

ANALYSIS OF THE SAMBAL DAPUR JOWO LOGO THROUGH UMBERTO ECO'S SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE

Atif Latifah¹, Hadianto², and Dewi Shintya Pratiwi³

Department of Visual Communication Design Bandung University of Technology

Jl. Soekarno-Hatta No. 378, Kb. Lega, Kec. Bojongloa Kidul, Kota Bandung,

Jawa Barat

Atiflatifah@utb-univ.ac.id¹; Hadianto@utb-univ.ac.id²; dewishintyapратиwi@utb-univ.ac.id³

ABSTRACT

Brand identity plays a vital role in the competitive culinary MSME sector, where logos must convey business character effectively despite design simplicity. However, many MSME logos are viewed merely as rigid identifiers rather than complex, adaptive sign systems. This study aims to analyze the visual meanings embedded in the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo using Umberto Eco's semiotic approach. This descriptive qualitative study employs an inductive method to examine the logo as an "open text" sign system. Data were gathered through visual documentation and observation of shapes, colors, typography, and composition. The results indicate that the logo operates as a multilayered communicative system in which elements such as chili icons, circular flame forms, and localized typography generate cultural meanings of spiciness, warmth, and Javanese identity, while simultaneously constructing emotional engagement with audiences through processes of encoding and decoding. The novelty of this research is strengthened by demonstrating that Eco's concepts of open text and unlimited semiosis remain underutilized in the analysis of culinary MSME visual identities, particularly in Indonesian local branding contexts. The study further shows that traditional visual identities function as dynamic and evolving codes rather than static cultural markers, offering a more context-sensitive framework for contemporary food branding strategies.

Keywords: Logo, Semiotics, Umberto Eco, UMKM, Sambal Dapur Jowo

INTRODUCTION

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2008, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are productive economic activities that meet specific legal criteria. MSMEs constitute an important pillar of the Indonesian economy due to their significant contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), employment generation, and regional economic development. During the 1998 economic crisis, MSMEs demonstrated strong resilience and became one of the foundations supporting national economic sustainability. Based on labor classification, enterprises employing 1 to 4 workers are categorized as household industries, 5 to 19 workers as small enterprises, 20 to 99 workers as medium enterprises, and enterprises with more than 100 workers as large-scale businesses (Rafika, 2010, p. 145). Furthermore, MSMEs develop through several patterns, including livelihood activities as informal survival mechanisms, artisan-based micro enterprises,

dynamic small enterprises with entrepreneurial potential and export capability, and fast-moving enterprises that have the capacity to transform into larger businesses.

The development of MSMEs can also be categorized based on business scale, products or services, and industrial sectors. According to Government Regulation Number 7 of 2021, micro enterprises have an annual turnover of up to IDR 2 billion excluding land and buildings, small enterprises range from IDR 2 billion to IDR 15 billion, while medium enterprises generate annual turnover between IDR 15 billion and IDR 50 billion. In terms of business activities, MSMEs may operate in the production of physical goods, service-based industries, or digital enterprises utilizing internet technology. From an industrial perspective, MSMEs encompass various sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, trade, culinary, and creative industries.

The growth of MSME activities in Bandung has increased significantly. According to the 2024 report from the Bandung Department of Cooperatives and MSMEs (DISKOP UKM), there are 11,255 MSME units operating across various sectors (Dinas Koperasi dan UKM Kota Bandung, 2024). This number reflects the strong entrepreneurial spirit among local communities in developing independent businesses that support the local economy. Among these sectors, the culinary industry occupies a dominant position because Bandung has long been recognized as a culinary tourism destination, creating substantial opportunities for culinary MSMEs to develop through innovation and consumer demand.

In an increasingly competitive business environment, particularly during the Industrial Revolution 4.0, MSMEs are required to adapt through innovation, digital marketing strategies, and effective branding. A brand is not merely represented by a name or a visual appearance, but consists of characteristics associated with a name or symbol that influence consumer preferences (Rufaidah, 2015, p. 3). Therefore, the establishment of a strong brand identity becomes an essential strategy for maintaining competitiveness and improving business performance. Competitive advantage plays a significant role in determining business sustainability and profitability (Nainggolan, 2018, p. 5).

Brand identity represents the tangible expression of a brand through a combination of names, symbols, colors, logos, typography, graphic elements, and packaging that create a consistent perception among consumers. It serves not only as a visual appearance but also as a strategic communication tool that distinguishes one brand from its competitors. Wijaya defines brand identity as a physical identity that connects a brand with its products to facilitate recognition (Eiseman, 2006). Rosalina explains that brand identity consists of a set of associations intentionally developed to support brand strategies (Rosalina, 2010, p. 334), while Chalil considers it a symbolic message communicated through names, product appearances, and advertisements (Chalil, 2021, p. 89). Among the elements of brand identity, the logo occupies a central role because it acts as a visual symbol reflecting the vision and mission of a company (Adams & Morioka, 2009, p. 16). Logos may appear in various forms, including logotypes, emblems, pictorial marks, letterforms, abstract marks, or combined forms.

