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Research Article

Semiotic Analysis of Fashion Brand Logos and Consumer Meaning-Making

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ABSTRACT

Fashion brand logos function as powerful semiotic devices that communicate complex layers of meaning beyond their visual form. This study investigates how logos operate as sign systems and how consumers construct meaning through their interpretation. Drawing on semiotic theory, including Saussurean and Peircean models, alongside Barthesian mythology and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), the research adopts a qualitative methodology based on secondary data. Sources include academic literature, brand archives, and marketing materials. The analysis reveals that fashion logos function across multiple levels-denotative, connotative, and mythological-encoding narratives of luxury, identity, and aspiration. At the same time, consumers actively participate in decoding and reinterpreting these meanings based on cultural context and personal experience. The findings highlight the dynamic interplay between brand intention and consumer agency, demonstrating that logo meaning is neither fixed nor universally shared. Instead, it is continuously negotiated within social and cultural frameworks. This study contributes to branding and consumer research by offering a comprehensive semiotic understanding of how visual identity shapes consumer perception and identity construction in the fashion industry.

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary global marketplace, fashion brands operate within an increasingly saturated and visually driven environment where differentiation is not merely a matter of product quality but of symbolic distinction. Among the most potent tools for achieving such distinction is the brand logo—a condensed visual marker that communicates identity, heritage, and value propositions. In the fashion industry, logos function not only as identifiers but also as cultural signifiers that carry layered meanings, shaping consumer perception and influencing purchasing behaviour (Keller, 2013). As visual culture continues to dominate consumer engagement across digital and physical spaces, understanding how logos operate as semiotic systems becomes critical for both scholars and practitioners.

The proliferation of logo-centric fashion in recent decades underscores the importance of visual branding. From minimalist typographic marks to highly stylised monograms, fashion logos have become central to the construction of brand narratives and consumer identity. The rise of “logomania,” particularly in luxury and streetwear segments, illustrates how logos can transcend their functional role to become symbols of status, affiliation, and aspiration (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012). In such contexts, the visibility of the logo itself becomes a key driver of value, transforming garments into communicative artefacts that signal social meaning.

Semiotics, as the study of signs and meaning-making, provides a powerful framework for analysing the communicative function of logos. According to Saussure (1916/1983), a sign is composed of the signifier (the form of the sign) and the signified (the concept it represents). In the case of fashion logos, the signifier includes visual elements such as typography, colour, and form, while the signified encompasses the cultural and symbolic meanings associated with the brand. Peirce’s (1931–1958) triadic model further enriches this understanding by introducing the interpretant—the meaning generated in the mind of the observer—highlighting the active role of the consumer in the process of signification.

Fashion logos are particularly rich sites for semiotic analysis because they operate across multiple levels of meaning. At the denotative level, a logo may simply represent a brand name or symbol. However, at the connotative level, it evokes associations related to lifestyle, status, and identity (Barthes, 1972). For example, a minimalist logo rendered in monochrome may connote sophistication and modernity, while an ornate emblem may suggest heritage and tradition. These meanings are not inherent in the logo itself but are constructed through cultural codes and shared understandings.

The significance of logos in fashion extends beyond branding into the realm of consumer culture. Consumers do not passively receive brand messages; rather, they actively interpret and negotiate meanings based on their own experiences, social contexts, and cultural frameworks (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). This process of meaning-making is

central to symbolic consumption, where products and brands are used as resources for identity construction (Belk, 1988). In this sense, fashion logos become tools through which individuals express who they are, who they aspire to be, and how they wish to be perceived by others.

Moreover, the globalisation of fashion has intensified the complexity of logo interpretation. As brands operate across diverse cultural contexts, the meanings associated with their logos may vary significantly. A logo that signifies luxury and exclusivity in one context may be interpreted differently in another, depending on local cultural values and social norms. This variability highlights the importance of examining logos not as fixed symbols but as dynamic signs whose meanings are continually negotiated.

The digital transformation of the fashion industry has further amplified the role of logos in consumer engagement. Social media platforms, e-commerce websites, and digital advertising have increased the visibility and circulation of logos, making them central to brand communication strategies. In digital environments, logos often function as quick visual cues that capture attention and convey meaning in a matter of seconds. This heightened visibility reinforces their role as key semiotic elements in the branding process.

