

# Proceeding

*by* Elisabeth Christine Yuwono

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**Submission date:** 31-Aug-2022 11:41AM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 1889841082

**File name:** 11682-Article\_Text-57293-1-10-20220811.pdf (2.35M)

**Word count:** 3322

**Character count:** 18269

Research article

# Representation of Yogyakarta's Identity Through Graphic Elements of Local Chocolate Packaging

Elisabeth Christine Yuwono<sup>1\*</sup>, IGAK Satria Wibawa<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Design, Faculty of Art and Design, Petra Christian University, Surabaya

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya

**ORCID**

Elisabeth Christine Yuwono: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3049-4860>

**Abstract.**

This research aimed to identify how Yogyakarta's local identity is represented through visual elements in chocolate product packaging. Qualitative methods were used with textual analysis of three brands of chocolate products. The product packages were analyzed descriptively in terms of the design elements of the packaging, and a literature review was conducted. The results indicated that the identity of Yogyakarta is represented through the cultural elements attached to Yogyakarta on the packaging. The identity displayed tends to be a stereotype, through the visualization of historical relics and traditions that are still firmly held in Yogyakarta. This study concludes that packaging design is an important factor in communicating Yogyakarta's identity. This role can be seen from the illustrations and the language used, the variety of flavors, as well as the selection of materials for the packaging.

**Keywords:** packaging, identity, local identity, graphic elements, representation

Corresponding Author: Elisabeth Christine Yuwono; email: [xine\\_y@petra.ac.id](mailto:xine_y@petra.ac.id)

Published 11 August 2022

Publishing services provided by Knowledge E

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the ICADECS Conference Committee.

## 1. Introduction

Currently, there are many chocolate bar products produced by small industries in various regions in Indonesia, especially Yogyakarta. In fact, chocolate bars can be said to have become one of the alternatives that are sought after by tourists, as souvenirs or souvenirs from Yogyakarta. According to the prevailing custom, when a person goes to a place or area, especially for a trip, generally he will buy something to be used as a souvenir, be it goods or food. Souvenirs have even become an obligation for some people. Of course, someone will choose goods or food that is typical of the area, which as much as possible does not exist in other areas. Typical here can also be interpreted as representing an area through its uniqueness.

This is an interesting phenomenon, because chocolate which was originally closer to European culture, is now one of the souvenir products from Yogyakarta which is very

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**How to cite this article:** Elisabeth Christine Yuwono\*, IGAK Satria Wibawa, (2022), "Representation of Yogyakarta's Identity Through Graphic Elements of Local Chocolate Packaging" in *International Conference on Art, Design, Education and Cultural Studies (ICADECS) 2021, KnE Social Sciences*, pages 358–367. DOI 10.18502/kss.v7i13.11682

thick with Javanese culture. This cannot be separated from the strategy adopted by chocolate producers so that it succeeded in influencing the minds of consumers (tourists) that chocolate bars are also a typical product from Yogyakarta, one of which is through its packaging. The packaging of these chocolate bars has become the spearhead of marketing because so far, producers have not advertised their products in the media so that the introduction of consumers to the product is only through the packaging. Thus, it can be assumed that packaging plays an important role, not just in introducing the product, but more than that, the chocolate packaging is able to convince consumers as a typical product of Yogyakarta.

This study aims to identify graphic elements that are visually displayed on chocolate packaging produced by Yogyakarta. Based on this identification, it will then be seen how the identity of Yogyakarta is constructed through the visual elements contained in the chocolate packaging, so that the identity can represent or be perceived as typical of Yogyakarta.

The research entitled "Yogyakarta's Local Chocolate Packaging, Graphic Elements, and Local Identity Representation" aims to identify graphic elements that are visually displayed and how Yogyakarta's local identity is represented through visual elements in chocolate product packaging.

