

# European Journal of Linguistics

(EJL)

**Semiotic Analysis of Symbolism in the Logo of the Evangelical  
Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe (AMECO) in Ghana:  
Modernity in Institution Branding**



**CARI  
Journals**

## **Semiotic Analysis of Symbolism in the Logo of the Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe (AMECO) in Ghana: Modernity in Institution Branding**



**Innocent Yao Vinyo**

Department of Languages

Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe, Ghana

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5202-9866>

*Accepted: 4<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2025, Received in Revised Form: 19<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2025, Published: 14<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2025*

### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** The paper investigated the logo of the Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe in Ghana.

**Methodology:** Qualitative approach was adopted and the type was descriptive. Elements of the logo constituted data for the study. Symbolisms of the red, gold, blue and silver colours together with symbolism of the crest, the cross, the sun and the sunrays were studied.

**Findings:** The study found out that the blue colour was used for the logo block while the rest of the colours were associate colours. Colours of the logo stand for hard work, positive mood, peace and security. The sun symbolized source of light and energy while the twelve sunrays symbolizes completeness and represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The cross is the values of Christian faith and the crest symbolized unity. Logo as an institutional branding, communicated to the outer world that the institution is at the center of the universe where knowledge is disseminated to be transmitted to the younger generation. The college is projected as the root of knowledge for teachers, it is the centre of academic excellence in Ghana and beyond. The study concluded that the message from the logo fosters unity and team work based on the Gospel of Christian faith. Findings of the study is a call for education planners to promulgate policies that would enforce the inclusion of logo of every institution of higher learning into the curriculum of the institution as a course of study.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice:** The relevance and uniqueness of the myth and semiotic theories in the study of symbolisms was confirmed by the study. This research informs stakeholders to adhere to the ethical standard and best practices when branding institutions and organizations. The mission and vision of the institution are possible areas for future studies.

**Keywords:** *Academic Institution, AMECO, Logo, Semiotic Analysis, Symbolism*

## I Introduction

Life is about expressing of thoughts and sharing of knowledge. There are many ways by which thoughts and knowledge are expressed and shared. Thoughts are shared by the words of mouth, signs, gestures and through graphical representations. Institutions are branded as communication strategies to express and communicate their values and philosophies to pursue the world in believing and patronizing their services and products. Another way of sharing thoughts and knowledge is by carving and symbols. Symbolisms become part of human life due to the roles they play in communicating and conveying meaning of thoughts and expressing of ideas. “Symbols are important for two reasons: first, they represent or replace words of a language and the second, they may concentrate the meaning” (Adir et al, 2015). Road signs and sign posts are made up of symbols since they convey deeper meaning of messages and less expensive to produce. Imperatively, educational values of symbols are the main reasons for their usage by individuals, organizations and institution to facilitate their day to day transactions. Despite the popularity of symbols, their meanings and interpretations demand a lot of education and training. For instance, a prospective driver needs to be educated and tested in the meaning and interpretation of road signs and symbols before issuing a certificate of driving. Also, letters of the alphabeth are symbols representing each speech sound, the interpretations and understandings of these symbols (alphabeths) demand formal education and training in literacy.

Educational institutions greatly rely on symbols to communicate the philosophies behind thier existence, competence and relevance to the world. It is an undeniable fact that competition among institutions of learning provokes and supports the choice and use of symbols considered as universal language. Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe (AMECO), an institution of higher learning is no exemption. It has a logo made up of symbols. AMECO is in the Volta Region of Ghana, whose core mandate was to train professional teachers. “The Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe, began as a Teacher Training College by the name Evangelical Presbyterian Training College, Amedzofe. It was officially opened on February 10, 1946 as an off-shoot of two earliar institutions established by the Bremen Mission in the second half of the nineteenth century at Keta in the Eweland by the German Missionaries. The birth of this institution whose sole mandate was to train African Missionaries for the propagation of the gospel and to teach in the schools of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church was with a logo consisting of symbols” (AMECO, 2022).

“The Evangelical College of Education metamorphosed from the award of the Teachers’ Certificate ‘B’ through Certificate ‘A’, Diploma and now awards degree in basic education, and can boast of producing closed to 20,000 dedicated teachers teaching in Ghana and beyond” (AMECO, 2023). It is obvious that Evangelical Presbyterian college of Education, Amedzofe was one of the pioneers responsible for training teachers in Ghana. The college has a logo which identifies it as outstanding teacher educator and a centre of academic excellence in Ghana. This is in line with the College’s vision to position itself and to become a reputable college in teacher education, and to be a pace setter in Information Technology Education (AMECO, 2022). There

are many ways in which an institution as a living organization speaks. Symbols in the logos of the institution do speak volumes to propagate the voice of the institution and communicate to the outer world what values and principles the institution believes and stands for. Also, their brand and quality of products in the past, present and future are revealed through the use of symbols.