Despite the centrality of logos in fashion branding, there remains a need for deeper theoretical and analytical exploration of how they function as systems of meaning. While existing research has examined branding and consumer behaviour, fewer studies have

focused specifically on the semiotic dimensions of logos and their role in consumer meaning-making. This gap is particularly significant given the increasing importance of visual communication in contemporary culture.

This study addresses this gap by conducting a semiotic analysis of fashion brand logos and examining how consumers construct meaning from them. By integrating semiotic theory with insights from consumer culture theory, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between visual branding and consumer interpretation. The study adopts a qualitative approach based on secondary data, drawing on existing literature, brand materials, and prior research to analyse the symbolic dimensions of logos.

In doing so, the research contributes to the fields of branding, visual communication, and consumer studies by highlighting the role of logos as mediators of meaning. It also offers practical insights for brand managers and designers, emphasising the importance of considering cultural context and consumer interpretation in logo design. Ultimately, the study underscores the idea that logos are not merely visual elements but complex sign systems that play a crucial role in shaping consumer perception and experience.

2. Literature Review

Semiotics provides the theoretical foundation for understanding how meaning is constructed and communicated through signs. Ferdinand de Saussure's (1916/1983) structuralist approach conceptualises the sign as a dyadic relationship between the signifier

(the form) and the signified (the concept). This model emphasises the arbitrary nature of signs, suggesting that meaning is not inherent but socially constructed through linguistic and cultural conventions.

Charles Sanders Peirce (1931–1958) expanded the study of semiotics by introducing a triadic model consisting of the sign, object, and interpretant. Peirce's framework highlights the interpretive process, recognising that meaning emerges through the interaction between the sign and the observer. This perspective is particularly relevant to consumer research, as it underscores the active role of individuals in meaning-making.

Roland Barthes (1972) further developed semiotic theory by introducing the concepts of denotation and connotation. Denotation refers to the literal, surface-level meaning of a sign, while connotation involves the cultural and ideological meanings that are layered onto it. Barthes also introduced the notion of myth, describing how cultural meanings become naturalised and taken for granted. In the context of fashion logos, myth plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of luxury, authenticity, and desirability.

2.1 Semiotics in Branding and Marketing

The application of semiotics to branding has gained significant attention in marketing research. Brands are increasingly understood as systems of signs that convey meaning and create value beyond functional attributes (Keller, 2013). Logos, as central elements of brand identity, serve as key signifiers within this system.

Aaker (1996) emphasises the importance of brand identity in creating strong brands, highlighting how visual elements contribute to brand recognition and differentiation. Logos encapsulate brand identity in a compact and easily recognisable form, making them essential tools for communication in competitive markets.

Kapferer and Bastien (2012) argue that luxury branding relies heavily on symbolic meaning, with logos playing a central role in conveying exclusivity and prestige. In luxury fashion, logos often function as markers of status, signalling wealth and social position. The strategic use of logos in luxury branding demonstrates how visual signs can be leveraged to create and sustain brand value.

Oswald (2012) highlights the role of semiotics in marketing strategy, arguing that brands must align their visual and symbolic elements with cultural meanings to resonate with consumers. This alignment requires an understanding of how signs are interpreted within specific cultural contexts.

2.2 Consumer Culture Theory and Meaning-Making

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) provides a framework for understanding how consumers interpret and use brands as symbolic resources. Arnould and Thompson (2005) describe CCT as an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationships between consumer actions, cultural meanings, and marketplace structures.

One of the central concepts in CCT is symbolic consumption, which refers to the use of products and brands to express identity and social meaning (Belk, 1988). Fashion

logos are particularly significant in this regard because they are highly visible and easily recognisable. By displaying logos, consumers communicate aspects of their identity, such as taste, status, and group affiliation.

Holt (2002) introduces a dialectical perspective on branding, suggesting that brands become meaningful through their interaction with cultural tensions and consumer practices. This perspective highlights the co-creative nature of meaning, where consumers actively participate in shaping brand narratives.

