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SWOT AND TOWS ANALYSIS OF THE BOLU SUSU LEMBANG BRAND: A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN THE CULINARY SOUVENIR INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the internal and external factors and to formulate a business development strategy for the Bolu Susu Lembang brand store located in the Cileunyi area, East Bandung, using SWOT analysis and the TOWS matrix. Competition among culinary souvenir businesses in the Greater Bandung area has intensified as the number of similar businesses grows and consumer shopping behavior changes. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with purposively selected informants, namely the store manager, sales and marketing staff, and customers. The data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, then mapped into a SWOT matrix and formulated into alternative strategies through the TOWS matrix. The results show that the store's main strengths are the brand image of Bolu Susu Lembang, which is already well known as a signature souvenir of Bandung, its consistent taste and product quality, and its strategic location on the main Cileunyi route, the eastern gateway to Bandung. Its weaknesses include dependence on passing travelers and the holiday season, the short shelf life of the products, limited stock during peak demand, and suboptimal digital marketing. The main opportunities include the high mobility of travelers passing through Cileunyi, the growth of e-commerce and online delivery services, the student market in the Jatinangor–Cibiru education area, and demand for hampers. The main threats come from the large number of souvenir shops and similar sponge cake brands along the Cileunyi route, fluctuating raw material prices, and changing consumer tastes. Based on the TOWS matrix, four groups of strategies were formulated: (1) SO strategies, namely strengthening digital marketing and optimizing the location to capture passing travelers; (2) ST strategies, namely taste differentiation and supplier partnerships; (3) WO strategies, namely online sales supported by packaging and delivery that preserve product freshness, together with a pre-order system; and (4) WT strategies, namely cost efficiency and market diversification beyond the passing-traveler segment. This study offers practical implications for souvenir store managers in formulating competitive strategies suited to the characteristics of their location.

Keywords: SWOT Analysis, TOWS Matrix, Bolu Susu Lembang, Cileunyi, Business Development Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

The culinary industry in Indonesia has grown significantly over the past decade. The sector has become one of the largest contributors to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorbs a large share of the workforce. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, the culinary subsector accounts for more than 40% of the creative economy's total national contribution (Kemenparekraf, 2022). This growth has been driven by increasing public mobility, the development of tourism, and changing consumer lifestyles, with consumers increasingly keen to seek out regional specialty foods, including souvenir products.

Bolu susu (milk sponge cake) is one of the culinary souvenirs most closely associated with Bandung's identity. The product originates from Lembang, West Bandung Regency, an area known as a dairy farming center, which makes fresh milk its signature ingredient. The popularity of bolu susu subsequently spread across Greater Bandung, so that bolu susu brands are no longer sold only in Lembang but also through stores located at strategic points throughout the city. This is in line with Kotler et al. (2022), who state that a strong brand carries symbolic and emotional value for consumers, enabling it to build loyalty and facilitate market expansion. This popularity has also been reinforced by *electronic word of mouth*, which has proven effective in marketing Bolu Susu Lembang products (Kristanto et al., 2024).

One such strategic point is the Cileunyi area of Bandung Regency, located in East Bandung. Cileunyi serves as the eastern gateway to Bandung, as it is where the Cileunyi Toll Gate meets the arterial roads leading to Sumedang, Garut, and Tasikmalaya. The area is also close to the educational centers of Cibiru and Jatinangor, home to many students from outside the region. These conditions make Cileunyi a busy route for passing travelers, both on ordinary days and during holiday and mudik (homecoming) seasons, and many souvenir shops have sprung up along its main road.

Bolu Susu Lembang is a bolu susu brand that is widely known among consumers and has a store in the Cileunyi area. Unlike its Lembang outlets, which rely on tourists, the Cileunyi store's customers are dominated by travelers buying souvenirs on their journey, students, and local residents. At the same time, the store faces intense competition, as many nearby souvenir shops and similar sponge cake brands offer comparable products at more competitive prices. This situation requires the store manager to formulate a business development strategy suited to the characteristics of the Cileunyi market. Similar challenges are faced by other food MSMEs in Bandung, which must strengthen product development and market penetration, including through digital marketing, to keep their businesses growing (Aurellia et al., 2024).