The effectiveness of a logo is closely related to the principles of Visual Communication Design (VCD), which is concerned with the processing of visual elements such as images, typography, colors, and layouts to communicate messages effectively. According to Sumbo, VCD is the discipline that develops creative communication concepts through various media while considering context, objectives, and audience characteristics (Sumbo, 2009, p. 23). Its function extends beyond aesthetics by acting as an indicator, interpreter, and director of human behavior. Therefore, VCD applies fundamental principles such as unity, balance,

emphasis, proportion, rhythm, alignment, and repetition to ensure that visual works possess both aesthetic quality and communicative meaning.

To create a visual design that is not only aesthetically attractive but also functional, designers must understand the fundamental elements that construct visual communication. These elements form the structure of a design and contribute to the creation of meaning and character. The most basic element is the point, which functions as an accent and determines visual rhythm within a composition. A line is formed through a sequence of points and has the ability to introduce shape, movement, and emotional expression. Shapes emerge from lines that enclose a space, creating forms such as squares, circles, and triangles that establish the visual foundation of a design. Meanwhile, space creates distance between objects and backgrounds, allowing compositions to achieve balance and clarity. Texture contributes visual depth, either through tactile or visual impressions, while illustrations, whether manual drawings, digital graphics, or collages, strengthen messages and attract audience attention.

Another important element of Visual Communication Design is typography, which refers to the art of arranging type through the selection of fonts, size, spacing, and layout to achieve readability while expressing visual personality. Typography includes several categories, such as serif typefaces characterized by small strokes at the end of letters that improve readability, modern and simple sans-serif typefaces, strong slab serif styles, elegant script fonts resembling handwriting, and decorative typefaces that emphasize visual uniqueness over long textual readability (Ambrose G, Harris P, 2011).

Color also plays a crucial role in establishing visual communication because it can generate emotions, build identity, and communicate messages without relying on verbal language. Color theory classifies colors into primary colors, including red, yellow, and blue; secondary colors produced through the combination of primary colors, such as orange, green, and purple; and tertiary colors created from the combination of primary and secondary colors. Furthermore, colors possess psychological associations that influence audience perception. Red represents energy and courage, yellow symbolizes happiness, blue conveys trust and professionalism, orange represents warmth and enthusiasm, green signifies freshness and growth, purple is associated with luxury and spirituality, black symbolizes authority, white represents purity, gray reflects professionalism, and brown communicates warmth and simplicity (Eiseman, 2006). Therefore, an understanding of color psychology allows designers to deliver emotional messages more effectively and strengthen the communication objectives of a visual identity.

Beyond logos, typography, and colors, packaging also serves as a significant component of brand identity because it is often the first visual interaction experienced by consumers. Packaging functions not only as a protective container but also as a medium that communicates product value, personality, and differentiation. Kotler and Keller explain that packaging integrates various visual components, including form, color, imagery, typography, and information, making it a strategic bridge between products and consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Similarly, Klimchuk and Krasovec describe packaging as a creative and communicative medium capable of evoking consumer responses and helping audiences understand the value embedded within a product (Klimchuk & Krasovec, 2006).

Despite the importance of visual identity in strengthening brand competitiveness, many MSME actors in Bandung still underestimate the strategic function of logo design. Logos are frequently treated merely as visual identifiers rather than as communicative systems capable of constructing meanings and delivering cultural messages. This condition often

results in weak visual storytelling and limits the effectiveness of branding in influencing consumer perception and purchasing decisions. Therefore, a deeper understanding of how visual elements construct meaning is required to develop stronger and more meaningful brand identities.

One example of a culinary MSME that demonstrates the importance of visual identity development is Sambal Dapur Jowo, a business established in 2021 by Fani Dwi Ringguni and Andri Prihandoko as a response to the economic challenges caused by the pandemic. Located at Jl. Pasirluyu XIII No. 3, Buah Batu, Bandung, this enterprise aims to contribute to economic development and create employment opportunities. The business focuses on producing squid chili paste with a practical packaging concept that combines traditional Indonesian culinary flavors with a contemporary approach. Through manual production methods, Sambal Dapur Jowo maintains product authenticity and quality, enabling the enterprise to expand its market distribution to several cities, including Jakarta, Bekasi, and Semarang. The development of Sambal Dapur Jowo illustrates how creativity and resilience can transform local culinary products into brands with broader market potential.