There were some scholarly works on semiotic analysis of symbolisms. Some of these include; semiotic analysis of educational advertisements course in Instagram by Fatmawati in 2019. A thesis that studied the types of sign found in educational advertisement in Instagram and the linguistic sign found in educational advertisement in Instagram. Semiotics about logo, identity and brand image by Guibourge in 2022, on the extracts of studies about logos that illustrate various links between identity represented by those logos and presupposed values attributed to the company. A study on a semiotic analysis of symbolism and persuasion as communication strategies on some educational billboards in Buea-Cameroon by Itanghi et al in 2023. The paper investigated the texts, symbols and persuasive elements on some educational billboards in Buea-Cameroon, with a view to determining the meanings they communicate. To the best of my knowledge, none of these studies investigated the semiotic analysis of symbols in the logo of the Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe. The purpose of this investigation was to subject the symbols in the logo of the Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe to a semiotic analysis to portray how the symbols in the logo influence the socio-cultural and economic development of Ghana. The study, when completed will complement the efforts of stakeholders of the institution seeks to globally advertise and showcase the values, principles and philosophies of the college after 75 years of its existence.

### **I.i Objectives**

The objectives are to;

- Establish the meaning of the symbols to showcase the heritage and future of the college.
- Analyze the socio-cultural significance of the logo in branding the institution.

### **I.ii Research Questions**

The study answered the following questions;

- How are the heritage and the future direction of college symbolized in the logo?
- How does the branding of the institution influence the perceptions of people?

## **II Theoretical Framework: The myth theory and the theory of semiology**

The study adopted combination of two theories of myth by Roland Barthes (1972) and Ferdinand De Saussure's (1974) theory of semiology. Barthes (1972) in his theory of myth depicts methods of decoding messages. Myth is a system of communication and a mode of signification. It is a culture's way of thinking about something, a way of conceptualizing or understanding it. Myth enables semioticians to identify the symbolic interaction of verbal and non-verbal signs and how these signs are interpreted to give connotative meanings. Myth is any story by which a culture is

expressed or which understands some aspects of reality or nature (Fiske, 1992). This view explained the dynamism of myth as it is not static since it focuses on the way of life of a group of people. Barthes (1972) identified a sign as a combination of a signifier and a signified. Thus, concrete signs are vehicles of culture and ideology. Myth represents the second order meaning of the signified while connotation is the second order meaning of the signifier. Hence, an advertisement text consists of two messages. The first message includes the level of expression and the level of content. It shows the syntactic relation of signifiers and is called the message of denotation. The second message derives its totality from the singular character of its signified: this signified is the same in all messages: it is the excellence of the product announced (Barthes, 1972). Denotation refers to the permanent sense of a word devoid of all subjective evaluations. It depicts the literal or obvious meaning of the sign—what people see without association to their culture, ideology, or society while connotation is an idea added to the main meaning. It is evoked by words and images over what they denote. Connotative signs are either individual or universal

A denoted message bears analogical properties and primary to connotation in the process of signification (Intanghi et al, 2023).

In his theory of semiology, De Saussure (1974) argued that language is a system of signs (icon, index, symbol) which have meaning by virtue of their relationships to each other. Each sign comprises a signifier (a word) and a signified (a concept). According to him, language is a socially shared system of signs. The elements in the system have no significance outside it. Hand-written letters have a significance that is purely negative and based exclusively on differences. The same person can write using different symbols but what counts is the value of the symbol. The similarities between the theory of myth and the semiology theory are three orders of signification; notably, denotation, connotation and order of myth. The Semiotics revolves around the study of signs and symbols as elements of communicative behavior. It explores how meaning is constructed and understood. Here are the core components: Sign: The basic unit in semiotics, which is something that stands for something else. Signs can be words, images, sounds, gestures, objects, etc. Signifier: The form that the sign takes. This could be the actual word, sound, or image used to convey meaning. Signified: The concept that the signifier refers to. This is the mental image or concept that the sign evokes. Code: A system or set of conventions that assigns meanings to signs and organizes them. For instance, language is a code made up of words and grammatical rules. Denotation: The literal or primary meaning of a sign. It's the direct relationship between the signifier and the signified. Connotation: The additional meanings, emotions, or ideas that a sign evokes beyond its denotation. These are often culturally or contextually specific. Referent: The actual object or concept in the real world to which the sign refers. Interpretant: The understanding or interpretation of the sign by the receiver. Context: The circumstances or setting in which the sign is used, which can influence its meaning.

