A STUDY ON INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BETTER PHOTOGRAPHY & SMART PHOTOGRAPHY

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Abstract

The lens of the photographer captures the seen and the unseen, prominent and abstract, colours and emotions. With the advancement in technologies photographers discovers various techniques and ideas for betterment of photography. Present study deals with the content analysis of two leading photography magazine of India i.e. Better Photography and Smart Photography. The objectives of the study include the comparison of contents on various elements in both the magazines. The conclusion of the study indicates that respondents like to read content of the photography magazines so that they can learn about new techniques and technologies of photography. Most of the respondent like better photography magazines more than Smart photography or other magazines.

Index Terms: Better Photography, Smart Photography, Magazine, photography

Introduction –

The world today has become digital, every aspect of life has become digitalized and for every small thing today we depend on digital things. Be it anything entertainment, education everything is available on digital platform. If we talk about education, gone are the days when paper books were the only source of knowledge for the readers, today even books are available on digital platform. E-books are available, online books are available, and these things are available on the tip of our finger. They are easily accessible and can be accessed by anyone anywhere.

Also, mostly the youth today do not prefer to read books at all, they are more interested in learning from video tutorials. The trend of video tutorials has become popular over the past couple of years and today if search on the internet, there are many video tutorials available on the internet about various topics. Be it any educational topic or any other thing which we want to learn, video tutorials are very easily available. But what matters here is are the content of the video tutorials authentic.

Photography is definitely a practical learning skill, but there are many theoretical aspects of the art which every photographer should know for capturing much better frames. There are several photography magazines published in India.

A magazine is a publication with a paper cover which is issued regularly, usually every week or every month, and which contains articles, stories, photographs and advertisements. A photography magazine is the one which as these things based on photography and photography techniques. It contains photographs of famous photographers and articles written by them sharing their experiences and experiments. It also includes articles on new techniques of photography and gives information about new and upcoming technologies. These magazines even conduct competitions from time to time to keep the readers engaged and to maintain their interest in the magazine.

There are many photography magazines some of the most popular ones are – popular photography, Amateur photography, Better photography, Photography monthly etc.

In this study the content of two very popular photography magazines were analysed on the basis of their segments and photographs. These magazines were – Better Photography and Smart Photography.

Better Photography is an Indian monthly photography magazine. The magazine is published by Network 18 Media & Investments Ltd. The magazine is printed in English Language and is published only in India.

Smart photography is also a production of Viacom18, and is considered India's No.1 Photography magazine. Both the magazines have very good content and information about a lot of new technologies coming up now days.

Review of Literature –

1. **Mary Jane Moran** and **Deborah W. Tegano** in their research paper, "**Moving towards visual literacy: Photography as a language of Teacher Inquiry**" said that, photography is a visual language that shares some important characteristics with verbal language both communicative and structural. Photography is not a language, rather it is a truth, an obvious fact, therefore a photograph does not require interpretations. Photography is a dynamic representational system that uses signs to produce and communicate meanings. Just as we do when we use words to speak photographs are culturally situated and consequently convey different meanings to different viewers based on personal life experience, knowledge and perspective.

2. **Anke Coumans** in the research paper **"Photography as Artistic Research"** said that Photography learning is not as easy as it may seem, because you don't take a photograph you make one, and for making a moment we need to be clear about what we are doing. As the researcher, *Anke Coumans* said, a photograph is something you fall into. Photographs are moreover 'apparatus-like' images (images produced by an apparatus) which gives them a semblance of objectivity. Part of the physical reality through light falls into the

apparatus and the photograph is the indexical impression of this. Photographs so much resemble the world as we know it, that we believe to be standing face to face with reality, instead of face to face with a mechanical reproduction. This is the reason why photographs place themselves between people and reality and they make us forget that the image is not reality, but an imprint of it. A photograph is an image, produced be a camera, which is an interpretation of reality, but is understood to be imprint of it. Images embed themselves into our awareness, programme the way we look at the world around us without being aware of this. And to complete the circle, these images then go on to determine what kind of photographs people are going to make.

