Beauty**

A young lady with long brown hair and fair skin wearing a white dress is shown in this advertisement pointing to a tube of Fair & Lovely BB Cream. The delicate, feminine ambiance is created by the floral motifs on the soft pink background. "For a makeup look with no makeup," as the Urdu phrase is translated, is followed by the hashtag "#StayBBeautiful." With the "no-makeup makeup look" implying that it enhances beauty without being unduly made up, the advertisement promotes the idea that the BB cream gives a perfect, natural-looking complexion. The model's radiant skin and the gentle pink backdrop exude attractiveness and confidence, presenting the product as a simple means of looking put together.

Deeper down, the advertisement reinforces South Asia's long-standing colorism, which holds that lighter complexion is linked to success, desirability, and social acceptance, by upholding the conventional concept that fair, flawless skin is the ideal of beauty. By fostering the notion of effortless beauty, it raises irrational expectations and puts pressure on women to project an idealized appearance. Patriarchal ideals are shown in the idea that women should easily



Picture 6 Fair & Lovely BB Cream (Source Google Images)

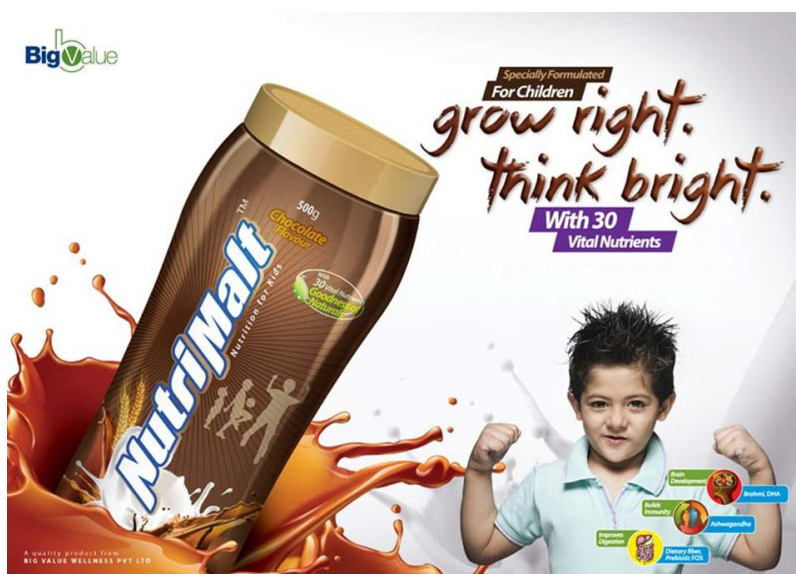
preserve their attractiveness while still being evaluated based on appearance.

The ad's iconic image of a woman changing from a darker to a lighter complexion represents prosperity and metamorphosis. The brand name and tagline highlight attractiveness and confidence, while the radiant, lightened skin symbolizes the product's efficacy. Colorism and unachievable beauty standards are perpetuated by the image of a fairer complexion, which represents the idea that lighter skin is associated with success and attractiveness. The delicate and feminine tone of the advertisement is accentuated by the pastel color palette of pink, white, and peach. Pink is associated with youth, tenderness, and beauty, which supports the idea of a natural, makeup-free appearance. White embodies beauty and purity, which supports the product's claim to improve skin. The ad's theme of effortless beauty through a smooth, even complexion is reinforced by the peach undertones, which provide the appearance of friendliness and approachability. The BB cream's lightweight, skin-perfecting properties are delicately highlighted by the beautiful color contrast.



### Nutrimalt: Health Drinks Guarantee a Child's Smartness and Strength

In order to arouse feelings of enthusiasm and vitality, the Nutrimalt commercial prominently displays a bottle or can against a colorful, dynamic background. With a color palette that incorporates vibrant hues like orange, yellow, and red, the product is frequently positioned to showcase its refreshing, bubbly, and foamy properties. These hues are frequently linked to vigor, and excitement. Along with the actual goods, the images usually include athletes, young professionals, or people doing high-intensity activities like cycling, jogging, lifting weights, or working in hectic settings. The overall feeling of vitality and energy is enhanced by motion blur, action shots, and other visual components that depict movement.



