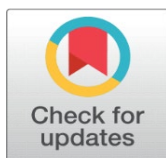


NAVRAS: REFLECTIONS OF EMOTIONS IN ADVERTISING

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ABSTRACT

Advertising utilizes human emotions and psychology to influence consumers and eventually build a brand connection. All over the world brands have turned to emotions to achieve awareness, acknowledgement, and engagement. In the Indian setting, these emotional selling propositions in advertising are Rasa, which elicit the desired response from the audience. The nine different Rasas termed as *Navras* which reflects nine aesthetic senses that people use to communicate their emotions. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how far Indian advertising have used *navbhavs* to develop *navras* in the audience in order to effectively persuade people to buy or consume a certain brand. This establishes the significance of nine rasas and their use in advertising to generate the ideal mood and effectively communicate the brand message.

Keywords: Advertising, Brand Communication, Emotions, Navras

1. INTRODUCTION

Emotions are an integral part of human life since they are what keep us alive. In everyday life, we employ expressions to convey our emotions, one may not say a word, but the gesture says it all. These expressions reveal a person's temperament, mental state, and intellect. Expressions are very important in advertising because they help to convey the message to the target audience. They are used in advertising to convey a variety of emotions using *Rasas*.

Rabindranath Tagore said "Our emotions are the gastric juices which transform this world of appearance into the more intimate world of sentiments. On the other hand, this outer world has its own juices, having their various qualities, which excite

our emotional activities. This is called in our Sanskrit Rhetoric, *Rasa*, which signifies "outer juices having their response in inner juices of our emotions" [Tagore \(2007\)](#).

So, *rasa* might be considered as an essence or aesthetic flavour that is necessary for any work of visual, literary, or performing art but can only be suggested rather than stated. It's a dynamic interaction between the artist's expression and the sensitive observer who may notice it. The *rasa* hypothesis can be traced back to the 1st century A.D. in the *Natya Shastra*, an Indian treatise on the performing arts that includes theatre, dance, and music [Sebastian \(2019\)](#). In this Bharat Muni defined the nine *rasas*, or *Navras*, that form the basis of all human emotion. The nine *rasas* of ancient Indian thought are: *Shringar* (erotic love), *Hasya* (laughter), *Karun* (compassion), *Raudra* (anger, fury), *Veer* (heroism), *Bhayanak* (fear), *Vibhats* (disgust), *Adbhut* (wonderment) and *Shant* (peace) [Chakrabarti \(2013\)](#). These *rasas* or emotions are fundamental to many forms of Indian arts like dance, music, theatre, painting, sculpture, literature, etc. but their implementation and interpretation differs.

In our Indian culture, *navras* has always been an important aspect of storytelling since they can readily connect with the audience, whether it's a *hasya kavi sammelan* or a political cartoon that draws people together via emotions. This reflects the fact that people express emotions in a variety of situations, so why should advertising be any different? After all, advertising is a type of art in which the expression of a concept or message necessitates expertise, originality, and imagination. Expressions are very important in advertising because they help to impart a variety of emotions and communicate the message to the target audience.

The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the role of *navras* in advertising and how it affects people's perception towards a brand.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the usage of *navbhavs* in advertising to develop *navras* in the audience.
- To look into the influence of *navras* in persuading people to buy or consume a certain brand.
- To enrich the existing literature by determining that Indian aesthetics is the foundation of all art forms.

3. ROLE OF NAVRAS IN ADVERTISING

Advertisements are created with a distinctive selling proposition which is the key aspect of interest. Emotional selling proposition is crucial in advertising as it can convince customers, and when handled correctly, it may even bring an indifferent buyer down the aisle. Emotions are more powerful than words. Though touching human emotions is not a new concept in advertising, brands have been telling stories that strive to strike both the head and the heart of their customers since the beginning of time. While some advertisements bring you closer to your loved ones, others leave you sad from the inside out. Brands experts feel that appealing to the emotional quotient aids in building a long-term relationship with customers [Krugman \(2008\)](#).