Figure 1. Sambal Dapur Jowo Logo

The construction of meaning within visual identity can be examined through a semiotic approach, which studies how signs, symbols, images, and other visual representations produce and communicate meaning. In semiotics, a sign consists of the signifier as the physical form, such as text, images, or sounds, and the signified as the concept represented by the sign. The relationship between these two elements is arbitrary and established through cultural conventions. Ferdinand de Saussure, as one of the pioneers of modern semiotic studies, emphasizes the distinction between *langue* as a collective language system and *parole* as individual language practices, while also asserting that every sign is composed of the relationship between the signifier and the signified (Saussure, 1959).

The development of semiotic studies was further expanded by Umberto Eco, who views signs as open, dynamic, and contextual systems that continuously generate new interpretations. Through the concepts of open text and unlimited semiosis, Eco explains that the meaning of a sign is never fixed but is constantly reconstructed based on the cultural codes, experiences, and interpretative backgrounds of the audience (Eco, 1976). This perspective aligns with Barthes' concept that visual signs possess two levels of meaning, namely denotation as the literal meaning and connotation as the ideological, emotional, and cultural meaning embedded behind a sign (Barthes, 1957).

Within the context of brand identity, semiotics provides an analytical framework to understand how logos, colors, typography, slogans, and other visual elements function as signs that communicate values and construct brand narratives. For example, blue may signify trust, red may represent energy and passion, serif typography may communicate elegance, and sans-serif typography may convey modernity. These meanings are not merely understood at a denotative level but are also influenced by cultural associations and social interpretations.

Semiotic interpretation is also closely connected to myths as cultural sign systems that continue to evolve across different periods and societies. Eco argues that myths function as open texts that can be continuously reinterpreted according to social and cultural contexts. In Javanese culture, for example, red symbolizes courage, white represents purity, black signifies firmness, and green reflects fertility. Likewise, traditional foods such as tumpeng and sambal contain symbolic meanings related to gratitude, togetherness, and the dynamics of human life (Magnis-Suseno, 1993).

The process of interpreting signs requires systematic analysis to reveal relationships, patterns, and meanings contained within visual phenomena. Analysis is an intellectual process that involves examining a phenomenon by separating its components and reorganizing them into a clearer and more comprehensive structure. Satori and Komariyah explain that analysis is an effort to break down a problem into smaller components so that its structure and meaning become more understandable (Satori, 2014). Similarly, the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI) defines analysis as an effort to investigate a phenomenon in order to uncover its actual conditions, whether in the form of texts, behaviors, or other observable events (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2021).

Previous studies on logo interpretation using semiotic approaches have generally focused on the structural relationships between signs or the binary interpretation of denotation and connotation in Barthesian semiotics, as well as the triadic relationship of signs in Peircean approaches. However, studies applying Umberto Eco's concept of unlimited semiosis to the visual identity of Indonesian MSMEs, particularly within the culinary sector, remain limited. This condition reveals a research gap concerning the application of Eco's perspective of open text in analyzing local brand identities that are deeply rooted in cultural values while actively participating in contemporary commercial environments.

Based on this gap, this research investigates the visual identity of Sambal Dapur Jowo through the perspective of Umberto Eco's semiotic theory. To understand how the public interprets the logo, interviews were conducted with selected respondents, indicating that the visual elements, particularly color selection and gradients, create a distinctive and communicative impression among consumers. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the visual elements of the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo construct meaning and how these meanings are interpreted within cultural and consumer contexts. Specifically, this research explores how visual brand identity articulates cultural messages while providing alternative perspectives for the development of MSME branding based on semiotic interpretation.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive analytical method. The qualitative approach was selected because it is suitable for uncovering meaning, understanding context, and interpreting symbols in visual communication and branding strategies. As emphasized by Creswell, qualitative research focuses on the interpretive process rather than merely numerical results (Creswell JW. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 2013). Satori and Komariyah add that qualitative research is a scientific effort to understand phenomena holistically within their context by utilizing natural methods (Satori D, Komariyah A. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Alfabeta; 2014. p. 200). The object of this research is the brand identity of the culinary MSME Sambal Dapur Jowo in Bandung, specifically the visual identity consisting of the logo and other graphic elements that construct the brand image.

Research informants include the business owners, the logo designer, and consumers selected through purposive sampling, which is the selection of informants considered to have the deepest understanding of the investigated phenomenon (Bungin B. *Penelitian Kualitatif: Komunikasi, Ekonomi, Kebijakan Publik, dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media; 2011). The research location was established in Buah Batu District, Bandung, where the Sambal Dapur Jowo MSME operates. The study was conducted from January to April 2024, adjusting to business activities and informant availability.

