

Smartphones vs Cameras: Aesthetic Analysis of Wedding Photos and Their Implications for the Needs of the Commercial Industry (Case Study of Wedding Photos on I Love Bali Photography)

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ABSTRACT

In every wedding event, documentation is important. The use of cameras like professional cameras has become commonplace, currently there is a phenomenon of using *smartphone* cameras as a new alternative or supporting means in wedding photo documentation. The results provided by each of these cameras certainly have differences both technically and non-technically, the output media produced. Therefore, the research with the aesthetic comparison method of wedding photos is carried out based on aesthetic theory as the main foundation in this research process. So it gives the implication that the use of *smartphone* cameras today can be a means of support for professional camera users, and there is a possibility that in the future the use of *smartphone* cameras can really compete and even replace the role of professional cameras in terms of quality and photo results.

INTRODUCTION

Photography has a role in almost all forms of activities, one of which is in the field of commercial industry, if commercial photography is defined as photography that is carried out for advertising purposes, be it advertisements in magazines and newspapers, posters, billboards, POP (*Point of Purchase*) materials, and various marketing supporting materials for a brand. ("*Being A Commercial Photographer*") . The role of photography in the commercial industry is very important because it is a medium to convey information to the (Enche Tjin & Erwin Mulyadi, 2014) *audience*. One of the commercial industries that uses photography as an information medium is the wedding business. Wedding photography has an important role in wedding events in conveying information, both for marketing purposes and just capturing the wedding moment itself. Wedding Photography is a genre of photography that is related to commercial and is usually conceptualized by the organizers. For its creation, it is not only based on the idealism of the photographer but must be based on the wishes of the client (bride/bride's family). Understanding each wedding procession is very necessary to maintain the essence and capture the solemn moment of the wedding. .(Sella et al., 2024)

Based on this explanation, it can be understood that wedding photography is an implementation of the need for documentation, journalistic and *fine art photos that are commercial for business purposes*. *The media/output of wedding photos is also growing, which was initially only limited to print media (photo paper, canvas, album, and others)* is now more developed towards digitalization such as (*websites, social media, and other platforms*) following existing technological developments. The development of photography ideas and technology has an influence on the work of photography itself, starting from the pre-photography era, analog photography, digital photography, *mirrorless camera photography*, to smartphone camera photography.

Photography activities today no longer have to use special cameras, but tend to use *more smartphone* camera facilities that are designed to capture all activities in a practically balanced manner with good results. As explained in the article The development of smartphone camera technology has affected the product photography industry in the following ways: Increasing accessibility and convenience, with the availability of increasingly quality smartphone cameras, product photography has become easier and more affordable for anyone. This allows many people to take photos of their own products without having to spend money on a professional photographer. Increasing competition, with the easier it is to take photos of products using (Lightbox Studio, 2024). *smartphone* cameras, the competition in the product photography industry is becoming more and more fierce. Professional photographers must adapt to this new technology in order to remain relevant in the market.

Based on these examples, it can be understood that technological developments encourage professional photographers to adapt and be able to follow market needs, be it product photography and other types of photography. There is no exception in the commercial industry such as wedding photos. One of the wedding photo service businesses in Bali that combines smartphone photos and professional camera photos is I Love Bali Photography.

I Love Bali Photography is a wedding documentation photo service provider that has been established in Denpasar, Bali from 2013 until now. With more than a decade of experience, of course, there are many cases/phenomena of business competition in the wedding industry.

One of the implementations carried out by I Love Bali Photography in responding to this phenomenon is to include "photographer content" in every *wedding event* that uses their services. The photographer's content has a role in capturing the *moment* professionally with the help of a *smartphone device*. The *moments* recorded are photo and video content from *behind the scenes* of the main photographer and *the moment* of the event, be it the bride, *venue*, decoration and other supporting factors, all of these moments are recorded using a *smartphone camera*. So it is considered appropriate if it is used as an object or case study in this research.

