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# **Decluttering the Future: An Analysis of Indian Minimalism**

**Aastha Rathour<sup>1</sup> and Gunita Mankame<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> *Amity University Noida, India*

<sup>2</sup> *Bachelor of Management Studies, V. G Vaze Kelkar College, Mumbai, India*

## **Abstract**

*Minimalism is a tool to rid yourself of life's excesses and to focus on what's important, to find happiness, fulfilment, and freedom. India has not been left behind in the wave of minimalism, whether it was back in the sustainable era of Mahatma Gandhi or the 21st century where Indian minimalists are embracing the traditional "less is more" lifestyle. The wave of minimalism rose vividly post the COVID-19 outbreak. Indian minimalists are palpable in every discipline and are mindful of their environment and lifestyle choices. The previous works have not rigorously examined the future of minimalism in India. Our paper aims to focus solely on Indian minimalism and its progress in Indian society. The current paper has analyzed secondary data imparting valuable information that adds meaning and structure to the aim of the paper.*

*The paper highlights insightful corners of Indian minimalism and its acceptance as a lifestyle, with the help of secondary data. It focuses on the essence of certain mindful behaviours such as thrifting, recycling, upcycling, and cautious consumerism. It explores the plausible future of minimalism along with practical alternatives that can be adopted by contemporary Indian minimalists.*

**Keywords:** *Minimalism, Indian minimalism, Decluttering, Thrifting, Consumerism, Sustainable, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

## **1.0 Introduction**

“Living simply, so that others may simply live.” - Mahatma Gandhi

This proverbial saying by Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest faces known for living a minimalist life, highlights why living simply is not only beneficial to ourselves but also for the environment and people around us. Simple living encompasses several voluntary practices to simplify one's lifestyle.

The dominance of a consumer culture based on materialism and mass consumerism has taken an enormous environmental toll (Bradshaw, 2019) and overconsumption has not proven to contribute to humans' well-being or happiness (Cole, 2010; Helm et al., 2019; Seegebarth et al., 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic, which has slowed some forms of consumption and stopped others entirely and thus decreased traditional retail and manufacturing operations, has had the ironic benefit of cleaner air and water and a respite for wildlife worldwide. (Gardiner, 2020)

The pandemic offered everyone an opportunity to reflect on what matters and the value of their consumption. Many people are asking themselves, “Why can’t we live with what we already have?”

We propose minimalism as a deliberate paradigm shift in consumer behaviour based on the principle of a sustainable lifestyle and seek to provide its operationalization and evidence of its effects on emotional well-being. India’s focus on minimalism is palpable. India is on the advent of consumerism. We are lured by high fashion labels and new gadgets and have been under the impression of feeling empty without such possessions. We are more interested in making others believe we are happy than in trying to be happy ourselves. We do need intentional living. Minimalism is the most pragmatic approach towards life and it is very flexible (Shah, 2020).

Indian Minimalism – is soon to become a candid design trend. In a country where less is less and more is never enough – minimalism is a demanding inclination to simply tip-toe at home (The Beauty of Indian Minimalism, 2020). As Times of India highlights while decluttering hacks call for a re-examination of what we keep inside our homes, the larger concept of sustainability entails careful consideration of what we throw out in the landfills (Vora & Sanjiv, 2021).

Our research paper aims to explore the concept of Indian Minimalism more rigorously which was lacking clarity in previous studies in the Indian context. This secondary analysis will focus on understanding how Minimalism emerged as a tombstone in India with shades of various religions or movements and how minimalism impacts our whole existence. It will discuss how the art of minimalism has been arising into various segments ranging from architecture to music and will be delving into the beauty of Indian Minimalism. In the last segment, it delves into the question of whether or not the "less is more" concept is possible in India. We will be discussing certain practical alternatives or suggestions to minimalism as an ending pedestal.

## **2.0 History and Philosophy of Minimalism**

The word minimalism feels like a new word but the ideas, principles, and origins of this word can be traced back in history. The idea of simple living originated from 1BCE when Seneca stated, "It is not the man who has too little but the man who craves more, that is poor." In Christianity, living minimally without any greed is about living out your purpose, not anyone else. Islam talks about 'Zuhd', which means Asceticism. It promotes moderation and shuns extravagance or extremism in any avenue of life. It encourages people to fulfil their basic needs moderately, without wasting any resources. In Hinduism, Sannyasa talks about a simple life, one with minimal or no material possessions. Indian religions include a spectrum of diverse practices, ranging from mild self-discipline, self-imposed poverty, and simple living, to more severe austerities and self-mortification practices of monks. Contingent upon Buddhism, a traditional Buddhist, such as a monk, lives an extremely minimalist lifestyle because their belief in these principles governs their everyday life. They also believe that attachment to objects is what causes suffering because nothing will last forever.