McCracken (1986) proposes a model of meaning transfer, explaining how cultural meanings move from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods and then to individual consumers. Logos play a crucial role in this process by serving as carriers of cultural meaning.

2.3 Visual Identity and Logo Design

Visual identity is a key component of brand communication, encompassing elements such as logos, typography, colour, and imagery. Henderson and Cote (1998) identify design characteristics that influence logo effectiveness, including complexity, symmetry, and familiarity.

Typography is a particularly important aspect of logo design. Serif fonts are often associated with tradition and authority, while sans-serif fonts convey modernity and simplicity. These associations are culturally constructed and influence how consumers interpret logos.

Colour also plays a significant role in meaning-making. Research indicates that colours evoke emotional and psychological responses, contributing to brand perception (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). In fashion branding, black and white are commonly used to convey elegance and sophistication, while bold colours may signal creativity and innovation.

Symbolism and iconography further enhance the communicative power of logos. Monograms, emblems, and abstract symbols can convey heritage, craftsmanship, and uniqueness. Over time, these symbols acquire cultural meaning through repeated exposure and association.

2.4 Fashion as a Cultural System

Fashion is not merely a system of clothing but a cultural phenomenon that reflects and shapes social values (Crane, 2012). It operates as a form of nonverbal communication, allowing individuals to express identity and navigate social contexts.

Simmel (1904/1957) conceptualises fashion as a process of differentiation and imitation, where individuals adopt styles to both conform to and distinguish themselves from others. Logos play a key role in this process by serving as visible markers of affiliation and distinction.

Bourdieu (1984) introduces the concept of cultural capital, which refers to the knowledge, tastes, and preferences that confer social advantage. Fashion logos can be seen as forms of symbolic capital, signalling cultural competence and social status.

2.5 Logos, Status Signalling, and Identity

The role of logos in status signalling has been widely studied in the context of luxury consumption. Kapferer and Bastien (2012) argue that logos serve as badges of prestige, allowing consumers to display wealth and social position.

Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010) distinguish between different types of luxury consumers based on their preferences for logo prominence. Some consumers prefer subtle logos that signal exclusivity to those in the know, while others favour conspicuous logos that are easily recognisable.

This variation highlights the complexity of consumer meaning-making. Logos do not have a single fixed meaning; rather, their interpretation depends on the social and cultural context as well as individual preferences.

2.6 Gaps in the Literature

While existing research has provided valuable insights into branding, semiotics, and consumer behaviour, there remains a need for more focused analysis of fashion logos as semiotic systems. Many studies have examined logos in general marketing contexts, but fewer have explored their specific role in fashion and identity construction.

Additionally, there is limited research on how consumers actively interpret logos in different cultural contexts. Given the global nature of the fashion industry, understanding these variations is essential.

This study seeks to address these gaps by applying semiotic analysis to fashion brand logos and examining how consumers construct meaning from them through a qualitative, secondary data approach.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that integrates semiotic theory, Barthesian cultural analysis, and Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) to examine how fashion brand logos function as systems of meaning and how consumers interpret them. These theoretical perspectives collectively provide a comprehensive lens for analysing both the production and interpretation of symbolic meaning in fashion branding.

3.1 Saussurean Semiotics: Signifier and Signified

At the core of this study lies the Saussurean model of semiotics, which conceptualises the sign as a dyadic relationship between the *signifier* (the physical form of the sign) and the *signified* (the conceptual meaning it represents) (Saussure, 1916/1983). In the context of fashion brand logos, the signifier includes visual elements such as typography, colour, shape, and composition, while the signified encompasses the meanings associated with these elements, including notions of luxury, modernity, heritage, or exclusivity.

A key principle of Saussurean semiotics is the arbitrariness of the sign, which suggests that there is no inherent connection between the signifier and the signified. Instead, meaning is constructed through social conventions and

cultural codes. This principle is particularly relevant for fashion logos, as their meanings are not fixed but are shaped by historical context, marketing strategies, and consumer interpretation.

By applying this framework, the study analyses how specific visual features of logos operate as signifiers and how these features are linked to culturally constructed meanings. For example, a minimalist typographic logo may signify sophistication and refinement, while a more elaborate emblem may evoke tradition and craftsmanship. These associations are not universal but are mediated by cultural knowledge and shared symbolic systems.