Data collection techniques include: (1) in-depth interviews with the business owners and consumers to explore perceptions regarding the logo, colors, and visual elements of the brand; (2) direct observation of products, packaging, and promotional media; and (3) documentary studies consisting of design archives, MSME reports, and relevant academic literature. Sugiyono notes that interviews and observations are primary techniques in qualitative research to capture social meaning (Sugiyono. *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta; 2017). Data analysis techniques are performed through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Reduction is conducted by selecting relevant data, display is presented in the form of descriptive narratives and tables, while conclusion drawing is executed through interpretation using the semiotic theory of Umberto Eco (Eco U. *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press; 1976). Miles and Huberman emphasize that qualitative analysis is interactive and continuous from data collection to verification (Miles MB, Huberman AM. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 1994.). Data processing techniques are carried out by coding the results of interviews and observations to identify patterns. The coded data are then mapped into categories corresponding to the elements of brand identity, namely the logo, color, typography, and packaging. Although qualitative research does not emphasize formal hypothesis testing, this study originates from an initial proposition that visual elements in MSME brand identity play a strategic role in shaping consumer perception and product competitiveness. This proposition serves as the interpretive foundation for all data analysis (Satori D, Komariyah A. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Alfabeta; 2014. p. 200, Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI)*. Jakarta: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa; 2021, Creswell JW. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 2013, Bungin B. *Penelitian Kualitatif: Komunikasi, Ekonomi, Kebijakan Publik, dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media; 2011)




RESULTS AND DISCUSSION


The findings of the analysis of the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo are presented below. This visual identity serves as the core of the study because it contains various elements that display local cultural patterns and function as a brand communication medium. The research focus is directed at exploring the visual elements that construct the brand identity of Sambal Dapur Jowo. Brand identity is viewed as a vital element that builds an image and serves as a bridge of dialogue between the product and its audience. The researcher examines how the visual composition translates into values, character, and an image connected to culture.

Table 1. Umberto Eco's Semiotic Analysis

Unit of Analysis	Sign	Signification	Interpretation
	 Two Red Bird's Eye Chilies	<p>In Java, red chili represents spiciness, strength, and cooking passion. It symbolizes the authenticity of ingredients and richness of flavor.</p>	<p>Audiences interpret the product as delivering a natural spicy sensation. The presence of chilies not only stimulates the appetite but also strengthens the impression of authentic homemade chili paste. In Javanese culture, chili has layers of meaning that transcend its culinary function, transforming into a philosophical and spiritual symbol related to life values, customs, and cultural practices. The sharp, pungent taste is viewed as a symbol of courage, assertiveness, and firmness of character. Chili is also frequently present in purification rituals (ruwatan) or ceremonial rice cones (tumpengan) as a means to ward off misfortune, because its heat energy is believed to repel evil spirits or negative energy, similar to the function of garlic and salt. Additionally, chili is interpreted as a symbol of desire and passion, as seen in Javanese art where the term lombok (chili) refers to enthusiasm. In Javanese philosophy, life consists of sweet, bitter, sour, salty, and spicy dimensions. Therefore, chili symbolizes that humans must be prepared for sharp trials.</p> <p>On the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo, two bird's eye chilies are displayed as the primary elements. Culturally, both represent a balance of flavor, namely the combination of a burning spiciness and an appetizing spiciness, thus offering a multi-layered experience. The presence of these two chilies also suggests harmony and togetherness, as a pair of chilies symbolizes a complementary unity. From the perspective of visual communication design theory, the slender, curved, and tapered shape of the chili presents dynamic line qualities. The curvature of the chili gives a flexible, natural, and flowing impression, creating harmony and balance.</p>

Unit of Analysis	Sign	Signification	Interpretation
	 Yellow Flame	<p>The flame in the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo refers to the element of heat and combustion. However, in a culinary context, specifically for chili paste products, this sign is directly biting spiciness. The color yellow denotatively signifies light, radiance, or flame, while reinforcing the energy contained within the product. The circular shape of the flame adds a dimension of visual meaning because the flame visually symbolizes spiciness and burning passion, while the circle implies unity, balance, and continuity.</p>	<p>Meanwhile, the sharp tip of the chili reinforces a visual contrast that implies sharpness, decisiveness, and intense energy aligned with the character of the spicy flavor itself. Placing two chilies symmetrically builds a balanced principle that produces a stable and harmonious composition. In terms of unity, the homogeneity of the shape and color of the chilies demonstrates visual consistency that helps the audience capture the complete message. Thus, the chili in the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo does not merely stop at a denotative representation of the main ingredient, but transforms into a connotative sign that strengthens the product image as spicy, authentic, harmonious, and rich in philosophical meaning rooted in Javanese culture</p>
	Having a circular basic shape	<p>The flame in the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo refers to the element of heat and combustion. However, in a culinary context, specifically for chili paste products, this sign is directly biting spiciness. The color yellow denotatively signifies light, radiance, or flame, while reinforcing the energy contained within the product. The circular shape of the flame adds a dimension of visual meaning because the flame visually symbolizes spiciness and burning passion, while the circle implies unity, balance, and continuity.</p>	<p>In Javanese culture, fire is not merely perceived as a physical burning element. Instead, it is viewed as an embodiment of life passion, courage, and resilience. The flame indicates an inner strength that continues to glow, an essential element in Javanese philosophy that glorifies perseverance, steadfastness, and the courage to overcome life obstacles. When fire is depicted in a circular form, this meaning expands further because the circle in the Javanese view signifies harmony, completeness, and the interconnectedness of life elements. The round shape presents a concept of life that is unified, continuous, and mutually supporting, a philosophy that lives within both the social and spiritual realms of Javanese society.</p> <p>The color yellow, which is intertwined with light and the radiance of fire, is often associated in Javanese interpretation with honor, prosperity, and the flow of positive energy (Pranoto, 2024:419). It appears frequently in traditional ceremonies as a symbol of noble hope and an illuminating power that provides encouragement (Syarif, 2018:9). Accordingly, the circular</p>