In the West, minimalism emerged as a reaction to the consumerist mentality that began in the Industrial Revolution. Overproduction and advertisements made to manipulate the audience have left the public saturated. People have realized that they were buying more than necessary, consequently cluttering their houses, emptying their bank accounts, and creating their prisons. The tendency to walk away from uncontrolled capitalism has therefore grown all over the world. Much like the West, people in Japan are too adopting minimalist lifestyles. With the emergence of capitalism in the United States of America and the consequent formation of global markets, Japan, too, set aside the Zen principles. Nonetheless, in the twenty-first century, Japan is re-embracing its old minimalist practices (Morais, 2019).

Minimalism is largely influenced by the art movement which took place in New York in the 1950s. It started when the artists first questioned and then rejected their overly expressive works in 'Abstract Expressionism' and turned to 'Abstract Geometric Forms'. Donald Judd popularised stacked monochromatic shapes, while Frank Stella reduced his work to geometric forms, in an attempt to get rid of external meaning in his paintings. Artistic minimalism reached its heights in the late sixties and early seventies.

At that time, minimalism was meant for the masses. It had very little to do with sustainability and anti-materialism and was more concerned with keeping things in order. Minimalism has deep roots in schools of philosophy that are thousands of years old. There are mentions of minimalism in Stoicism, which is an ancient Greek school of philosophy. One of the key foundations of the Stoics is to learn to fully appreciate the things that we already have and be truly grateful for their presence, in an attempt to ease our desire for more (Arundel, n.d.).

### **3.0 Segments of Minimalism**

#### **a. Minimalism in architecture**

Architecture predominantly focuses on the most essential elements, clarity, monochromatic surfaces, repetition, and simplicity of form (Sheth, 2019). The framework of traditional Indian architecture provides an ideal base for minimalist decor and with the current sustainable movement, interior designers have been quick to fuse the two styles. Indian minimalism tends to eschew natural material. The addition of stone accents means that while the minimalist theory is still in place, the design takes on a more comforting, familiar aesthetic that is missing from the sterile glossy interpretations elsewhere.

#### **b. Minimalism in food and fitness**

Indian cuisine has always been famous for its rich flavours and fragrant spices. A traditional Indian diet is known for its simple ingredients that provide nutrients. Minimalism in food also promotes eating food items that do not come with unnecessary packaging. Minimalist fitness helps you to achieve similar or better results by focusing on the things that matter most. You simplify and essentialize your fitness by doing less but better. In India, people practice Yoga, which focuses on breathing techniques and postures which does not require any equipment.

#### **c. Minimalism in digital space**

The Global Web Index's Social Media Trends 2019 report shows that the average daily social media usage of internet users worldwide amounted to 144 minutes per day. There is an urgent need to minimize the use of electronic devices to a bare need-based minimum – essentially a digital declutter.

While complete social media disengagement may be far from feasible in the age of social media, everyone should restrict the time they spend on social media with the help of certain apps like ‘Stay Focused’ and ‘Social X’, which help to set limits on time spent on social sites (Kiran & Deepak, n.d.).

#### **4.0 Indian Minimalism**

Minimalism in India is growing because of excessive consumerism. In affluent corners of India, where people can afford to consume conspicuously, many are walking away from the tiresome update-and-upgrade consumerist lifestyle that ends up clogging their spaces and weighs on their minds. The focus is on needs, quality, experiences, and decluttering. With a major global warming crisis and ever-growing mountains of trash, a minimal lifestyle is finding many takers on ethical grounds as well (Goyal,2018).

#### **4.1 History of Indian Minimalism**

Minimalism is a subjective choice of decluttering or getting rid of possessions that are invaluable and do not add meaning to one's life. In India, Mahatma Gandhi was the original proponent of minimalism. Analyzing the Sabarmati Ashram, it was made from burnt brick and handmade tiles. The use of material and energy was limited and there was great emphasis on open and semi-open spaces. Rooted in the concepts of sustainability and frugality, Gandhi's architecture, which was once considered rural and conservative, was in fact, modern (Tayyibji, 2019). His focus on simple and natural has influenced various practitioners including British-born Indian architect Laurie Baker.

**Frugality in Indian minimalism:** Gandhi respected natural resources and rejected attachment to luxury, making frugality a part of his life. In the twenty-first century, we find ways to creatively and cautiously spend money. India invented “Jugaad” or “Frugal Innovation”. Jugaad was popularized by Sam Pitroda, founder of C-DOT, who developed and popularized telecommunications in India. Frugal innovation can be defined as “the commercialization, in the context of limited resources, of quality products and services that are affordable to the masses” (Pierre, 2019).