### 1.1. Packaging Role

Promoting and selling a product requires the right marketing strategy. In today's era, competition is getting tougher, so we need the right strategy so that a product can be recognized by potential consumers. According to Fill [1], the method that is widely used in marketing is to use the promotional mix, which consists of advertising (advertising), personal selling, sales promotion (sales promotion), and publicity (public relations). The more thorough in implementing the promotional mix, the more effective it is in marketing a product. This strategy requires substantial funds. Products on a small industrial scale generally do not have large enough funds to carry out the promotion mix strategy above. A possible solution is through personal selling, one of which is through attractive packaging.

Well-designed packaging will be able to attract the attention of potential consumers, especially when potential consumers are faced with a variety of products. Research conducted by Cahyorini and Rusfian [2] shows that packaging design contributes to purchasing decisions by potential consumers and the element of packaging design that drives purchases is graphic design.

Packaging as part of marketing needs to be designed with attention to visual aspects in order to be able to express the quality and the personality of the product brand, and is expected to create an emotional connection with consumers [3]. Good packaging must at least have the following graphic elements [3]; [4]; [5], namely: (1) Color; (2) Shape; (3) Brand/logo; (4) Pictures/illustrations; (5) Letters/typography.

## 1.2. Cultural Identity

Identity indicates the way an individual or group is distinguished in relation to other individuals or groups. Similarities and differences are key principles in identity or identification and are central to human life [6].

According to Hall [7], culture is an actual domain that is deeply rooted, consisting of practices, representations, languages, and customs that exist in society. Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) identifies three distinctive aspects of culture. The first is to interpret culture as 'the whole pattern or configuration of values and meanings in society. Secondly, it covers all forms of culture, whether 'high', 'popular' or 'low'. And thirdly, viewing this expressive form as an integral part of social life [8]. Based on the two understandings above, it can be said that cultural identity refers to the overall way of life of a society that distinguishes it from the way of life of other communities.

## 2. Method

This study uses qualitative methods, with textual analysis to make it easier to interpret 'text' as a meaningful reality. The research focuses on identifying the graphic elements in Yogyakarta's local chocolate packaging and the characteristics of Jogja that are displayed through these graphic elements. The graphic elements studied include color, design style, letters/typography, packaging materials/materials, name selection, and illustrations/photos.

The research will be conducted on the three biggest local Jogja chocolate brands in terms of production and distribution. In addition, the selection of the three chocolate brands is also based on the packaging design that displays the characteristics of Jogja.

## 3. Findings and Discussion

### 3.1. Graphic Elements on Chocolate Packaging Represent Culture

#### 3.1.1. Illustration

The illustrations or pictures on Monggo's chocolate packaging use characters in puppet, namely Gareng, Petruk, Semar, and Mulatani. There are various types of puppets in Indonesia, ranging from *Wayang Orang*, *Wayang Kulit*, *Wayang Golek* to *Wayang Potehi*. The puppet stories are also diverse and have undergone many developments, ranging from adaptations of the Ramayana and Mahabharata stories - which feature characters such as Bima, Gatotkaca and Wisanggeni and Punakawan which are displayed in local Jogja chocolate packaging - to displaying cultural symptoms at that time [9].

The Punakawan character himself is a character that only exists in Indonesian puppet is mixed with the story of the Mahabharata. Punakawan figures are also a description of the diverse conditions of Javanese society, according to Tanudjaja [10] "... (Punakawan) his characters indicate variously roles, such as advisor to knights, entertainers, social critics, clowns and even sources of truth and virtue".



Figure 1: Puppet Illustration on Chocolate Packaging.

On the Joyo and Monggo chocolate packaging, there are illustrations of historical places or areas, namely Vredeborg Fort, Malioboro, and Borobudur Temple. Vredeborg Fort was built in 1760 by the Dutch government as a strategy to guard towards the Yogyakarta Kraton attack under the rule of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono I. Currently, Vredeborg Fort functions as a museum and becomes a tourist attraction, as well as cultural [11].