Unit of Analysis	Sign	Signification	Interpretation
	 <p data-bbox="379 1395 472 1458">Orange Flame</p>  <p data-bbox="379 1597 512 1697">Having a circular basic shape</p>	<p data-bbox="555 1301 954 1440">The flame is an element of heat and combustion, but in chili paste, it relates directly to a strong and biting spicy sensation. The accompanying orange color reinforces this impression, as it represents a transition between red and yellow, which characterizes a medium-to-high intensity flame. In color psychology, orange generally evokes energy, warmth, and life passion. The framing circular shape of the fire further strengthens the meaning with unity, interconnectedness, and stability. The circle in this context is a symbol of the completeness of the chili paste flavor.</p>	<p data-bbox="986 371 1501 685">yellow flame in the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo can be read as a symbol of spiciness that is not only strong to the taste senses but also retains spiritual and cultural resonance. It portrays the courage to preserve flavor authenticity, the meeting point between strength and harmony, and a heritage of flavor that is complete and noble.</p> <p data-bbox="986 696 1501 1294">From the perspective of visual communication design, the circle is a basic element that displays stable, complete, and harmonious visual properties (Wong, 1993). The principle of unity is present because the circle encompasses every visual element into a single clear node of meaning for the audience. Furthermore, the depiction of fire within a circular frame reinforces the principle of balance, as its curved lines create an impression that is repetitive, consistent, and endless. This character strengthens the philosophical meaning of the circle as a symbol of the wholeness of life in Javanese philosophy, while enriching the visual appeal of the logo.</p>
			<p data-bbox="986 1305 1501 1805">In Javanese culture, fire is interpreted as a heat element and as a symbol of enthusiasm, resilience, and strength. The orange color, which exists as a transition between red symbolizing courage and yellow portraying wisdom, also represents a balanced stability of bravery and calmness. The circle holds significant meaning because it is continuous and whole, symbolizing a cohesive unity. The flame framed by the circular shape introduces order and focus on the burning spicy taste, while revealing that spiciness is part of a complete flavor profile.</p>

Unit of Analysis	Sign	Signification	Interpretation
	Red text "Dapur Jowo"	The selection of the spelling "Jowo" instead of "Jawa" reveals the distinctive dialect of the Javanese people, particularly in the Central and Eastern regions, which is filled with a sense of closeness, familiarity, and a traditional aura. The use of a red hue on the characters reinforces the intended impression. Red is understood as a symbol of courage, burning enthusiasm, and the spiciness that serves as the core spirit of the chili paste dish. From a semiotic perspective, the combination of the phrase "Dapur Jowo" with the color red creates an image of a warm, passionate, and appetite-stimulating kitchen space. At the same time, it implies a burning chili sensation that is rich in flavor and authentic in its cultural traces.	In the Javanese cultural landscape, the "Dapur Jowo" text painted in a red hue ignites a deep emotional resonance. The spelling "Jowo" is viewed as a regional speech marker, delivering cultural closeness and a sense of ownership over local heritage. For the Javanese audience, this choice brings to life the image of a warm home atmosphere filled with traditional nuances and values rooted in their culture. For a wider audience, the use of that spelling emits an authentic and local impression, as if greeting them with a familiar touch. Meanwhile, the red hue surrounding the text reinforces a brave character and burning spirit, blending with the character of spicy and burning chili paste (Syarif, 2018:8). Overall, the product delivers both flavor and a cultural experience.