According to David et al. (2023), in a dynamic business environment, companies need to conduct strategic analysis periodically to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats they face. SWOT analysis is a strategic tool widely used to map internal and external conditions in both large companies and small and medium-sized enterprises (Benzaghta et al., 2021). However, SWOT analysis alone is considered insufficient because it is merely descriptive and does not yet produce concrete action strategies. For this reason, the TOWS matrix is used, as it is oriented toward formulating strategies based on the interaction between internal and external factors (David et al., 2023), as applied in formulating strategies for food-processing MSMEs in Bandung (Aurellia et al., 2024).

The TOWS matrix offers a more practical approach by generating four groups of strategies: SO (*Strength–Opportunity*), ST (*Strength–Threat*), WO (*Weakness–Opportunity*), and WT (*Weakness–Threat*). This approach allows business owners to formulate aggressive, diversification, turnaround, and defensive strategies in an integrated manner. Research on food MSMEs has also shown that mapping internal and external factors through a SWOT matrix is effective in determining alternative strategies that fit a business's conditions (Wardahiljannah et al., 2025). Accordingly, SWOT analysis and the TOWS matrix provide an appropriate framework for formulating a business development strategy for the Bolu Susu Lembang brand store in Cileunyi amid increasingly intense competition in the culinary souvenir industry.

Based on the foregoing, this study aims to: (1) identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by the Bolu Susu Lembang brand store in Cileunyi, East Bandung, based on the views of the informants; and (2) formulate alternative business development strategies through the TOWS matrix.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business Development Strategy

Strategy is the means by which a company achieves its long-term objectives, for example through market development, product development, market penetration, or diversification (David, 2011). Hunger and Wheelen (2011) add that strategy is a comprehensive plan stating how a company will achieve its mission and objectives by maximizing competitive advantage and minimizing weaknesses. Business development strategy can thus be understood as a series of decisions and actions designed to increase business growth, whether through market expansion, product improvement, or better marketing practices. Porter (1980) emphasizes that competitive advantage can be built through generic strategies, one of which is differentiation, namely offering products that consumers perceive as unique.

Brand Image and Souvenir Products

Brand image is consumers' perceptions of and beliefs about a brand, as reflected in the associations held in their memory (Kotler & Keller, 2016). For souvenir products, brand image plays an important role because consumers buy not only a taste but also symbolic value as a signature gift from a particular region. A brand that has become synonymous with its region of origin makes purchase decisions easier and encourages loyalty, making it a strategic asset when a business expands its store network beyond its home region.

Digital Marketing and *E-Commerce*

Digital marketing enables brands to reach consumers more widely through social media at a relatively lower cost than conventional marketing (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Meanwhile, *e-commerce* gives small businesses the opportunity to expand their markets without depending on a physical location, as transactions can be conducted through *marketplaces*, apps, and delivery services (Laudon & Traver, 2020). For souvenir businesses that depend on in-person visits, these two channels offer an alternative way to sustain sales outside the peak season.

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Internal, External, and SWOT Analysis

Internal environment analysis is the process of identifying factors that originate within the organization, lie within its control, and affect its ability to achieve its objectives. According to David et al. (2023), internal factors serve as the basis for establishing objectives and strategies to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses. These factors can be traced across management, marketing (product, price, distribution, promotion, and brand image), finance, human resources, operations (production capacity, product quality, and supply chain), and research and development. The results of the internal environment analysis are formulated as strengths and weaknesses.

External environment analysis aims to identify factors beyond the company's direct control that may affect the achievement of its objectives. The external environment can be divided into three: the general (macro) environment, the industry environment, and the competitor environment (Hitt et al., 2020). The macro environment is analyzed using the PESTEL approach, covering political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors. The industry environment is analyzed using the five competitive forces: the threat of new entrants, the bargaining power of suppliers, the bargaining power of buyers, the threat of substitute products, and the intensity of rivalry among competitors. Competitor analysis, meanwhile, seeks to understand competitors' objectives, strategies, assumptions, and capabilities. The results of the external environment analysis are formulated as opportunities and threats.

SWOT analysis is the systematic identification of strategic factors to formulate an organization's or company's strategy (Rangkuti, 2016). It helps organizations identify internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats (Phadermrod et al., 2019), while the SWOT matrix is used to develop strategies by matching the strengths and weaknesses an organization has with the opportunities and threats it faces (David et al., 2023). SWOT analysis is therefore used not only to list factors but also to examine the relationship between internal and external conditions in formulating strategy. These relationships are then developed through the TOWS matrix into alternative SO, WO, ST, and WT strategies (Benzaghta et al., 2021).