Picture 7 Nutrimalt (Source Google Images)

Beyond its accurate portrayal, the commercial links Nutrimalt consumption to vitality, achievement, and endurance. The commercial gently suggests that Nutrimalt is essential for athletes or hard-working professionals in particular to preserve endurance, focus, and peak performance. Nutrimalt appears to be necessary for those who want to succeed in a variety of spheres of life because of the vivid colors and dynamic imagery, which inspire feelings of power and motivation. The impression that Nutrimalt is not just an energy boost but also a delicious and revitalizing beverage is further supported by the drink's bubbly, frothy texture, which further communicates refreshment and satisfaction. Whether in sports or regular work, the message presents Nutrimalt as an essential energy source for people who want to stay focused, fight exhaustion, and accomplish their goals. The commercial takes advantage of the contemporary exaltation of a fast-paced, aspirational lifestyle, where people are constantly supposed to be motivated, productive, and active. With the subliminal message that endurance and achievement are readily achievable through ingestion, Nutrimalt is presented as a rapid and effective energy source, making it the perfect option for people with busy schedules.

On a mythic level, the commercial depicts a capitalist, consumer-driven society in which productivity and energy are commodities. It fits in with the mentality of the modern workplace, which places a higher value on success, productivity, and consistent



performance—often at the price of relaxation and overall health. The commercial gently advances the notion that energy must be obtained from external consumption as opposed to being maintained by organic habits like rest, hydration, and a healthy lifestyle. The advertisement creates the belief that people need conquering energy levels and Nutrimalt helps overcome this social connection to be energetic.

In the commercial Nutrimalt presents itself as a key tool for people trying to keep up with rapid day-to-day demands. The company promotes Nutrimalt as a product you need to live an energized and successful life in a society that values endurance in all activities. This visual presentation generates the impression of fresh strength by showing the bottle combined with thick foam pouring directly into a glass. The frothy liquid represents nourishment through its role as the main advertisement sign. Nutrimalt promotes physical strength through its brand design and slogan which creates a direct connection to the product and fitness benefits. The company sells Nutrimalt as a solution to today's life challenges while creating the false idea that proper nutrition needs this product to enjoy an active well-being. The white lettering highlights health and purity but the orange and brown color scheme shows that Nutrimalt gives energy and nutrition. The use of green color elements hints at Nutrimalt's connection to natural elements and vital energy while using wellness principles.

Regarding cultural myths media experts use Barthes' semiotic theory to explore how ads use creative elements to build and maintain these myths. Through study results we found three regular patterns: advertisements link domestic cleaning with women, energy with production, and justice with success. Through their methods advertising companies create new standards for what people should be and what they should value beyond product choices. The first chapter establishes the basis for investigating cultural myths in advertising further and analyzing their complete impact on marketing practices.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Role of Signs in Meaning-Making**

The meaning of advertising relies on verbal and visual signs to function correctly. According to semiotic analysis signs do more than transfer information because they carry hidden messages beyond their basic representation. Companies use ideal color schemes and design to generate specific emotional connections with target audiences. The examined commercials use pink, green and white colors to stand for feminine, fresh and pure together. Marketers promote health messages by showing athletes and joyful children's images that stand for energetic lifestyles which match their intended promotion. These signs produce emotional responses that match cultural stories as well as their basic definitions. Our study affirms Barthes' views about signs because commercials mix spoken and visual language to suggest things beyond the product. Research findings confirm that advertisements use signs to transmit cultural ideas according to McQuail (2010).

