

## Commentary

### Minimalism and Positive Psychology

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Human beings are mostly driven by greed and unnecessary possessions and therefore our needs and possessions are increasingly expanding and so are materials. However, achieving balanced needs fulfillment and optimal growth are considered as the ultimate meaning and purpose of our life. Every day we are gaining new wisdom about the ways to achieve optimal thrive and adaptation. Furthermore, as being humans we are evolutionarily endowed with so many survival resources at our reserve to achieve flourishing that is considered as the ultimate purpose and meaning of life. In recent years, we have been attracted by two advancing concepts which in combination can add a new approach to our well-being and overall meaning in life. The first advancement is concerned with the emergence of the concept of minimalism and the latter is related to the growing recognition of the principles of positive psychology and their beneficial effects on well-being. These two constructs are gradually gaining utmost importance and acceptance in the furtherance of achieving positive mental health and improved well-being. Furthermore, these two enriched concepts are also constantly imparting a sense of wisdom in our present outlook and providing new perspectives or approaches to the survival meaning. In this commentary, we have attempted to highlight and discuss these concepts with their potential interrelated link and also how these advancing concepts can be considered as the added beneficial values for achieving a flourishing or fulfilling life.

Minimalism generally refers to what actually adds value to your life by cutting down materialistic values which are primarily seen as the means to have life satisfaction and wellbeing. The concept of minimalism is constantly

showing an added advantage to our meaning in life. Positive psychology deals with optimal human functioning that helps individuals thrive and flourish and hence can be further considered as the science of well-being, values, and character strengths. Several positive psychology variables can foster the sense of minimalism. A considerable amount of research has accumulated over the years to support the general view that a high-consumption lifestyle and excessive possessions can't bring happiness to your life. There is a concept which is known as authentic happiness which can be understood in the context of positive psychological variables. A high-consumption lifestyle often leads to over-possession and confined boundaries of interests within self and sometimes restricts an optimal survival adaptation and functioning as a human being. It also imparts a sense of false life fulfillment resulting in unauthentic happiness. On the contrary sense of minimalism in our current lifestyle leads to higher-order needs of fulfillment, freedom, and happiness. However, there seems to be a lack of symmetry in understanding and experiencing happiness related to fulfillment. People may be very satisfied with one fulfilling aspect of life for eg. a high-consumption lifestyle or excessive possessions but not with the other aspect. Moreover, we are often also found to be so attached to the seductive cycle of continually possessing the materials which may sometimes result in hoarding problems i.e. a persistent difficulty of discarding with possessions. So there should be an optimal balance to overall aspects of our lifestyle which sometimes go unnoticed. People are oblivious to potentially negative outcomes to their high-consumption lifestyle and materialistic values. In a general sense, the attitude of

minimalism conveys the reduction or cut down sense in materialistic values whereas positive psychology reflects the promotion of humanistic values.

Several underlying mechanisms have been proposed to account for minimalism. Among them, a person's failure to satisfy his or her psychological needs is worth mentioning here that has a direct link with Maslow's hierarchy. Different needs and motivational qualities may characterize the meaning in life and fulfillment concerns. Minimal survival concerns and strivings are associated with core self-evaluation and minimalism. Minimalism sometimes also referred to as voluntary simplicity, contains a lifestyle that is more directed towards decreasing consumption and promoting well-being. Furthermore, minimalism helps people reduce the materialistic excess in their lives which enables them to focus or direct their motives on achieving their most important life and humanistic values. Recently few attempts have been made to construct a preliminary theory of minimalism from a positive psychology perspective.

In the modern era, the concepts of minimalism and well-being are increasingly being considered as a dialectical approach that encompasses the whole array of human experience and behavior. Hence, the reductionist approach can be applied to bring the goodness of fit between the two independently established constructs of minimalism and Positive Psychology. It can be simply defined as voluntary generosity or simplicity along with the reductionist approach to the

materialistic excesses in one's life so that we can focus on prioritizing our real human values. Several empirical kinds of literature have confirmed the consistent positive relationship between minimalism and well-being. However, the integrated practice of the principles of minimalism and Positive Psychology can provide a beginning empirical foundation. Both the concepts may seem vastly different but they often have a single common factor that is to promote an optimal functioning or adaptation which has gone almost unnoticed. Finally, the concepts of minimalism and positive psychology commonly share various core features including the focus on wealth v/s health choice, as well as an increased focus on values i.e. personal growth, ecological awareness, autonomy, self-sufficiency, spirituality, and flourishing with the purpose of living fulfilling and meaningful life.

Overall, while considering the strategies to help people and communities experience more survival-fulfilling and adaptive aspects, we should apply an integrative approach of minimalism and positive psychology concepts. Furthermore, through the adoption of these principles, we can increase positive outcomes and advance our existing knowledge of survival meaning in life. In essence this commentary would provide an advanced understanding of these constructs and by applying these principles people can optimize their well beings.