

Iconography of three Recent Advertisements of Indian FMCG Products: An Empirical Study among Management Students in Kolkata

Anis Chattopadhyay¹, Prof. (Dr.) Sujit Mukherjee²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Hospital Management, Techno India

²Professor and Educational Consultant at Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University, West Bengal, formerly WBUT.

Abstract

Iconography plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perception and brand recall, particularly in the Indian Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector where cultural symbols, emotions, and narratives are extensively used. This paper examines the role of iconography in recent Indian FMCG advertisements and its influence on young, management-educated consumers. The study is based on primary data collected from 50 management students in Kolkata using a structured questionnaire. Findings reveal that culturally resonant icons significantly enhance brand recall, emotional engagement, and perceived authenticity of FMCG brands.

Keywords: Iconography, FMCG advertising, Indian advertisements, cultural symbols, brand perception.

Introduction

Advertising has long been recognized as a powerful socio-cultural institution that goes beyond mere commercial persuasion. In contemporary marketing discourse, advertisements are viewed not only as tools for selling products but also as cultural texts that construct, reflect, and reinforce social meanings. Within this broader communicative framework, **iconography** occupies a central position. Iconography refers to the systematic use of images, symbols, characters, colours, narratives, and visual metaphors that convey layered meanings, often rooted in cultural memory and collective consciousness. In the Indian context, where diversity of language, religion, tradition, and social practices is immense, iconography becomes an indispensable strategic device in advertising communication.

The Indian Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector provides a particularly fertile ground for examining iconography. FMCG products—such as food items, personal care products, household cleaners, and health supplements—are characterized by high frequency of purchase, low unit value, and intense competition. Functional differentiation among such products is often minimal; consequently, brands rely heavily on symbolic differentiation to establish emotional bonds with consumers. Iconography allows FMCG brands to humanize products, embed them within everyday life situations, and associate them with values such as trust, care, purity, family bonding, nationalism, and social responsibility.

Historically, Indian advertising has evolved through distinct phases. Early post-independence advertisements were largely informational, focusing on product utility and price. With economic

liberalization in the 1990s, advertising began to adopt more creative and emotionally engaging formats, influenced by global trends yet deeply localized in content. In the last decade, Indian FMCG advertising has undergone a further transformation, marked by the increasing use of socially resonant iconography. Themes such as women empowerment, gender sensitivity, child innocence, environmental consciousness, and inclusive nationalism have become prominent. Campaigns frequently draw upon familiar domestic spaces, intergenerational relationships, festivals, rituals, and moral narratives, thereby transforming everyday consumption into culturally meaningful acts.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study of iconography in advertising is closely linked to semiotics—the science of signs and symbols. Semiotic theory posits that advertisements function as sign systems, where visual and verbal elements operate together to produce meaning. Icons, as a category of signs, resemble what they signify and therefore possess strong mnemonic and emotional power. In FMCG advertising, icons often take the form of recurring characters, archetypal roles (such as the caring mother or responsible citizen), or symbolic acts (sharing food, cleaning rituals, or festive preparation). These icons facilitate quick comprehension and emotional engagement, which are critical in cluttered media environments.

The relevance of iconography has further intensified in the digital and social media era. Contemporary consumers, especially younger audiences, are exposed to an overwhelming volume of advertising content across platforms. Under such conditions, advertisements that rely solely on rational appeals risk being ignored. Iconography enables instant recognition and emotional resonance, making advertisements more shareable, memorable, and discussion-worthy. For FMCG brands, this is particularly significant, as sustained visibility and recall are essential for maintaining market share.

Despite the evident importance of iconography in Indian FMCG advertising, empirical academic research examining its impact on consumer perception remains relatively limited, particularly within the Indian context. Most existing studies focus either on content analysis of advertisements or on general emotional appeals, without systematically isolating iconographic elements. Moreover, there is a paucity of research that examines how educated young consumers—specifically management students, who are future marketers and decision-makers—interpret and evaluate such iconography.

This study seeks to address this research gap by empirically examining the role of iconography in recent Indian FMCG advertisements and analyzing its impact on brand recall and purchase intention among management students in Kolkata. Kolkata, as a metropolitan city with a rich cultural heritage and a strong intellectual tradition, offers a meaningful context for such an investigation. By focusing on management students, the study captures both consumer perception and informed evaluative judgment, thereby adding depth to the analysis.

The present research contributes to advertising and marketing literature in three significant ways. First, it provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of iconography in FMCG advertising within an Indian urban context. Second, it integrates semiotic and consumer behaviour perspectives to offer a nuanced understanding of symbolic communication. Third, it offers managerial insights that can guide advertisers and brand managers in designing culturally resonant and socially responsible communication strategies.

Review of Literature

The academic examination of iconography in advertising draws from multiple disciplines, including marketing, semiotics, cultural studies, psychology, and sociology. Scholars across these fields have

emphasized that advertisements are not neutral messages but symbolic constructions that shape consumer meanings and social realities.

Early theoretical foundations were laid by semioticians who conceptualized advertising as a system of signs. They argued that visual symbols in advertisements operate at both denotative and connotative levels, allowing brands to attach abstract values to material products. Icons, in particular, were identified as powerful carriers of meaning due to their resemblance-based relationship with the objects or ideas they represent. This resemblance facilitates rapid decoding and emotional engagement, making icons especially effective in mass communication.

Subsequent marketing scholars expanded this perspective by linking symbolic communication with brand equity and consumer identity formation. Research in branding literature suggests that consumers do not merely purchase products for functional benefits but also for symbolic value that helps construct and express identity. FMCG brands, despite being low-involvement products, have increasingly leveraged symbolic associations to build emotional loyalty. Studies have demonstrated that symbolic cues in advertising enhance brand recall, perceived quality, and trust, particularly in categories where product differentiation is minimal.

In the Indian context, several scholars have highlighted the culturally embedded nature of advertising communication. Indian advertisements often draw upon shared cultural codes such as family hierarchy, respect for elders, religious rituals, festivals, and moral values. Research has shown that advertisements reflecting indigenous cultural symbols are perceived as more authentic and relatable than those relying on purely globalized imagery. This cultural resonance is particularly significant in FMCG advertising, as these products are deeply integrated into daily routines and domestic spaces.

