CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides the theoretical and conceptual framework as the basis of the study related to happiness in marriage, wedding in Indonesia, *Bridestory*, and the commodification. It elaborates theoretical framework which discusses related theories as well as conceptual framework as the concept of conducting this study.

2.1 Concept of Happiness in Marriage

Generally speaking, happiness is one of the goals in marriage. Seligman (2005, p.13) contends marriage has three positive main purposes: religious, biological, and socio-psychological purposes. In terms of religion, marriage aims to perfecting one's religion. After a couple enters a marriage life, the good values taught by religion can be implemented through marriage. Good values such as shared the same vision in marriage, shared belief in marital fidelity and commitment, and shared family rituals. Faith in God encompassed in marriage preserves the spouse's commitment to avoid lust and evil. While from the biological purposes, Hoesni (2012, p.17) argues that it is a human nature to be in pairs and having a child. The spouse can undergo parenthood and build a family. Every parents hope that their children will carry their family name and continue the legacy.

In terms of socio-psychological purposes, when someone has a spouse; it will intertwine a mutual love and happiness. In line with this, it is a human desire as *zoon politikon* or social beings to be in a relationship with others because they cannot live

alone and in this case men and women complement each other as a spouse (Salina, 2005, p.20). People also want to avoid loneliness in life as it is often associated with stress and depression. The way to overcome loneliness, for instance a husband and wife can freely plan and do many activities together without worrying about social prejudice. Although living together with other people without getting married can be an alternative, but most of people chose to get married because marriage is a legal binding accepted by society (Sunarti, 2012, p.104).

In line with the three main purposes of marriage above, Murphy & Horwitz (1997, p. 20) argues that marriage gives a better mental and physical health for the couple. Marriage can enhance feelings of attachment and belonging, which are thought to affect mental health, this case is supported by having a spouse. A good mental health affect the physical, for instance the couple tend to engage less in dangerous activities and more in healthy ones for the sake of their partner (Umberson, 1987, p.24). Moreover, partners probably unconsciously look after each other for early symptoms of illness. Wilson (2005, p.38) adds that this better physical and mental health refers to the quality of life. When someone has a good quality of life, then the happiness will follow. Above all, people want a happily-ever-after life.

People instilled a value since their childhood through fairy tales that a happily-ever-after life happened when you got married to someone (Klewin, 2007, p.10). It was a cultural myth that embedded in the society since childhood through fairy tales (Lauren, 2007, p. 6). This myth impacted in the way people lead their lives and even how they interact with each other. It is notable that myths have a role to

personally, or to the wider society. In as much as one may believe or doubt such myths, they still continue to exist in different ways. They are shaping the way we perceive the world. Myths can be full of truth or falsehood and depend on the interpretation of a person (Colombo, 2013, p.5). Happily-ever-after as a cultural myth stated the concept for every woman to have a goal in their lives to meet and marry her "prince charming" or her true love and live happily-ever-after (Klewin 2007 p.12). The concept also applied for every man to find his woman of his dreams and marry her in the future.

Many of the fairy tales told us about the story of a princess who met and fall in love with a prince charming and ended in a wedding with a phrase "..and they live happily-ever-after". For instance, Cinderella story told us how Cinderella hopes that she could meet the prince that will save her from her struggle and make her dream come true. Whereas the prince finds his true love, Cinderella and after a long journey, the prince asked her to marry him then they had a happy wedding where everyone is invited to the ball. They celebrated it with an abundant food, good music, dance, and they live happily-ever-after. This Cinderella story as a cultural myth was reinforced with the story of Snow White and Beauty and The Beast. Snow White was hiding in the forest with her seven dwarfs, until she was rescued at the hands of her true love. Beauty in Beauty and The Beast held captive in the enchanted castle, until she falls in love with the Beast and breaks the spell that frees her to marry the man of her dreams. Snow White and Beauty and The Beast were merely two of many other fairy tales as the repetition of the same myth in order to embed the concept to the society.

It is the concept that if you meet the one – the guy or girl that meets your ideals, then there will be a day to celebrate it which is a wedding day and after that you will live happily-ever-after. However, real life long-term relationships rarely resemble the fairy tales. The truth is that living with a spouse year-in, year-out is not always easy, fun, or like what we expected (Jack Zipes, 1997, 24).