Frugality innovators end up being strong advocates of their choices, the honour of being minimalist, and the virtues of reducing consumption (Shashikant, 2017). The ability to differentiate between needs and wants is a quality possessed by our ancestors as well.

### **Case Study of Abraham Thomas, an Advocate of Sustainable Living**

Abraham Thomas, a dentist from Bengaluru, moved to his native village 'Koduru' in Andhra Pradesh a decade ago. There he built 'Hut K', an alternate space with an amphitheatre and gardens. Since then, Abraham continues to advocate the basic principles of sustainability through design and living. The millet shop which he set up has helped increase the consumption of 'Ragi' in Koduru. He encourages the village folk to take regular walks, to apply oil and sit in the sun, and to take hot water baths, in an attempt to reduce their dependence on antibiotics. "We need to create spaces where people can be healthy," he said. Hut K is a space built on a modest budget. It is made entirely of earthly materials like lime, stone, mud, bamboo, and grass. Based on its material properties and economic considerations, bamboo is a very suitable component for cheap architectural implementations in developing nations (Leake, Toole, Divis, & Torres-Sánchez, 2010).

## **4.2 Indian Artists and Minimalism**

Art is not supposed to represent the real world but the abstracts it entails. Minimalism is an abstract and subjective art where decluttering for one can be valuable but for others, it can be puzzling. In the following paragraphs, the authors observe how minimalism is perceived by eminent designers, musicians, cooks, or any other form of artist.

### **4.2.1 Indian brands/designers**

**i. Runaway Bicycle:** 'With a passion to make art for everyday life', Runaway Bicycle, a Mumbai based label that came into being in 2013, works closely with weavers to make their fabric, and ensure that their organic cotton fabrics are certified by the Better Cotton Initiative, while also using natural dyes (Homegrown, n.d.).

**ii. Meesha:** Founded by Meesha Khanna, in collaboration with her friends from Paris, Magali Charruyer and Catherine Gouin. They incorporate a very French aesthetic that gives these statement scarves a minimalist edge while working with bonafide Indian fabrics. The scarves are all handwoven by Indian artisans working across the country, making them sustainable, artisanal, and wonderfully unique (Homegrown, n.d.).

**iii. Bodice:** Founded by Ruchika Sachdeva in 2011, Bodice represents a modern, minimal yet extremely ethnic approach to fashion. They make use of subtle colour palettes, simple, clean lines. By employing Indian artisans, Bodice is committed to sustainable production (Homegrown, n.d.).

**iv. Karan Torani:** Designer Karan Torani is heavily influenced by his childhood memories, spent playing in his grandmother's backyard in Bhopal. Taking inspiration from the handlooms and handicrafts of the region, his label specializes in light, easy Indian wear (Homegrown, n.d.).

**V. Ridhi Mehra:** The designer's offering of Indian wear is a fresh take on traditional silhouettes for the new age fuss-free bride, who's all about comfort. With innovative draping and pattern cuts, her clothes are ideal for pre-wedding occasions (Homegrown, n.d.).

#### **4.2.2 Chefs**

- i. **Megha Kohli:** This executive chef is passionate about reducing wastage. She uses indigenous grains and ingredients, while her main focus continues to be sustainable cooking. Kohli uses Manipuri black rice, 'Chakhao' in her Kheer "to show that you can make a traditional recipe unique by substituting just one ingredient" (Lobo, Behrawala, Roy, Sanghvi & Sundaram, 2020).
- ii. **Urvika Kanoi:** Kanoi runs The Daily, a cafe in Kolkata, on the principles of sustainable food practices. She works directly with farmers, cooks with local and seasonal produce, and even uses biodegradable cutlery to reduce wastage (Lobo, Behrawala, Roy, Sanghvi & Sundaram, 2020).



- iii. **Radhika Khandelwal:** "We won't be the last generation with the twin problem of food excess and scarcity, and chefs can play a powerful role here." Radhika Khandelwal also has a sustainable approach to cooking (Lobo, Behrawala, Roy, Sanghvi & Sundaram, 2020).