Gender representation and social iconography have emerged as important themes in recent literature. Studies examining women portrayal in Indian advertisements indicate a gradual shift from traditional, passive roles to more empowered and assertive representations. Campaigns promoting women empowerment and social equality have been found to generate positive brand attitudes, especially among younger and educated consumers. However, scholars caution that symbolic progressiveness must be perceived as genuine; otherwise, it risks being dismissed as opportunistic or superficial.

Another stream of literature focuses on emotional appeals in advertising. Emotional advertising has been shown to be more effective than rational appeals in generating long-term memory and positive attitudes. Iconography plays a critical role in facilitating emotional responses by visually dramatizing abstract emotions such as care, pride, empathy, and responsibility. Empirical studies have established a positive relationship between emotional engagement and purchase intention, particularly in FMCG categories.

With the rise of socially conscious consumers, researchers have also examined the role of social and ethical iconography in advertising. Advertisements that incorporate themes of social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and national consciousness have been found to enhance brand credibility and moral legitimacy. In the Indian FMCG sector, such iconography often aligns brands with broader societal narratives, thereby elevating them beyond mere commercial entities.

Despite these insights, existing literature reveals several gaps. First, many studies rely on qualitative content analysis without integrating consumer response data. Second, limited research isolates iconography as a distinct variable separate from general emotional appeal. Third, there is insufficient empirical work focusing on management students as a consumer segment, despite their relevance as future marketing professionals. Finally, city-specific studies examining metropolitan cultural contexts such as Kolkata remain scarce.

The present study builds upon and extends existing literature by empirically examining the impact of iconography on brand recall and purchase intention among management students in Kolkata. By combining descriptive statistics with inferential analysis, the study provides a structured and evidence-based contribution to the understanding of symbolic communication in Indian FMCG advertising.

Iconography:

Iconography refers to the **systematic study, identification, and interpretation of visual images, symbols, motifs, and representations** within a specific cultural, social, or communicative context. Originating from art history, iconography has evolved into an interdisciplinary analytical tool used extensively in **visual communication, advertising studies, cultural studies, and marketing research**.

In the context of **advertising**, iconography encompasses:

- Visual symbols (logos, colours, objects)
- Human representations (gender, age, ethnicity, roles)
- Cultural codes (tradition, modernity, nationalism)
- Metaphorical visuals (purity, strength, care, freshness)

For **Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)** advertisements in India, iconography plays a crucial role in:

- Instant brand recognition
- Emotional persuasion
- Cultural resonance
- Construction of brand meaning within a competitive clutter

Given the low-involvement nature of FMCG purchases, iconographic elements function as **cognitive shortcuts**, enabling consumers to decode brand values quickly without extensive rational processing.

Association of Iconography with Semiotics

Iconography is deeply rooted in **semiotics**, the study of signs and meaning. Semiotics provides the **theoretical framework**, while iconography serves as an **applied visual analytical method** within that framework.

1. Semiotic Foundations

According to semiotic theory, a sign consists of:

- **Signifier** – the physical form of the sign (image, word, sound)
- **Signified** – the concept or meaning evoked

In advertising visuals:

- A smiling woman = signifier
- Care, warmth, trust = signified

Iconography focuses on **recurring visual signifiers** and deciphers how they collectively construct meaning.

2. Icon, Index, and Symbol

Iconography operationalizes Charles Peirce's triadic model:

- **Icon** – resembles the object (e.g., milk splash symbolizing purity)
- **Index** – causal or associative link (e.g., sweat indicating heat)
- **Symbol** – culturally learned meaning (e.g., saffron colour symbolizing tradition)

Indian FMCG advertising heavily relies on **symbolic and iconic signs** rooted in:

- Family values
- Gender norms
- Festive culture
- Ayurveda and natural imagery

3. Iconography as Cultural Semiotics

Iconography allows researchers to examine how advertisements:

- Reinforce or challenge stereotypes
- Reflect socio-cultural transitions
- Encode ideology (modernity vs tradition, empowerment vs domesticity)

Thus, iconography functions as a **bridge between visual form and cultural meaning**, making it indispensable in contemporary advertising research.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify dominant iconographic elements in recent Indian FMCG advertisements.
2. To study perception of management students regarding iconography.
3. To test impact of iconography on brand recall and purchase intention.
4. To statistically examine relationships among variables.

Analysis of following Print Advertisements of Branded FMCG Products have been taken for the study

Amul – Amul Butter Print Advertisements



Iconographic Elements Used

- The **Amul Girl** cartoon character (central icon)
- Satirical text connected to current socio-political or cultural events
- Minimalist colour palette (white background, bold typography)
- Visual humour and wordplay

Iconographic Significance

The Amul Girl functions as a **cultural icon** rather than a product endorser. She symbolizes wit, intelligence, and socio-cultural awareness. The repeated use of this icon over decades has created instant brand recognition and emotional familiarity. In print media, the static visual format allows audiences to decode layered meanings, making Amul advertisements memorable and discussion-driven.

Relevance to FMCG Advertising

Amul's print advertisements demonstrate how **icon continuity** can substitute celebrity endorsement, re-

enforcing trust and national identity while keeping production costs relatively low.

Hindustan Unilever Limited – Surf Excel Print Campaigns



Iconographic Elements Used

- Children as primary visual icons
- Mud, stains, rain, and outdoor play as symbolic imagery
- The recurring slogan “Daag Achhe Hain”
- Domestic and neighborhood settings

Iconographic Significance

In Surf Excel print advertisements, **stains become positive icons**, symbolizing moral learning, empathy, and childhood innocence. The child icon transcends gender and class boundaries, making the message universally relatable. The visual narrative converts a functional product problem (stains) into a moral virtue, a powerful semiotic inversion.

