

**ANALYSIS OF THE FOREGROUND ELEMENT THAT ENHANCE VISUAL APPEAL IN
PHOTOJOURNALISM WITH REFERENCE TO HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON
PHOTOGRAPHY**

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Abstract

The study of this Foreground element is indicated that photography educators must recognize that students need to understand this foreground visual elements and how it impacts a photograph. However, it is more important to understand how it enhances the effect on images in photojournalism. When students are aware of this difference and understand the use of this foreground element on their photographs they can develop the skills necessary to consistently create images of strong visual appeal. The research method used for this paper is Mixed Methods Research i.e. combination of qualitative as well as quantitative one. A sample taken from ten people who are from film industry, students from media and communication, professional photographers, film technicians, professors from media and communication, advertising professional, newspaper editors and book publishers from Pune, Mumbai, Maharashtra for the quantitative data which is collected through survey method. The tool used for data collection was questionnaire. The conclusion of this research is, the foreground element enhances the visual appeal in photojournalism for images taken by Henri Cartier-Bresson and it is worth adding into capturing images in photojournalism. It enhances the depth to viewer's perspective in relation to the subject of photographs. Analyses of the data indicated that there are some commonalities in visual elements that affect the appeal of Images. However, most visual elements are dependent on the photographic category. The results of this study designated that photography educators must recognize that students need to understand this foreground visual elements and how they impact a photograph as well as photojournalism.

Keywords: *Visuals, Photography, Elements of Design, Photojournalism, Foreground Element, Viewers, Henri Cartier-Bresson.*

Introduction

“In photography, the smallest thing can be a great subject. The little human detail can become a Leitmotiv.”

— **Henri Cartier-Bresson** (goodreads, 2007).

The objective of this study is to propose the preferred element and principle of design in photography. It also seeks to guide the viewer to describe the photograph in the correct way. It then suggests the proper manner of seeing, explaining and creating a good and the study of the foreground elements used by legendary French photographer by Henri Cartier-Bresson's effective photography works. He was born in Cantaloupe-en-Brie, Seine-et-Marne, Henri Cartier-Bresson developed a strong fascination with painting early on, and particularly with Surrealism. In 1932, he discovered the Leica – his camera of choice after that moment – and began a life-long passion for photography. In 1947, with Robert Capa, George Rodger, David ‘Chim’ Seymour and William Vandivert, he founded Magnum Photos. From 1968, he began to curtail his photographic activities, preferring to concentrate on drawing and painting. In 2003, with his wife and daughter, he created the Foundation Henri Cartier-Bresson in Paris for the preservation of his work. Cartier-Bresson received an extraordinary number of prizes, awards, and honorary doctorates. He died at his home in Provence on 3 August 2004 (henri-cartier-bresson, 1947).

Some of the most important are your ability to capture the right light, the right composition, and the right moment—the three elements of great image. In photography there are many photographers’

uses various composition techniques to create world's best Iconic Images using design elements. There are various design elements & composition theory like Fibonacci Sequence, Golden Rule, Golden Rectangle, Rule of Thirds, Centered Composition and Symmetry, Foreground Interest and Depth, Frame Within the Frame, Leading Lines, Patterns and Textures, Break the Pattern, Rule of Odds, Fill the Frame, Leave Negative Space, Simplicity and Minimalism, Use of Black and White, Isolate the Subject, Shoot from Below, Shoot from Above, Look for Particular Color Combinations, Rule of Space, Left to Right Rule, Balance Elements in the Scene, Juxtaposition, Golden Triangles, Golden Ratio, Let the Background Give Context to the Subject, Let the Eye Wander Around the Frame, Add Human Interest, Moment, Patterns, textures, lines, shapes, forms, color, tone, contrast, depth, frames, symmetry, asymmetry, depth of field, Patterns and repetition, Center dominant eye, Fill the frame, Figure to ground, Frame within a frame, Diagonals, Leading lines, viewpoint, negative space, positive space, and visual tension isolation, emphasis, balance rhythmic lines, shapes, and many more as well as (Carroll, 2022). The author said self-explanatory photos, are indeed distinguished because they are genuine visual communication free from language communication influence, and are thus contributing to to enhance the status of photojournalism (Hin-yu, Jimmy, 6 oct 1994).

In photojournalism there is one element where photographers or Photo Enthusiastic and other researchers hardly did study or research on this area that is called "Foreground Element". This is why, where researcher thinks there is much needed research on this Foreground Element.

What is foreground element?