From a semiotic reading, it is evident that the logo is not merely a graphic sign, but a web of symbols rich in cultural resonance and emotional vibration. The two red chilies do not merely point to a spicy taste, but also showcase images of courage, decisiveness, and philosophical meaning within the Javanese universe, ranging from the dual-unity as harmony, the warding off of misfortune as protection, to the symbol of an unextinguished life spirit. The orange-yellow flame rotating inside the circle opens deeper layers of meaning: the spiciness of flavor, inner strength, courage, and the unity that binds the balance of taste. In the Javanese context, yellow and orange hues reflect honor, a stimulating power, and a stability of bravery combined with calmness, reinforcing the impression that this product does not only stimulate the senses but also stores philosophical values rooted in tradition.

The typography of "Dapur Jowo" with its specific local spelling dipped in red further enlivens the nuances of cultural closeness, warmth, and courage. The writing form of "Jowo" evokes a down-to-earth feeling, inviting homemade familiarity, while the red hue reinforces the burning passion and spiciness that constitute the main spirit of the product. Examined through Umberto Eco's semiotic framework, the entirety of these elements demonstrates that the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo does not only serve to provide product information, but weaves multi-layered meanings involving taste, culture, and local identity.

Table 2. Swot Analysis of Sambal Dapur Jowo

Strengths		Weaknesses	
1.	Cultural identity is strongly engraved through the spelling "Jowo" and Javanese-nuanced icons: chili, fire, and the circle that mark locality.	1.	The use of the "Jowo" language risks narrowing the reach of meaning for non-Javanese consumers or a more diverse national market.
2.	The representation of the red chili indicates spiciness, flavor intensity, and dining passion; an icon that is quickly read and easily recognized in the culinary landscape.	2.	Visual complexity in the form of color gradients, flames, and circles potentially creates constraints when the logo is reproduced on small media.
3.	The combination of orange, red, and yellow colors spreads warm, energetic, and evocative nuances aligned with the spicy character.	3.	The contrast between text and background is sometimes less prominent; consequently, readability can be reduced in certain applications.
4.	The circle of fire weaves the symbols of energy (fire) and harmony (circle), creating a measured and controlled impression of spiciness.		
Opportunities		Threats	
1.	The logo can be personalized into cultural narratives on social media, stories behind the symbols, Javanese philosophy, and traditional meanings.	1.	Competition with various local chili paste brands that also carry values of authenticity and spiciness demands sharper differentiation.
2.	Opportunities exist to collaborate with cultural events, other MSMEs, or culinary tourism programs to expand brand reach.	2.	Rapid shifts in design trends such as minimalism may cause the traditional-nuanced logo to be viewed as less suitable by certain segments.
3.	It has the potential to be developed as a local visual identity that is authentic, traditional, and robust.	3.	Similar symbols (fire, red, orange) are commonly used in the chili paste industry; consequently, the logo risks being less prominent without unique differentiating elements.

Based on the SWOT analysis in the visual domain, it can be concluded that the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo radiates its greatest strength through the embodiment of a culture-rich identity. The red chili symbol, the circular flame, and the combination of red, orange, and yellow colors spark an image of spiciness, warmth, and appetite-stimulating energy. The typography of "Dapur Jowo" with its local spelling further establishes the ethnic nuance, delivering emotional closeness to the audience, particularly those rooted in Javanese tradition. In terms of opportunities, this visual advantage can be developed further through storytelling strategies that reveal the layers of philosophy behind each design element. This logo also holds significant potential to support synergies with cultural festivals and culinary tourism, and to function as a solid visual identity for tradition-based local MSMEs. The richness of meaning it contains makes it flexible for display across various promotional media, both in the digital realm and on derivative products.

Thus, the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo does not merely stop at being a trademark, but transforms into a communication medium to elevate local elements to the commercial stage.

This advantage opens wide space for strengthening a brand image that is authentic, down-to-earth, and distinct from the hectic culinary competition. As a more comprehensive strategic foundation, the results of this analysis are then formulated into a visual SWOT Matrix. This matrix does not only display the intersection of potential factors, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, but also maps out strategies to optimize effectiveness, both in terms of aesthetics and communication functions.

Table 3. Visual Swot Matrix Analysis of Sambal Dapur Jowo

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Threats	ST		WT
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emphasizing the uniqueness of cultural symbols as differentiators. 2. Strengthening the logo as a cultural representation that contrasts with minimalist trends. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Optimizing visual contrast to ensure clear readability. 2. Designing an adaptive version of the logo that aligns with trends without eroding cultural essence.
Opportunities	SO		WO
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilizing the strength of logo colors and shapes as triggers for visual promotional appeal on social media. 2. Presenting cultural symbols through visual storytelling to reinforce the brand image as traditional chili paste. 3. Visual expansion into various promotional products, such as merchandise. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating a concise version for digital media needs. 2. Including visual explanations or accompanying text for the cultural message.