2.2 Wedding in Indonesia

An Indonesian wedding mostly consists of three sections which are civil, religious, and celebration followed with regional traditions. Indonesian still upholds marriage as an important life event that must be sacred (Borges, 2005, p.20). Many Indonesians rigidly follow their tradition in marriage according to their cultural background. Many people still consider that an Indonesian marriage is identical with a family involvement in a formal proposal, engagement, and gift-exchange ceremony or we call it *seserahan*.

An Indonesian marriage's process starts with a formal proposal that is made by the groom asking permission to the bride's parents to marry their daughter followed by the groom's family at the bride's house. When the parents agree, then the next phase is a formal engagement that symbolizes an official commitment by the bride and groom. After the engagement, the bride and groom's relatives exchange gifts in an event referred as *seserahan*. Indonesian marriages are usually more diverse in customs, depending on which tradition is followed by the couple. In Indonesia, the vow exchange ceremony is the main part of the wedding (Martin Salim, 2013 p. 17).

A religious representative asks the groom and the bride if they both accept each other as their lawful partners. The bride's relatives then give their blessings for a happy married life.

Indonesia is a country that rich in tradition and it is an evident in traditional wedding receptions. The major differences between wedding receptions of different ethnic groups would be in the style of wedding dress, stage decorations, food served and the dance performance. Besides that, most weddings follow the same patterns. Wedding celebration in Indonesia is also enriched with the Chinese wedding ceremony because of the large number of Chinese descent all over Indonesia archipelago. Ethnic Chinese wedding reception seems more similar to European weddings, due to the adaptation of western wedding dress and the wedding cake (Caves & Porter, 2004, p.8). A week before the wedding day, the family of the groom will bring assorted gifts that are set in red baskets or boxes to the bride's house. For the Chinese, red symbolizes happiness and prosperity. The next procession is three days before the wedding, the bride's family do the same thing to the groom's house. These red baskets are carried by females of the bride's family.

One of the Chinese wedding processions that differentiate it with other wedding ceremony is the *tea pai* procession. We can see this procession on the article of Sandra Dewi's wedding that will be analyzed further in chapter four. The bride and groom would serve tea to both of their parents while kneeling down in front of them. This symbolizes their respects as well as asking permission to their parents. The next procession is religious procession like any other wedding ceremony. The most

important event to attend for Chinese is the reception. The rest is adapting the international wedding patterns which are reception led by a Master of Ceremony, cake cutting, a toast with all the guests and family, after that the guests are invited to shake hands with the newlyweds and their parents.

The wedding industry in Indonesia is a multifaceted industry that covers many business areas as each city has its own culture and ways to conduct a wedding. In Indonesia's big cities especially Jakarta, wedding industry has been growing for the past few years because of the population and the economic growth in Indonesia (Hancock, 2016, p.3). There were around 6000 wedding ceremonies held in Jakarta back in 2012 (Setyanti, 2013, p. 14). The rising standards of wedding ceremonies in Indonesia's big cities influence the demand of the ideal pre-wedding photo shoots up to the wedding venue. This makes a wedding have become a lifestyle and they are packaged the whole wedding list as appealing as possible. This business potential used by the wedding professional to expand the market until recently arise many successful online wedding companies in Indonesia.

2.3 Bridestory

In *Bridestory's website,* they claim their site as a complete and inspirational global wedding directory, and also the marketplace that helps wedding professionals and vendors connects with the engaged couples all around the world. *Bridestory* that was launched in April 2014 is now the country's top wedding site according to SimilarWeb data tracker. The website is attracting 500,000 monthly page visits and

allows visitors to browse offerings from more than 10,000 wedding-related vendors. In *bridestory.com* there is various wedding-related information ranging from providers of wedding dresses, catering, photography, and venue up to the honeymoon package. *Bridestory.com* also includes information about the top vendors, top venues, and a variety of interesting articles about marriage and romance.