In a photograph, the foreground is the portion of the frame that is closest to the camera. The foreground space in an image can be utilized to draw attention to a subject located further into the frame (Anon, 2016). Foreground element it's an object which is use while on framing photographs, it is purposely used in front of as a foreground, the Foreground elements can be anything shapes which could be human shape, birds, animals, plants, trees, or any other objects which can be look foreground elements. Including some foreground interest in a scene is a great way of adding a sense of depth to the scene. Including foreground interest in the frame is one of a number of techniques to give the scene a more 3D feel. The researcher thinks it adds a real sense of depth to the composition. Including it in the frame portrays a sense of depth in the scene by including an element that was quite close to foreground in the distance and everything in between them.

Foreground elements in photography are used for a variety of reasons. The most common reason is to balance out the photograph by giving it more interest. It can be used to add contrast to a photograph and make it stand out from the background. The second reason is to add emphasis to the photograph. Third elements can be used as a focal point in photographs and help direct viewers' attention towards it. If you want your viewers to see something interesting in your photo, you can use an object as a foreground element and place it in such position of the frame in foreground where viewers something to focus on and make them want to look at what's in front of them. There are times when you need your subject matter to be part of an image rather than just being behind or beside something else. You can use Third elements like trees or bushes that surround your main subject which helps to the viewers to glance in the image and will not allow to viewers to come back again towards the foreground element, it matter as another way of making sure that viewers have to have seen the main focal point at your photo where photographer purposely wanted to show (Matt, p. 2023).

Review of Literature

In India generally early photographers who wanted to pursue their career in photography they mostly assist to senior photographer or do internship for three to five years ; there were very few school of photography where students study the design element. Assistant tried to imitate to make images from their seniors 'work to survive in the photo industry. Photographers are categorized in several ways.

There is the amateur and the professional, the truly artistic and the purely technical, the educated and the uneducated.

Photography is used for various reasons. It has been used from capturing or documenting historical events in newspaper and also as a visual representation that highlight an act of seeing to establish subject matter in the surrounding with the help of using various elements to craft, with the camera selecting, composing, and capturing moments. In a communication process, photograph is used as medium of persuasion as it controls the emotions of the reviewer. On their paper it explores on the basic element and principle of art and design, in making an effective photography. That they think the study will benefit to the image creators and will give them a new style of making and producing mesmerizing photography to persuade a society. (Adzrool Idzwan Hj. Ismail, December 2010).

Holly Ballenger in his phenomenal work 'Photography: A Communication Tool (2014) focuses upon photography advocacy as it examined a variety of historical and contemporary artists and organizations that have used their photographic compositions to communicate powerful messages of justice, love, integrity, and desired changes to the world. As past and present artists have used photographs to change the world, she therefore placed herself in a continuum of artists working for social change. The purpose of this particular study was to illuminate the works of such great social activists and to focus on photography's characteristics, which make it such a significant medium of communication. In her paper she problematizes the issue of many people lacking the understanding of how to properly use the tools, elements of photography to visually communicate ideas. Approaching photography with an artist's eye differs from taking a snapshot. Anyone can capture a snapshot. The moment the tool is at the eye of an artist one begins to see and perceive the world a bit differently, but many do not understand this importance (Ballenger, 2014). So the researcher understands that the elements of photography enhance the visuals. The author says that not only did photographers want to take images; they wanted to disseminate their images and communicate to the world what they were able to see.

On her research paper he was referencing about Bob Shepherd that he believes that well-meaning photographs highlight the subject by focusing attention to it. Too many times the photograph includes diverting or irrelevant elements, thus de-emphasizing the subject. He thinks photographs fail is that they do not communicate ideas because the photographer has not identified why he wanted to take a particular photograph or how his photograph should be composed unless he knows what he is trying to convey (Hall, 2006).

Research Method

In this research, the researcher uses a mix method whereas practically analyzing the images had been taken by Henri Cartier-Bresson, the researcher searching the foreground element on selected images with help of sample survey to get authentic and less-biased research and after that analyzing and interpreting results, the type of this research is library research whereas as researcher use his 5 different photographs which are taken by Henri Cartier-Bresson from his official website **MAGNUM**, in during his photography career (1930-2004) as the main data. (magnum photos, 1947). As well as using survey sample of questionnaire to quantify the public notion of foreground element in Photo-journalism.