### **III Empirical Review**

Etymologically, the term ‘Semiotics’ can be traced back to the Greek word *semeiotikos* that symbolizes the study of signs and forms the theory of semiotics (Jadou et al, 2021). Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols that influence communicative behaviour through language and gestures. Signs are physical and perceivable by our senses. They depend on the recognition given by their users (Najafian and Dabaghi, 2002). Semiotics as simply put, is the use of language to unveil the meanings of signs and symbols that are designed to communicate ideas and to disseminate information. De Saussure (1974) opined that language is a system of signs (icon, index, symbol) which have meaning by virtue of their relationships to each other. Some of these signs and symbols constituted the logo of some institutions and organization to form a relationship. They are purposely and strategically formed to pursue the world to buy into their visions and move with them. Meaning that symbols constitute a language of relationship in which uniqueness of an institution is expressed. Institutions employ logos of different kinds for marketing products of their organizations. Most of these institutions of higher learning are identified by logos which communicate the intentions of the organizations to the world. It is obvious that messages from logo enhance publications and reach areas where the owners cannot reach. Universities and colleges have logos, alongside other symbolic apparatus such as mascots, and particular colors.

The word logo is short for the original term, “logotype” derived from the Greek words *logos* (word) and *typos* (imprint). The origins of logos can be traced to the cradle of society, ancient Greece, circa 2000bc. Pottery crafters would make a simple mark on their work in the form of a common symbol such as a moon, star, circle etc. to signify and “advertise” their work (Kozisek, 2018). This revealed that logos communicate since they are words in form of symbols used in branding institutions. Logos change from time to time to meet the contemporary change and demand of the world. They are also designed to focus on the past, the achievements and weakness that have earned them the goodwill they have as a reputable organisation or institution. Logos are meant to be timeless, but when a company wants to represent change, highlight services, or apply a fun theme, they re-shaping an identity by distinguishing services and applying a theme (Basics, nd).

Logos are noted for the corporate identification roles but it is beyond the principles of corporate identification. Schmidt (1995) argued that corporate identity as portrayed by logo is a combination of corporate culture, corporate behaviour, products, services and communications as well as the visual image projection of the logo. Corporate identity is deeper than the external visual image and comprises all the elements of the organization that influence the way people see and think about the corporation. Corporate visual identity (logo) belongs to the realm of the graphic designers and artists, whilst corporate identity is the realm of organizational theorists and spin doctors. They both need good corporate communications to project to the general public what the organization is, what it stands for, and what it in fact does (Halloway and Halloway, 2005).

These logos serve the purpose of identifying both the university and those that choose to be identified with that university. However, what these logos rarely embody in their symbolic repertoire is the mission of colleges and universities, that of higher education and research (Hussinger, 2003). Symbols are identified with a particular logo which is the brain child of the

institution or the organization it represents. Symbols are created within a society or culture and those born into that society acquire them. The system of symbols used within a given group of people constitutes a language (Redmond, 2015). This view expresses the fact that there is a direct relationship between symbols and language, that symbols play the role of language.

Interactions are facilitated and enhanced by the simplicity of language for conveyance of meaning. Symbols are universally used during interactions to unfold and reveal the intension of the speaker. What we call a symbol is a term, a name, or even a picture that may be familiar in daily life, yet that possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning. It implies something vague, unknown, or hidden from us (Jung, 1988). Thoughts and ideas are represented and translated into symbols for the purposes of simplicity and easy understanding. People use symbols not only as a prestige but to portray the meaning of a particular concept they believes. For instance, people use the symbol of a wild animal such as leopard because they believe in the hunting prowess of the animal. People's behaviour and understanding of the world are based on meanings expressed through symbols. Terms that are symbolically used do not call for action appropriate to their objects. They make one think of their objects in a certain way. A symbol therefore is a vehicle for the conception of an object. It enables one to conceive or form an opinion of an object and for the formation of mental image (Atiase & Appiah, 2015).