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. Qualitative research is an approach to understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem through data in the form of words rather than numbers (Creswell & Poth, 2023). A case study is an approach that explores in depth a contemporary, real-life case or bounded system through detailed data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2023). This approach was chosen because the study seeks to understand in depth the strategic condition of the Bolu Susu Lembang brand store in Cileunyi and to formulate its business development strategy based on the views of those directly involved, rather than to test hypotheses.

The study was conducted at the Bolu Susu Lembang brand store located in the Cileunyi area, Bandung Regency (East Bandung), West Java. This location was chosen because it lies on the main route of Bandung's eastern gateway, which is busy with passing travelers and surrounded by many competing souvenir shops, making it relevant for examining business development strategy amid competition. The study was carried out over three months, namely September and October 2026.

The data source for this study is primary data obtained entirely through interviews. Informants were selected using *purposive sampling*, a technique for selecting informants based on specific considerations, such as choosing the people considered most knowledgeable about the subject under study (Sugiyono, 2022). The informant criterion was being directly involved in the store's operations or being a customer of the Cileunyi store. Based on these criteria, four informants were selected: the store manager/head as the key informant (I1), a sales and marketing staff member (I2), a regular customer from among local residents or students around Cileunyi (I3), and a passing customer buying souvenirs while traveling (I4).

The only data collection technique used was the *in-depth interview*. An interview is a meeting between two people to exchange information and ideas through questions and answers, allowing meaning to be constructed around a particular topic (Sugiyono, 2022). The interviews were semi-structured, using a pre-prepared interview guide while still allowing the researcher to ask follow-up questions as the conversation developed. The interview guide was organized around the four aspects of SWOT analysis: (1) the store's strengths, such as brand, product, price, location, and service; (2) the store's weaknesses in operations, production, and marketing; (3) opportunities arising from the market, technology, and the characteristics of the Cileunyi area; and (4) threats arising from competitors, raw materials, and changes in consumer behavior. Each interview was recorded with the informant's consent and then transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data validity was tested through source triangulation, namely comparing and cross-checking information obtained from different informants, for example comparing the store manager's statements with those of staff and

customers (Sugiyono, 2022). In addition, *member checking* was carried out by reconfirming summaries of the interview results with the informants to ensure that the researcher's interpretations matched what the informants meant (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model, which consists of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2022). In the condensation stage, the researcher selected, simplified, and coded the interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2021); each informant statement was grouped into the category of strength (S), weakness (W), opportunity (O), or threat (T). Internal factors were grouped by management, marketing, finance, human resources, operations, and research and development (David et al., 2023), while external factors were grouped by the macro environment (PESTEL), the industry environment (five competitive forces), and the competitor environment (Hitt et al., 2020). Factors mentioned by more than one informant or emphasized by the key informant were designated as strategic factors. In the display stage, these factors were organized into an internal factor table, an external factor table, and a SWOT matrix. Finally, in the conclusion-drawing stage, internal and external factors were paired in the TOWS matrix to generate alternative SO, ST, WO, and WT strategies (David et al., 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Bolu Susu Lembang Store in Cileunyi

The Bolu Susu Lembang brand store in Cileunyi is one of the outlets that market bolu susu as a signature Bandung souvenir. Its main product is a milk-based sponge cake in a range of flavors, such as original, chocolate, cheese, and pandan. In addition to sponge cakes, the store also sells complementary products such as brownies, milk pies, and hamper packages. The store operates every day and is located on Cileunyi's main road, which carries traffic to and from the Cileunyi Toll Gate as well as the routes toward Sumedang and Garut.

Based on interviews with the store manager (I1), the store's customers fall into three main groups: travelers buying souvenirs on their journey; students and residents around Cileunyi, Cibiru, and Jatinangor; and customers ordering hampers for family events and institutions. The store manager stated that the brand's vision is to become "an iconic Bandung souvenir recognized nationwide." To realize this vision, the store combines in-store sales, orders via text messaging and online delivery services, and sales through resellers.