The initial idea of bridestory.com began in 2012 when Kevin Mintaraga, CEO of *Bridestory* married and at that moment his wife was interested in the wedding industry then she decided to become a wedding stylist. Kevin knew most of the wedding business and perceives its big potential business from his wife. Kevin had a difficulty in finding a vendor or inspiration when he married, so Kevin thought a good potential in wedding business and also not many people were engaged in this industry at that time. Kevin thought to create a bridge between vendors and engaged couple. In April 2014 Kevin and his team launched *Bridestory* armed with the experience and knowledge of internet advertising business that Kevin got since 2007. At the beginning, *Bridestory* merely has six employees, now it increases to 150 employees and there are 20 others in Singapore and Philippines.

Bridestory has a vision to help create dream weddings by providing more options and connecting engaged couples with the wedding vendors that fit their own personal criteria and preferences. Engaged couples can search for vendors not only by wedding themes and concepts, but also by filtering results based on their specific budget. For vendors, one of the key benefits is that they are not limited to the Indonesian market, but are given an opportunity to reach customers located in

regional and international markets. Kevin believes that businesses must not merely have commercial value but also social value. *Bridestory* trusts when someone is preparing for the wedding, then there must be good values are instilled. *Bridestory* has a dedicated team of content that prepares a relationship started from the engagement, marriage until become a family.

2.4 Roland Barthes' Semiotics

Roland Barthes' work on popular culture is concerned with the process of signification, the means by which meanings are produced and circulated. Barthes also discusses Mythologies in a collection of essays on French popular culture. Barthes' goal (cited in Storey, 1993, p. 77) is to make obvious what often remains unspoken in the texts and practices of popular culture. Barthes' purpose is political; he calls his target as 'bourgeois norm'. Mythologies represent the most meaningful work to bring the methodology of semiology to stand on popular culture. Semiology itself according to Saussure is a science that studies the signs within society. Barthes takes Saussure's schema of signifier/signified = sign and adds to it a second level of signification.

Primary signification	I. Signifier	2. Signified	
Denotation			
Secondary signification	3. Sign		
	I. SIGNIFIER	II. SIGNIFIED	
Connotation	III. SIGN		

Figure 2.1 Primary and secondary signification

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the sign of primary signification becomes the signifier of secondary signification. In *Elements of Semiology,* Barthes replaces the more common terms denotation (primary signification) and connotation (secondary signification). The first system (denotation) becomes the stage of expression or signifier of the second system (connotation). The signifier of connotation are made up of signs (signifiers and signified are united) of the denoted system. Barthes (cited in Storey, 1993, p. 78) claims that myth is produced and consumed at the level of secondary signification or connotation. Barthes also argues (cited in Storey, 1993, p. 83) that myth means ideology understood as a body of ideas and practices which hold the status quo and actively develop the values and interests of the dominant groups in society.

Barthes (cited in Leiliyanti, 2009, p.107) states that ideology makes us forget that everything is constructed. In order to make us forget then the ideology has to

appear naturally, so when the actors want to instilled their ideology, we do not recognize it. This destruction is through the signifying process that will make what is seemed implicit before become explicit, in this case the commodification of happiness in blog. Before we understand this concept, we need to understand that the nature of signs is polysemic, as signs they can signify multiple meanings.

Barthes' most famous example of the secondary signification's work is taken from the cover of Paris Match (1955). Here is Barthes' statement of his story with the magazine:

> I am at the barber's, and a copy of *Paris Match* is offered to me. On the cover, a young Negro in a French uniform is saluting, with his eyes uplifted, probably fixed on a fold of the tricolor. All this is the meaning of the picture. But, whether naively or not, I see very well what it signifies to me: that France is a great Empire, that all her sons, without any colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors. I am therefore again faced with a greater semiological system: there is a signifier, itself already formed with a previous system (a black soldier is giving the French salute); there is a signified (it is here a purposeful mixture of Frenchness and militariness); finally, there is a presence of the signified through the signifier.

Primary signification Denotation	Photo of black soldier saluting French flag.	Black soldier saluting French flag.
Secondary signification Connotation	3. Sign Black soldier saluting French flag.	Great French empire, all her sons equal, etc.
	III. SIGN	

Figure 2.2 Black Soldier on Barthes' order of signification

As illustrated in Figure 2.2 above, we can understand how the order of signification works on one image. The cover illustration represents Paris Match's effort to produce a positive image of French imperialism. Connotations are not simply produced by the makers of the image, but from an already existing cultural repertoire. In other words, the image both depicts from the cultural repertoire and at the same time adds to it. A social knowledge or cultural repertoire from the reader when he or she reads the image is what makes the shift from denotation to connotation possible, because without the shared code (either conscious or unconscious) then the work of connotation is impossible. The social knowledge is always both historical and cultural. There are differences from one culture to another, and from one period to another.