The implication of a particular symbol used by an individual or a group of people can be seen in their day to day interactions. A symbol can be sung, recited as an appellation or appeared in a proverb. Among the Ewes, symbols play a very important role in oral compositions in which a myth is presented as it is. Myth is a system of communication and a mode of signification. It is a culture's way of thinking about something, a way of conceptualizing or understanding it (Barth, 1972). This is because most of the traditional symbols significantly has a historical antecedent. A word or an image is symbolic when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. It has a wider "unconscious " aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained. Nor can one hope to define or explain it. As the mind explores the symbol, it is led to ideas that lie beyond the grasp of reason (Jung,1988). Symbols of an educational institution showcase the culture, the vision and mission, the history and intent of the institution to the outer world. Hence the symbolism of an institution speaks louder than what the mouth can say.

Institutional branding focuses on the vision and the mission of the institution supported by the moto to communicate the idea and the ideals of the institution to the world. Branding is relating to organizational activities designed to synthesize and manage various complementary elements, such as visual identity, online presence, and reputation, in order to create a tangible sense of value to which people can make emotional attachments (O'Sullivan et al, 2024). This views express the fact that to brand is to make efforts to reach out to people by pursuing them to have fair idea and appreciate the existence of an organization and why their product is second to none. Higher educational institutions strategise in packaging and delivering messages concerning the institution. This is done through branding in forms of symbols and logos that explain the intentions and prospects of the institutions in order to survive and withstand the might of competitors. The

higher education brand is multifaceted, encompassing various elements such as logo, image, awareness, identity, differentiation, meaning, strength, impact on satisfaction, consistency, reputation, and personality (Rutter et al, 2016).

#### **IV Methodology**

The study employed qualitative approach specifically descriptive analysis. Symbolisms in the logos of the Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education constituted the data for the study. The symbols were analyzed step by step to unearth the purpose and their educational implications. Key areas of the analysis were the choice and use of symbols including the sun, the cross and the colours; red, gold and blue. The concept of interaction, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology would be employed dialectically in this study to reveal the reason behind the symbols of the institution.

#### **V Findings**

In this section of the study, the colour and objects in the logo of the Evangelical Presbyterian College of Education, Amedzofe were identified and analyzed. The analysis focused on the symbolization of the colours and objects, meanings and messages carried by the items of the logo expressing the thoughts and ideas of this institution of higher learning.

##### **V.i The Logo**

“Logo comes from a greek word ‘logotype’ which means ‘word’ and ‘typos’ meaning imprint. A logo is a graphic mark, emblem, or symbol commonly used by commercial enterprises, organizations and even individuals to aid and promote instant public recognition. The origins of logos can be traced to the cradle of society, ancient Greece, circa 2000bc” (Kozisek, 2018). Logo exposes and tells people’s affiliations and practices since it reveals a group or an association the person belongs. In other words, people’s socio-cultural, economic and political identity can be well-expressed by a logo. “Logo represent the identity of an organization, product, brand, or idea. It is an identifying symbol which should be kept simple and clearly represent an organization’s identity” (Louisiana Technical University, 2017). The AMECO logo symbolically represents the philosophies and values of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church which is the offspring of the Christian faith. Figure 1 is the logo of the institution, made up of elements or the symbols made up of the crest, the sun, the rays of the sun, the cross, the acronym (EPCE). Blue, gold, red and silver are the colours of the logo. The symbols denote and connote the ideas, principles and values of the college. The myth theorists Barthes (1972) and Intanghi et al (2023) viewed denotation as “the permanent sense of a word devoid of all subjective evaluations. It depicts the literal or obvious meaning of the sign what people see without association to their culture, ideology, or society while connotation is an idea added to the main meaning. It is evoked by words and images over what they denote. Connotative signs are either individual or universal. A denoted message bears analogical properties and primary to connotation in the process of signification”.