Identification of Internal Factors

Internal factors were identified from the informants' statements about conditions within the store that can be controlled by the manager. Condensation of the interview data produced five strength factors and five weakness factors, grouped according to the aspects of the internal environment (David et al., 2023), as presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Internal Factors of the Bolu Susu Lembang Store in Cileunyi

Code	Internal Factor	Aspect	Summary of Interview Findings
Strengths			
S1	The Bolu Susu Lembang brand image is widely known as a signature Bandung souvenir	Marketing (brand image)	Buyers come because they already know the brand and need little persuasion
S2	Distinctive milk flavor and consistent product quality	Operations (product quality)	Soft texture and consistent taste are the reasons customers make repeat purchases
S3	Variety of flavors and attractive packaging suitable for souvenirs	Marketing (product) and R&D	The choice of flavors and packaging is considered practical and suitable as a gift
S4	Strategic store location on Cileunyi's main road	Marketing (distribution/location)	The store is easily accessible to travelers coming from the toll road or the Sumedang–Garut route
S5	Established reseller network and ordering services	Marketing (distribution) and management	Part of the sales comes from resellers and orders placed via text messaging
Weaknesses			
W1	Dependence on passing travelers and the holiday season	Marketing (target market)	Sales are high on weekends and long holidays but decline on ordinary days

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Code	Internal Factor	Aspect	Summary of Interview Findings
W2	Perishable products with a short shelf life	Operations and R&D	The sponge cakes last only a few days, making long-distance shipping difficult
W3	Prices relatively higher than local sponge cake brands around Cileunyi	Finance (cost structure) and marketing (price)	Some consumers compare prices with the souvenir shop next door
W4	Limited stock and production capacity during peak demand	Operations (production capacity)	During holiday and mudik seasons, certain variants sell out quickly
W5	Suboptimal digital marketing	Marketing (promotion) and HR	The store's social media is rarely updated and the store is not yet active on *marketplaces*

Source: Interview results, processed by the researchers (2026)

Table 1 shows that the strengths most frequently mentioned by informants are brand image (S1) and store location (S4). All customer informants stated that the name "Bolu Susu Lembang" is already synonymous with Bandung souvenirs, so purchase decisions are made relatively quickly. The location on Cileunyi's main road is also an advantage because the store sits at a point that travelers pass before entering the toll road or when exiting toward the east. Meanwhile, the most prominent weaknesses are dependence on passing travelers (W1) and suboptimal digital marketing (W5). These two weaknesses are interrelated: because sales still rely on walk-in buyers, the store has no other strong channel to sustain sales on ordinary days.

In terms of aspects, the store's strengths are concentrated in marketing, namely brand image, location, and distribution network, and in operations, in the form of consistent product quality. Conversely, its weaknesses are spread across marketing (dependence on a single market segment and weak digital promotion), operations (product shelf life and production capacity), and finance (a cost structure that keeps prices relatively high). This pattern indicates that marketing is simultaneously the store's greatest source of strength and of weakness: the store excels in direct sales channels but lags behind in digital channels.

Identification of External Factors

External factors were identified from informants' statements about conditions outside the store that cannot be directly controlled but affect business performance. These factors were grouped by the macro environment (PESTEL), the industry environment (five competitive forces), and the competitor environment (Hitt et al., 2020). The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 External Factors of the Bolu Susu Lembang Store in Cileunyi

Code	External Factor	Environmental Aspect	Summary of Interview Findings
Opportunities			
O1	High mobility of travelers at Bandung's eastern gateway	Macro – social (population mobility)	Traffic from the toll road and the Sumedang–Garut route rises sharply during long holidays and mudik
O2	Growth of *e-commerce* and online delivery services	Macro – technological	Orders through delivery apps have begun to increase, although they have not yet been seriously pursued
O3	Student and out-of-town resident market in the Cibiru–Jatinangor education area	Macro – social (demographic)	Students from outside the region buy souvenirs when returning to their hometowns
O4	Demand for hampers and gift packages	Macro – sociocultural	Orders increase ahead of religious holidays, family events, and institutional activities
O5	Support from MSME digitalization programs	Macro – political (government policy)	Digital marketing training and programs are available from the government and online *platforms*
Threats			