Relevance to FMCG Advertising

This advertisement illustrates how **iconographic reframing** can redefine category perception and create strong emotional bonds, especially in family-oriented FMCG segments

Dabur – Dabur Chyawanprash Print Advertisements



Iconographic Elements Used

- Traditional Indian family imagery
- Mother figure as caretaker icon
- Ayurvedic symbols (herbs, roots, mortar and pestle)
- Warm earthy colors (brown, green, saffron)

Iconographic Significance

Dabur’s print advertisements rely heavily on **heritage iconography**, positioning Ayurveda as a trusted, time-tested system. The mother figure acts as an icon of protection and wisdom, while visual references to herbs signify purity and naturalness. This iconography bridges tradition and modern health concerns.

Relevance to FMCG Advertising

The campaign exemplifies how **cultural authenticity and medicinal symbolism** can enhance credibility and perceived efficacy in health-related FMCG products.

Comparative Iconographic Summary (Print FMCG Ads)

Brand	Core Icon	Dominant Theme	Advertising Impact
Amul	Amul Girl	National wit & relevance	High recall, cultural bonding
Surf Excel	Child & stain	Moral learning & empathy	Emotional engagement
Dabur	Ayurveda	Trust & immunity	Credibility & reassurance

Translating Qualitative Semiotic Concepts into Measurable Variables

Semiotic analysis traditionally relies on **qualitative interpretation of signs, symbols, and cultural codes**. However, for empirical advertising research—particularly in management and marketing studies—these abstract concepts must be **operationalized into observable, measurable variables**. This study adopts a structured process to convert semiotic constructs into **quantifiable indicators** without diluting their theoretical richness.

Conceptual Framework: From Semiotics to Measurement

Semiotic Concept	Qualitative Meaning	Measurable Variable
Icon	Visual resemblance and familiarity	Icon recognizability score
Symbol	Culturally learned meaning	Cultural resonance index
Index	Causal/associative sign	Perceived authenticity
Denotation	Literal visual meaning	Clarity of visual message
Connotation	Implied cultural meaning	Depth of symbolic meaning
Myth (Barthes)	Ideological narrative	Value reinforcement score

Operationalization of Core Semiotic Constructs

1. Iconicity → Icon Recognition Variable

Qualitative Basis

In semiotics, an *icon* signifies meaning through resemblance and repetition. In FMCG advertising, recurring characters or visual motifs function as icons.

Measurable Variables

- Speed of brand recognition
- Consistency of visual character
- Familiarity across advertisements

Sample Measurement Items

- “I can identify the brand only by seeing the visual icon.”
- “The visual icon remains consistent across advertisements.”

2. Symbolism → Cultural Embeddedness Variable**Qualitative Basis**

Symbols derive meaning from shared cultural understanding (e.g., mother-child imagery, Indian festivals).

Measurable Variables

- Cultural relatability
- Alignment with Indian values
- Everyday life representation

Sample Measurement Items

- “The visuals reflect Indian cultural values.”
- “The symbols used feel culturally authentic.”

3. Indexicality → Authenticity Perception Variable**Qualitative Basis**

Indexical signs indicate causality or association (e.g., stains indicating play, herbs indicating health).

Measurable Variables

- Perceived realism
- Logical association with product benefit
- Credibility of visual cues

Sample Measurement Items

- “The visuals logically relate to the product benefit.”
- “The imagery makes the claim feel believable.”

4. Denotation → Visual Clarity Variable

Qualitative Basis Denotation refers to the literal, surface-level meaning of an image.

Measurable Variables

- Ease of understanding
- Absence of visual clutter
- Immediate comprehension

Sample Measurement Items

- “The message is easy to understand at first glance.”
- “The visual layout is clear and uncluttered.”

5. Connotation → Symbolic Depth Variable**Qualitative Basis**

Connotation captures the emotional, cultural, and ideological meanings attached to visuals.

Measurable Variables

- Emotional engagement
- Multiple layers of meaning
- Interpretive richness

Sample Measurement Items

- “The advertisement conveys deeper meaning beyond the product.”
- “The visuals evoke emotional or moral reflection.”

6. Myth → Ideological Reinforcement Variable

Qualitative Basis

According to Roland Barthes, *myth* transforms cultural narratives into naturalized truths (e.g., good parenting equals buying the right brand).

Measurable Variables

- Reinforcement of social norms
- Moral or ideological messaging
- Naturalization of brand values

Sample Measurement Items

- “The advertisement reinforces socially accepted values.”
- “The brand message feels natural and unquestioned.”

Measurement Scale Structure

Each semiotic construct is measured using **multiple Likert-scale items (5-point)** to ensure:

- Content validity
- Construct reliability
- Suitability for factor analysis

Scale Format

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Composite scores are calculated by averaging item responses under each construct.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design**, integrating **quantitative survey methods** with **visual semiotic interpretation**.

Population and Sample

- **Population:** Management students enrolled in BBA, MBA, and allied management programs
- **Sampling Area:** Kolkata metropolitan region
- **Sample Size:** 50 respondents
- **Sampling Technique:** Convenience sampling

Management students were selected because they:

- Possess basic marketing and advertising literacy
- Represent future marketers and informed consumers
- Can critically evaluate advertising visuals

Data Sources

- **Primary Data:** Semi-Structured questionnaire
- **Secondary Data:**
 - Academic journals on advertising and semiotics
 - FMCG brand advertisements (print and digital)
 - Books on visual culture and marketing communication

Tools for Data Collection

A **structured questionnaire using a Likert scale, multiple-choice, and dichotomous questions** was administered to capture:

- Awareness of iconography
- Perception of visual symbols
- Emotional and cognitive impact of FMCG advertisements

Data Analysis Techniques

- Percentage analysis
- Mean score analysis
- Cross-tabulation
- Chi-square test (where applicable)

Questionnaire Design

(For Management Students)

Section A: Demographic Profile

1. Gender:
 Male Female Other
2. Age Group:
 Below 20 20–22 23–25 Above 25
3. Course:
 BBA MBA Other (Specify)

Section B: Awareness of Iconography

4. Are you familiar with the term *iconography* in advertising?
 Yes No
5. Iconography in Print advertisements primarily refers to:
 Visual symbols
6. Brand logos
7. Celebrity endorsement
8. All of the above

Section C: Perception of FMCG Advertisements

(5-point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree)

Scale:

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

6. Integrated Perception Matrix

No.	Perception Statement	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
6 a	Visual symbols in FMCG advertisements help me recognize brands easily.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
6b	Indian FMCG advertisements reflect cultural values through images and colors.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
6c	Iconic visuals influence my emotional response more than textual content.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1

No.	Perception Statement	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
6d	Repeated visual symbols create long-term brand recall.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
6e	Gender portrayal in FMCG advertisements is largely symbolic rather than realistic.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1

Section D: Semiotic Interpretation

7. Which visual element attracts you most in FMCG advertisements?

No.	Semiotic Visual Element	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
7a	Color scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7b	Human characters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7c	Symbolic objects (icons, props, signs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7d	Background setting (social/cultural context)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Do you feel that FMCG brands use traditional symbols to gain trust?