Every advertising has some form of emotional appeal or *rasa*. Though it might be difficult to have an advertisement with only one *rasa*, we can simply determine the nature of the product the advertisers want to convey by looking at the dominating *rasa* in the commercial. The *rasas* in the advertising undeniably evoke

an emotional response in buyers, which is reflected in sales. As a result, it becomes easier to place a product if we can figure out which *rasas* resonate with audience the best in that particular product segment.

4. PORTRAYAL OF DIFFERENT RASAS IN ADVERTISING

Emotions encompasses all sentiments, feelings, moods, and impacts, which may be categorized into nine Indian *rasas*, *Shringar* (erotic love), *Hasya* (laughter), *Karun* (compassion), *Raudra* (anger, rage), *Veer* (heroism), *Bhayanak* (fear), *Vibhats* (disgust), *Adbhut* (wonderment), and *Shant* (peace).

4.1. SHRINGAR RASA

Shringar is the *rasa* of spiritual dedication, love, art, and beauty. It is characterized as the 'King of *Rasas*' in Indian *Natya Shastra*, it is the feeling that is used to express what appeals to the human mind, what one finds attractive, and what elicits love. It may be used to express love between friends, between a mother and her kid, between professors and students, and love for God, but the *shringar* between a man and a woman is by far the most common.

In Indian advertising we use this *rasa* in a variety of ways, such as showing lovely ladies who fascinate the public and generate a sense of beauty. Many brands such as Lakme, Titan Raga, Tanishq, Lux, established brand identity through this *rasa*. This *rasa* may also be used to bring people together by expressing sensuality or desire between different genders. It might be the wonder of first love, the desire to be close to a teenage girl, or the boy-girl connection. It may take on any shade, from the purity of Jai soap's '*pehla pyar*' in the 1980s to Closeup's fantasy of being close to a young girl, the naughtiness of attraction in a recent Fastrack classroom advertisement to Levi's iconic boy-girl chemistry.

The third aspect of this *rasa* is to show that quality, well-crafted and exclusively created products have the *shringar*. When Titan introduced its watch collection in the late 1980s, it tempted customers by making the timepieces appealing to the eye. The Cannes-winning Honda 'cog' commercial visually conveys the strength of precision while also exhibiting the beauty of technology, which is guaranteed impress us.

Figure 1



Figure 1 Lux Beauty Soap Advertisement

Source: <https://www.coroflot.com/mbaber/Print-Ads>

The above advertisement of Lux soap is a perfect example of *Shringar rasa* as it depicts beauty along with sensuality. The term 'Lux' refers to a sign of luxury that is why it has always been labeled as '*filmi sitaaron ka saundarya sabun*' in India as their allure and beauty enchanted the public. This *rasa* which is built on magnificence, love and male-female association will never go out of style in a brand world that is changing from utility to beauty.

4.2. HASYA RASA

The second *rasa* is *hasya*, which can be joy from inside or delight from the deeds of others. In today's environment where people are so stressed, this technique works well because it makes customers chuckle and creates an emotional connection with the brand. People are more likely to pay attention to a funny advertisement than a factual one. Humour that is well-executed improves recall, appraisal, and the desire to buy the goods. Products that are very affordable and frequently consumed can be represented without delivering a lot of information, and here is where humour comes into play.

Advertisers must remember to keep things original when making their customers laugh, because old jokes expire with their products. Another thing to keep in mind when implementing humour in advertising is that various individuals find different things amusing, so an advertisement that seems funny to one person may not be funny to others. The products that sell best with humour content are ones that require the least amount of thought from the buyer. Products that are generally affordable and frequently consumable can be represented without delivering a lot of information, and here is where comedy comes in. Candy, food, and toys/entertainment related products have all benefited from using *hasya rasa* in their marketing strategies.

Figure 2



Figure 2 Fevicol Advertisement

Source: <https://www.socialsamosa.com/2019/03/brandsaga-fevicol-advertising-journey/>

Fevicol commercials are usually funny. The element of surprise, along with a sense of humour has been ingrained in these advertisements. We could not understand how they did not fall off the bus, but we knew why. Amul, Flipkart,

Fevicol, Cadbury 5 Star Mentos and Vodafone are among the brands that have established themselves using *hasya rasa*.