3.2 Peircean Semiotics: Interpretant and Meaning-Making

While Saussure's model provides a structural understanding of signs, Peirce's (1931–1958) triadic model introduces a dynamic dimension by incorporating the *interpretant*, or the meaning generated by the observer. According to Peirce, a sign consists of three components: the representamen (sign), the object (referent), and the interpretant (interpretation). This framework emphasises that meaning is not inherent in the sign itself but emerges through the process of interpretation.

In the context of fashion branding, the interpretant is particularly significant because it highlights the active role of consumers in meaning-making. Consumers do not simply decode logos in a passive manner; rather, they interpret them based on their personal experiences, cultural background, and social context. This

interpretive process can lead to multiple and sometimes conflicting meanings for the same logo.

Peirce also distinguishes between different types of signs: icons, indices, and symbols. Fashion logos often function primarily as symbols, as their meanings are based on convention rather than resemblance or direct association. However, some logos may also incorporate iconic or indexical elements, such as visual references to heritage or craftsmanship. This multiplicity of sign types enhances the richness and complexity of logo meaning.

3.3 Barthesian Mythologies: Connotation and Ideology

Roland Barthes' (1972) extension of semiotic theory introduces the concept of *myth*, which refers to the process by which cultural meanings become naturalised and appear self-evident. Barthes distinguishes between denotation (the literal meaning of a sign) and connotation (the cultural and ideological meanings that are layered onto it). At the level of myth, these connotations are transformed into seemingly natural truths.

In fashion branding, logos play a crucial role in the construction of myth. For instance, a luxury brand logo may connote exclusivity, elegance, and success. Over time, these associations become naturalised, leading consumers to perceive the brand as inherently prestigious. This process obscures the constructed nature of these meanings and reinforces the ideological foundations of consumer culture.

Barthesian analysis allows this study to examine how fashion logos contribute to the

reproduction of cultural narratives and power structures. By analysing logos as myth-making devices, the research explores how they encode and perpetuate values related to status, identity, and aspiration.

3.4 Consumer Culture Theory (CCT): Symbolic Consumption and Identity

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) provides a complementary perspective by focusing on how consumers engage with and interpret symbolic meanings in the marketplace (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). CCT emphasises that consumption is not merely a functional activity but a cultural practice through which individuals construct and express identity.

Belk's (1988) concept of the extended self suggests that possessions, including branded products, become part of an individual's identity. Fashion logos, as visible markers of brand affiliation, play a significant role in this process. By wearing or displaying logos, consumers communicate aspects of their identity, such as social status, lifestyle, and personal values.

Holt (2002) further argues that brands acquire meaning through their interaction with cultural tensions and consumer practices. This perspective highlights the co-creative nature of meaning, where consumers actively participate in shaping brand narratives. Logos, in this sense, are not static symbols but dynamic elements that evolve through ongoing cultural discourse.

3.5 Integrative Framework

By integrating Saussurean and Peircean semiotics with Barthesian myth analysis and CCT, this study develops a multi-layered framework for analysing fashion brand logos. At the structural level, logos are examined as sign systems composed of signifiers and signifieds. At the interpretive level, the focus shifts to how consumers generate meaning through the interpretant. At the cultural level, the analysis explores how logos function as myth-making devices that naturalise ideological meanings. Finally, at the consumer level, the study investigates how these meanings are appropriated and reinterpreted in the construction of identity.

This integrative framework enables a comprehensive understanding of both the production and consumption of meaning in fashion branding, highlighting the complex interplay between visual design, cultural context, and consumer interpretation.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive research design to explore the semiotic dimensions of fashion brand logos and their role in consumer meaning-making. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for this study because it focuses on understanding complex social and cultural phenomena rather than measuring quantifiable variables (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Given that meaning-making is inherently subjective and context-dependent, an interpretive approach allows for a nuanced analysis of how logos function as symbolic systems.

The research is based on secondary data analysis, which involves the systematic examination of existing data sources, including academic literature, brand materials, and prior empirical studies. This approach is appropriate for semiotic research, as it enables the analysis of widely circulated visual and textual artefacts without the need for primary data collection.