The core research findings highlighting the visual analysis of the logo from Umberto Eco's semiotic perspective are elaborated below. Within Eco's horizon of thought, a sign does not stop at being an external image, but functions as a node of communication with interpretive opportunities. Each visual element does not merely voice surface meaning, but stores symbolic depth that can be interpreted differently according to the social or cultural horizons of the audience. The analysis reveals that the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo consists of two red chilies, a circle-framed flame, the "Dapur Jowo" typography, and a color combination. The red chili, at a denotative level, points directly to the core ingredient of the chili paste. However, in the cosmos of Javanese culture, it is present as a symbol of courage, vitality, and burning spirit. The number of two chilies is not a coincidence; instead, it can be interpreted as a symbol of balance, harmony, and dual-unity in life, such as masculine-feminine relations or the harmony of a couple.

The flame embraced by the circular shape implies a burning yet balanced spiciness. Fire is not merely an indicator of heat and the kitchen, but a metaphor for life spirit, transformative power, and inner energy. The circle, which binds the fire, reinforces the symbol of unity, continuity, and balance of flavor. Within the culinary horizon, this form can also be read as a representation of a complete gastronomic experience that unifies taste, aroma, and memory. The typography of "Dapur Jowo," which selects the local spelling instead of the standard form "Awa," does not stop at a mere play on characters. Instead, it appears as a visual strategy that fosters closeness among Javanese speakers. The handwritten style strokes ignite a homemade, familiar, and traditional impression, as if reviving childhood memories of the kitchen, family dishes, and the warmth of the domestic space. The word *dapur* (kitchen) itself marks an everyday space identical to women, where flavors passed down across generations flourish.

The present color palette is also rich in interpretation. Red and orange bubble up as symbols of passion and spiciness. Yellow implies abundance and the warmth of togetherness. Green introduces freshness and natural nuances, while orange, standing between red and yellow, narrates a down-to-earth warmth. This color spectrum is frequently carved into palace ornaments, traditional rituals, or symbolic artifacts of Javanese culture, thereby strengthening the bond between the logo and traditional heritage as well as local aesthetics. Categorically, the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo belongs to the combination mark type, uniting text and imagery. Typography functions as the verbal identity, while the chili and the circle of fire become a solid visual identity. Both form a harmony that not only reinforces brand recognition but also provides flexibility of application across various communication media. The decoding process shows a variety of responses. For the Javanese community, this logo evokes nostalgia for traditional kitchens, family bonds, and the authenticity of homemade flavors. Meanwhile, for a wider audience, it still sends a clear message about spiciness, warmth, and the originality of a local product, differentiating it from generic commercial chili pastes.

To map out meanings and visual strategic opportunities, the analysis continues with the SWOT framework. It is found that the strength of the logo lies in its capacity to voice an authentic cultural identity through symbols. Opportunities lie wide open in the form of visual storytelling, cultural collaboration, and the utilization of digital channels. However, visual complexity at a small scale and the rapid flow of minimalist design trends represent challenges that must be anticipated. These findings are then incorporated into the visual SWOT Matrix, which blends strengths and opportunities as the basis for a locality-based brand strengthening strategy, while making weaknesses and threats a foundation for mitigation in the branding architecture. Thus, this description emphasizes that the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo does not stop at a mere visual identity function, but transforms into a multi-layered, meaningful, and effective symbolic narrative in weaving brand identity. It does not merely communicate the existence of the product, but also revives the rhythm of tradition, courage in flavor, and the spirit of togetherness while establishing its position in the local landscape as an authentic, down-to-earth icon with a cultural soul.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo is not merely an identifier but transforms into a culturally meaningful system. Drawing upon Umberto Eco's semiotic framework, this analysis demonstrates how each visual element in the logo serves as a medium to communicate values, ideology, and brand identity. The configuration of visual elements does not merely convey a message of spicy chili paste but weaves emotional and cultural

bonds. The red chili signifies the courage and strength of Javanese culinary arts; the circle of fire communicates enthusiasm, warmth, and stability; while the spelling "Jowo" marks the intimacy of identity. The color palette is not only aesthetically pleasing but also creates a psychological and symbolic atmosphere that aligns with the product character. The analysis emphasizes that the embedded meaning is open, depending on the interpretative horizon of the audience. For the Javanese community, these signs evoke nostalgia for traditional kitchens and home memories, while the general audience captures nuances of locality, originality, and flavor intensity that reinforce brand differentiation.

The SWOT approach confirms that the primary strength of the logo lies in its robust and appetizing cultural identity. Opportunities emerge through visual storytelling strategies, cultural collaboration, and digital media exploration. Challenges such as competition and shifts in design trends can be anticipated through adaptive strategies without losing the essence of its identity. Therefore, the Sambal Dapur Jowo logo can be viewed as a flexible, recognizable, and communicative combination of text and imagery. It conveys product identity and narrates a cultural story. The semiotic approach is proven relevant in uncovering the depth of visual messages, while serving as a foundation for MSMEs and designers intending to build brands rooted in local values.