Barthes argues that context of publication is important, for example if the portrait of the black soldier saluting the flag had shown on the cover of the *Socialist Review,* then its connotative meaning would have been very different. Readers would have looked for an irony such as a sign of imperial exploitation and manipulation. Semiotics makes us aware that the cultural values with which we make sense of the world are a tissue of conventions that have been handed down from generation to generation by the members of the culture of which we are a part. It reminds us that there is nothing 'natural' about our values; they are social constructs that not only vary enormously in the course of time but differ radically from culture to culture (Schroeder, 1998, p. 225). Semiotics creates careful and precise accounts of how the meanings of particular images are made, concerned with the construction of social difference through signs. Semiotic theory also has a limitation in its dependence on individual analytical skills. From the description of semiotics' theory above, there is a strong dimension of subjectivity when the researcher makes the interpretations.

2.5 Encoding-Decoding

Stuart Hall is a cultural and social science figures in the UK who has contributed to the mass communication and humanities field, among others through the encoding-decoding theory in a televisual discourse. Literally, encoding can be defined as the translation process by the source on a message, while decoding is defined as the translation process by the receiver towards a message from the source

(Anne Ahira, 2012, p. 4). In other words, encoding means making the code and decoding means to break the code.

Though encoding-decoding is a theory in television discourse, I argue that the encoding-decoding scheme by Hall can be adapted with encoding-decoding in magazine or blog, because both of these media are in the same category of popular culture, mass culture, and also a two-dimensional visual media. In this case, blog is a new media that stands the same with magazine production process. Labor process occurs when the editor is required to summarize the social-cultural phenomena in the society and create trends to the reader. This production process is supported by the ideas from a writer, editor, photographer, fashion designer, makeup artist, and other relations. Factors that affect those ideas also come up from historical knowledge, celebrities' updates, professional ideology, the ideology of commercial through ads agency, and assumptions about the reader. These elements frame the commodification of happiness in *Bridestory*'s blog. Based on this production process, the editor or writer produces topics, opinion, agenda, events, trends, and the image of the reader.

Hall (1980, p. 128) said that the traditional model of mass communication has received many critics because of the linear—sender/message/receiver. In this case, the concentration is centered on the level of the exchange messages from producers to consumers, and not explained that these three components is a complex relationship structure. According to Hall, it is possible if people think of this process as a structure

that is produced and transmitted through the articulation of related but distinct from each other—production, circulation, distribution or consumption, reproduction.

Davis (2004, p.60-61) concludes the Hall's opinion about the concept of the traditional linear mass communications that the target audience of the message is a passive reception as a result the interpretation and production of a text is actively determined by the producer. According to Davis it has become a common thing when people assume that consumption is a passive act. However, Hall argued this by stating that the consumer is not a passive act because it requires earning a meaning. Without meaning, then there is no consumption. We do not receive meaning passively; we have to create it. This action is in the chain of moment by Hall. This chain of moment then developed by Hall to be like the scheme below.
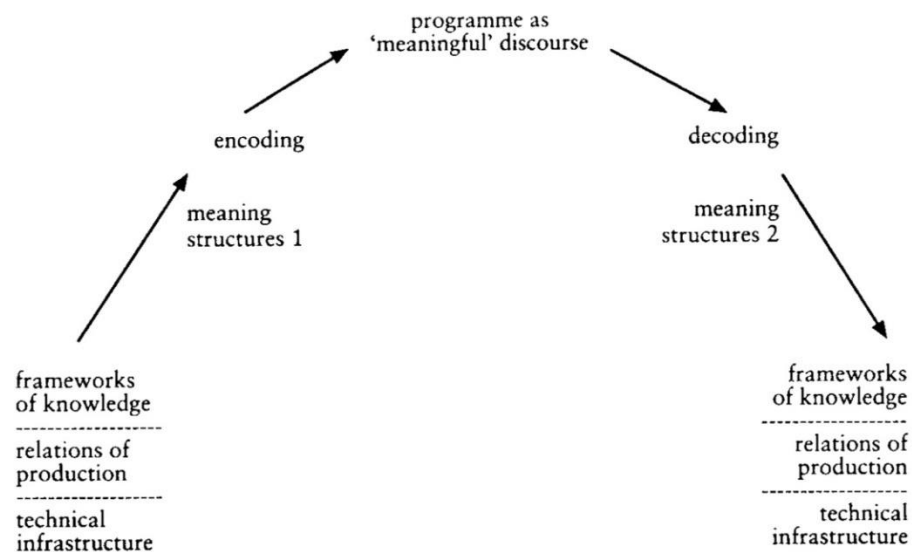