4.1 Data Sources

The study draws on multiple sources of secondary data to ensure a comprehensive and triangulated analysis. These sources include:

- **Academic Literature:** Peer-reviewed journal articles and books on semiotics, branding, consumer behaviour, and fashion studies provide the theoretical foundation for the analysis.
- **Brand Archives and Official Websites:** These sources offer access to logo designs, brand histories, and visual identity guidelines, which are essential for understanding the intended meanings of logos.
- **Advertising and Marketing Materials:** Campaign images, promotional content, and digital media are analysed to examine how logos are presented and contextualised within brand narratives.
- **Existing Empirical Studies:** Prior research on consumer perception and brand interpretation is used to support the analysis of meaning-making processes.

The use of diverse data sources enhances the validity of the study by enabling triangulation, which involves comparing and integrating multiple forms of evidence (Flick, 2018).

4.2 Sampling Strategy

The study employs a purposive sampling strategy to select fashion brands for analysis. Purposive sampling involves the intentional selection of cases that are particularly relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2015). In this case, brands are selected based on the following criteria:

- Strong and recognisable visual identity
- Global presence and cultural influence
- Distinctive logo design with symbolic significance

This approach ensures that the selected cases provide rich and meaningful data for semiotic analysis. While the study does not aim for statistical generalisation, it seeks to generate theoretical insights that can be applied to broader contexts.

4.3 Analytical Framework

The analysis is conducted using a multi-stage semiotic approach, drawing on the theoretical framework outlined in Section 3. The process involves the following steps:

Denotative Analysis: The first stage involves a detailed description of the visual elements of each logo, including typography, colour, shape, and composition. This stage focuses on the literal, surface-level features of the logo without interpretation.

Connotative Analysis: The second stage examines the cultural and symbolic meanings associated with the visual elements. This involves interpreting how specific design features evoke associations related to identity, status, and lifestyle. The analysis draws on existing literature and cultural knowledge to contextualise these meanings.

Mythological Analysis: The third stage applies Barthes' concept of myth to identify the broader cultural narratives embedded in the logos. This involves analysing how logos contribute to the naturalisation of ideologies, such as luxury, authenticity, and exclusivity.

Interpretive Analysis: The final stage focuses on the role of the consumer in meaning-making. Drawing on CCT, this stage examines how consumers interpret and appropriate logo meanings in the construction of identity. This analysis is informed by existing studies on consumer behaviour and symbolic consumption.

4.4 Trustworthiness and Rigour

To ensure the credibility and rigour of the research, several strategies are employed (Mannan & Farhana, 2026):

- **Triangulation:** The use of multiple data sources enhances the validity of the findings.
- **Theoretical grounding:** The analysis is firmly rooted in established theoretical frameworks, ensuring conceptual rigour.
- **Transparency:** The research process is clearly documented, allowing for replication and evaluation.

While qualitative research does not aim for objectivity in the positivist sense, it seeks to provide a coherent and well-supported interpretation of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4.5 Limitations

The study is subject to certain limitations. First, the reliance on secondary data means that the analysis is limited to existing sources and may not capture real-time consumer perspectives. Second, the interpretive nature of semiotic analysis introduces a degree of subjectivity, as meanings are constructed by the researcher.

However, these limitations are inherent to qualitative research and are mitigated through the use of established theoretical frameworks and rigorous analytical procedures.

5. Findings and Analysis

This section presents a comprehensive semiotic analysis of fashion brand logos, examining how visual elements function as signifiers and how meanings are constructed through cultural interpretation and consumer engagement. Drawing on the theoretical framework outlined earlier, the analysis is structured across four interrelated levels: denotative, connotative, mythological, and interpretive. These levels reveal how logos operate as complex sign systems that mediate between brand identity and consumer meaning-making.

5.1 Denotative Structures: Formal Characteristics of Logos

At the denotative level, fashion brand logos consist of visual elements such as typography, colour, form, and composition. These elements are often designed with precision to ensure recognizability and consistency across various platforms. The analysis of secondary data indicates that many globally recognised fashion brands employ minimalist designs characterised by clean lines, balanced proportions, and limited colour palettes.