Data Collection

In this research the main data is Images taken by Henri Cartier-Bresson (1930-2004), The researcher has chosen some of his 5 images where he could be possibly addressing the Foreground elements used by Henri Cartier-Bresson to his most iconic images, in this research the researcher is also a photographer, worked in fashion, advertising industry for more than 20 years and presently now in teaching field since more than 10 years. He studied this images several times until researcher

interpreting the selected images of Henri Cartier-Bresson which included in this paper (1930-2004)'. As a result, there are various kinds of foreground elements used by Henri Cartier-Bresson which are like abandon car, tree, broken walls, staircase and women saris enhance the visual appeals in photojournalism.

In this research, the researcher uses a mixed methods whereas practically analyzing these images taken by Henri Cartier-Bresson, the researcher searching the foreground element on selected images with the help of sample survey to attain the authentic research outcomes and then analyzing and interpreting results, a sampled survey with only ten people from film industry, media and communication students, professional photographers, film technicians, professors from media and communication, Advertising professional, newspaper editors and book publishers etc.



Image 1: A man rides his bicycle through the var-department. Hyeres, France 1932. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Image 2: A group of children play amongst rubbleSeville, Spain.1933. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos.



Image 3: A train moves the landscape behind a rusting car frame, Arizona, USA, 1947. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Image 4: Woman spreading out their saris before the sun, Gujarat, India.1966 © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Image 5: Swiss painter and sculptor, Alberto Giacometti. Paris, France 1961. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos

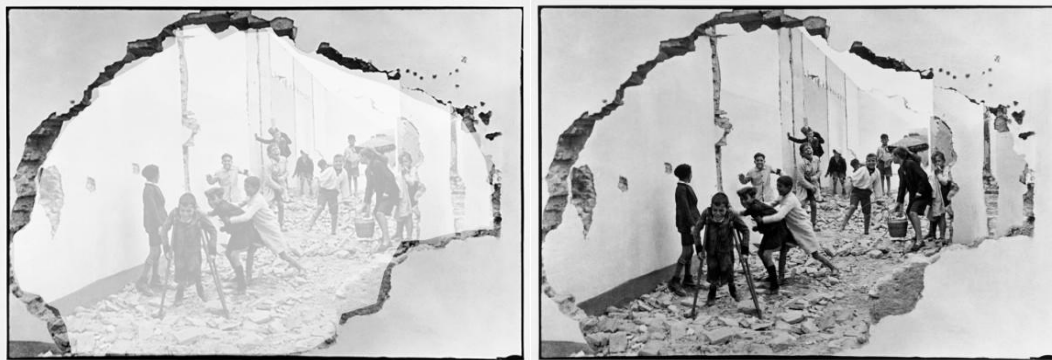
Data Analysis



Recreated Image

Original Image

Image 1: A man rides his bicycle through the var department. Hyeres, France 1932. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Recreated Image

Original Image

Image 2: A group of children play amongst rubble Seville, Spain.1933. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Recreated Image

Original Image

Image 3: A train moves the landscape behind a rusting car frame, Arizona, USA, 1947. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Recreated Image