Code	External Factor	Environmental Aspect	Summary of Interview Findings
T1	Intense competition from souvenir shops and similar sponge cake brands along the Cileunyi route	Industry (intensity of rivalry) and competitors	Many nearby shops sell similar products, some at lower prices
T2	Fluctuating raw material prices	Macro – economic; industry (supplier bargaining power)	Rising prices of milk, eggs, flour, and sugar squeeze margins
T3	Changing consumer tastes	Macro – social; industry (substitute products)	Some consumers look for low-sugar products and trendy snacks
T4	Economic uncertainty and purchasing power	Macro – economic; industry (buyer bargaining power)	Consumers are more selective in buying souvenirs when their expenses rise
T5	Traffic congestion at the Cileunyi junction and the availability of souvenirs at toll road *rest areas*	Macro – environmental (infrastructure); competitors (rest areas)	Some travelers are reluctant to stop because of congestion and choose to buy at *rest areas*

Source: Interview results, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 2, the strongest opportunities are the mobility of travelers in the Cileunyi area (O1) and the growth of online sales (O2). Informant I2 noted that orders through delivery apps have started coming in even though the store has not actively promoted this channel. The most emphasized threat is competition from nearby souvenir shops (T1). A threat specific to the Cileunyi location is congestion at the Cileunyi junction and the availability of souvenirs at toll road *rest areas* (T5), which may reduce the number of travelers who stop at the store.

From the perspective of the external environment framework, the store's opportunities stem mainly from the macro environment, namely social factors (traveler mobility, the out-of-town student market, and the culture of giving hampers), technological factors (the growth of e-commerce and online delivery services), and political factors in the form of government policies promoting MSME digitalization. Conversely, threats arise mostly from the industry and competitor environments, namely the intensity of rivalry among souvenir shops, the bargaining power of raw material suppliers, the threat of substitute products such as trendy and low-sugar snacks, the increasing bargaining power of buyers when purchasing power weakens, and souvenir sellers at toll road rest areas that compete directly for passing travelers.

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is the systematic identification of strategic factors to formulate an organization's or company's strategy (Rangkuti, 2016). According to David et al. (2023), the SWOT matrix is used to develop company strategies by matching the company's strengths and weaknesses with the opportunities and threats it faces. Phadermrod et al. (2019) add that SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool that helps organizations identify internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats. Strengths are internal capabilities or resources that give the business an advantage over competitors; weaknesses are internal limitations that hinder business performance; opportunities are favorable external conditions that can be exploited; and threats are external conditions that could harm or disrupt the business. In this study, strengths and weaknesses were derived from the internal environment analysis (Table 1), while opportunities and threats were derived from the external environment analysis (Table 2). All of these factors were then mapped into the SWOT matrix in Table 3.

Table 3 SWOT Matrix of the Bolu Susu Lembang Store in Cileunyi

Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)

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Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**
S1. Brand image widely known as a signature Bandung souvenir	W1. Dependence on passing travelers and the holiday season
S2. Distinctive taste and consistent quality	W2. Short product shelf life
S3. Variety of flavors and attractive packaging	W3. Relatively higher prices
S4. Strategic location on Cileunyi's main road	W4. Limited stock during peak demand
S5. Reseller network and ordering services	W5. Suboptimal digital marketing
Opportunities (O)	**Threats (T)**
O1. High traveler mobility at Bandung's eastern gateway	T1. Intense competition from similar souvenir shops
O2. Growth of *e-commerce* and online delivery	T2. Fluctuating raw material prices
O3. Cibiru–Jatinangor student market	T3. Changing consumer tastes
O4. Demand for hampers and gift packages	T4. Economic uncertainty and purchasing power
O5. MSME digitalization programs	T5. Congestion and souvenirs at toll road *rest areas*

Source: Interview results, processed by the researchers (2026)

The SWOT mapping shows that the position of the Bolu Susu Lembang store in Cileunyi rests on two main assets: brand image and location. The brand image means travelers need little deliberation before buying, while the location at Bandung's eastern gateway places the store on a route used by many potential buyers. However, these two assets also create dependence: sales become highly sensitive to the volume of passing traffic. When traffic is heavy or travelers choose to buy at *rest areas*, the store loses some of its buyers. This finding confirms that the strategy needed is not only to maintain strengths but also to build sales channels that do not depend on in-person visits.

In keeping with its function, the SWOT analysis in this study does not stop at a list of factors but is used to examine the relationship between internal and external conditions. For example, the strengths of brand image and distinctive taste (S1, S2) meet the opportunity of growing online sales (O2), yet this opportunity remains untapped because of weak digital marketing (W5) and the short shelf life of the products (W2). Conversely, the strength of location (S4), on which the store has long relied, is in fact vulnerable to the threat of congestion and competitors at toll road rest areas (T5). It is these relationships that are subsequently translated into alternative strategies through the TOWS matrix.