Typography emerges as a central component of logo design. Serif typefaces are frequently associated with heritage and tradition, while sans-serif fonts convey modernity and simplicity (Henderson & Cote, 1998). For example, a serif-based logo may denote a long-standing legacy, whereas a sans-serif logo may suggest innovation and contemporary relevance. These typographic choices serve as primary signifiers that guide initial consumer perception.

Colour is another crucial denotative element. Black and white dominate fashion branding due to their versatility and associations with elegance and neutrality (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). The use of monochrome palettes allows logos to maintain visual consistency across diverse media while also reinforcing a sense of sophistication. In contrast, the selective use of gold or metallic tones often denotes luxury and exclusivity.

Form and composition further contribute to the denotative structure. Symmetry, balance, and simplicity are commonly employed to enhance memorability and aesthetic appeal.

Monograms and abstract symbols are frequently used to create distinctive visual identities. These formal characteristics establish the foundational layer upon which deeper meanings are constructed.

5.2 Connotative Meanings: Cultural and Symbolic Associations

Beyond their literal features, fashion logos operate at the connotative level, where visual elements evoke cultural and symbolic meanings. These meanings are not inherent in the logos themselves but are constructed through shared cultural codes and social practices (Barthes, 1972).

Minimalist logos, for instance, often connote sophistication, exclusivity, and modernity. The absence of elaborate ornamentation is interpreted as a marker of refined taste, aligning with cultural ideals of understated luxury. This interpretation reflects broader aesthetic values that associate simplicity with elegance and authenticity.

Typography plays a significant role in shaping connotative meaning. Serif fonts may evoke tradition, authority, and craftsmanship, while sans-serif fonts are associated with innovation and accessibility. These associations are culturally mediated and may vary across contexts, but they generally function as cues that guide consumer interpretation.

Colour also carries strong connotative significance. Black is often associated with power, elegance, and timelessness, while white conveys purity and simplicity. Gold and metallic tones are linked to wealth and prestige. These colour associations are deeply embedded in cultural symbolism and

contribute to the overall perception of the brand.

Symbolic elements, such as monograms and emblems, further enrich connotative meaning. These symbols often reference the brand's heritage or founder, creating a sense of authenticity and continuity. Over time, repeated exposure to these symbols reinforces their association with specific values and narratives.

5.3 Mythological Dimensions: Logos as Cultural Narratives

At the mythological level, fashion logos function as vehicles for cultural narratives that naturalise and legitimise particular ideologies. Barthes (1972) describes myth as a second-order semiological system in which cultural meanings are transformed into seemingly natural truths. In the context of fashion branding, logos play a central role in this process.

Luxury logos, for example, often perpetuate myths of exclusivity, success, and aspiration. Through consistent branding and marketing, these logos become associated with a lifestyle characterised by wealth, sophistication, and social distinction. Consumers come to perceive these associations as inherent qualities of the brand, rather than as constructed meanings.

This myth-making process is reinforced through advertising, celebrity endorsements, and media representation. Logos are embedded within narratives that depict idealised lifestyles, thereby shaping consumer aspirations. The repetition of these narratives contributes to the normalisation of

certain values, such as the desirability of luxury and the importance of status.

Moreover, logos can also reflect broader cultural ideologies related to globalisation and modernity. Global fashion brands often use logos to project a cosmopolitan identity, appealing to consumers who seek to align themselves with global cultural trends. This process highlights the role of logos in mediating between local and global identities.

5.4 Interpretive Processes: Consumer Meaning-Making

The interpretive dimension of the analysis focuses on how consumers engage with and construct meaning from fashion logos. Drawing on Peirce's concept of the interpretant and CCT, the findings indicate that consumers play an active role in meaning-making, rather than passively receiving brand messages (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

Consumers interpret logos based on their personal experiences, cultural background, and social context. This interpretive process can lead to diverse and sometimes contradictory meanings. For instance, a logo that signifies luxury for one consumer may be perceived as ostentatious or inauthentic by another. These variations highlight the subjective nature of meaning-making.