**b. Architects that adopt minimalism**

- i. **B.V. Doshi:** Born In 1927, he became the first Indian to win the Pritzker Architecture Prize. He sticks to the principles taught by his Guru, Le Corbusier, which are to respond to climate, tradition, function, and structure. He likes to play with scale and proportion, light and shadows in his buildings (Green Hat Studio, 2018).
- ii. **Laurie Baker:** He was born in 1917 in England but moved to India in 1945 and continued to practice architecture here itself. Minimalist in his approach, Baker worked towards creating energy-efficient, affordable structures and paid attention to details using simple local materials, creating exemplary designs (Green Hat Studio, 2018).
- iii. **Gerard Da Cunha:** He was born in 1955 in Gujarat and started his practice in his hometown Goa. His work is greatly influenced by Architect Laurie Baker. He uses natural materials like stone and recycles waste materials in his designs (Green Hat Studio, 2018).

**5.0 SWOT Analysis of a minimalist lifestyle**

<b>Strengths +15</b>	<b>Weaknesses -4</b>
1. Proponents of minimalism claim the lifestyle offers a myriad of well-being benefits, including happiness, life satisfaction, meaning, and improved personal relationships.	1. The biggest drawback of the minimalist movement is how there is not a lot of information available on the topic. This gives rise to misinformation and people often misunderstand the whole concept.

2. If one can learn to stress less by decluttering their environment, they can potentially learn a more effective way to manage their feelings and health.
3. A study aimed to explore the experiences of people with a minimalistic lifestyle. Results showed an abundance of positive well-being, autonomy, competence, positive emotions, awareness, and mental space (Lloyd & Pennington, 2020).
4. Minimalism provides a sense of control because it's the ability to maintain order in your environment. Study shows that excessive possessions have been a major cause of an increase in stress and anxiety (Lloyd & Pennington, 2020).
5. The word 'purge' has been used to describe decluttering possessions in one's physical space, which suggested a feeling of relief and renewal (Lloyd & Pennington, 2020).
6. It has also led to self-reflection, new learnings, and growth (Lloyd & Pennington, 2020).
7. Minimalism gives a feeling of freedom and liberation—not only from their possessions but from societal expectations; from the monotony of routine; and from the endless cycle of purchasing new things (Brickman & Campbell, 1971).

2. In the past, people have taken advantage of minimalism by selling used commodities at higher prices. Such cases contribute to weakening the movement and drifting people away from minimalism.
3. People feel hesitant to try minimalism just because they think it's a cliché. Many people even feel ashamed.
4. There is a lack of awareness among the people about what exactly minimalism is and the advantages it offers.

8. High volumes of consumerism lead to an increase in waste. For this reason, many minimalists often practice “zero waste,” which is a step further from just reducing consumption (Palafox, 2019).
9. Minimalism rejects the concept of fast fashion and inclines more on the idea of a capsule wardrobe, donating, upcycling and thrifting clothes, which are all beneficial for climate.
10. As people who adopt minimalism normally choose to live in a smaller house that consumes a small fraction of energy, hence there is an automatic reduction in the amount of gas and water needed to run the home.
11. The reduction of one’s carbon footprint is another benefit of leading a minimalist lifestyle.
12. Minimalist marketing is done in businesses with the help of images, words, and videos. These campaigns have objectives such as simplified choices, establishing trust, telling a story, and providing valuable information. This impacts consumers and increases profit margins.
13. About 82% of Indians suffer from stress on account of work, health, and finance-related concerns (Cigna Survey report, 2019).

<p>With anxiety, the last thing we want to add to the plate is financial stress. Shifting to a minimalist lifestyle often frees up a substantial amount of money over time. Not only because we need less to maintain our lifestyle, but also because we aren't flippantly spending our money on items that add no life value.</p> <p>14. When business goals are centred on conscious, deliberate choices, self-assessment, and the elimination of distractions, there are greater benefits.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities +5</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats -4</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Hotel sectors from all around the world have started making minimalist changes to their business models.</li><li>2. Today people prefer sustainable clothing brands that care about different environmental causes. There is a huge opportunity for the clothing sector to make use of this situation and bring wanted changes to their brands. With an increase in thrifting and upcycling, there are greater opportunities for business enthusiasts.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Minimalism is not devoid of potential disadvantages. For example, a minimalist lifestyle in India could be expensive for a middle-class family, due to the lack of alternatives. Minimalism is often characterized as merely an aesthetic; a luxury wealthier people can afford. The New York Times stated that “minimalism is now conflated with self-optimization” and that such optimization is expensive and exclusively branded by and for the elite (Palafox, 2019).</li><li>2. Certain critics suggest that a minimalist lifestyle encourages and enables new forms of consumption and that minimalism is simply a “cure-all for a certain sense of capitalist overindulgence" (Palafox, 2019).</li></ol>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Local online stores have all shifted to sustainable packaging.</li><li>4. Today, people are trying to learn more about a minimalist lifestyle through books, blogs, articles, videos, and online courses. So, there is also an increase in demand for writers who advocate sustainability.</li><li>5. Minimalist writing isn't just deleting content, it is writing to deliver a lot of value in as few words as possible. It is the conjunction between clarity and brevity (Aschwanden, n.d.).</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. These new forms of consumption can manifest themselves as a desire to purchase additional items that are multi-purpose or energy-saving; For example: Wanting to renovate a home so that it checks the box of typical minimal space (Palafox, 2019)</li><li>4. To those that are not as financially lucky, letting go of possessions that are not necessarily “essential” might prove to be difficult. Decluttering can be oppressive to some as they obsess over what to get rid of and how many items, they “should” own. In a sense, the “ban” on clutter can create pressure for people to get rid of as many possessions as they can (Palafox, 2019)</li></ol>
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### **6.0 The present and the future of a minimalist lifestyle in India**