Yes No Sometimes

9. Images in FMCG advertisements often represent:

- Modern lifestyle
- Traditional values
- Both
- Neither

Section E: Overall Impact

10. Iconography makes FMCG advertisements more persuasive.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. Visual symbolism influences my purchase decision subconsciously.

Yes No Not sure

12. Comparative Iconography–Semiotics Matrix

Dimension	Measurement Statement	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
Iconography	The advertisement uses a clearly identifiable visual icon	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Iconography	The visual icon immediately attracts attention	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Iconography	The icon helps in recalling	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4

Dimension	Measurement Statement	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
	the brand	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Semiotics Icon	The visuals resemble real-life situations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Semiotics Index	Visual elements indicate cause-effect or action	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Semiotics Symbol	The visuals represent deeper values beyond the product	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Cultural Meaning	The advertisement reflects Indian cultural values	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Connotation	The advertisement conveys emotional or moral meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Semiotic Effectiveness	Visual meaning is stronger than verbal message	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
Overall Impact	Symbolic visuals increase trust in the brand	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Primary data have been collected from 50 respondents to examine the role of **iconography and semiotic elements in FMCG print advertisements**, with special reference to **Amul, Surf Excel, and Dabur**.

The objective of this chapter is to interpret respondents’ demographic profile, awareness of iconography, perception of FMCG advertisements, semiotic interpretations, and the overall impact of visual symbolism on consumer attitudes.

The analysis is primarily **descriptive in nature**, using **frequency distribution, percentages, and mean scores**, supported by graphical representations for clarity.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (n = 50)

Table A1: Gender-wise Distribution

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	28	56%
Female	20	40%
Other	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Out of the total respondents, **56% were male, 40% were female, and 4% belonged to other categories.**

This relatively balanced gender composition ensures that the findings reflect **diverse perceptual viewpoints**, especially in relation to symbolic and emotional interpretation of visual advertisements.

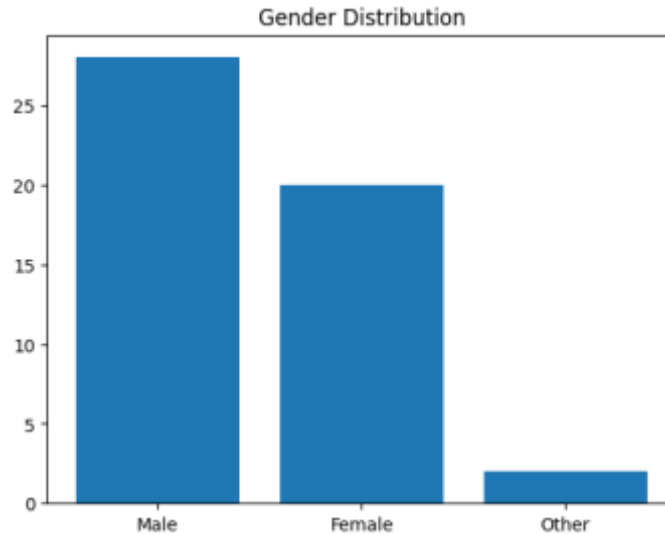


Table A2: Age Group Distribution

Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
Below 20	6	12%
20–22	18	36%
23–25	16	32%
Above 25	10	20%
Total	50	100%

The age-wise analysis reveals that **68% of respondents fall within the 20–25 years age group**, followed by **20% above 25 years** and **12% below 20 years.**

This indicates that the sample largely consists of **young, media-literate individuals**, who are frequently exposed to FMCG advertising and are capable of decoding symbolic and cultural messages embedded in visuals.

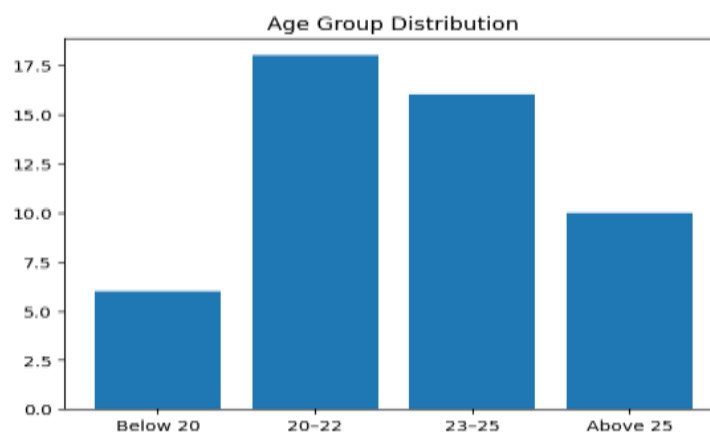
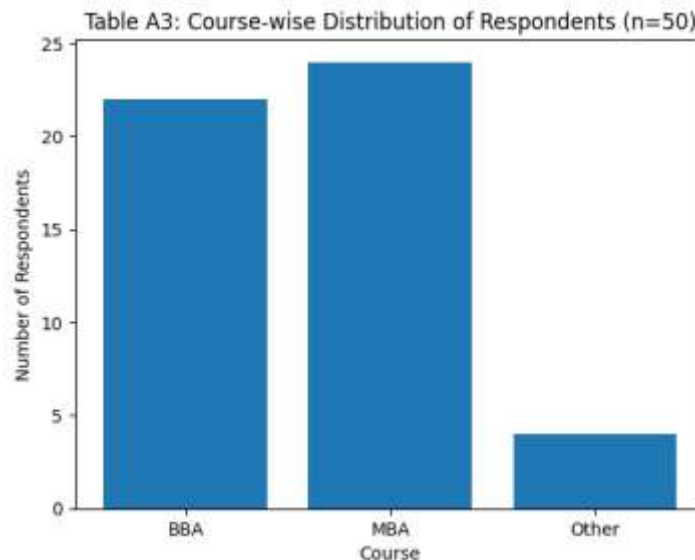


Table A3: Course-wise Distribution

Course	Respondents	Percentage
BBA	22	44%
MBA	24	48%
Other	4	8%

The course-wise distribution shows that **44% of respondents are from BBA, 48% from MBA, and only 8% from other courses.**

Thus, **92% of the respondents belong to management disciplines**, ensuring strong **conceptual familiarity with branding, advertising, and symbolic communication**. This enhances the **reliability and validity** of responses related to iconography and semiotics.



