



VISUAL LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI CLOTHING BRAND LOGOS

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Abstract

In the modern era, logos are powerful visual tools that envelop a brand's identity, cultural significance, and consumer appeal. A significant number of studies are available on semiotic analysis; however, limited research exists on the semiotic analysis of Pakistani clothing brand logos. Thereby, the current study aims to explore the semiotic dimensions of Pakistani clothing brand logos by adopting the theoretical lens of Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model. For the current study, four Pakistani clothing brands, like Khaadi, Ideas, Bonanza Satrangi, and Zellbury, are selected. The study examines how logos visually communicate the brand's identity and the language of logos. The findings of the study highlighted that color schemes, typography, shapes, and design of logos provide sophistication, elegance, and authenticity to the consumerism of South-Asian markets. It also shows that logos are not merely identifiers but also act as cultural identities that influence consumer perceptions and emotional engagement. The current research holds significance for scholars of visual culture, marketing communication, and cultural studies that offer insights into how brand logos function as a tool of meaning-making in a globalized fashion industry.

Keywords: *Clothing Brands, Logos, Pakistan, Semiotics, Visual Communication.*

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1. Introduction

In the modern world, visuals have replaced the traditional way of presenting values, ideas, and cultures in the fast-paced marketplace. Globalization and the development of digital media have expanded the use of visuals for brand identity (Amatulli et al., 2016). Semiotics is the study of symbols and signs. The concepts in semiotics include sign, signifier, signified, semiosis, arbitrariness, and structuralism. Gestures, postures, and all body language come under the umbrella of semiotics. It is a framework that helps in creating clear meanings of perspectives hidden within the logos of the brands. It helps in the understanding of meanings that lie in signs, images, and social practices.

In semiotics, there are two influential personalities, Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce, whose work provides a thorough lens for the interpretation of signs and images across cultural and social contexts. Pierce's model presented the triadic relationship among sign, object, and interpretant in creating meanings (Peirce, 1931–1958). Peirce's model helps in the exploration of visual elements and how these visuals convey meanings within a specific context.

Semiotic analysis has significant importance in the interpretation of the meanings. It shows that in advertisements, images, symbols, and signs convey specific messages across the target audience Zakir (2014). Logo designs are helpful in constructing perceptions of the audience. A brand communicates with the help of a logo that presents cultural meanings that are within visuals (Ali, 2024).

In the context of Pakistan, the fashion industry presented logos to show traditions, norms, modernity, and innovation that reflect the nation's culture. Pakistani brands like Khaadi, Bonanza Satrangi, Ideas, and Zellbury have specific logos that make them stand confidently in the marketplace due to the richness of innovation and heritage. The logo of the brand Khaadi has stylistic hand motifs depicting the ancient clothing that is a sign of genuineness and authenticity (Ali, 2024).

Despite such cultural and innovative richness, there must be some research focus on the semiotic analysis of Pakistani clothing brands. Previous research focused on the semiotic analysis of visuals like advertisements and posters. To fill the gap in previous

research, the current study aims to semiotically analyze the Pakistani clothing brand logos. It helps in understanding the cultural meanings along with the innovativeness. How brands are using visuals to attract the audience is also studied. Prominent brands like Khaadi, Bonanza Satrangi, Ideas, and Zellbury are selected for the current study. Peirce's triadic model is adopted to analyze the logos of such brands. The current study adopted the following research questions:

1. How do Pakistani clothing brand logos semiotically communicate their brand identity and values?
2. What cultural meanings and associations are expressed through the brand logos?

2. Literature Review

In modern branding, logos have become more than mere determinants of businesses. Logos represent the central values, identity, and cultural narratives of the brands they denote. Semiotic analysis has emerged as an important tool for deconstructing the visual language rooted in logos, providing insights into how symbols, colors, and typography convey deeper meanings to the audience. This section of the study reviews existing literature that explores the significance of semiotic analysis in branding. The particular focus is on clothing brands and investigates the application of semiotics in logo designs. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols that play an important role in branding, particularly in logo design. Peirce's semiotic theory divides signs into icons, indexes, and symbols, each contributing uniquely to meaning-making in brand logos (Afisi, 2020). In the context of Pakistani clothing brands, logos serve not only as identifiers of the brands but also as representatives of cultural, social and emotional values.