### **How Myths are Created in Advertising**

The concept of myth defines how commercials push products but also use them to spread popular beliefs about related themes. Marketing efforts develop four key beliefs regarding prosperity, energy, cleanliness, and cosmetic standards. Advertising teams build these myths by selecting effective words and pictures for their campaigns. The commercial for beauty products suggests that fair skin leads to success and attractiveness and the Nutrimalt promotion makes people think they will gain energy simply by drinking it. By displaying these myths as normal social standards advertisers help consumers understand how these products relate to standard public beliefs. The analysis confirms commercials create false ideas about beauty standards and success according to Barthes' explanations of myth

formation. Croteau and Hoynes (2003) researched how the media produces social misconceptions.

### **The Illusion of Attractiveness and Self-Assurance**

The Fair & Lovely BB Cream advertisement uses the myth of attractiveness to promote both skin fairness and impeccability. The advertisement creates a false idea that attractive looks come easily rather than being a valuable part of who someone is. Through her flawless look and dominant pose the model demonstrates that your appearance including makeup contributes to your self-assurance. According to this method of advertisement beauty standards everyone tries to achieve now replace real beauty standards because their ads display unachievable beauty ideals pushed by public opinion about physical attributes. This research proves that manufacturers sell beauty and self-confidence as essential social skills by matching Dyer's findings about attractiveness myths in his 1982 article.

### **The Fantasy of Health and Wellness**

In Nutrimalt and other health product promotions consumption creates an illusion of instant vitality and energy that businesses in this sector use regularly. The commercial implies that using such items is the only way to achieve true wellbeing by linking them to high-energy activities and energetic people. This fosters an illusion in which health is something that can be purchased and devoured rapidly rather than a holistic activity. Customers may be misled into believing that performance can be maintained by external aids rather than internal practices as a result of the focus shifting from long-term lifestyle choices, such as balanced eating and physical activity, to temporary solutions. The analysis, which supports earlier research (Gill, 2007), shows how commercials create a fantasy about health and wellness by frequently associating outward beauty with interior well-being. This reinforces the commodification of a "healthy lifestyle," which has been promoted to consumers more and more.

### **The Myth of Social Approval**

The idea that one's capacity to maintain a flawless home or one's attractiveness are prerequisites for social acceptance is a common theme in marketing, especially for beauty and domestic goods. Motherhood is portrayed in advertisements for products such as Surf Excel in a way that supports the myth of social acceptance based on looks and cleanliness while also supporting the concept that a good mother is one who keeps her kids clean. These beliefs perpetuate gender norms and social pressures, which demand those women—mothers in particular—maintain a balance between managing the home and maintaining one's own beauty in order to be accepted by society. The study supports Goffman's (1959) conclusions about acceptance and social approval. This analysis's advertisements regularly play on customers' need for social validation, which is consistent with studies that demonstrate the relationship between consumer goods and acceptance and social standing.

### **Myth of Effortless Transformation**

One of the main narratives in the wellness and beauty industries is the idea of effortless transformation. The idea that physical transformation is simple and doesn't require major lifestyle changes is supported by products like Fair & Lovely BB Cream, which promise a perfect, fair complexion with little effort. This story reinforces a skewed idea of self-improvement that is reliant on outside goods and leads to a consumer-driven society that favours speedy fixes and immediate results. As mentioned in earlier studies by Gerbner (1998), advertising frequently show a quick and easy transformation, which is a subject at the heart of this research. Products claim to improve one's look or lifestyle in a short amount of time, which reinforces irrational expectations of personal change.

### **Emotional Appeal and Consumer Manipulation**

Customers are frequently tricked by emotional appeals into associating the promoted goods with their own fears and wants. Strong bonds are formed between the product and the customer through the use of emotional music and vivid imagery in commercials. For instance, Nutrimalt appeals to consumers' desire for success and energy by showcasing motivated, energetic people who use the product to improve their performance. Consumers' emotional wants drive their purchasing decisions because companies link product consumption to emotional satisfaction. The research findings show how Solomon (2018) and Belk (1988) noted that commercials manipulate emotions to make people feel dependent on products to meet their psychological needs.