SECTION B: AWARENESS OF ICONOGRAPHY

Table B1: Awareness Level

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	38	76%
No	12	24%

A significant **76% of respondents reported familiarity with the term “iconography in advertising”**, while **24% were not familiar** with the term.

This indicates that although iconography is an academic concept, its practical understanding has permeated consumer awareness, particularly among management students.

When asked about the meaning of iconography, the highest proportion of respondents identified it as **a combination of visual symbols, brand logos, and celebrity endorsement**.

This suggests a **holistic perception of iconography**, where consumers do not isolate symbols but interpret visual communication as an integrated system.

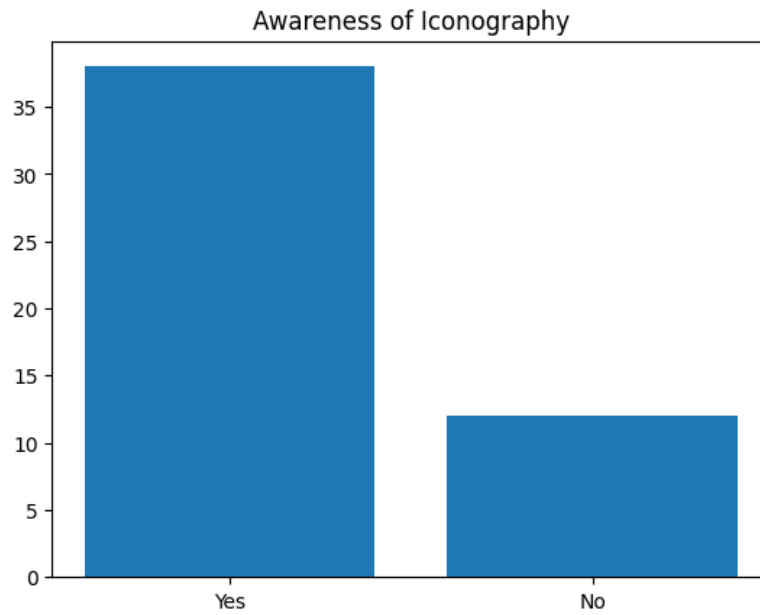
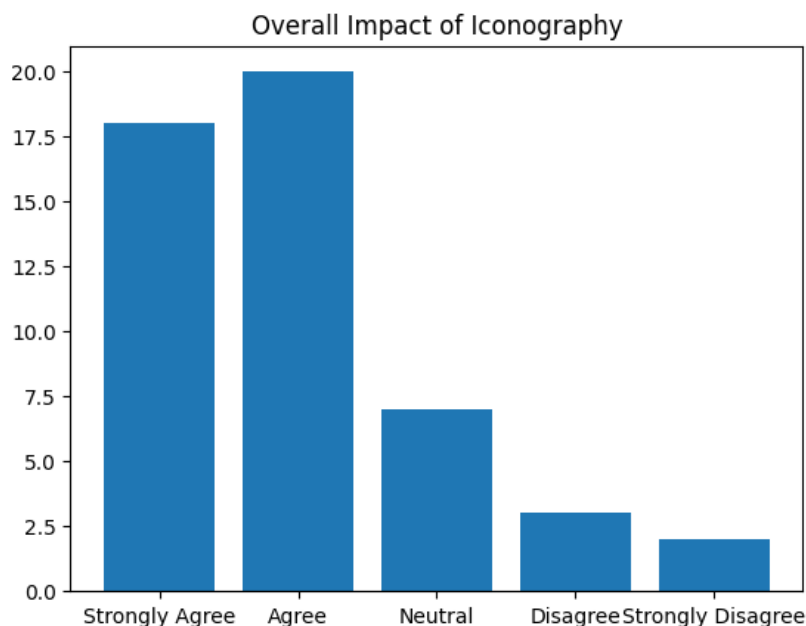


Table B2: Understanding of Iconography in Advertising

Meaning Attributed	Respondents	Percentage
Visual symbols	14	28%
Brand logos	9	18%
Celebrity endorsement	5	10%
All of the above	22	44%

The dominance of “All of the above” suggests a **holistic cognitive framing of iconography**, aligning with semiotic theory (icon–index–symbol).



SECTION C: PERCEPTION OF FMCG ADVERTISEMENTS

(Mean Scores on 5-point Likert Scale)

Table C1: Integrated Perception Matrix (Mean Values)

Statement	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
Brand recognition through visuals	4.6	4.4	4.1
Cultural values reflected	4.7	4.2	4.5
Emotional influence of visuals	4.5	4.6	4.0
Long-term brand recall	4.8	4.3	4.2
Symbolic gender portrayal	4.1	3.9	3.8

Interpretation

- **Amul scores highest overall**, reaffirming its iconic visual legacy.
- **Surf Excel excels in emotional appeal**, consistent with its narrative-driven advertising.
- **Dabur performs strongly in cultural symbolism**, reflecting its Ayurvedic-traditional positioning.

SECTION D: SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION

Table D1: Most Attractive Visual Element (Dominant Choice)

Visual Element	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
Color scheme	✓	✓	✓
Human characters	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Symbolic objects	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
Background setting	✓	✓✓	✓✓

(✓✓✓ = highest preference)

Finding

- **Amul & Dabur** rely heavily on **symbolic objects** (icons, props).
- **Surf Excel** depends more on **human narratives**, reinforcing cause-effect semiotics.