Figure 2.3 The Circulation of a Model of Communication

Hall describes those three processes through how we characterize the television communicative process. Broadcast industry with the practices, networks of production and infrastructure including all the workers such as director, visual-editor, cameraman, actor / actress should create a program. This work process is in a discursive method. A circuit of communication started from the production of constructing a message. The production process is contained by the meaning and ideas that gained from raw social events which are taken from social phenomena in the society. These constructions of an idea and meaning are framed in the program. Through this production process, they produce topics, actions, agenda, events, image of audience, and it links with other texts in a wider social-political structure.

The process of meaning construction by the producer represented as a meaning structure 1 in the figure above, whilst the product that produced from that process is called meaningful discourse that will be disseminated to the society. In the process of distribution, Hall stated that we must perceive the audience as the source and the receiver of a message, for instance a television message.

The reception of the television message is a moment of its own in the production process in a wider sense because that is the starting point of the message translation. Therefore, the production and reception of television messages are not identical, but connected one to each other. In other words, the meaning and the message is not an exchange, meaning and the message is always produced and reproduced, even by the reception. Both of the producers and receiver are able to provide an interpretation of the delivered message and eventually give a feedback on

the messages to be used in the reproduction process (Ahira, 2012, p. 9). This process is referred to as meaning structure 2 in the picture above.

Based on this phenomenon, Hall (1980, p. 136) stated the three hypothetical positions to place a position of decoding reception:

1. The Dominant-Hegemonic Position

    This position occurs when the reception fully understand the implicit meaning and information in a 'meaningful discourse', and produce the same message as when the message was created by the producer. Hall addresses the person in this position is 'operating inside the dominant code'. In this position there are no contradiction between the message from producers and socio-cultural values held by consumers.

2. The Negotiated Position

    Generally, the audience in this position is quite understood of what is defined dominantly and what is the meaning professionally. Decoding process in this position consists of the adaptive and selective elements; they admit the validity and effect of a meaningful discourse which they consumed, but at the level of situational they make their own rules. In this case, they use their logic to identify different relationships between their selves and meaningful discourse which they consumed. In other words, they operate in a situational logic and not the dominant code. In this position, there is a compromise between producers and consumers.

3. The Oppositional Position

The audience in this position basically understands the meaning of the implicit message in the dominant code, but they have a contradictory interpretation.

The encoding and decoding model reveal that the meaning made by the reader is affected by many factors, including socio-economic frameworks and their past experiences, but also involving the context in which the message is consumed. By understanding how audiences read meanings in the text, we are also able to gain a closer understanding of the culture to which that audience belongs (Cruz & Lewis, 1994, p. 20). However, the encoding and decoding model has several weaknesses; the first limitation derives from the impossibility of investigating and measuring audiences and their responses.

Other weakness of this model is the three decoding positions. These three categories are not supported by empirical evidence. This model also has the inability to address how new social media functions in this model. Given the increasing amount of media since Hall wrote his essay, opinions have changed. Today's media include an explosion of online or global networking systems such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram as well as a music culture that has moved beyond musical exchange to include the marketing and selling of culture, lifestyle, and products (Marshall, 2013, p. 28).

2.6 Commodification

Baudrillard (cited in Dawson, 2007, p.12) claimed that Marx's view of use-value has become too limited; introducing sign value or the image created through advertising that is actually consumed. Commodities are no longer an expression of need, but a function of the social practices of advanced capitalism (Ritzer and Goodman, 2004, p.32). Debord (1967, p. 54) adds a critique along with Lukacs' reification that the spectacle or the seductive nature of commodities appears to simulate real life.