### **The Representation of Myth and Gender in Advertising**

Advertising commonly develops and strengthens traditional roles for men and women in modern society. The promotional pieces feature women in roles of domestic caregiving where they maintain family cleanliness and appearance. The media shows energetic male achievers who set standards for cleanliness and attractive looks but expects female characters to uphold them. These gendered requirements come from basic social rules in our society. Women appear in these commercials as part of established social traditions because they have to handle domestic duties and aesthetics. The study output matches Kilbourne's 1999 findings by showing how women become the care standards through advertisements that hold them as appearance controllers and home managers.

### **The Myths' Commercialization**

The best approach to get people interested in product buying is through advertising that uses consumer myths. The market turns standard ideas about social life and success into products that customers believe will help them achieve these aims. Converting social value beliefs into physical product options produces more sales results and affects how customers behave. Fair & Lovely and Nutrimalt capitalize on social beliefs to group people into believing they need these items for social advancement. Companies now market their products using myths more often as Schor (2004) mentions in his research. According to consumer culture research this study demonstrates how advertisements transform success attractiveness and health myths into purchasable lifestyles for selling their products.

### **The Change in Marketing Approaches**

Marketers now reinforce feelings in customers instead of listing product features and benefits as their main marketing approach. Today marketing seeks to sell not just a product but also the way of life or identity customers want to reach. Brands today offer life transformations through solutions that address what customers want and fear. Semiotic analysis reveals that ads now specialize in responding to individual personal feelings and public needs at the same time. These findings show ads now promote life dreams instead of basic product selling which matches what Kotler and Keller (2016) describe about modern marketing methods. The moves organizations make in their marketing strategies now represent big changes in industry practice from past decades.

### **The Impact of Culture on Consumer Behavior**

People follow cultural norms that define their expectations about successful living and healthy appearance. In South Asian cultures people connect how clean and beautiful a woman looks to her social role yet lighter skin color helps her gain better social standing. The deeply rooted cultural standards direct how companies promote and market their products to consumers. Businesses mainly use advertisements to maintain cultural patterns that control how people understand themselves and their worth in society. The research upholds Hall's

(1997) cultural code concept by showing how ads show and encourage changes in consumer actions across different environments according to local beauty and social rules.

### **The Role of Media Knowledge**

The results of advertising myths mainly depend on how well consumers understand their media sources. Greater media awareness helps consumers recognize and question the false messages commercial promotions display. Despite this most consumers remain unaware of how companies use persuasive approaches to market their products. People who stay uninformed about sales methods remain susceptible to ads that work on their emotional and psychological factors through desire and fear tactics. Our method links to McLuhan's ideas (1964) about media literacy to help viewers grasp advertising since educated customers can see through myth promotion and handle market demands better.

### **CONCLUSION**

This examination studies how ads create and keep cultural legends through the semiotic approach of Roland Barthes. Through close analysis of many product ads, we see they promote basic myths that control social standards of gender roles, social value systems and customer purchasing habits while also promoting products. Through combinations of words and imagery advertisements generate multiple levels of meaning that touch what consumers want emotionally and fear the most.

Through their investigation the researchers discovered how special advertising methods create and expand myths about wellness fiction and easy beauty plus social need and transformation experiences. These opinions directly follow the main cultural patterns that focus on achievement success and physical attractiveness. The study confirmed how commercial ads depend on cultural standards such as gender behaviors and beauty standards to make money and attract customers. Businesses now sell complete lifestyles instead of basic products thanks to the commercial use of these beliefs in advertising. When consumers find it harder to tell where their actual needs end and their goals begin marketers use stronger ways to direct purchasing choices. Marketing content makes people exposed to unrealistic goals seem reachable by using emotions and cultural signs to activate buying impulses.

This study proves that advertising strongly affects how cultures create myths while also controlling what people purchase. Previous social standards become stronger through advertising which also builds unrealistic benchmarks for customers. People who consume ads and create them need to understand these deceptive meanings because they show how media strongly shapes beliefs about identity self-achievements and personal worth. When consumers gain more advanced media knowledge about advertising impact society will develop more profound studies on this topic.

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