A semiotic analysis of symbols and meanings in Dan Brown's 2013 novel, "Inferno," was conducted (Wikipedia contributors, 2025b). The research adopted a descriptive qualitative approach and utilized Charles Sanders Peirce's (1991) semiotic theory model. The findings of the study highlighted 30 indexes that are related to Christianity (Kusumoriny, 2019). Furthermore, a semiotic examination of interactive banner advertisements uses both syntactic and paradigmatic approaches. The research utilized Berger and Luckman's framework. The analysis of the study focused on textual and visual elements. It focuses on interactive resources and design quality with a methodology rooted in the literature of experience (Zhen, 2019).

Furthermore, research was carried out on Covid-19 street banners, that was a mode of communication during the pandemic. The analysis of the study used sign theory as the model. Findings of this study indicated that these banners in COVID-19 played a mandatory role in circulating information and lessening the spread of the virus (Lestari, 2021). In addition, the names of online Acehnese newspapers were studied using semiotic theory (Arafah, 2023). A qualitative approach with content analysis was followed in the research. The analysis of the study showed that the choice of flag colors strengthened the nation's identity. The white color symbolizes purity, honesty, and innocence.

Additionally, to design the brand identity, visual elements like color, typography, and images are essential. An international research study was conducted on the famous 500 brand logos, and the results of the study highlighted that the use of words, the choice of natural color, and the visuals play a strategic role in engaging the huge audience (Emerald Insight, 2023). Such features play a vital role in engaging a huge number of people and spreading the brand identity.

In the context of Pakistan, the clothing brand logos use the semiotic features to represent the cultural identity that is associated with the audience. A study followed Barthes' theory to analyze the advertisements of clothing brands. The findings of the study highlighted that both linguistic and visual features play a significant role in constructing the cultural and ideological meanings (Shahzadi & Maqbool, 2020). In the same way, research focused on the semiotic investigation of logo designs within Pakistani clothing brands (Ali, 2024). This study revealed the importance of color patterns, icons, and typography in interpreting customer perceptions.

Moreover, the portrayal of gender in media, especially in advertisements, is another significant element of semiotic examination. The print media in Pakistan, particularly advertisements, also contributes to the format of clothing brand identities (Umar & Rasul, 2020). These print media emphasize how choices in language and demographic presentations build and boost gender identities. Their socio-semiotic opinion shares the picture of conventional gender roles and the influence of these gender depictions on public understandings.

The taglines used by brands work as comprehensive reflections of their identity and values. Javed and Sadiq (2024) explored a critical discourse analysis of Pakistani clothing brands on the basis of their taglines. This study uncovered the linguistic strategies that make ideologies and influence consumer behavior. Their findings underscore the importance of language in branding and its role in shaping consumer perceptions.

Hence, after reviewing the literature, the current study aims to explore the selected brand logos semiotically. Charles Sanders Peirce's theory is applied to analyze all logos based on icons, indexical, and symbols.

3. Research Methodology

The current research adopts a qualitative semiotic analysis to analyze Pakistani clothing brand logos. The methodology is designed to provide a deep analysis of selected brand logos. For semiotic analysis, four prominent Pakistani clothing brands are selected that includes, *Khaadi*, *Bonanza Satrangi*, *Ideas*, and *Zellbury*. These brands were selected due to their popularity in South-Asian markets. All selected brands are culturally rooted in the Pakistani context.