4.3. KARUN RASA

The essence of *Karun rasa* is compassion and sympathy, which has been defined as the heart shivering in the suffering of others. It connects us to other beings on a fundamental level, allowing us to comprehend and sympathize with them. In India, we see this in various areas of art, literature, and theatre. This intense, poignant *rasa* can be one of the most successful methods to convey a message across the audience.

Although modern consumer psychology emphasizes happiness, sorrow remains a deep and powerful force that smart advertisers may exploit. To portray *Karuna* in advertising, one must first comprehend that grief may occur, but it will pass just as quickly. Sadness in advertising can come when the subject feels abandoned and attempts to elicit empathy from the audience. *Karuna* is one of the most compelling and long-lasting feelings in social or nonprofit advertising, it builds an emotional bond with the organization or brand.

Advertisers can effectively generate *karun rasa* in two ways, first as to elicit empathy and second as something to be evoked and then resolved. In the below posters, poor street kids are dressed in clothes made from old newspapers, cardboards, and sacking and seen walking the runway to generate funds for a winter clothing drive. In these posters, *Karun rasa* eloquently demonstrates the depth of compassion.

Figure 3



Figure 3 New Ark Mission of India: Winter Collection Posters

Source : <https://www.commart.com/project/4579/new-ark-mission-of-india-posters>

4.4. RAUDRA RASA

In *Natya Shastra*, the *Raudra rasa* is one of the most significant *rasa* and *Krodh* (rage) is its main emotion. It shows anger, a universal feeling that we all experience at some point in our lives. We may experience righteous anger in response to

injustice or disrespect, believing it to be more justified than selfish anger, yet *raudra rasa* is an unpleasant feeling regardless of its cause. It may be used in advertising to persuade people to do various things by portraying them what might happen in harsh reality if they do not follow good advice. Advertisers will overuse the harshest of colours to their utmost intensity, they will overuse brightness, ultra-fast action, and wrath in body language and attitudes.

Figure 4



Figure 4 Tata Tea Advertisement

Source: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/3BKwCSD5bLA/maxresdefault.jpg>

Tata tea '*Jaag Re*' advertising campaign depicts how we wait for circumstances to unfold, for calamities to strike, and then we grieve. These are essentially a forceful wake-up call to the hypocritical Indian society, or '*Alarm Bajne Se Pehle, Jaago Re*' before the crisis hits. *Jaag Re* continues to interest and engage viewers with concerns such as corruption, pre-activism, gender inequality, citizen rights and duties, and recognizing raw sports ability. There are several advertisements that arouse *Raudra rasa* through visuals, message, or copy. One such advertisement is of Vogue '*My Body, My Choice*' campaign in which Deepika Padukone asserts that men and women are equal stakeholders in this world. Anger is used in a variety of ways, but it is most commonly seen in advertisements intended to get people angry about environmental concerns, government actions, policies, and political groups.

4.5. VEER RASA

Veer rasa represents firmness, endurance, valor, pride, zeal, bravery, and wit. In the present world, *Veer*, heroism is no more about completing incredible feats of physical power, as we commonly connect heroes with. It is a symbol of bravery, self-assurance, resolve and courage (Kumar (2014)). In advertising, the advertiser must depict a moment of panic, or someone trapped in a difficult circumstance with no clear way out. When confronted with fear, the communication must be founded on the belief that there are only two options: flee or face the problem.

Advertisements woven into the *veer rasa* frequently convey themes such as appreciate the pleasure of conquering challenges, don't be disheartened by failure,

relish the exhilaration of solving a problem, or become active in speaking out against wrong.

Figure 5



Figure 5 Mountain Dew Advertisement

Source: <https://www.milestoneloc.com/10-big-brands-with-hindi-taglines/>

The above advertisement of Mountain Dew is based on a profound and powerful consumer insight, overcoming fear to meet a challenge and win. These kind of advertisements features *veer rasa* and emphasize what lies beyond fear and how it may be utilized constructively as a steppingstone to achievement. Many advertisements of bikes, sports and fitness products, aerated drinks, and even Indian army and air force successfully portrayed this *rasa* through propagating the emotions of courage, pride, and bravery.

4.6. BHAYANAK RASA

Bhayanak rasa or terrible feeling is one of the most significant *rasas* in the *Natya Shastra*. *Bhaya* is the *rasa* employed to elicit terror in audience. It is about the unexplained anxiety brought on by a sense of despair tragedy, the emotions of helplessness and the fear experienced while facing certain death.