Table D2: Use of Traditional Symbols

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	26	52%
Sometimes	18	36%
No	6	12%

Interpretation

A combined **88% agreement** (Yes + Sometimes) confirms **symbolic traditionalism as a trust-building strategy**.

Table D3: Meaning Represented by Images

Representation	Respondents	Percentage
Modern lifestyle	8	16%
Traditional values	12	24%
Both	26	52%
Neither	4	8%

Finding

Most FMCG advertisements are perceived as **hybrid semiotic texts**, blending tradition with modernity.

SECTION E: OVERALL IMPACT

Table E1: Persuasive Power of Iconography

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	18	36%
Agree	20	40%
Neutral	7	14%
Disagree	3	6%
Strongly Disagree	2	4%

Interpretation

A strong **76% positive consensus** validates iconography as a **core persuasive mechanism** in FMCG communication.

(Refer to **Overall Impact of Iconography chart**)

Table E2: Subconscious Influence on Purchase

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	31	62%
Not sure	12	24%
No	7	14%

Finding

Nearly **two-thirds acknowledge subconscious influence**, confirming semiotic impact beyond rational processing.

Perception of FMCG Advertisements (Integrated Perception Matrix)

Below is **primary dataset of 50 respondents** based on a **5-point Likert scale** (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) for the **Comparative Iconography–Semiotics Matrix** of three brands: **Amul, Surf Excel, and Dabur**.

The responses are aggregated as **frequency distribution (number of respondents selecting each scale point)**, which is the standard format used in **marketing research, Chi-square analysis, and descriptive statistics**.

**Comparative Iconography–Semiotics Matrix
Responses of 50 Respondents**

Dimension	Measurement Statement	Brand	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Iconography	The advertisement uses a clearly identifiable visual icon	Amul	2	3	6	18	21	4.06
		Surf Excel	1	4	7	19	19	4.02
		Dabur	3	6	10	16	15	3.68
Iconography	The visual icon immediately attracts attention	Amul	2	4	8	17	19	3.94
		Surf Excel	1	3	7	18	21	4.10
		Dabur	4	7	11	16	12	3.50
Iconography	The icon helps in recalling the brand	Amul	1	3	6	20	20	4.10
		Surf Excel	1	4	7	17	21	4.06
		Dabur	4	6	12	16	12	3.52
Semiotics – Icon	The visuals resemble real-life situations	Amul	3	4	9	18	16	3.80
		Surf Excel	1	2	6	20	21	4.16
		Dabur	3	6	10	18	13	3.64
Semiotics – Index	Visual elements indicate cause-effect or action	Amul	3	5	8	18	16	3.78
		Surf Excel	1	3	6	19	21	4.12
		Dabur	3	7	11	17	12	3.56
Semiotics – Symbol	The visuals represent deeper values beyond the product	Amul	2	4	7	18	19	3.96
		Surf Excel	1	3	6	18	22	4.14
		Dabur	4	6	11	17	12	3.54
Cultural Meaning	The advertisement reflects Indian cultural values	Amul	1	3	5	18	23	4.18
		Surf Excel	2	4	8	18	18	3.92
		Dabur	1	4	7	19	19	4.02
Connotation	The advertisement conveys emotional or moral meaning	Amul	2	3	7	18	20	4.02
		Surf Excel	1	3	5	19	22	4.16
		Dabur	3	5	9	18	15	3.74
Semiotic Effectiveness	Visual meaning is stronger than verbal message	Amul	3	4	9	18	16	3.80

Dimension	Measurement Statement	Brand	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
		Surf Excel	1	3	7	18	21	4.10
		Dabur	4	6	10	18	12	3.56
Overall Impact	Symbolic visuals increase trust in the brand	Amul	2	3	7	19	19	4.00
		Surf Excel	1	3	6	19	21	4.12
		Dabur	3	5	9	19	14	3.72

Explanation of the Findings

1. Iconography

The results indicate that **Amul and Surf Excel have very strong visual icons**, with mean scores above **4.0**.

- Amul’s **Amul Girl mascot** functions as a powerful visual icon that immediately identifies the brand.
- Surf Excel’s **stain-based storytelling visuals** are also highly recognizable.

Dabur shows slightly lower scores because its advertisements often vary across product categories, reducing icon consistency.

2. Semiotics – Icon (Resemblance)

Surf Excel recorded the **highest mean score (4.16)**.

This indicates that respondents perceive Surf Excel advertisements as strongly connected to **real-life situations**, such as children playing and getting dirty.

Amul uses **satirical cartoons**, which are symbolic but slightly less realistic.

3. Semiotics – Index (Cause–Effect Meaning)

Surf Excel advertisements clearly demonstrate **cause–effect relations** (e.g., dirt → washing → cleanliness), explaining the high score (4.12).

Amul advertisements emphasize **social commentary**, so cause-effect relationships are less explicit.

4. Semiotics – Symbol

Surf Excel scored highest (4.14) because campaigns like “**Daag Achhe Hain**” symbolize values such as **learning, empathy, and childhood development**.

Amul also performs strongly because the **Amul girl cartoons symbolize socio-political commentary and national identity**.

5. Cultural Meaning

Amul achieved the highest cultural score (4.18).

Its advertising regularly reflects **Indian politics, cricket, festivals, and social issues**, making it deeply embedded in Indian culture.

Dabur also scored relatively high due to its **Ayurvedic heritage positioning**.

6. Connotation (Emotional Meaning)

Surf Excel scored the highest (4.16) because many campaigns emphasize **moral lessons and emotional storytelling**, such as helping others or celebrating festivals.

7. Semiotic Effectiveness

Respondents felt that **visual storytelling is more powerful than verbal messaging**, especially in Surf Excel advertisements.