The Malioboro area is one of the main tourist destinations in Yogyakarta, which has become an icon of the city of Yogyakarta. Jalan Malioboro was established to coincide with the establishment of the Yogyakarta Palace. In Sanskrit, the word "Malioboro"

means a bouquet of flowers. This is believed to be related to the past, namely when the Kraton held a big event, Malioboro Street would be filled with flowers. The word "Malioboro" also comes from the name of a British colonialist named Marlborough who lived there from 1811 to 1816 AD. In the past, Malioboro Street had an important role in the independence era (post-1945), as an area where Indonesian people fought to defend independence in the battles that took place in the north-south along the way [12]).



Figure 2: Joyo Chocolate Packaging.

The nDalem chocolate packaging uses an illustration with the visualization of two people sitting on the floor and drinking together. The drink is described as smoky which indicates the drink is hot, which in Javanese is called *wedang*. *Wedang* is a traditional drink in the form of a drink served hot. As a people's drink, *wedang* has existed since time immemorial and is easy to find in Java. The habit of drinking *wedang* is usually done with several people while talking. The packaging illustrates two people sitting on the floor holding a cup of hot drink. The *lesehan* position is a sitting pose without a chair which is usually done by the Javanese. Symbolically, the pose shows a relaxed, intimate, and family atmosphere. On the other hand, *lesehan* can also be interpreted as an attitude of humility. *Lesehan* poses are still often found in Jogja, especially in places to eat.

### 3.1.2. Language

The use of names for Monggo, Joyo, and nDalem chocolates is very synonymous with Javanese. 'Monggo' in Javanese means 'please'. The people of Jogja often say the word





Figure 3: Dalem Chocolate Packaging.

'monggo' while holding up their thumbs, or when we pass in front of people, and when we invite people to enter someone's house or leave someone's house [13].

'Joyo' in Javanese means triumph or success. The name 'Joyo' chocolate itself is based on the hope that the business will be successful and victorious. In addition, based on an interview with the owner of the 'Joyo' chocolate business, namely Renny Sukmasari, the choice of the word 'Joyo' is also based on the proximity of the vowel sound in the initial syllable to the word 'Jogja'. (R. Sukmasari, personal interview, May 18, 2014). This is also a strategy to make it easier for consumers to remember 'Joyo' chocolate as a souvenir from Jogja.

While the word 'nDalem', in Javanese means house. Home is a place where a person lives, a gathering place for a family. Home is synonymous with a person's place and memories of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Associated with the tagline "Heartfully made chocolate", nDalem chocolate is positioned to be chocolate made with all the heart, as a souvenir from home, namely Jogja.

### 3.1.3. Taste Variant of Yogyakarta specialty drink/ Wedang

The flavor variant is also an element of the product that is shown on the packaging of nDalem chocolate by writing a description of the taste, namely types of traditional drinks, such as *wedang ronde*, *wedang bajigur*, and *wedang uwuh*. *Wedang* with various types is a traditional drink of Jogja. The main ingredients for making *wedang* are spices such as ginger, cinnamon, lemongrass, lime leaves, cloves, vanilla, and nutmeg. Illustrations

of *wedang bajigur*, *wedang ronde*, and *wedang uwuh* as flavor variants are the variants that best show the uniqueness of Jogja. *Wedang* is a heritage of the rich repertoire of ingredients from Jogja and is full of noble values. *Wedang uwuh* is one of the typical herbal ingredients of Jogja which has been produced based on ancestral heritage and is hereditary [14].

### 3.1.4. Packaging Materials

Recycled paper is paper produced from recycled waste paper. What is unique about recycled paper is the resulting texture and color. In Monggo's chocolate packaging, which uses recycled materials, the paper has a brownish yellow color, thus reinforcing the traditional impression. Something that is traditionally associated with the color brown. This is possible because the paper is starting to turn yellow or brown, indicating that the paper is old. Likewise, traditions that are passed down from generation to generation are identified with a long period of time.