TOWS Matrix and Strategy Formulation

The TOWS matrix is a situational analysis tool that matches external threats and opportunities with a company's internal weaknesses and strengths to generate alternative strategies (Weihrich, 1982). The letters TOWS deliberately begin with the external factors (T and O) to emphasize that strategy formulation starts from the environmental conditions the company faces. According to David (2011), the matrix produces four types of strategies: SO, WO, ST, and WT. The advantage of the TOWS matrix over SWOT is its ability to turn a list of factors into concrete courses of action, since each strategy arises from a clearly defined pair of factors. The resulting strategies are presented in Table 4.

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Table 4 TOWS Matrix of the Bolu Susu Lembang Store in Cileunyi

Factors	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
Strengths (S)	**SO Strategies (Aggressive)** SO1. Expand digital marketing through social media, *marketplaces*, and delivery apps by highlighting the brand image and distinctive taste (S1, S2 + O2) SO2. Develop hamper and gift packages featuring a variety of flavors and attractive packaging (S3 + O4) SO3. Optimize the strategic location with clear signage and a quick pick-up service for travelers during long holidays (S4 + O1) SO4. Target out-of-town students in Cibiru–Jatinangor with homecoming-season promotions (S1, S4 + O3)	**ST Strategies (Diversification)** ST1. Strengthen differentiation in taste and quality to stand out from competitors along the Cileunyi route (S2 + T1) ST2. Establish long-term partnerships with raw material suppliers to maintain prices and quality (S2 + T2) ST3. Develop low-sugar/healthy variants building on the strength of product variety (S3 + T3) ST4. Build a customer loyalty program leveraging the brand image (S1 + T4) ST5. Use resellers and delivery services to reach consumers who are reluctant to stop because of congestion (S5 + T5)
Weaknesses (W)	**WO Strategies (*Turnaround*)** WO1. Use airtight packaging and fast delivery to keep products fresh when sold online (W2 + O2) WO2. Optimize digital marketing by taking advantage of MSME training programs to reduce dependence on passing travelers (W1, W5 + O2, O5) WO3. Implement production planning and a *pre-order* system ahead of long holidays and religious holidays (W4 + O1, O4) WO4. Offer small-size packages at affordable prices for students (W3 + O3)	**WT Strategies (Defensive)** WT1. Improve operational efficiency and cost control to cope with price competition (W3 + T1, T2) WT2. Develop products with a longer shelf life and healthy variants (W2 + T3) WT3. Diversify into segments beyond passing travelers, such as local residents, institutions, and online buyers (W1 + T4, T5) WT4. Partner with resellers and local MSMEs to add sales points without significantly increasing the production burden (W4 + T1)

Source: Interview results, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 4, each group of strategies is discussed below.

1. SO Strategy (*Strength–Opportunity*): Aggressive Strategy

An SO strategy uses a company's internal strengths to take advantage of external opportunities. Rangkuti (2016) refers to this position as an aggressive strategy, one that supports growth because the company has both strengths and opportunities. For the Bolu Susu Lembang store in Cileunyi, the strengths of its brand image and distinctive taste can be leveraged to expand digital marketing through social media, *marketplaces*, and delivery apps (SO1). According to Tuten and Solomon (2017), digital marketing enables brands to reach consumers more widely at a relatively lower cost than conventional marketing.

In addition, the store's location on Cileunyi's main road should be optimized to capture the surge of travelers during long holidays and mudik, for example through signage that is easily visible from the road and a quick pick-up service for buyers who have ordered in advance (SO3). The out-of-town student market in Cibiru and Jatinangor can also be targeted through promotions ahead of semester breaks and religious holidays (SO4), while demand for hampers can be met with gift packages that make use of the variety of flavors and packaging (SO2).

2. ST Strategy (*Strength–Threat*): Diversification Strategy

An ST strategy uses internal strengths to avoid or reduce the impact of external threats. In this position, the company has strengths but faces threats, so the strategy is directed toward diversification (Rangkuti, 2016). Intense competition from souvenir shops along the Cileunyi route calls for clear differentiation. The store can strengthen its differentiation through its distinctive milk flavor and consistent quality (ST1). According to Porter (1980), differentiation is one of the generic strategies effective in building competitive advantage, because consumers are willing to pay more for products they perceive as unique.