Original Image

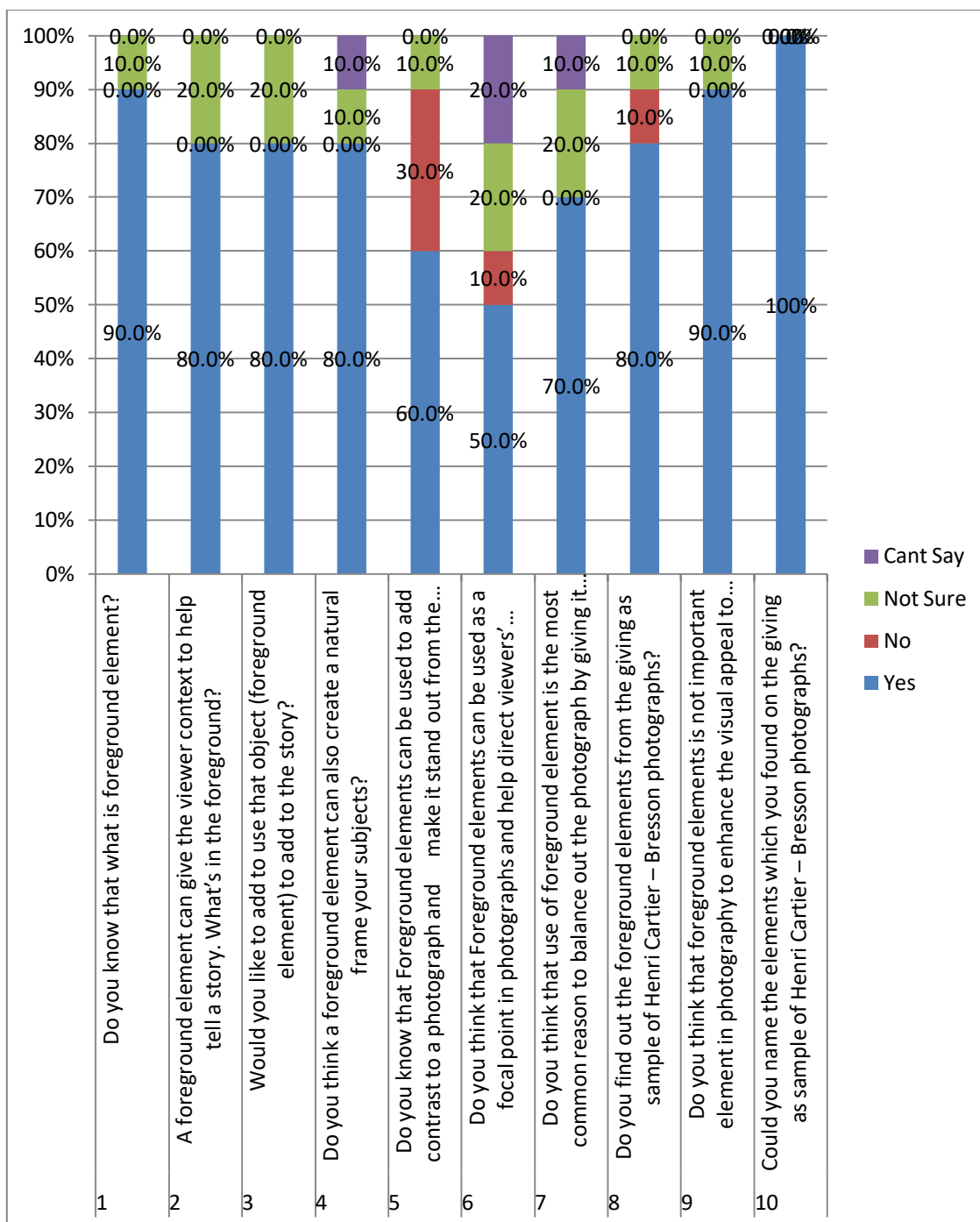
Image 4: Woman spreading out their saris before the sun, Gujarat, India.1966 © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Recreated Image

Original Image

Image 5: Swiss painter and sculptor, Alberto Giacometti. Paris, France 1961. © Henri Cartier-Bresson | Magnum Photos



Discussion:

The survey questionnaire contains ten questions that were asked to media and communication students, professional photographers, film technicians, professors from media and communication, Advertising professional, newspaper editors and book publishers etc .to collecting data the researcher deliberately retouch the images of Henri Cartier-Bresson works which later on included as questionnaire for the viewers to make comparisons between original and reconstructed images. It will help them to solve the questionnaire provided by the researcher. As a result of question 1, 90% of people understand the foreground element and only 10% of people were not sure about foreground elements. So there is significant awareness in public regarding foreground element. From the question number 2, 80% of people said yes to that the foreground element can give the viewer context to help tell a story and 20% are saying not sure, so that means major people know that

foreground elements plays major role to telling story through his photography works. Whereas 80% of people saying that they would like add foreground element to their photography works which very important from the question 3, and only 20% are saying that they are not sure to use on their photographic works. Overall it was observed that more than 50% population understands the effect of Foreground Element that enhances Visual Appeal in Photojournalism with reference to Henri Cartier-Bresson Photography. It was observed that the question was asked to several aged group of audiences' dissimilar profession at the same time so the data and answer comes very genuine and authentic. From the questionnaire results an average 80% facts sample respondents are understand the foreground element from the references to Henri Cartier-Bresson Photographs use as samples. Henri Cartier-Bresson used in his works various Foreground elements are recognized from the provided samples. So it helps to prove Foreground Element that enhances Visual Appeal in Photojournalism with reference to Henri Cartier-Bresson Photography.

By analyzing all these questions, we can conclude that majority of people from sample are not just aware about the existence of foreground element but they are much more inclined towards its utilization in photographs. It is clear from the responses that foreground element plays a cardinal role in audience reception of different photographs in photojournalism domain. Therefore there is a need to understand and acquaint with the important role that Foreground Element plays, and professionals from photojournalism domain must go through the better knowledge of foreground element.

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