Bhayanak rasa is used in three ways in Indian advertising. The first way is to generate anxiety, which is the most common and targets women, mothers, and wives, as well as their care-giving persona. It's possible that the anxiety isn't caused by the sickness. Some brands have successfully portrayed this *rasa* such as Pepsodent is about '*dishum dishum*' against food-borne germs, Dettol and Lifebuoy are about dirt germs that can cause disease, and Saffola is about lifestyle diseases at a young age. The second way of generating *Bhaya rasa* is to demonstrate danger. This is less commonly used because of the Indian traditional reluctance to publicly discuss death and disease and also because marketing philosophy generally argues that you sell advantages or happy tales with brands rather than highlighting anxieties.

However, when it comes to breaking inertia, fear is the most effective tool. It just compels the audience to pay attention and listen. Saffola accomplished it extremely well in the early 1990s with its image of a spouse being carried into an

operation theatre with the background sounds of an ambulance siren. Arousing tension is the third technique to depict this *rasa*. Whether it is a 30-second television commercial or a half-page print advertisement, this is possibly the most difficult *rasa* to execute. When the government intended to promote iodised salt in the late 1990s, it utilized the fear of goitre and stunted development to make its case.

Figure 6

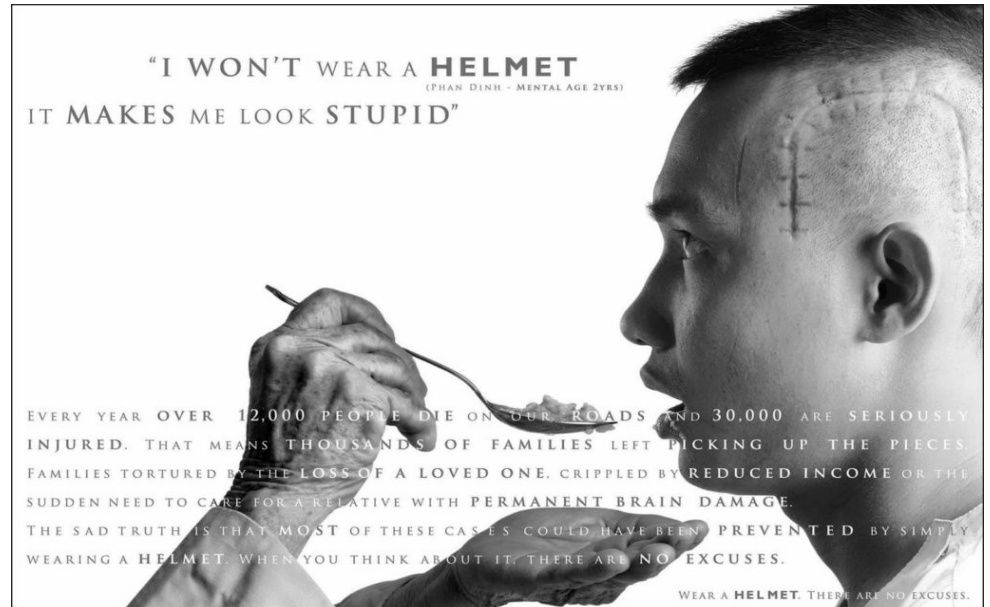


Figure 6 Poster Of 'Wear Helmet' Campaign

Source : <https://adhomecreative.com/vibe/our-blog/the-fear-factor-of-advertising/>

Conventional marketing talks about the advantages of brands and brand propositions, but in some cases, it is important to directly address fears. The advertisements of life insurance, cooking oils, skin care products, deodorants can employ this *rasa* very well. But the utmost impact of *bhaya rasa* can be depicted in public safety and health advertisements. These advertisements are not really attempting to sell you a product, instead they are intended to make you more aware of the dangers you may encounter in your daily life.