3.1. Research Design and Approach

The study utilizes descriptive, qualitative, and analytic methods to analyze the logos of selected brands semiotically. The study is based on the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce using his triadic model that includes sign (representation), object (signified), and interpretant (viewer's interpretations). Analyzing the logos of these four selected clothing brands will show how these logos function as signs in Pakistani society. The logos will be analyzed thoroughly in terms of visuals, iconic, and symbolic elements that include typography, colors, symbols, shapes, and texts. The logos of the four selected brands, *Khaadi*, *Bonanza Satrangi*, *Ideas*, and *Zellbury*, are collected from their official websites and social media platforms. These logos will be examined in both digital and print formats to ensure consistency in analysis.

3.2. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are mandatory to ensure the research's validity and credibility. As the study involves analyzing publicly available brand logos, there is no direct interaction with human participants. However, care will be taken to ensure that all logos used are credited to their respective brands, respecting copyright and intellectual property laws. All selected logos are fully accredited by adding references.

The current study deals with the following objectives:

1. To investigate the Pakistani clothing brand logos semiotically to comprehend how logos help to communicate brand identity and values.

2. To explore the cultural meanings and associations that are conveyed through the brand logos.

3.3. Limitations of the Study

For the current study, it is mandatory to accept the limitations of the research. The main focus of the study is on the analysis of four selected Pakistani clothing brand logos. It is feasible that these samples may not define the entire South-Asian fashion industry. Furthermore, the explanation of semiotic components is subjective and can differ based on several social and cultural contexts. Despite these conditions, the research offers a comprehensive semiotic investigation of elected Pakistani clothing brands.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

This part of the paper examines deeply into the logos of four famous Pakistani clothing brands: Khaadi, Bonanza Satrangi, Ideas, and Zellbury. The logos of all chosen brands are investigated through a semiotic framework, primarily determined by the theories of Charles Sanders Peirce. The objective of this study is to understand how these logos transfer the brand identity, cultural values, and social messages through visual components such as signs, symbols, and semiotic codes. The study investigates several components of logos, including typography, colors, shapes, and symbols, in order to declare the deeper meanings fixed in these logos. This study is based on Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic sign model, which classifies signs as icons, indexes, and symbols.



4.1. Khaadi's Logo

In the Pakistani context, the Khaadi brand is categorized as the dominant clothing brand. The logo indicates the brand's connections in traditional Pakistani textiles while simultaneously appealing to a modern, diverse, and stylish audience. The logo features a distinct typographical design with bold, uppercase letters. The letters are slightly stylized to approach traditional embroidery or woven threads, showcasing the handmade artistry connected with Khaadi's textile craftsmanship.

4.1.1. Iconic Elements

In sessions of iconic semiotics, Khaadi's logo utilizes shape and form to highlight the brand's identity of authenticity, tradition, and craftsmanship. The robust and extended

characters in the lettering imitate the conventional patterns found in fabrics. The font's design visually connects to the material it underscores, positioning the brand as an authentic and skilled one, fixed in local craftsmanship.

4.1.2. Indexical Elements

The logo's indexical features are present in its color palettes. Utilizing a dark color (typically black) with lighter accents makes the logo easily visible and recognizable, both in online and physical contexts. The dark shade also presents as an indicator of complication and luxury, depicting a quality often linked with Khaadi's premium offerings.

4.1.3. Symbolic Elements

In conditions of symbolism, the letters in "Khaadi" carry cultural implications. The word "Khaadi" denotes hand-woven fabric, a traditional Pakistani material. The brand name's persistent connection with local culture and history makes it a potent cultural logo. The term generates nationalist feelings, pride in local crafts, and a connection to Pakistani culture.

4.2. Bonanza Satrangi's Logo



Bonanza Satrangi is a well-known clothing brand. The brand features a logo that combines modern design with cultural resources. The brand's combination of bold and italic fonts indicates a feeling of motion and inauguration, aligning with the company's identity as a modern, progressive fashion house.