Objectives

- To analyse the content of both the photography magazines on the basis of various elements.
- To compare the elements of both the magazines.
- To study the opinion of photographers on photography magazines.
- To study the opinion of photographer towards skill development through photography magazines.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

This is an in-depth study of two photography magazine, in which content analysis was done. Interview was also taken of photographer.

Tool

An open-ended questionnaire containing five questions was used in the interview.

Sample Size

For content analysis, 2 Indian Photography magazines (Better Photography & Smart Photography) were taken (June 2018 issue).

6 professional photographers were selected using purposive sampling method for the Interview.

Sampling Method

Purposive sampling method was used to select both the photography magazines and the photographers

Universe

The universe of this study is, Bhopal, M.P

Data Analysis –

Content Analysis

Smart Photography June 2018

Elements	Quantity
Segments	10 segments 15 sub segments
Articles on New Technology	21
Photographs	53
Advertisements	45
Review	4

Segments

1. SP news international
2. SP news Business
3. SP News National
4. Kaledoscope
5. Show case
6. Nastercraftsman
7. Special

i) Street smart

ii) Top 10 mirror less camera

8. Learning

i) PC for photo editing

ii) Monitors for image editing

iii) Recommended monitors

iv) How to set up Photoshop for optimums performance

v) Three methods of color correction in Photoshop.

vi) Camera calibration for present color cast.

vii) Creating luminosity masks.

viii) Infrared imaging

ix) My work flow

x) Focus stacking

9. Review

i) DSLR review

ii) Mirror lens

iii) Lens

10. The last World

Articles on Technology-

1. Panasonic introduces Lumix TS7
2. Hasselblad announces XCD 21mm f/4 lens for the X1D
3. Meyer-optic -Gorlitz Launches Nocturnus III 50 f/0.95.
4. Huawei's P20 Pro and P20 lite unveiled in India.
5. Panasonic announces P95 mobile phone.
6. One plus announces OnePlus 6.
7. LuminHouse launches images-delivery and cloud storage solution.
8. Top 10 Mirrorless Cameras.
9. PC for photo editing
10. Monitors for Image editing.
11. Recommended Monitors.
12. How to setup Photoshop for Optimum Performance.
13. Three Methods of Colour Correction in Photoshop.
14. Camera Calibration for Persistent Colour Cast.
15. Creating Luminosity Masks.
16. Infrared Imaging.
17. My Workflow.
18. A serious Effort.
19. Decked up for video.
20. Packed to the Brim.
21. An all-weather Lens.

Review –

1. Canon EOS M50
2. FUJIFILM X-H1
3. Sony Cyber shot RX10 IV
4. Sigma 14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM / A

Better Photography June 2018

Elements	Quantity
Segments	10 segments 15 sub segments
Articles on New Technology	7
Photographs	51
Advertisements	45
Review	5

Segments –

1. Feed Back
2. Snap Shot

- TIPA World Awards Reveals it's 2018 winners.
- Tokyo International Foto Awards Winners Announcements
- Amazon India Launches an online photography club.
- FujiFilm Launches the GFX 50S in India
- RedInk Awards Reveals its Winners
- Nikita Distributors Introduces New Range of Products.
- Detained Photojournalist Wins Press Freedom Prizes.
- Photojournalist Shah Marai Killed on Assignment.
- Winner of Wildlife Photography Competition Disqualified.
- Photography workshop & Talks at Piramal Art Gallery.
- Sony World Photography Awards Announces its winner.
- Pink lady food photographer of the year 2018 announced.
- Rolleiflex is Back with the Instant Kamera TLR.