**Figure 1:** *The logo*

*Source: AMECO (2022)*

## **V.ii The Colours**

Duku and de Graft Yankson (2005) defined colour as “an element derived from reflected light. The sensation of colours is aroused in the human mind as vision responds to various wavelengths of light. The three properties of colour are hue, value and intensity. The legendary of a colour is not only the aesthetic pleasure but also the great impact it has on physical and mental development of an individual. Everything around man is colour, the sky is colour, the ground is colour, the food we eat is colour. They are the essence of life and the life seems to be incomplete without colours. Even if we say Black and White, they are colours, so nature has given colour to each molecule in this world. Nothing is colourless, even sound has its own colour (Jain, 2021). The use of colour by the institution is in line with the culture of the Ghanaian people since the institution is established and patronized by the people. In Ghana, colour is a representation of beauty. That is to say that every colour is seen as beautiful whether it is black or white. The widely used colours among the people are mostly red, white and black. The use of colours are not just for their aesthetic purposes but for the symbolic usage (Tamakloe, 2016). Blue, gold, red and silver constituted the colours in the logo of the institution being studied. According to the semiotic theory, “signs are the basic unit in semiotics, which is something that stands for something else. Signs can be words, images, sounds, gestures, objects, and colours. Signifier is the form that the sign takes. This could be the actual word, sound, or image used to convey meaning” (De Saussure, 1974).

**Table 1: Colour Symbolism**

SN	Colour	Implication
01	RED	Excitement, energy, passion, love, desire, speed, strength, power, heat, aggression, danger, fire, blood, war, violence, all things intense and passionate.
02	GOLD	Joy, happiness, optimism, idealism, imagination, hope, sunshine, summer, gold, philosophy, friendship. warmth, cheer, happiness.
03	Blue	Peace, tranquility, cold, calm, stability, harmony, unity, trust, truth, confidence, conservatism, security, cleanliness, order, loyalty, sky, water, technology, depression, appetite
04	Silver	The Silver symbolizes security, reliability, intelligence, staid, modesty, dignity, maturity, solid, conservative, practical, old age, sadness, boring.

*Source: Mollon (2003)*

Table 1 contains the colours of the institution’s logo with their implications. An indication that the functional roles of colours in everyday life of the people cannot be overruled. It is obvious from table 1 that educational institutions and organizations use colours of their own choice as symbols to express and share the thoughts and the basic principles of the institution. Some colours are conventionally used as logo blocks while others are used in association. “Blue and white are the primary colours used for logo blocks, although a black can also be used. Other colours can be used in association but should never be used for the logo block itself “(UNESCO, 2021). The colours are the views of the founding fathers that led to the visions and mission of the institution they represented and symbolized. Red, gold, blue and silver constituted the colours of the logo under study.

**V.ii.i Red:** Red colour is seen in every facet of human life. In Ghana, it occupies a very significance space in the national life of the people since it is one of the colours of the national flag. The meaning of the red colour in Ghana serves as a yardstick for measuring patriotism and preparedness to die for the country. Literary, red represents the colour of blood. The red signifies patriots who fought and shed their blood to gain independence for Ghana (Annku and Mireku-Gyimah, 2009). This suggests that the importance Ghanaians attached to red as a colour cannot be underestimated. This was reflected in the socio-cultural life of the Ghanaian people. For instance, when a loved one is lost, red is used as a mourning colour. Hence, red attire is worn to show how dear the deceased was loved and cherished when alive. Although red is a national colour, people

attributed meaning to the colour according to their perception and culture. Red represents blood, which signifies life and used to symbolize seriousness, heightened spiritual or political mood and danger (Tamakloe, 2016).

The institution adopted red as a symbol to easily convey the message associated with the colour. A message to prospective students and other stakeholders. It is an undeniable fact that not all the meaning of the red colour is desirable. Meaning such as patriotism, excitement, energy, passion, love, desire, speed, strength, fire, blood and power as shown in table 1 are accepted by the culture of the Ghanaian people. The cross in the logo of AMECO is coloured with red to portray the blood of Jesus according to the Christian culture and belief. The message the red symbol of logo conveys is enough to tell the background story of the college. This is to let the people know what the red colour stands for as far as Christian faith is concerned, not only the blood but also excitement, energy, passion, love, desire, speed, strength and power of the fame. Also, it is to inform the world that as a religious institution, it stands against aggression, danger, war, violence which are also associated with the red colour.