4.7. VIBHATS RASA

Vibhats rasa is a *rasa* that expresses disgust. Antipathy can be triggered by a variety of factors, including seeing something undesirable, faults or abnormalities, strange smells, touch, and sound. *Vibhats rasa* is used in Indian advertising to boost the efficacy of fear or *bhaya rasa*. Disgust gives us a strong want to avoid and withdraw ourselves from the habit or circumstance as fast as possible, whereas fear produces doubt and nervousness about what to do. It is particularly effective in motivating people to lose weight, quit smoking, or change any behaviour that will enhance their health. We have also seen a number of advertisements for cleaning goods that upset viewers by describing and displaying the dirt, grime, and germs that are left behind when you use less efficient mops, cleansers, and even toothpastes.

Figure 7



Figure 7 Just Liquid Soap Advertisement

Source: <https://fcdn.me/bec/023/just-liquid-soap-cockroaches-79ef935ccaae4ec7602ce78fa1.jpg>

The above advertisement tries to evoke *Vibhats rasa* to make people paranoid about germs that might be lingering on their hands, and it states, 'If you aren't totally clean, you're filthy'. There is not much to say about this *rasa* except that it is made when things like vomit, terrible odours, and health problems are correctly represented. A smart advertiser can readily communicate this area, while a bad one may inadvertently generate it.

4.8. ADBHUT RASA

Adbhut rasa is the sense of surprise, amazement, and astonishment evoked by encountering a heavenly entity or achieving a cherished desire. We are awestruck by all the wonderful things we see around us, which keeps our minds active and our life experience vivid. According to *Natya Shastra*, this *rasa* can be distinguished by distinctive characteristics such as wonderful statement, behaviour, demeanor, form and so on. Touch, perception, sincere demonstration of laughing, congratulatory remarks, trembling, choking speech, sweat, are some examples of its presentation.

The *adbhut rasa* is a strategy used in advertising to elicit curiosity with the dual goal of stimulation of interest and customer involvement. Teaser commercials do not provide all the details about the product, instead they build anticipation and encourage viewers to wait for the reveal. For example, the campaign for Royale Atmos, a new line of Asian paints has Deepika Padukone wearing a mask everywhere, creating a sense of intrigue and surprise. The other tactic of using this *rasa* which is very popular in television commercial is advertising burr. This is the basic way of adding memorability to brand messaging by including a twist in the narrative at the conclusion which is usually comic. Twists are effective because they strike the audience by surprise. This was effectively employed in Cadbury's '*Kuch meetha ho jaye*' campaign.

The magnitude of execution is another technique to generate *adbhut rasa*. Apple is a great example of this, it chose a new approach by releasing the 'Shot on iPhone' campaign which features images made with the iPhone from photographers all around the world. Not unexpectedly, it is a brand established on its product, the

narrative is embedded in the company's concept and people excitedly anticipate its new launch, which they have never been disappointed with.

Figure 8



Figure 8 Apple Billboard

Source: <https://hayleycarter-39668.medium.com/shotoniphone-a-picture-perfect-campaign-93e54b89bab0>

While the other eight rasas play a part in raising consumer awareness, *adbhut rasa* has the potential to have a bigger influence. It is not only about being memorable, but also about creating excitement and spreading word of mouth. Nothing does this more effectively than doing something that both shocks and awes the customer.

4.9. SHANT RASA

Shant rasa is a symbol of tranquility, peace, and calmness. It does not necessitate a lack of activity or emotion, rather the actual feeling of calm is one of stability, which may be carried wherever and while doing anything. It encompasses both nonviolence and serenity.

Most individuals strive to be as calm as possible. A calm situation is desired to relieve stress. Advertisements featuring *shant rasa* can appeal to people's need for relaxation and personal pleasure by promising that if they buy something or utilize a service, their stress and worries would vanish. Advertisers have creative power over the emotional appeal of their ads. In difficult times, when anxiety is more widespread, it is preferable for brands to link their products with pleasant feelings of tranquilly through their advertising.