3. Gear Guide.

- Third time's the Charm
- Affordable ultra wide

4. Editorial
5. A worthy Competitor
6. A dynamic Successor
7. Up Close & Personal
8. Letting the Masks Fall
9. A memorable Day of Insight
10. Show Case

Articles on Technology –

1. Fujifilm launches the GFX 50S in India.
2. Tamron reveals it's new 28-75mm f/2.8 lens.
3. Rolleiflex is back with the Instant Kamera TLR.
4. Sony Alpha 7R III – Third Time's the Charm.
5. Samyang AF 14mm f/2.8 EF.
6. TIPA World Awards 2018 – The Best Imaging Product of the Year.
7. Samsung Galaxy S9 – A worthy Competitor.h

Interview –

Respondent 1 (Varun- Delhi Based Fitness Photographer)

Q1. Do you like to read about photography?

Ans.1. – Yes, I like to read about photography, it helps a lot. I come to know about competitions, it keeps me updated with new technologies and keeps me updated about new style of photography.

Q2. Have you ever read photography magazines?

Ans 2. Not really, I prefer to read online content more as magazines have limited knowledge.

Q3. How are the content of Photography Magazine?

Ans 3. They have more interviews and advertisement. They give limited knowledge.

Q4. How are Photography magazines helpful in skill development?

Ans 4. The more we read, more knowledge we will gain. It helps to grow in commercial market.

Q5. What changes do you suggest in photography magazines?

Ans 5. Contents are sufficient, but digitalization has changed the preference of readers.

Respondent 2 (Ankush – Wedding Photographer)

Q1. Do you like to read about photography?

Ans 1. Yes, I like to read about photography as it gives a lot of exposure to photographs of good photographers

Q2. Have you ever read photography magazines?

Ans 2. Yes, Better Photography and Photo Orange.

Q3. How are the content of Photography Magazine?

Ans 3, There are more adds of products in some magazines, but in Better Photography the content is very good, I get to learn many new things about photography from it.

Q4. How are Photography magazines helpful in skill development?

Ans 4. Yes, they help a lot specially for the beginners and professional get updated about all the new technologies and techniques coming in the world and this helps a lot in skill development.

Q5. What changes do you suggest in photography magazines?

Ans 5. Some magazines should also come in hindi language as English is not understood by all.

Respondents 3 (Ravi Sarathe – Macro Photographer)

Q1. Do you like to read about photography?

Ans 1. Yes, I like to read about photography, I like to read about the lighting done on the photograph and about the exposure of the photograph.

Q2. Have you ever read photography magazines?

Ans 2. Better Photography

Q3. How are the content of Photography Magazine?

Ans 3. The content is very good, they mention all the technical aspects of the photographs in it like the exposure, frame etc.

Q4. How are Photography magazines helpful in skill development?

Ans 4. Yes, they are very much helpful in skill development of photographers, it helps in broadening our aspects of photography and we can learn new techniques and types of photography from it. Like earlier I used to do only landscape and nature, but once I saw an article in Better Photography about macro photography and how to do it without a macro lens. This trick really helped me a lot.

Q5. What changes do you suggest in photography magazines?

Ans 5. There should be a version of the magazine in language other than English like it should also be available in Hindi or other regional language

Respondent 4 (Suraj Basak – Landscape and Portrait Photographer)

Q1. Do you like to read about photography?

Ans 1. Yes, I read about street photography and about new equipment or lens kits.

Q2. Have you ever read photography magazines?

Ans 2. Better Photography.

Q3. How are the content of Photography Magazine?

Ans 3. It is quite good, it's just that since it comes once a month, some topics which are current are not printed in it.

Q4. How are Photography magazines helpful in skill development?

Ans 4. It does, but the development is limited, as the terms used in the magazines like aperture or shutter speed will be understood by those who have practically done photography, but for someone who is a beginner he/she won't be able to understand the term unless he/she works on the camera or learn about basics of photography. So, development is limited.

Q5. What changes do you suggest in photography magazines?