## 3.2. Graphic Elements on the Packaging as Representation of the Local Identity

In the case of Jogja chocolate packaging, it appears that producers place the identity of 'Jogja' as the main identity of their chocolate products, therefore the method is to use a local content approach that reflects the perception of Jogja's identity from the producer's point of view. According to Jenkins (2008), the way a person sees his/her identity is closely related to how other people see that person's identity; how a cultural group perceives and interprets their identity reflects how other groups outside the cultural group identify with them.

From the explanation above, it can be seen the elements that build the perception of Jogja's identity. The visual approach is widely used to represent the uniqueness of Jogja. In addition, there are also other elements such as taste, packaging materials, and the use of Javanese language, especially the brand name.

The city of Jogja is known to strongly adhere to the traditions of the past: the identity of the past (retrospective mirror) is an inseparable part of the present life of the people of Jogjakarta. This cultural identity is expressed through the material and non-material culture which is then applied to the packaging of Jogja's local chocolate. Burke [15] stated that the past plays an important role in interpreting identity: Who is who and What is what. In the case of society, the past involves history.



The elements used in the packaging of Jogja's local chocolates show a lot of the history of Jogjakarta, as seen in the visual elements of illustrations of historical places. This shows that history is considered an integral and very important part of the identity of the City of Jogjakarta, both now and in the future (prospective mirror).

Meanwhile, Kenneth Burke argues that language plays an important role (especially to understand a word denotatively and connotatively), how "language representation explains a reality of all identities that are detailed and then compared" [16]. The naming of chocolate using the Javanese language and the meaning of the chosen brand name indirectly implies the identity of the city of Jogja. The name chocolate 'Monggo' which in Indonesian means 'please' displays the typical politeness in Javanese culture.

On the other hand, the media has an important role in shaping public perception. In this modern era, people receive a lot of information about people and places that are unknown or have never been visited before, either through television, radio, newspapers, or the internet. The information is packaged in such a way, with a certain style of language, and is often accompanied by visual images or videos which can ultimately influence people's perceptions of the place or person covered [17]. Furthermore, advertisements that are designed and designed to form certain perceptions also have a role in shaping people's perceptions of the identity of a person or a place.

This information about Jogja then forms an 'ideal' perception of Jogja or a stereotype: people expect something traditional Javanese from the city of Jogja. In the context of tourism, this stereotype certainly affects the tourist's travel plans in the city of Jogja, to the selection of souvenirs or souvenirs purchased. Souvenirs are a souvenir to remember the place visited while souvenirs can be said to be proof to others that they have visited the place.

## 4. Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, it can be seen that the packaging of Jogja chocolate displays the identity of Jogja which is perceived by chocolate producers. These perceptions are communicated to the audience or target market through the elements in the packaging. The result of this producer's perception is accepted by the target market as a unique identity of Jogja or something that is expected by the target market as something unique to Jogja (stereotype). The formation of stereotypes towards the city of Jogja is strongly influenced by the coverage and information conveyed through the media. In the case of the city of Jogja, the stereotypes displayed highlight the historical heritage and traditions that are still firmly held in Jogjakarta. As a discourse for local

product producers from other regions, historical and traditional heritage can be used as an alternative to communicate local cultural identity through product packaging. However, it is necessary to pay attention to the adjustment of cultural values that are still firmly held and considered important by the region, or in other words, a deep introduction to local identity is needed.

Thus, packaging design plays an important role in communicating Yogyakarta's identity, which supports the marketing of Jogja's local chocolate. This can be seen from the illustrations, the language used, the flavor variants, and the selection of materials for the packaging. It is possible that other factors outside of packaging design, of course, also influence potential buyers in purchasing chocolate decisions, namely promotion, relevance of packaging design/visual style to the target audience group, price, product characteristics, characteristics of the place of sale, product placement in stores, and flavour.

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