Figure 9

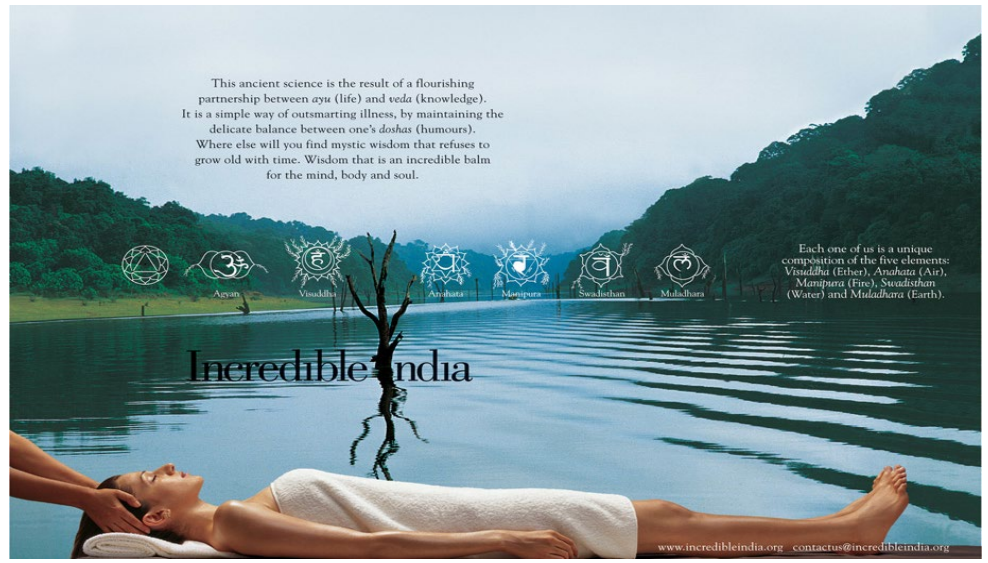


Figure 9 Incredible India Advertisement

Source: <https://www.incredibleindiacampaign.in/images/2004/Yoga-river.jpg>

Shant rasa is commonly used in tourism promotion, to urge people to visit a location and experience the tranquilly and beauty of nature. The above advertisement of Incredible India promotes spiritual tourism by implying that visiting India and practicing Yoga and meditation will help to relieve tension, anxiety, boost confidence, revitalize our spirits, refresh our minds, and re-energize our bodies. The visuals provide visitors with a sense of calm and tranquility. *Shant rasa* is also utilized in real estate advertisements to target individuals and indicate that their lives would be much more tranquil and quieter in this location. The background, visuals, and colours utilized in certain advertising create a very tranquil and comfortable ambiance, which will reduce people's fears and arouse *shant rasa* in the advertisement, making people feel good, and so generating a favourable image of the company.

5. CONCLUSION

Rasa or the emotion delivered by the advertisement, grabs the viewer's attention, triggers them to empathize with the concept and characters in the advertisement, and so puts them in a situation where the promoted product or service is perfectly suited to them. The *rasa* is significant in advertising since it aids in the development of a brand image, promotion, and niche creation. The *rasa* is presented to the spectator in segments, that is any well-thought-out, well-executed concept reaches the intended audience. During the advertisement conceptualization, the idea is considered to be one that emotionally impacts the target audience in the desired way. The layout of the advertisement is also created in such a way that it confers the *rasa* that leads to the desired response. The layout includes not only the visual aspects, but also the images, graphics, drawings, typography, layout, negative positive space, advertisement arrangement, distribution, and placement. All of these elements influence the *rasa* observation in the chosen media and grabs viewer's attention to the advertisement. This in turn have an impact on the success of advertisement, leads to increase in brand promotion and further leads to increase in sales.

It is not a secret that effective advertising relies primarily on emotions. We all know that sugary snacks and beverages are harmful for us, yet Pepsi and Coca-Cola advertisements emphasize on youth, energy, and good times rather than fat, calories, and diabetes. Chocolate brands tries to link with luxury, indulgence, and sensuality. Emotions are used to promote anything from laundry detergents to video games, mayonnaise to life insurance.

However, using the *rasas* in advertising is extremely crucial for advertising success, advertisers must also pay attention to how people react to it. As consumers attention has switched online over the last two decades, advertising has drastically altered. Short attention spans, the use of ad-blockers, and people's irritation with commercials that are aggressive or interfere with their enjoyment of online activities are some of the issues that advertisers may encounter. As a result, advertisers must pay greater attention to the emotions of their target consumers. Advertising must be more responsive to their target audiences' emotions and bring the underlying *rasas* to connect with people.

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