The logo of the Bonanza Satrangi brand is a strong representation of Pakistani fashion brands that are famous for their traditional and modern blend. It shows a fine floral pattern that is entirely black and minimalist typography with uppercase letters. The logo's visual representation reveals a purposeful design strategy that aims to convey elegance with cultural heritage. Its colourful palette, specific geometric forms, and symbols rooted in culture not only deliver a modern branding method but also present a link to local values and visual customs. This fusion positions the logo as a platform for complex semiotic interpretations, specifically when examined through Peirce's sign categories.

4.2.1. Iconic Elements

The iconic representation indicates the importance of a sign in visuals. The logo of the brand “Bonanza Satrangi” is created to represent the South Asians’ traditional elements. It shows a specific floral pattern, while fine textile prints and embroidery can be seen in the clothing. It is a perfect example of architectural elements. The iconic design of Bonanza Satrangi represents the historical designs within the South Asian art context. It has been so popular fashion style throughout the Pakistani context.

The logo’s coherence and radial balance creatively provoke natural forms such as flowers or celestial bodies, frequently associated with aesthetics, balance, and design. As a result, the symbol serves an iconic purpose since it visually expresses culturally embedded artistic elements that the brand aims to portray. This agrees with Peirce's idea of an icon, as its form represents characteristics that are visually prominent and culturally explored.

4.2.2. Indexical Elements

The representation of elements through a direct design and the use of contextual association is known as indexical elements. In the Pakistani context, the black color of the Bonanza Satrangi logo creates considerable indexicality. Black is commonly associated with complexity, authority, power, elegance and formality in both fashion and cultural values. It is a color frequently selected for formal wear and religious events, thereby spreading seriousness, experience, sophistication and respect. The balanced design of the logo further presents values such as consistency, order, and dependability. These attributes are desirable for a fashion brand planning to build itself as both luxurious and trustworthy. Furthermore, the pattern of visual elements and the clear typography transfer a modern and global aesthetic, indicating that the brand aims to meet international standards while remaining fixed in cultural traditions.

4.2.3. Symbolic Elements

Symbolic elements represent the meanings that originate from traditional contexts instead of casual connections. The words in the brand names “Bonanza” and “Satrangi” play a symbolic role in the motif. ‘Bonanza’ is an English word that represents prosperity, blessing, and a boon that indicates diversity and richness. These features attract customers towards the brand. Conversely, "Satrangi" is an Urdu word that means "seven-colored," presenting variance, vibrancy, and inclusiveness, like the rainbow. Together, the names indicate a mixture of international elegance with local cultural richness. The neutral and

modern typography conveys a dual message of professionalism and modernity that avoids creating complexity for the audience. Such symbolic features of the ‘Bonanza Satrangi’ logo represent cultural and linguistic knowledge for the audience, but only interpreters can understand this better. It conveys Peirce’s concept of symbolic signs.

In short, the Bonanza Satrangi logo reveals a well-structured interaction of icon, index, and symbol. It efficiently spreads the brand’s identity using visual and textual semiotics. The logo presents not only visual fascination but also represents cultural values and ambitions that make it a profound space for semiotic analysis.

4.3. Ideas’ Logo



The sub-brand of Gul Ahmed Textile Mills is “Ideas”, which has a refined and simple logo, which is a sign of elegance and simplicity. The typography shows simplicity and elegance with slightly tilted and bold letters. The Ideas’ logo depicts a green soft color design that seems abstract, which is a symbol of textile structure and freshness. The letters are lowercase and rounded sans-serif font style. The use of lively, fresh colors, simple design components, and gentle visual language constructs the logo to correspond with the branding values that produce specific cultural elements. This visual perspective holds deep layers of semiotic importance, especially when examined through Peirce's notions of icon, index, and sign.

4.3.1. Iconic Elements

Iconically, the Ideas logo shows a stylized flower, clover, or textile logo, composed of four soft-edged rectangular forms organized in a cross-like structure. It may provoke the image of cloth designs or printing blocks used in traditional textile manufacturing, which strongly echo with the tradition of Gul Ahmed as a textile achiever. This outline shape iconically presents nature and fabric designs, as it visually echoes forms familiar in local fabric art, embroidery, or floral design. Its soft edges and symmetrical form further contribute to an iconic reading of nature, softness, and balance that are qualities often emphasized in fabric-based industries.