The use of *smartphones* has become a lifestyle for millennials. Photographic results are not only easy to remember, but sometimes have an important role and are always interesting to see and observe because they have a high documentary value. The need for photo content in several digital media encourages the use of (Rusdi et al., 2016) *smartphones* to be the easiest choice to use in photography activities in the wedding photo industry. For example, with the many *wedding content creator* service providers in Bali using *smartphone* cameras, such as on the Instagram accounts @herdigitaldiaries.id, @brideswhisperer, @baliwedding_cc and many more. The provision of content services has emerged as an effect of the wedding photography business, especially in Bali, which is very massive. Modern bridal-style weddings (foreign brides) that usually use the services of *wedding organizers/wedding planners*, with short scale (duration 2 hours – 4 hours) and long scale (duration 8 hours-12 hours) are very much held almost every week in Bali in certain seasons. Based on data from one of the wedding business websites, Bridestory, starting from the first three months of 2024, brides-to-be who registered on the Bridestory platform and actively accessed it through applications and *mobile browsers* managed to reach nearly 1.1 million users, an increase of 30% compared to the fourth quarter at the end of last year. This shows that many of the bride-to-be couples are planning their special day. (*Bridestory Quarterly Statistics January - March 2024 - Bridestory Business Blog* , n.d.)

The implication is that many vendors such as: Hotel/Villa, *Wedding Planner*, Photographer & Videographer, Decoration/*Florist*, Catering, *Entertainment* work extra with a long duration. Of course, with this long duration, each vendor will provide the best service according to the previously agreed budget. Brides who look elegant, Aesthetic location selection, Beautiful & luxurious decorations, Lots of delicious food, *Entertainment* that looks like a good *Band/DJ* and complementary prints such as *dancers, games* to flower parties. Of course, every vendor with the advancement of digital technology wants to display the results/products that they have worked on at *the wedding event* through their social media platforms. Photographers with professional cameras as the main vendor of wedding documentation are certainly the target of every vendor to ask for the best photos, but sometimes photographers are focused on capturing moments from the substitute as a priority scale. This encourages every worker from each vendor to carry out photography activities or hire their own

photographer for the need for their own photo content, this is when the role of photography with *smartphones* emerged as an alternative for vendors outside of photographers to compete to capture wedding moments for their photography content. With the sophistication of *hardware* such as large megapixels and good *software* from today's *smartphones*, it can produce photos that are no less good than professional photographers.

The author sees this as an interesting phenomenon, with the development of media technology/*the output* of a photo is no longer limited only as a print media but develops into digital media. This phenomenon became the basis for making a research entitled *Smartphones vs Cameras: Aesthetic Analysis of Wedding Photo Works and Their Implications for the Needs of the Commercial Industry (Case Study of Wedding Photo Works on I Love Bali Photography)*. The contribution of this study is to find out the impact or implications of the use of *smartphone* cameras and professional cameras on the commercial wedding photography industry in Bali in terms of photography and business aesthetics, later it can be in the form of recommendations for wedding photographers to use professional cameras or *smartphone* cameras In order to meet the standards of the commercial industry and creative industries engaged in photography, especially wedding photography.

METODOLOGY

Qualitative methods are used in this study to collect data and understand conditions in the field in *real terms* through the process of interviews, and observations.

- a. Interviews: A method of data collection that involves in-depth conversations with individuals or groups directly involved in the wedding event. This interview process involves, onwer I Love Bali Photography, *Freelance Shooter* who has worked for I Love Bali Photography, Ponselstory, Brideswhisperer, Staff Bali Moon Wedding Planner, Owner Bali Japan Wedding, Staff Bali Japan Wedding, Owner Bali Wedding Honeymoon, Staff Bali Wedding Honeymoon.
- b. Observation: The researcher is directly involved in the activity or community being researched or studied. In order to observe and study each process, and understand what obstacles occur in the field. The observation process is carried out by the *pastisipan* observation method, involved as one of the *shooter photographers* in I Love Bali Photography. To see firsthand the conditions at the time of the wedding, time management, venue selection, ability to solve problems, and the potential or uniqueness that exists at each wedding event.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Judging by the results of wedding photos with *smartphone* cameras and *mirrorless* cameras, the moments taken are almost the same. The difference is in the camera features used, for *smartphone* cameras the iPhone 12 device is used because I Love Bali Photography has been using the device since 2021 or when it

was first released. Meanwhile, the mirrorless camera uses two devices, Sony A7 Mk III and Sony A7 Mk IV.