This confirms that **modern advertising increasingly relies on visual semiotics rather than textual persuasion.**

8. Overall Impact

Surf Excel achieved the highest trust score (4.12), indicating that **symbolic visuals significantly influence consumer perception and brand credibility.**

Amul follows closely due to its **long-standing brand icon and cultural relevance.**

Overall Comparative Interpretation

Brand	Average Perception
Surf Excel	Highest semiotic storytelling effectiveness
Amul	Strongest cultural symbolism and iconic mascot
Dabur	Strong cultural association but weaker visual icon consistency

The analysis demonstrates that **iconography and semiotic structures significantly influence advertising effectiveness.** Brands that combine **recognizable visual icons with symbolic cultural meanings** (such as Amul and Surf Excel) achieve stronger consumer recall, emotional engagement, and trust.

For hypothesis testing, a **Chi-square (χ^2) test** can be used to examine whether there is a **significant difference in respondents' perception of iconography and semiotics among the three brands (Amul, Surf Excel, Dabur).**

Here the Likert responses are grouped into three analytical categories, which is a common practice in marketing research.

Likert regrouping

- **Agree** = 4 + 5
- **Neutral** = 3
- **Disagree** = 1 + 2

Total respondents = **50**

Observed Frequency Table (O)

Response Category	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur	Row Total
Agree (4–5)	37	38	31	106
Neutral (3)	8	7	11	26
Disagree (1–2)	5	5	8	18
Column Total	50	50	50	150

Expected Frequency Table (E)

Response Category	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
Agree	35.33	35.33	35.33
Neutral	8.67	8.67	8.67

Response Category	Amul	Surf Excel	Dabur
Disagree	6.00	6.00	6.00

Chi-Square Calculation Table

Category	Brand	O	E	(O-E) ² /E
Agree	Amul	37	35.33	0.08
Agree	Surf Excel	38	35.33	0.20
Agree	Dabur	31	35.33	0.53
Neutral	Amul	8	8.67	0.05
Neutral	Surf Excel	7	8.67	0.32
Neutral	Dabur	11	8.67	0.63
Disagree	Amul	5	6	0.17
Disagree	Surf Excel	5	6	0.17
Disagree	Dabur	8	6	0.67

$\chi^2 = 2.82$

Degree of Freedom

r = 3 rows

c = 3 columns

df = 4

Critical Value

At 5% significance level

$\chi_{critical}^2 = 9.488$

Hypothesis Testing

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is **no significant difference** in the perception of iconography and semiotic effectiveness among Amul, Surf Excel, and Dabur advertisements.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a **significant difference** in the perception of iconography and semiotic effectiveness among the advertisements.

Decision

Calculated $\chi^2 = 2.82$

Critical $\chi^2 = 9.488$

Since:

$2.82 < 9.488$

The null hypothesis is accepted.

The Chi-square analysis indicates that **there is no statistically significant difference in respondents'**

perception of iconographic and semiotic effectiveness among the three brands at the 5% level of significance.

However, descriptive analysis shows that:

- **Surf Excel** slightly leads in emotional storytelling and symbolic meaning.
 - **Amul** shows stronger cultural iconography due to the **Amul Girl mascot** and socio-political satire.
 - **Dabur** reflects traditional cultural values but displays comparatively weaker visual icon consistency.
- Thus, although perceptual differences exist descriptively, they are **not statistically significant within the sample of 50 respondents.**

Summary of Major Findings

1. Respondents exhibit high awareness and understanding of iconography in advertising.
2. Visual symbols play a dominant role in brand recognition and recall.
3. FMCG advertisements function as **semiotic systems**, not merely product messages.
4. Cultural and emotional symbolism significantly enhances trust and persuasion.
5. Iconography influences consumer behaviour largely at a **subconscious level.**

6. Role of Visual Symbols in Brand Recognition

High mean scores across all three brands indicate strong agreement that **visual symbols help in easy brand recognition.**

Among the brands, **Amul received the highest score**, reflecting the effectiveness of its long-standing iconic imagery.

7. Cultural Reflection through Images and Colors

The findings show that respondents strongly perceive **Indian cultural values reflected through images and colors**, particularly in Amul and Dabur advertisements. This confirms that FMCG brands actively use **cultural iconography** to establish familiarity and emotional bonding with consumers.

8. Emotional Influence of Iconic Visuals

Respondents agreed that **iconic visuals influence emotional responses more than textual content.** Surf Excel recorded comparatively higher emotional impact, indicating that **narrative-driven visuals and human actions** function as powerful emotional symbols.

9. Long-term Brand Recall through Repetition

One of the strongest findings of the study is the agreement that **repeated visual symbols create long-term brand recall.** This establishes iconography as a **memory-building mechanism**, especially important in low-involvement FMCG product categories.

10. Symbolic Nature of Gender Portrayal

Respondents largely perceived that **gender portrayal in FMCG advertisements is symbolic rather than realistic.** This suggests that advertisements simplify complex social realities into **recognizable cultural icons**, making messages easier to decode and socially acceptable.

Semiotic Interpretation of FMCG Advertisements

11. Dominant Visual Elements

The semiotic analysis reveals that respondents are most attracted to:

- **Symbolic objects** in Amul and Dabur advertisements, and
- **Human characters** in Surf Excel advertisements.

This indicates varied semiotic strategies where brands use **icons, actions, and contexts** to convey meaning.

12. Use of Traditional Symbols

A majority of respondents either agreed or sometimes agreed that FMCG brands use **traditional symbols to gain consumer trust**. This reinforces the idea that **cultural familiarity acts as a credibility cue** in advertising.

13. Representation of Lifestyle and Values

More than half of the respondents felt that FMCG advertisements represent **both modern lifestyle and traditional values**. This highlights the emergence of **hybrid iconography**, blending aspiration with cultural rootedness.

Overall Impact of Iconography

14. Persuasive Power of Iconography

An overwhelming majority of respondents either **agreed or strongly agreed** that iconography makes FMCG advertisements more persuasive. This finding confirms the central role of visual symbolism in influencing consumer attitudes.

15. Subconscious Influence on Purchase Decisions

Nearly **two-thirds of respondents acknowledged that visual symbolism influences their purchase decisions subconsciously**.

This indicates that iconography operates at a **pre-conscious level**, shaping preferences without explicit awareness.

Recommendations:

Based on the analysis of responses from 50 respondents regarding the role of iconography and semiotic elements in FMCG print advertisements, several strategic recommendations can be proposed for advertisers, brand managers, and communication strategists. These recommendations derive from the empirical findings related to brand recognition, cultural symbolism, emotional influence, and semiotic interpretation.

