

HUES AND YOU

BY SAMEEKSHA GUPTA

“Everything that you can see in the world around you presents itself to your eyes only as an arrangement of patches of different colors.” - John Ruskin

If we discuss the scientific definition of what colors are. It defines colors as the result of light interacting with objects. When light strikes an object, certain wavelengths are absorbed, and others are reflected. And the ones reflected, determine the color we perceive. But we know that, don't we? One of the most basic understandings of humans is colors. Colors contain various feelings for different people, and they tend to like or dislike different colors on the basis of their experiences. Colors also affect our emotions which is why sometimes we are green with envy, see red, feel blue, or are tickled pink.

Colors have a profound psychological impact on human emotions and behavior. While the effect of color can be somewhat subjective—depending on personal experiences and cultural backgrounds. Colors always play a huge role in many different fields such as storytelling, music, design, branding, and even retail among others. In Storytelling, filmmakers use color palettes to reflect a film's mood, themes, and characters' emotional journeys.

For example, red might signal passion or danger in a thriller, while blue could convey sadness or an atmosphere in a futuristic film. For example, in *La La Land* (a movie), colors enhance the emotional depth of the story. Mia's (a character in the movie) warm, soft hues like mustard yellow symbolize hope and ambition, while Sebastian's (another character in the movie) cooler tones reflect his passion for jazz and internal conflict. The vibrant color contrasts, especially in scenes like the opening traffic dance, amplify the dreamlike, bittersweet quality of the film, highlighting its themes of love, dreams, and sacrifice.

In the dance sequence, titled "A Lovely Night" in the same movie, color plays a key role in expressing emotions and character dynamics. The warm orange sunset lighting brings forth romance and nostalgia, enhancing the dreamlike quality of the frame. The contrasting colors of their costumes reflect their differing personalities—Mia's lively spirit and Sebastian's grounded nature. While the urban background highlights their connection. Overall, the colors create a visual metaphor for the joyful yet complex relationship between the characters.

While music itself is not inherently visual, color is often linked with sound through album covers, music videos, and stage performances. For instance, the bold red cover of a rock album

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can convey energy and rebellion, while soft pastels might represent sweetness or nostalgia in pop music.

Music's emotional impact is often described using color metaphors. For example, major keys are linked to bright colors like yellow, representing happiness, while minor keys are associated with cooler tones like blue, evoking sadness or mystery. Fast tempos might suggest vivid colors like red, whereas slow tempos bring muted colors like grey. Musically, instruments and chords have distinct *colors* in terms of sound, on one hand, violins might be described as golden, and on the other, diminished chords as dark.

Additionally, music videos and live performances often use lighting and color schemes to enhance the song's emotional tone. Overall, color deepens the emotional and aesthetic experience of music.

Colors are an essential element of branding and design that can evoke powerful emotional responses, enhance brand recognition, and guide consumer decisions. When choosing colors for a brand, it's important to understand their psychological impact, cultural significance, and how they can be harmonized to support the overall message of the brand.

Each color carries psychological meanings, one may have observed that red evokes excitement, blue signifies trust, yellow conveys optimism, and green symbolizes nature and health. Consistency in color usage is key for brand recognition. Think about major brands like Coca-Cola, whose consistent use of red makes them instantly recognizable across the globe, or Nike, whose black-and-white palette along with the iconic 'swoosh' logo reflects power, simplicity, and elegance, or even Starbucks, whose green color represents freshness, sustainability, and relaxation, which aligns with the brand's focus on high-quality coffee and a comfortable atmosphere.

Colors can also be influenced by trends that shift over time, and brands may adopt trendy colors to seem current and relevant. For example, Pantone's 'Color of the Year' often influences brand designs and marketing campaigns.

In essence, colors are far more than just visual stimuli. They are an integral part of our emotional and psychological landscape- from the way we see them to how they influence our behavior and emotions, colors play a powerful role in shaping our experiences. Whether in movies, music, advertising, branding, or the world around us, they provide an additional layer of meaning, enhancing our understanding and connection to the world.