Symbolic consumption plays a key role in this process. Consumers use logos as tools for identity construction, selecting brands that align with their desired self-image (Belk, 1988). Wearing or displaying a logo becomes a performative act that communicates identity to others. This aligns with Goffman's

(1959) concept of self-presentation, where individuals manage their appearance to influence social perception.

Social context also shapes interpretation. Logos may function as markers of group affiliation, signalling membership in specific social or cultural groups. For example, certain logos may be associated with particular subcultures or lifestyles, influencing how they are perceived and used by consumers.

5.5 Tensions Between Brand Intent and Consumer Interpretation

A key finding of the analysis is the tension between producer-intended meaning and consumer interpretation. While brands attempt to control meaning through design and marketing, consumers ultimately interpret logos in ways that may diverge from these intentions.

Holt (2002) describes this dynamic as a dialectical process in which brand meaning is co-created through the interaction between marketers and consumers. Logos, as visible and widely circulated symbols, are particularly susceptible to reinterpretation and appropriation.

This tension is evident in the way logos are used in different cultural contexts. A logo designed to convey exclusivity may be reinterpreted as a symbol of mass consumption if it becomes widely accessible. Similarly, logos may be appropriated by subcultures in ways that challenge or subvert their original meaning.

5.6 Logos as Dynamic Sign Systems

Overall, the findings demonstrate that fashion brand logos function as dynamic sign systems that operate across multiple levels of meaning. They are not static symbols but evolving entities whose meanings are shaped by ongoing cultural and social processes.

The interplay between denotation, connotation, myth, and interpretation highlights the complexity of logo meaning. Each level contributes to the overall significance of the logo, creating a rich and multifaceted system of communication.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the semiotic and cultural dimensions of fashion brand logos, highlighting their role as powerful tools for communication, identity construction, and ideological reproduction. This section interprets these findings in relation to the theoretical framework and existing literature, offering a deeper understanding of how logos function within contemporary consumer culture.

6.1 Logos as Mediators of Meaning

One of the central contributions of this study is the demonstration that logos function as mediators between brand identity and consumer interpretation. From a Saussurean perspective, logos operate as sign systems that link visual forms to conceptual meanings. However, as Peirce's model suggests, this relationship is not fixed but is mediated by the interpretive processes of consumers.

This mediation highlights the importance of considering both the production and consumption of meaning in branding. While designers and marketers encode specific meanings into logos, these meanings are ultimately realised through consumer interpretation. This underscores the limitations of a purely sender-oriented model of communication and emphasises the need for a more interactive and dynamic understanding of branding.

6.2 The Role of Myth in Branding

The analysis also underscores the significance of myth in the construction of brand meaning. Following Barthes (1972), logos can be seen as myth-making devices that naturalise cultural values and ideologies. In the context of fashion, these myths often revolve around notions of luxury, exclusivity, and aspiration.

The persistence of these myths reflects the broader dynamics of consumer culture, where brands serve as vehicles for the expression of identity and desire. By associating logos with idealised lifestyles, brands create powerful narratives that shape consumer perception and behaviour. These narratives are not merely symbolic but have material implications, influencing purchasing decisions and social interactions.

However, the mythological dimension of logos also raises critical questions about the role of branding in reinforcing social inequalities. The association of certain logos with status and prestige may contribute to the reproduction of social hierarchies, as access to these symbols is often limited by economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984).

6.3 Consumer Agency and Co-Creation of Meaning

A key insight from the study is the active role of consumers in meaning-making. Consistent with CCT, the findings indicate that consumers are not passive recipients of brand messages but active participants in the construction of meaning (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

This agency is evident in the diverse interpretations of logos, which vary across individuals and contexts. Consumers draw on their own experiences and cultural knowledge to interpret logos, resulting in a multiplicity of meanings. This variability challenges the notion of a single, unified brand identity and highlights the complexity of consumer-brand relationships.

The concept of co-creation further emphasises this dynamic. As Holt (2002) argues, brand meaning emerges through the interaction between marketers and consumers. Logos, as visible and widely shared symbols, play a central role in this process, serving as sites of negotiation and reinterpretation.

6.4 Identity Construction and Symbolic Consumption

The study also contributes to the understanding of symbolic consumption by highlighting the role of logos in identity construction. As Belk (1988) suggests, possessions can become extensions of the self, and fashion logos are particularly effective in this regard due to their visibility and recognizability.