**V.ii.ii Gold:** Anytime Gold is mentioned, people’s mind is directed at ornament and royalty. Gold is also one of the national colours of Ghana. It represents the rich minerals of the country and symbolizes royalty. “Gold implies warmth, sunshine, cheer, happiness. It is the color of sunshine and associated with joy, happiness, intellect, energy and produces a warming effect, arouses cheerfulness, stimulates mental activity, and generates muscle energy” (Cerrato, 2012). One of the most important implications of gold colour as contained in table 1, is the mineral ‘gold’. The role and impact of the precious mineral, gold cannot be overruled in the life of the people. The gold colour creates an impression that the institution is as precious as ‘gold’. Table 1 demonstrates the qualities of the gold colour

Although the sun in the logo was designed in gold as a conversional symbol, the colour also associated the positive mood and the intellectual capacity within the institution. This communicates to the world about the calibre of products from the institution. Joy, happiness, excitement, cheerfulness together with intellect, energy, warming effect and mental activity which are the implications of the colour shown in table 1, has translated into hard work in happiness as portrayed in the institution’s logo. The colour attracts and encourages people globally to patronize the services of the college especially, products from the institution are considered as hard working who are trained to work under every condition devoid of acrimony. “It is an indicator of warming and a colour that centralizes self confidence and trust to achieve a person’s desired goals. It points towards self-actualization and leading a meaningful life. It is a colour of positivity happiness and joy” (Jain, 2021).

**V.ii.iii Blue:** It is obvious that the institution attached importance to blue since it is used as the logo block. This shows that the colour plays significant roles as far as teaching and learning is concerned and greatly impacted lives in the institutions. “It is a colour of truthfulness and peace.

The people inclined towards this colour are well spoken, trustworthy and easy to understand. Blue colour premises make the people more imaginative and productive. This colour also displays meditation and spiritual learning” (Jain 2021). Some of the implications of blue in table 1 are justifications for adopting the colour in the institution’s logo. The blue was employed due to its implication and impact on the people. For instance, the colour was used to express the Religious inclination of the College as a faith-based institution since some of the implications of the colour portrayed peace, harmony, trust, truth and royalty as indicated in table 1 which are the basic principles of the Christian faith.

**V.ii.iv Silver:** The outline of the logo was designed with silver to bind the logo together suggesting that the elements in the logo which served as the heart of the institution are secured and protected. Since the logo belongs to educational institution, the silver outline portrays the rich resources of the institution including knowledge. An indication of love and affection for the philosophies and the values that had brought the institution to its present state. The goals and aspiration of the faith are therefore protected. Related with ash, the grey colour is used in rites of healing, spiritual cleansing and protection (Tameklo, 2016). This expresses to the fact that silver plays an important role in socio-cultural life of the people. As shown in table1, silver is a colour with many parts. Its qualities of security, reliability and intelligence build a spirit of boldness in trainees and lecturers those who patronize the services of the institution. Security of life and property is paramount in the life of people. No one goes to a place where there is no security, reliability and dignity. Since silver is noted for defense and security, the college employed the colour to communicate to the globe that everything in the institution including human life is securely protected.

### **V.iii The objects**

Symbols are fundamentally used to express an individual’s or group’s perceptions about the world. Ofuafo (2013) defines symbols as objects, actions, associative or verbal formations that represent a diversity of meanings. The role and impact of symbols on people’s life cannot be swept under the carpet since they carry and represent the meaning of thoughts and ideas. In other words, symbols mediate between the abstract and the real world by conveying thoughts of values and philosophy into reality. A symbolic theorist, Bluhm (1989) argued that “the symbolic element in pictures is an implied value, a mediator between recognizable reality and the mystical, invisible realm of religion, philosophy, and magic, extending from the consciously understandable into the field of the unconscious”. To this extent, it can be said that the artist or craftsman is in reality a mediator between two worlds, visible and invisible. The sun, the cross and the crest are the objects employed in the logo of the institution. The myth theorist believed that “myth enables semioticians to identify the symbolic interaction of verbal and non-verbal signs and how these signs are interpreted to give connotative meanings. Myth is any story by which a culture is expressed or which understands some aspects of reality or nature” (Fiske, 1992).

**Table 2 Symbolism of elements in the logos**

SN	Element	Implication
01	Sun and the sun rays	Life-giving womb, life, warmness, power and strength, happiness and joy, creativity and imagination, unity and harmony, protection and safety, good luck and prosperity, positivity, truth and justice, wisdom, love, growth and abundance, hope.
02	Cross	Christian faith; peace with God, righteousness, forgiveness, new life, freed from sin, love, non-violence, giving and facing sufferings.
03	Crest	Legacy, history, identity, heritage, authority, honour, unity, pride and values