4.3.2. Indexical Elements

The green color in the motif works as a key indexical indication in Pakistani cultural history. The green color is extremely attached to the Islamic identity and is particularly identified in the national flag of Pakistan, where it represents prosperity,

peace, and growth. As such, the green color used in the Ideas logo indexes national pride and religious connotations, while also suggesting eco-consciousness, renewal, and vitality. Moreover, the lowercase typography in a soft, rounded typeface indexes modernity, friendliness, and accessibility, traits that a mass retail fashion brand would want to project. The use of such typography avoids rigidity and hierarchy, suggesting inclusivity and contemporary relevance.

4.3.3. Symbolic Elements

Symbolically, the brand name "ideas" depicts connotative meaning far beyond its literal reading. In a symbolic sense, the word suggests creativity, innovation, and forward-thinking, qualities that align with the brand's vision of offering innovative and affordable fashion. The symbol does not directly resemble or point to clothing or textiles, but through cultural and linguistic convention, the word "ideas" symbolizes the concept of conceptual thinking and style development. Additionally, the abstract floral mark symbolically suggests continuity, harmony, and tradition when interpreted within the cultural semiotic system of South Asian design heritage.

The use of lowercase letters also symbolizes modesty, innovation, and a non-authoritarian brand voice. In contemporary branding, this is a common symbolic strategy to appeal to the younger, urban consumers by suggesting friendliness and approachability. The symmetrical sign and minimal use of visuals further symbolize cleanliness, quality, and refined taste.

Through the triadic lens of Peirce's semiotic theory, the Ideas logo reflects a thoughtful interplay of signs that communicates the brand's core identity as modernism, rooted in cultural aesthetics, and committed to innovation. Its iconic abstraction of natural and textile elements, its indexical use of green and soft typeface, and its symbolic references to imagination and accessibility all work collectively to present Ideas as a trustworthy, culturally aware, and forward-looking fashion brand in the Pakistani market.



4.4. Zellbury's Logo

Zellbury is approximately a new but swiftly growing brand. It has a logo that connects a bold typeface with the cultural pattern. The clarity of its font and the unique color preferences used in its design position it as a modern, youthful, and reasonable brand catering to the fashion-forward consumer.

4.4.1. Iconic Elements

The iconic features of Zellbury's logo involve its bold and geometric typography. The use of clear and bold lines in the logo represents a more recent aesthetic, engaging a younger demographic involved in up-to-date and trendy fashion. The clarity of the design reveals minimalism and highlights functionality over embroidered decoration.

4.4.2. Indexical Elements

Zellbury's logo uses sparkling colors, particularly its striking use of mixed orange and red, which can be investigated as contextual signs of brightness, youthfulness, and energy. These colors are culturally connected with passion, warmth, and energy in the Pakistani context. It depicts well the brand's positioning as a modern and reasonable option for young and fashion-conscious customers.

4.4.3. Symbolic Elements

The name "Zellbury" involves symbolic implications tied to modern and contemporary luxury. The name itself is specifically Western in its sound and appearance, which could indicate the brand's global reach and its attention to presenting itself as a bridge between traditional and recent aesthetics.

The semiotic analysis of the four selected clothing brand logos, such as Khaadi, Bonanza Satrangi, Ideas, and Zellbury, confirms how each brand uses visual and textual elements to communicate specific meanings and cultural associations. The following key findings arose from the analysis:

4.5. Cultural Resonance in Logo Design:

Every brand logo uses semiotic symbols that are deeply engaged in Pakistani cultural factors. Khaadi's use of traditional patterns communicates a connection to heritage and craftsmanship, while Bonanza Satrangi's use of black and modern fonts indicates celebration and trendiness. This highlights that these brands purposefully use cultural patterns to captivate customers' emotions and unite feelings.