By displaying logos, consumers communicate aspects of their identity, including social status, lifestyle, and personal values. This process is closely linked to Goffman's (1959) concept of self-presentation, where individuals use symbols to manage how they are perceived by others.

The findings suggest that logos function as social signals that facilitate communication within and across social groups. They enable individuals to align themselves with certain identities while distinguishing themselves from others. This dual function reflects Simmel's (1904/1957) notion of fashion as a process of imitation and differentiation.

6.5 Cultural Context and Globalisation

The role of cultural context emerges as a critical factor in the interpretation of logos. As global fashion brands operate across diverse markets, their logos must resonate with different cultural audiences. This creates both opportunities and challenges for branding.

On one hand, global logos can serve as symbols of cosmopolitan identity, appealing to consumers who seek to participate in global culture. On the other hand, cultural differences may lead to variations in interpretation, potentially undermining the intended meaning of the logo.

This highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in logo design and branding. Brands must consider how their visual elements are interpreted in different contexts and adapt their strategies accordingly.

6.6 Implications for Branding and Design

The findings have important implications for branding and design practice. First, they emphasise the need for a semiotic approach to logo design, where visual elements are carefully considered in relation to their cultural meanings. Designers must be aware of the symbolic associations of typography, colour, and form, and how these elements contribute to overall brand perception.

Second, the study highlights the importance of consumer interpretation in shaping brand meaning. Brands cannot fully control how their logos are perceived, but they can influence interpretation through consistent and coherent communication strategies.

Finally, the findings suggest that logos should be viewed as dynamic and evolving entities. As cultural contexts and consumer preferences change, logos may need to be adapted to remain relevant and meaningful.

6.7 Contributions to Theory and Research

This study contributes to the literature by integrating semiotic theory with consumer culture theory to provide a comprehensive analysis of fashion brand logos. It extends existing research by focusing specifically on logos as semiotic systems and exploring their role in consumer meaning-making.

The study also highlights the value of qualitative, interpretive approaches in branding research, demonstrating how in-depth analysis can reveal the complex and multifaceted nature of meaning.

7. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the semiotic dimensions of fashion brand logos and their role in consumer meaning-making. By integrating semiotic theory with Consumer Culture Theory, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how logos function as systems of signs and how their meanings are constructed, interpreted, and negotiated within contemporary consumer culture.

The findings demonstrate that fashion logos operate across multiple levels of meaning. At the denotative level, logos consist of carefully designed visual elements such as typography, colour, and form. At the connotative level, these elements evoke culturally embedded associations related to luxury, modernity, and identity. At the mythological level, logos contribute to the construction and naturalisation of broader cultural narratives, including ideals of status, exclusivity, and aspiration. These layered meanings illustrate the complexity of logos as communicative tools within the fashion industry.

A key contribution of this study lies in its emphasis on consumer agency. Drawing on Consumer Culture Theory, the research highlights that consumers are not passive recipients of brand messages but active interpreters who co-create meaning. The interpretation of logos varies across individuals and contexts, reflecting differences in cultural background, social positioning, and personal experience. This variability underscores the dynamic and contested nature of brand meaning.

The study also reveals the tension between brand intention and consumer interpretation. While brands seek to encode specific meanings into their logos, these meanings are not always received as intended. Instead, logos are subject to reinterpretation, appropriation, and transformation within different cultural and social contexts. This finding reinforces the importance of viewing branding as an interactive process rather than a one-directional communication strategy.

From a practical perspective, the research underscores the importance of adopting a semiotic approach to logo design and branding. Designers and marketers must consider not only the aesthetic qualities of logos but also their cultural and symbolic implications. Understanding how visual elements function as signs can enhance the effectiveness of branding strategies and improve alignment with consumer perceptions.

In conclusion, fashion brand logos are not merely visual identifiers but complex and dynamic sign systems that play a central role in shaping consumer perception, identity, and cultural meaning. Future research could build on this study by incorporating empirical methods, such as interviews or ethnographic approaches, to further explore how consumers interpret logos in diverse cultural contexts.

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