Based on the visual SWOT Matrix mapping, several strategic recommendations can be offered for the visual branding development of Sambal Dapur Jowo and similar local culinary MSMEs. First, awareness must be raised that visual elements, colors, shapes, and symbols are not merely aesthetic ornaments but strategic communication tools that differentiate a brand in a crowded market. Symbols such as the circle of fire, red chilies, and the "Jowo" typography should be maintained as the core identity, but given a creative touch to remain relevant to current trends. Second, in facing competitors who also promote values of authenticity, the brand needs to reinforce its visual differentiation. This can be achieved through cultural storytelling, such as narratives on Javanese kitchen philosophy, illustrations of carvings, batik motifs, or the atmosphere of traditional eateries. This approach will strengthen local appeal while maintaining uniqueness amidst a visual landscape that tends to be homogeneous. Third, to address readability limitations at a small scale, it is recommended to create adaptive logo variants, such as monochrome versions, an isolated chili-and-fire icon, or typography without additional elements. This flexibility will maintain consistency across various media, from miniature labels to digital platforms.

Fourth, to address minimalist design trends, traditional elements can be preserved through simplified graphic stylization without losing their symbolic meaning. In this way, a balance between rich tradition and alignment with contemporary tastes can be maintained. Fifth, the term "Jowo" should be retained as a marker of locality. However, to ensure inclusivity, an explanatory narrative or tagline in Indonesian or English should be added, so that non-Javanese speakers can still understand the underlying philosophical message. Finally, visual identity must not function as a static emblem. The embedded Javanese values can be activated through interactive promotional strategies, including educational digital content, collaborations with cultural communities, and participation in culinary festivals. Consequently, the logo serves not only as a symbol but also as an entry point into a broader and deeper narrative. Through these steps, Sambal Dapur Jowo is expected to preserve and strengthen its identity while addressing visual communication challenges. This strategy can serve as a model for other MSMEs in developing sustainable, meaningful, and competitive brands based on local values.

References

- Adams, S., & Morioka, N. (2009). *Logo design workbook: A hands-on guide to creating logos*. Beverly, MA: Rockport Publishers.
- Ambrose, G., & Harris, P. (2011). *The fundamentals of typography* (2nd ed.). Lausanne, Switzerland: AVA Publishing.
- Barthes, R. (1957). *Mythologies*. Paris, France: Seuil.
- Bungin, B. (2011). *Penelitian kualitatif: Komunikasi, ekonomi, kebijakan publik, dan ilmu sosial lainnya*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Kencana Prenada Media.
- Chalil, M. (2021). *Branding dan identitas visual*. Medan, Indonesia: USU Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dian, R. (2013). *Brand identity dan logo dalam strategi pemasaran*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Andi Offset.
- Dinas Koperasi dan UKM Kota Bandung. (2024). *Laporan UMKM Kota Bandung 2024*. Bandung, Indonesia: Dinas Koperasi dan UKM Kota Bandung.
- Eco, U. (1976). *A theory of semiotics*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Eiseman, L. (2006). *Color: Messages and meanings: A PANTONE color resource*. Gloucester, MA: Hand Books Press.
- Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2021). *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa.
- Klimchuk, M. R., & Krasovec, S. A. (2006). *Packaging design: Successful product branding from concept to shelf* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Harlow, England: Pearson Education.
- Magnis-Suseno, F. (1993). *Etika Jawa: Sebuah analisa falsafi tentang kebijaksanaan hidup Jawa*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Gramedia.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Nainggolan, A. (2018). *Keunggulan kompetitif dalam strategi bisnis*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Mitra Wacana Media.
- Rafika, M. (2010). *Ekonomi mikro dan UMKM di Indonesia*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Kencana Prenada Media.
- Rosalina, E. (2010). *Strategi brand identity dalam komunikasi pemasaran*. Bandung, Indonesia: Alfabeta.
- Rufaidah, N. (2015). *Manajemen pemasaran: Konsep dan aplikasi dalam bisnis*. Bandung, Indonesia: Alfabeta.
- Satori, D., & Komariah, A. (2014). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. Bandung, Indonesia: Alfabeta.
- Saussure, F. de. (1959). *Course in general linguistics*. New York, NY: Philosophical Library.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode penelitian kualitatif, kuantitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung, Indonesia: Alfabeta.
- Sumbo, M. (2009). *Komunikasi visual: Konsep dan aplikasi kreatif*. Jakarta, Indonesia: RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Wijaya, B. (2019). *Brand management: Strategi membangun merek yang kuat*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Wu, S. C., & Ho, C. W. (2014). The influence of brand knowledge on purchase intention: An empirical study of college students in Taiwan. *Journal of International Management Studies*, 9(1), 1–6.