*Source: The meanings behind the symbols (nd)*

**V.iii.i The Sun:** Lundal (2022) argues that “there is a vast and varied symbolism for the sun because every culture and its people have seen it uniquely”. This perception made it clear that sun is significant and its importance largely depends on what it means and how a culture perceives and symbolizes it. Table 2 shows the sun and the sun rays (sunshine) as part of the elements in the logo of the institution. The sun is in the middle with its rays spread throughout the logo. There are strokes from the sun representing the rays pointing at different directions in the logo. This is an indication that the institution and its products is found in every corner of the globe. The logo is divided into four equal zones. Showing the four quarter of the world and each of the demarcations consists of three rays of the sun. “The sun sign comprises two basic elements: the circular or disk-shaped form of the body and the more abstract representation of the rays” (Bluhm, 1989). The total number of strokes indicating the sun rays in the logo is twelve, a very important figure in the Christian faith. For instance, in Christianity, twelve stands for the twelve tribes of Israel and also the twelve Apostles of Jesus. “In the Bible, it is the symbolic of the nation of Israel and seen as the God’s authority serving as a perfect governmental foundation. The number 12 represents the people of God” (Harvestime, 2015). It is obvious that the twelve strokes showing the rays of the sun had been designed to connote the Christian culture from which the institution was born. An information to the world that the college shares the principles and values of Christ. Source of energy and light are some of the implications of the symbols of sun, has projected the college as the root of knowledge. Comia (2023) opined that “the number 12 represented completeness and cosmic order. It was linked to the twelve lunar months in a year and the twelve hours of both day

and night”. The twelve rays of the sun symbolized completeness to emphasize the high level of orderliness and hard work which are the hallmarks of the institution.

Lundal (2022) identified fourteen symbolisms of the sun as shown in table 2 such as life, power and strength, happiness and joy, creativity and imagination. It is obvious from these symbolisms of the sun that sun supports life, and life depends on sun since every living thing needs these qualities of the sun to grow. The location of the sun in the logo suggests that the institution is at the centre of the world where moral values are cherished. “Most sun symbols clearly emphasize the concept of the "center" as a confirmation of the central significance of the sun for all life” (Bluhm,1989). The sun is very crucial in the life of the college as a teacher educator since it imparts knowledge that transforms people throughout the world by its products. This has been captured in the sun symbolism of the college since sunshine covers the entire universe and plays important roles as far as growth and development is concerned. When there is a sun, there is warmth which imparts life, brings continuity and reproduction. Absence of sun connotes absence of life. An indication that the institution lives and continues to live so long as there is sunshine. “In Christianity, the sun is often seen as a symbol of Christ, hope, and redemption” (Lundal, 2022). The existence of the sun in the college’s logo expresses the presence and reflection of the gospel of Christ in the life of the people who patronize the services of the college and its products.

**V.iii.ii The Cross:** The cross symbolizes the Christian faith and its values. The cross is seen by a Christian faithful as the representation of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. “The sign of the Cross has its origin from the baptismal mandate and is based on the mystery of Christ. The Sign of the Cross was that all salvation come to us through the cross of Christ” (Kanu, 2018). “It is the representation of the teachings of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Hence, the cross is the source of life and power in the life of Christians”. According to Keeran (2017), “the suffering and death of Jesus of Nazareth upon a Roman cross near Jerusalem teaches us many things that must not be lost”. Among these teachings are peace with God, righteousness, forgiveness, new life, freed from sin, love, non-violence, giving and facing sufferings. These teachings are known in Christendom as the values of the faith which the cross symbolizes. As an institution by the Christian Missionaries whose core mandate was to train Africans to propagate the Gospel the cross, the college embraces and cherishes the teaching of Jesus by using the cross. This communicates to potential partners of the college that the institution belongs to a Religious group values its own principles and philosophies. An option for them to make the right decision when it comes to decision making as far as teacher education is concerned. It is also obvious that Christian doctrine represented by the cross has love and peace as its principal values that call for attention from the globe since these values are considered as panacea to the current crises such as cyber-crime, corruption and war confronting the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The greatest abundance of ornamented crosses is to be found within the Christian culture of the West. Since the Middle Ages, the significance of the cross has been completely taken over and determined by Christianity, making it the basic element in all fields of

application such as decoration, heraldry, and identification marking (Bluhm, 1989). The college is the foundation of moral values and principles needed for human development.