The threat of fluctuating raw material prices can be anticipated through long-term partnerships with suppliers (ST2), which not only stabilize prices but also safeguard raw material quality. Developing low-sugar variants (ST3) responds to increasingly health-conscious consumers, while a loyalty program (ST4) helps retain

customers when purchasing power weakens. To deal with congestion at the Cileunyi junction, the store can make use of resellers and delivery services (ST5) so that its products can still be purchased without customers having to stop.

3. WO Strategy (*Weakness–Opportunity*): *Turnaround Strategy*

A WO strategy aims to overcome internal weaknesses by taking advantage of external opportunities. Rangkuti (2016) calls this a *turnaround* strategy, one that minimizes internal problems so the company can seize better market opportunities. The store's main weaknesses are its dependence on passing travelers and the short shelf life of its products. The *e-commerce* opportunity can be used to reduce this dependence through online sales supported by airtight packaging and fast delivery so that products remain fresh when they reach consumers (WO1). According to Laudon and Traver (2020), *e-commerce* enables small businesses to expand their markets without depending on a physical location.

Optimizing digital marketing is also a priority (WO2). The interviews revealed that the store's social media is rarely updated and the store is not yet active on *marketplaces*; this weakness can be addressed by joining MSME digitalization training programs. To address stock running out quickly during long holidays, the store needs to implement production planning and a *pre-order* system (WO3), while small packages at affordable prices can answer price objections from the student segment (WO4).

4. WT Strategy (*Weakness–Threat*): Defensive Strategy

A WT strategy is a defensive strategy that aims to minimize internal weaknesses while avoiding external threats. According to Hunger and Wheelen (2011), a defensive strategy does not necessarily mean retreat; it can take the form of consolidation and efficiency to maintain market position. For the Bolu Susu Lembang store in Cileunyi, operational efficiency and cost control (WT1) are needed to cope with price competition and rising raw material costs. Developing products with a longer shelf life and healthy variants (WT2) can reduce the risk of unsold products while responding to changing consumer tastes.

Furthermore, diversifying into segments beyond passing travelers, such as local residents, institutions, and online buyers (WT3), can reduce the risk of declining sales on ordinary days and when the Cileunyi route is congested. Partnerships with resellers and local MSMEs (WT4) can also add sales points without requiring large production investments.

Strategy Priorities

Based on the convergence of the informants' views, the most urgent strategies to implement are those related to strengthening digital channels, namely SO1, WO1, and WO2. These three strategies were chosen because they directly address the store's main weakness, its dependence on passing travelers, while leveraging the brand image it already has. The next priorities are SO3 and WO3 to maximize sales during the holiday season, followed by ST1 to maintain differentiation amid competition from souvenir shops around Cileunyi.

CONCLUSION

Based on the interviews and SWOT analysis, the Bolu Susu Lembang brand store in Cileunyi, East Bandung, has as its main strengths a brand image widely known as a signature Bandung souvenir, consistent taste and quality, and a strategic location on the main route of Bandung's eastern gateway. Its main weaknesses are dependence on passing travelers and the holiday season, the short shelf life of its products, limited stock during peak demand, and suboptimal digital marketing. The greatest opportunities come from traveler mobility, the growth of online sales, the Cibiru–Jatinangor student market, and demand for hampers, while the greatest threats come from competition with similar souvenir shops, fluctuating raw material prices, changing consumer tastes, and congestion in the Cileunyi area.

Through the TOWS matrix, four groups of strategies were formulated: SO (aggressive) strategies through digital marketing and location optimization; ST (diversification) strategies through taste differentiation and supplier partnerships; WO (*turnaround*) strategies through online sales with freshness-preserving packaging and a *pre-order* system; and WT (defensive) strategies through cost efficiency and market diversification. Overall, the store needs to prioritize strengthening its digital channels, reinforcing partnerships, and continuing to innovate in product development so that it does not depend solely on passing travelers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The store manager is advised to promptly activate sales through *marketplaces* and delivery apps, update social media content regularly, and implement a *pre-order* system ahead of long holidays and religious holidays. This study is limited in that it examined only one store in Cileunyi, with a limited number of informants and data drawn solely from interviews. Future research is therefore advised to involve more informants and several souvenir

shops in East Bandung for comparison, and to use a quantitative approach to measure the impact of the formulated strategies more rigorously.

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