4.5.1. Typography and Brand Identity

The typeface of the logos is pivotal in representing the brand's identity. Khaadi's complex font indicates heritage, whereas Zellbury's striking, geometric style appeals to the modern, youth-focused audience. These font preferences suit the brands' identities as

either classic or modern. It also explains how typography can work as a symbolic identifier of a brand's values.

4.5.2. Color Significance

In the logos, the color patterns are not only artistic choices, but they also present circumstantial signs that transfer specific conventional meanings. Such as, Khaadi's logo color can be expressed as a sign of grace, although the green color in Ideas' logo indicates trust and style. In Zellbury's logo, the use of cheerful and decent colors makes Zellbury a youthful and active brand.

4.5.3. Brands' Distinction through Semiotics

The blend of icons, signs, and symbols is used by every brand to make itself prominent in the Pakistani marketplace. The representation of Khaadi is strongly decided by the idea of tradition, while the brand Bonanza Satrangi depicts itself as a modern brand with its lively colors and stylish fonts. The selected Pakistani brands' images highlight refinement and style, whereas a youthful, fashionable population indicated by Zellbury. These explanations indicate that semiotic investigation can expose how brands construct their visual identity to different customer sections.

Basically, the semiotic patterns of four famous Pakistani clothing brand logos investigated by this research include Khaadi, Bonanza Satrangi, Ideas, and Zellbury. In this examination, Charles Sanders Peirce's triplet model of the sign (icon, index, symbol) is applied. The study aimed to indicate how these visual symbols show brand identity and convey underlying cultural values.

The study found that every logo intentionally uses a mixture of visual components like typography, color, and layout to set up brand identity and meet customer expectations. Khaadi's logo features a traditional lettering design and neutral colors to reflect its heritage-driven identity. The name itself conveys an iconic and symbolic nod to handwoven fabric, associating the brand with its Pakistani cultural heritage. Bonanza Satrangi's logo, featuring bright shades and a modern typeface, presents celebration and variety, indicating the brand's philosophy of inclusive and vibrant fashion. The term Satrangi (seven colors) presents a cultural and symbolic marker, presenting a wide range of fashion options. Ideas uses minimalist typography and cool, muted colors that symbolically deliver modernity, elegance, and high quality. This is consistent with its identity as a refined and city-oriented brand. On the other hand, Zellbury's striking,

youthful fonts and vibrant color selections present as indicators of moderation, confidence, and fashionable trends, attracting a modern and younger audience.

It is summarized that the current study provides a beneficial semiotic method for identifying how brands present their identity and link with their target market. Every one of the four brands under examination makes a distinct brand image that matches with customers on an emotional and cultural level by using semiotics.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the results of the research support the view that logos function as notable semiotic mechanisms rather than just decorative components, enabling brands to form and reveal meaning. According to Peirce, icons (visual likeness), indexes (relationships based on causality or context), and symbols (arbitrary signs grounded in tradition) all work jointly within brand motifs to declare messages about the brand's identity, principles, and cultural importance. The research also presented that color indicates a figurative purpose across all four examined logos, like the *Zellbury* logo shows celebration, whereas the rich green in *Ideas* indicates solidity and worthiness, presenting a connection with nature.

Similarly, typeface is not only a dull design element but a culturally meaningful symbol that affects understanding, whether it reveals tradition, as seen in *Khaadi*, or modern elegance, as explained by *Ideas*. The term *Satrangi* (seven colors) presents a cultural and symbolic marker. The *Bonanza Satrangi* logo is enriched with cultural markers. Finally, the research demonstrates how semiotic examination can expose the underlying meanings fixed within brand logos. It provides valuable observations into how Pakistani clothing brands involve visual language to link with cultural values and customer identities. This opinion not only helps in recognizing brand communication programs but also enriches the broad analysis of visual culture and customer semiotics in South Asia. Future examinations could expand this framework by involving audience reception research, cross-cultural associations, or extensive investigation of how brand logos change over time in line with developing social values and market dynamics.

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