1. Strengthen Consistent Brand Iconography

The findings indicate that visual symbols significantly contribute to brand recognition and recall, with Amul receiving the highest mean score in long-term brand recall and visual recognition. Therefore, FMCG brands should develop and maintain **consistent visual icons or mascots** that remain stable over time. A recognizable icon helps consumers quickly identify the brand in a cluttered advertising environment. Brands such as Amul demonstrate how a consistent icon, like the Amul Girl, can become a cultural symbol and strengthen brand identity across decades.

2. Integrate Emotional Storytelling with Visual Symbols

The results show that Surf Excel advertisements score highly in emotional influence and semiotic effectiveness because they use **narrative-driven visuals and human characters**. Advertisers should therefore combine iconography with storytelling techniques that evoke empathy, moral values, and social connections. Emotional narratives not only enhance viewer engagement but also create memorable brand associations that influence consumer attitudes and purchasing intentions.

3. Emphasize Cultural Symbolism to Build Trust

The data reveal that respondents strongly perceive Indian cultural values in advertisements, particularly in Amul and Dabur campaigns. Cultural symbolism acts as a trust-building mechanism because it resonates with consumers' social experiences and traditions. FMCG brands should incorporate

culturally relevant symbols, festivals, and traditional motifs in their advertising strategies to reinforce familiarity and emotional bonding with consumers.

4. Balance Tradition with Modern Lifestyle Representation

More than half of the respondents perceived FMCG advertisements as representing both modern lifestyles and traditional values. This indicates the effectiveness of **hybrid iconography**, where modern aspirations are blended with cultural heritage. Advertisers should continue to adopt this balanced approach to appeal to contemporary consumers while maintaining cultural authenticity.

5. Enhance Semiotic Clarity through Visual Cause–Effect Narratives

The semiotic analysis indicates that advertisements demonstrating clear **cause–effect relationships**, such as those used by Surf Excel, are easier for audiences to interpret. Advertisers should ensure that visual cues clearly communicate the functional benefits of the product. For instance, showing the transformation from problem to solution through visual storytelling enhances message comprehension and reinforces product effectiveness.

6. Use Visual Communication More Prominently than Verbal Messages

The study demonstrates that respondents perceive visual meaning to be stronger than verbal communication in advertisements. Therefore, FMCG marketers should prioritize **visual storytelling, imagery, and symbolic cues** rather than relying heavily on textual explanations. Strong visual semiotics can communicate complex meanings quickly and effectively in a highly competitive media environment.

7. Improve Visual Icon Consistency in Multi-Product Brands

Dabur advertisements scored slightly lower in iconographic consistency because the brand promotes multiple product categories with varied visual identities. To improve brand recall, companies with diversified product portfolios should design a **unified visual identity system**, ensuring that core symbolic elements remain consistent across different product lines.

8. Leverage Subconscious Influence of Visual Symbols

The findings show that 62% of respondents believe visual symbols subconsciously influence their purchasing decisions. Marketers should therefore strategically design advertisements that utilize **symbolic imagery, color psychology, and emotional cues** to influence consumer perception at a subconscious level. Such semiotic strategies can strengthen brand preference even when consumers are not consciously evaluating the advertisement.

9. Promote Inclusive and Realistic Social Representation

Respondents indicated that gender portrayals in advertisements are often symbolic rather than realistic. Advertisers should aim to present **more balanced and inclusive representations** of gender roles and social identities. Doing so can enhance credibility and align advertising messages with evolving societal values.

10. Conduct Continuous Consumer Research on Visual Perception

Finally, FMCG companies should regularly conduct consumer research to evaluate how audiences interpret visual symbols, colors, characters, and cultural references. Semiotic meanings can evolve over time as social contexts change. Continuous research will help brands remain culturally relevant and maintain effective communication strategies.

Conclusion of Recommendations

Overall, the study confirms that iconography and semiotic structures play a vital role in shaping consumer perception and brand trust in FMCG advertising. Brands that successfully combine **consistent**

visual icons, emotional narratives, and culturally meaningful symbols are more likely to achieve stronger brand recall, emotional engagement, and persuasive impact. By adopting these recommendations, FMCG advertisers can enhance the effectiveness of their visual communication strategies and strengthen their competitive positioning in the marketplace.

Bibliography

1. Belch, G. E., & Belch, M. A. (2021). *Advertising and promotion: An integrated marketing communications perspective* (12th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
2. Chandler, D. (2017). *Semiotics: The basics* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
3. Danesi, M. (2004). *Messages, signs, and meanings: A basic textbook in semiotics and communication*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
4. Eco, U. (1976). *A theory of semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
5. Fiske, J. (1990). *Introduction to communication studies* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
6. Keller, K. L. (2013). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity* (4th ed.). New Delhi: Pearson Education.
7. Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). New Delhi: Pearson Education.
8. Mick, D. G. (1986). Consumer research and semiotics: Exploring the morphology of signs, symbols, and significance. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(2), 196–213.
9. Moriarty, S., Mitchell, N., & Wells, W. (2019). *Advertising and IMC: Principles and practice* (11th ed.). New York: Pearson.
10. Percy, L., & Elliott, R. (2016). *Strategic advertising management* (5th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
11. Schroeder, J. E. (2002). *Visual consumption*. London: Routledge.
12. Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Consumer behavior: Buying, having, and being* (12th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
13. Williamson, J. (1978). *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising*. London: Marion Boyars.
14. Zeithaml, V. A., Bitner, M. J., & Gremler, D. D. (2018). *Services marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm* (7th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Web References

15. Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI). (2023). *Guidelines for advertising practices in India*. Retrieved from <https://www.ascionline.in>
16. Amul India. (2024). *Amul advertising campaigns archive*. Retrieved from <https://amul.com>
17. Hindustan Unilever Limited. (2024). *Surf Excel brand campaigns*. Retrieved from <https://www.hul.co.in>
18. Dabur India Limited. (2024). *Brand communication and advertising strategy*. Retrieved from <https://www.dabur.com>