Figure 1. Illustration of Smartphone Camera and Mirrorless Camera

Lenses and lens apertures are selected that are close to equivalent to each other. The selected photos are those that can represent each condition in real life in the field, starting from wide *lenses* (35mm), standard *lenses* (50mm) and telephoto lenses (85mm). The equivalent was chosen with different lighting conditions, starting from day, afternoon and night conditions. These conditions were chosen because they are the most risky conditions in terms of changes in lighting and the ability of each device to be able to keep up with these conditions. Comparatively, each photo subject still does not use an additional application on the camera device at the time of taking the photo, so that later the results obtained are more original and based on the ability of the camera device to process the image.

The aesthetics of the photos that are the basis in determining the value of each photo are Lighting, Angle, Composition, Background, Scale, Focus, Color and *Depth of Field*.

The implication in question is the direct or indirect impact of photos with *smartphone* cameras and *mirrorless cameras* on the needs of the commercial industry. The current use of cameras can certainly be categorized into vulnerable professionals and non-professionals, the professional in question is a photographer, a photographer is a person who makes images (paints) with light through film or a sensitized surface. The photographer determines whether an image produced is exactly the same as the original (Khoirul & Irman, 2020). While non-professional is general use or ordinary people who use camera devices without the need to know the full technical aspects of the camera. From this understanding, it can be seen that the concentration of each user has differences so that the output produced will be different. A professional photographer will prioritize good technical and non-technical photo results so that later they can be applied to various media. Meanwhile, non-photographers will prioritize results that look aesthetic to be published instantly through social media.

With the need for fast publication media, smartphone cameras offer more convenience and flexibility than the use of mirrorless cameras. So that the results of smartphone cameras are felt to be able to keep up with mirrorless cameras in terms of ease of publication to social media. As for mirrorless cameras, it is more about exclusive and high-quality use. The needs in the commercial industry today demand the ease and speed of publication through social media compared to high-quality results so that the use of smartphone cameras is very suitable for the needs of the commercial industry such as publications to social media. With

such rapid technological advancements in the future, there is the potential for the use of smartphone cameras to compete and replace the role of the use of professional cameras, both in terms of technology and the quality of the photos provided, this can happen if the potential that exists in smartphone cameras can be maximized by users and applied to more appropriate media.

Table 1. Technical Indicators

	: Smartphone (Apple iPhone 12)				: Camera (SONY ILCE-7M4)	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)		
KURANG	RATA-RATA	BAIK	SANGAT BAIK	SEMPURNA		
INDIKATOR	JENIS KAMERA					
	Smartphone (Apple iPhone 12)			Camera (SONY ILCE-7M4)		
						
Pencahayaan	3	3	4	4	3	5
Sudut (Angle)	5	3	5	3	4	4
Komposisi	5	5	3	3	4	5
Latar Belakang (Background)	5	5	2	2	2	5
Skala	4	4	3	3	5	4
Fokus (Ketajaman)	3	3	2	5	5	5
Kontras	2	5	3	4	5	5
Warna	4	4	3	5	5	5
Kedalaman Ruang (Depth of Field)	2	2	1	4	5	5
JUMLAH	33	34	26	33	38	43

Based on the assessment of the table above, vertically it was found that from several indicators, the results of smartphone cameras can be more balanced and superior to mirrorless cameras in certain indicators. And mirrorless cameras remain superior to other rating indicators.