Baudrillard broaden the Marxian explanation of the commodity by stating that commodities were no longer merely described by use and exchange value, but they were consumed with a sign value. The sign value does not related to the fulfillment of human's need, but rather the image associated with the object created through advertising. Baudrillard (cited in Dawson, 2007, p. 14) explains that in order to become an object of consumption, the object must become a sign. Advertising of commodities constructs an image of the object to be sold and consumers find themselves more caught up in the representational aspects than its actual function. The symbolic nature of the commodity reflects some level of prestige or status attained through consumption, the demand is dependent upon the cultural meanings attached to image of the object. These images transferred on onto commodities help to perpetuate false needs and distract consumers from real life under an expanding capitalist system.

Baudrillard (cited in Dawson, 2007, p.16) went a step beyond his thought of sign-value to suggest that these signs had become simulacra. These simulations have now come to become dominant over all social life, masking class and reorganizing production around these false imitations of reality. More specifically, Baudrillard (cited in Dawson, 2007, p.16) saw simulacrums created by the electronic media as a copy of a copy so far abstracted that its relation to the original object is no longer evident; rather than producing meaning in media commodities. Thus, commodities generated by mass media institutions are a falsified duplication of reality that comes to replace the original.

Guy Debord (2001, p.139) takes a different path in describing the commodity, he argues that commodity is an immense accumulation of spectacles. According to Debord (2001, p.139) the spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images. The spectacle becomes a means to placate and distract society from reality and the creative human potential. Cultural commodites, such as art were no longer become authentic representations of social life but spectacles that are consumed by public. The spectacle manipulates and exploits the use value and human needs to extended profit and ideological control over humans. In spectacle's society, the images seem more real than the reality. This is where hyperreality's society is born. Music is the example of global spectacle and it already become a commodity that hunted by mass media. A lot of media displays music shows not only discussed about the ability to dance, sing, or play music's instrument,

but how they attract the audience. All of those spectacles are not separated with competition, glory, achievement, and money in the end.

In this case, the concept of happiness in wedding industry is commodified in the form of blog in the website. Based on the commodificaton's theory above then this product is perceived not merely as a use and exchange value, but it consumed with sign value and become an object of consumption sold to get a prestige or status. Happiness is no longer an expression of need, but a function of social practices of advanced capitalism. This sign value then sold to be consumed to get a status and create a false need. In order to get a false need, in this case people are willing to spend more than five hundred million for their wedding celebration. This research focuses on the textual analysis and encoding-decoding processes as these processes are needed prior to arriving to the commodification stage.

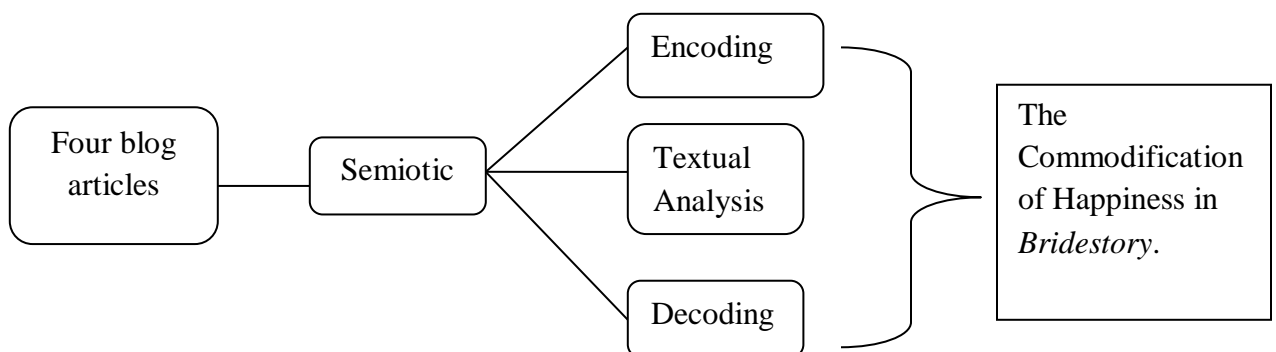## 2.7 Theoretical Framework

The chart below gives a clear theoretical framework which is used.

Table 2.1 Theoretical Framework