Ans 5. They should mention the details of regional and state level competition also.

Respondent 5 (Avinash Rawat – Street Photographer)

Q1. Do you like to read about photography?

Ans 1. Yes, I like to read about different photographers working on different themes like social issue, war, tragedy

Q2. Have you ever read photography magazines?

Ans 2. Better Photography

Q3. How are the content of Photography Magazine?

Ans 3. The content is very good, they give latest reviews on new equipment, story on good photographers, articles on mobile photography. It has a lot of content, which is not there in Asian and smart photography.

Q4. How are Photography magazines helpful in skill development?

Ans 4. Magazines help a lot in skill development. The impact of seeing a printed photo on paper and watching a digital photo is very different. Printed photo has more impact, also when we see many photo on one theme, and we read about the details of that photo, how and in what conditions was it taken. This develops the skill a lot.

Q5. What changes do you suggest in photography magazines?

Ans 5. More information about various contests should be given in it.

Respondent 6 (Benny Mathur)

Q1. Do you like to read about photography?

Ans 1. Yes, I like to read about photography. I like to read articles on various tricks of photography.

Q2. Have you ever read photography magazines?

Ans 2. Yes, I read Better Photography, as it has many articles on new technologies.

Q3. How are the content of Photography Magazine?

Ans 3. Content is good, but the language should be easier so that everyone understands it and prize of all the equipment which are shown should be mentioned.

Q4. How are Photography magazines helpful in skill development?

Ans 4. Not very much useful in skill development of photographers as there are more articles on technologies than techniques.

Q5. What changes do you suggest in photography magazines?

Ans 5. The magazines should include articles on basic photography knowledge for amateur photographers. Most of the contents are such that they are useful only for the professional photographers. So, the content of the magazine should also contain information on low budget cameras, basics of photography etc.

Findings –

Content Analysis

- The June 2018 issue of Smart Photography and Better Photography have same number of segments.
- Articles of new technology are more in Smart Photography (21) than that in Better Photography (7)
- Even the number of photographs were more in Smart Photography (54) than that in Better Photography (51) though the numbers are very close.
- Both the magazines had 45 advertisement in them.
- In terms of review, Better photography has 5 review and Smart Photography had 4 reviews.
- There were not a lot of difference between the number of elements in both the magazines but smart photography was better in the June 2018 issue.

Interview

- The photographers who have been working on field from a long time all prefer to read about photography as they think reading about the aesthetics, lighting and other elements really help them to grow.
- Among all the 6 interviewees 5 said that they read Better Photography.
- According to the photographers the content of the magazines
- is very good, they give a lot of knowledge on new equipment and techniques.
- As the magazines are monthly they at times miss out some latest topics.
- Since the magazine is completely in English this is a problem for those photographers who want to get knowledge but language becomes a barrier.

Conclusion –

From the study it was clear that both the magazines Better Photography and Smart Photography have a lot of content. They both give a lot of knowledge about photography techniques and information about new

technologies. The number of articles and photos were more in Smart Photography but the difference was very minor. All the photographers who were interviewed said that they prefer Better Photography as the content in it is very good and give details of every photograph which is very helpful in understanding the photograph. The story covered by the magazine is also something which is liked by the photographers. There were few drawbacks, language was one of the biggest drawbacks, the magazine should also come in *hindi* or other regional language, so that those who do not understand English can also get knowledge from it. One bigger drawback is that the magazines do not contain articles on basic photography, and use terms like aperture, shutter speed which are only understood by those who have been doing photography and have knowledge about it. But if a amateur or a beginner wants to get knowledge he/she will first have to know all the photography terms only then these magazines will be helpful to them. The magazines do contain information about the competition but very few and only national level competition, there should be information about state level competition as well. Despite of few drawbacks, all the photographers said that these magazines are very helpful in skill development of photographers as reading about photography and seeing photographs of good photographers are always helpful in improving photography skills.

Acknowledgement

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