**V.iii.iii The Crest:** The crest is a well-drawn and designed symbol used by organizations such as educational institutions for identification and intent. “In the past, crests were basically shaped like a shield, and this apparently influenced the shapes of crests designed today. Also, in ancient times, crests did not stand alone but were part of a coat of arms” (Duku and deGraft-Yankson, 2005). The prowess of the crest as a protector, is used to defend warriors in battle to either neutralise the might of the enemy or to enforce the fighting skills of the person using it. Using the crest as a logo wall of the college communicates to potential customers and stakeholders that their relationship with the institution or any form of investments they make in the college is safe and protected. The qualities of safety and protection as symbolized by the crest attracted people from all walks of life to patronize the products and services of the college. Since the crest contains other elements of the logo, it is a sign of unity, togetherness and fosters team work among students as well as lecturers and other workers of the college. Teye et al (2023) concluded that “university crests play a significant part in the process of cultivating a feeling of community, belonging, and pride among current students, graduates, and faculty members. As such, they should be appreciated and conserved as cultural objects that symbolize the rich history and tradition of institutions of higher learning. This will ensure that they are preserved for future generations to appreciate”. According to the implications of the crest as captured in table 2, are authority, pride, identity and heritage. This indicated the fact that the crest portrays the way of life of the people. The myth theory postulated that “a sign as a combination of a signifier and a signified. Thus, concrete signs are vehicles of culture and ideology” (Barthes 1972).

## **VI Conclusion**

The blue and white are conventional colours logo blocks while others are associate colours. Colours of the AMECO logo symbolized hard work, positive mood, peace and security. The sun which is the source of light symbolizes knowledge and energy while the twelve rays stand for completeness. The logo as an institutional branding communicated to the outer world about the prospects of the institution to indicate that the college is at the center of the universe where the belief of Christian values and principles are paramount and upheld. The college was projected as the root of knowledge, teachers are trained and has become a centre for academic excellence in Ghana and beyond. The message from the logo fosters unity and team work of the learners and the lecturers in the institution.

## **VII Recommendation**

The study recommended that symbolisms in the logo of every institution of higher learning should be developed and included in the curriculum of the institution as a course of study. There should be a day set aside by the stakeholders as college logo day where issues about the logo will be discussed in relation to the current trends of information communication technology development

for updates and modernization. The mission and vision of the institution are another possible areas of study.

## References

- Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies*. The Noonday Press.
- Basics, L. D. (nd). unpublished.
- Comia, G. J. (2023). *Esoteric meaning of mystical numbers*. unpublished.
- De Saussure, F. (1974). *Cours de linguistique Generale*. Payot.
- Duku, F. K., & deGraft-Yankson, P. (2005). *Design Fundamentals*. Black Mask Ltd.
- Fatmawati, S. (2019). *Semiotic analysis of educational advertisement course in instagram*. State Islamic Institute of Kediri.
- Fiske, J. (1992). *Introduction to Communication Studies*. Routledge.
- Guibourge, J. (2022). *Semiotic: about logo, identity and brand image*. Hall open science.
- Halloway, D., & Halloway, D. A. . (2005). University Logos and the Commodisation of Higher Education. *ANZMAC 2005 Conference Corporate* (p. 34=40). ANZMAC 2005 Conference Corporate.
- Intanghi, I. N., Cheo, V. N., & Julius, A. (2023). A Semiotic Analysis of Symbolism and pursuation as Communication Strategies on some Educational Billboards in Buea-Camaroon. *Scientific Research Publishing*, 13, 179-201.
- Jadou, S. H., Imam, M. M., & Ghabra, M. A. (2021). Barthes' Semiotic Theory and Interpretation of Signs. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanity*, 11, 470-482.
- Jain, S. (2021). Colour: The Essence of Life. *Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 19-26.
- Kozisek, J. (2018). *The Logo Design Book*. Summitsoft.
- Mollon, J. D. (2003). *The origin of modern color science*. University of Cambridge.
- Najafian, M., & Dabaghi, A. (2002). Hidden Language of Advertising: A Semiotic Approach. *Proceeding of the International Conference, . Doing Research in Applied Linguistics* .
- O'Sullivan, H., Polkinghorne, M., Chapleo, C., & Crownie, C. (2024). Contemporary Branding Strategies for Higher Education. *Encyclopedia*, 4, 1292--1311.
- Rutter, R., Roper, S., & Lettice, F., (2016). Social Media Intercation, the University Brand and Recruitment Performance. *J. Bus. Res*, 69, 3096-3104.
- Symbols, T. m. (nd).



Teye, V. Q. N., Amissah, B., & Esseku, J. F. (2023). The significance of University crest from both cultural and historical perspectives: A case study of the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. *The International Journal of Humanity & Social Studies*, 70 (5) 70-77.



©2025 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)