Conclusion

The visual aesthetics of wedding photos using a *smartphone camera* by I Love Bali Photography, seen from the Ideational Stage, namely the wedding moment that wants to be displayed is successfully conveyed through a photo display that shows an intimate and romantic atmosphere in a wedding event of the bride and groom in a unique and beautiful place. Meanwhile, from the technical level, it can be seen from the technical aspects of taking pictures and visualizing images. The technical aspects in question are Lighting, *Angle*, Composition, Background, Scale, Focus, Contrast, Color, and *Depth of Field*. Lighting is the aesthetic of photos that are obtained with perfect lighting even with a small camera sensor size. Angle (*Angle*) is a technique of shooting at angles that are difficult to achieve with a mirrorless camera that can be easily obtained by a smartphone camera. The composition, which is easy to use and high flexibility, allows you to set up with unique compositions without having to bother changing the lens equivalent with just one click. Background is the ability of the camera to take images in HDR (*High Dynamic Range*) instantly and good results are an added value that mirrorless cameras do not have. Scale is the

ability of the lens on the camera to capture objects without much distortion of shape-shifting. Focus (Sharpness) is the ability of the camera's sensor and the optical quality of the lens to produce a sharp enough image. Contrast is the camera's ability to separate the main object from the *background* so that it doesn't blend together and is easy to find. Color is the camera's ability to create colors that are close to their original condition. *Depth of Field* is the camera's ability to produce depth of space to appear focused even though it is limited only digitally. The visual aesthetic of wedding photos using a *Mirrorless camera* by I Love Bali Photography, seen from the Ideational Level, namely the wedding moment that wants to be displayed is successfully conveyed through the display of sharp photos equivalent to various lenses and succeeds in showing the atmosphere of the wedding event to be more lively.

Meanwhile, from the technical level, it can be seen from the technical aspects of taking pictures and visualizing images. The technical aspects in question are Lighting, Angle, Composition, Background, Scale, Focus, Contrast, Color, and *Depth of Field*. Lighting is a photo aesthetic that is obtained with better lighting because it has a larger sensor size (Full Frame) so that it is able to capture light better without noise. Angle is the technique of shooting at a certain angle that can be combined with various lens variations. Composition is determining the composition according to the lens being used. Background is the camera's ability to take pictures so that the photo becomes more dimensional. Scale is the ability of the lens on the camera to capture objects without experiencing distortion of shape-shifting. Focus (Sharpness) is the ability of the camera lens, the optical quality of the lens to produce very sharp images. Contrast is the camera's ability to separate the main object from the *background* so that the object becomes more prominent and does not blend into the *background*. Color is the camera's ability to create colors that are close to their original condition. *Depth of Field* is the camera's ability to produce depth of space so that it looks like the focus is set through the camera lens aperture, the wider the lens aperture, the better the depth of space effect. The comparison of wedding photo works using smartphone cameras and mirrorless cameras in I Love Bali Photography is more about its application to predetermined media. For the use of smartphones, practicality is prioritized in publication to social media, fast, easy, and efficient, although in terms of quality results are not as good as the results of using mirrorless cameras. Meanwhile, the use of mirrorless cameras is more about the need for larger media, needs such as hardcopy, album printing, canvas and others.

In the context of the commercial industry, especially the wedding industry in Bali, the two different instruments are sought to outperform each other to support the company's marketing strategy. The advantages of each of these instruments are not intended to be competition but aim to complement each other's shortcomings.

As the findings obtained in this study, it was found that the use of smartphone cameras under certain conditions can be balanced with the results of the use of mirrorless cameras. The influencing factor is that from the user side, smartphone cameras may not be able to compensate for the results (Lighting, Scale, Focus, Contrast, Color, and Depth of Space) in terms of results. However,

when viewed from the user factors (Angle, Composition, and Background) it can be superior to mirrorless cameras. So it can be concluded that the results of each camera already have a space and media that is suitable for its use, the most important thing is to maximize all the potential that each of these instruments has.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Each camera device or research instrument has its own advantages, with the rapid development of new camera technology that develops, the task as a practitioner in the field is to be able to explore each instrument and develop every potential that it has. Applying it to the right media so as to provide the expected implications, especially for the commercial industry.

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