Minimalism in India is growing because of excessive consumerism. Consumerism is the “Social movement seeking to augment the rights and power of buyers about sellers.” (Kotler, 1972) and India is on the advent of consumerism. Consumer spending across India amounted to over 17 trillion rupees as of October 2020. The decline in demand due to the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic soon recovered in a few decline.

Today Indian minimalists are opting for a zero-waste lifestyle. Minimalism can be interpreted widely, from reducing screen time to creating a customized to-do list, with the aim being to promote our priorities. People are making a conscious choice of buying sustainable, whether it's thrift clothes or organic foods. Indian minimalism in architecture today tends to indulge in warmer, more rustic wood.

This return to natural material with the addition of stone accents makes it evident that while the minimalist theory is still in place, the design takes on a more comforting, familiar aesthetic which was missing from the sterile glossy interpretations.

### **6.1 Garment and Apparel industry**

A study examined that customers derive motivation for online second-hand shopping based on many factors, some of which include:

- Availability of branded goods at a low price (economic motivation).
- Reduced time and effort (convenience motivation).
- Availability of authentic products that evoke the past (ideological motivation) (Padmavathya, Swapana & Paul, 2019).

According to anthropologist and fashion journalist Phyllida Jay, “They can foster creativity and individual expression to self-styling, which in itself can be a powerful reminder that you don’t have to rely on the latest trends and fast fashion.” (Gurung, 2021). The attributes of clothes have been central to the perception and subsequent use of clothes as an agent of transformation in South Asia, as demonstrated by Chris Bayly’s historical insights (Bayly, 1986) and contemporary studies such as those of Pnina Werbner (Werbner, 1990). Clothes can absorb the spirit of the wearer. For example, Old Saris and Dhotis of venerated elders are still used for wrapping babies, making quilts, and children’s clothes. A piece of fabric in India is used and reused, often until it falls apart and disappears (Norris, 2018). Upcycling is a good way to repurpose waste without increasing your carbon footprint. But it is also, increasingly, a great way to hold onto things that you can’t part with but don’t have the room to keep. The worth of unused items in Indian homes has reached a staggering Rs 78,300 crore, according to a 2016 survey by the online classifieds and retail portal OLX (Saha, 2017).

### **6.2 Covid-19**

Covid-19 is a global public health crisis of a scale not previously experienced in modern times. Most people have been feeling intense anxiety. (Pillai, Vipin & Jayachandran, 2020) These uncertain times have called for a pledge to develop psychological crisis intervention or behaviour modification strategies (Mukhtar, 2020).

Practising minimalism could help declutter the mind. (Mukhtar, 2020) and (Pillai, Vipin & Jayachandran, 2020). There have been several socio-cultural changes since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, which have impacted consumer preferences across the world. There has been a change in consumer behaviour patterns, with sustainability and hygiene being the primary focus.

### **6.3 India and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12**

Sustainable development Goal (SDG) 12, that is, Sustainable consumption and production aim at "Doing more and better with less." Its objective is to increase net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing the use of resources, degradation, and pollution while increasing the quality of life. SDG-12 calls out for bold and radical business model innovations which do not necessarily reduce the public's access to goods and services. The focus is on meeting consumer needs in a manner that does not exhaust ecological limits. It calls for measures that maximize the value of production and utilize the resources to the fullest. As India progresses to embark upon individual Sustainable Development Goals, SDG-12 becomes even more critical to secure the balance between economic growth and ecological imbalances. The upward migration of socio-economic status due to various poverty alleviation initiatives is already visible in the burgeoning middle-class population that is estimated to reach around 475 million by 2030, from a mere 50 million (5% of the population) in 2010; This, in turn, results in greater consumption needs, placing tremendous pressures on India's energy demand. The dependence on the already congested infrastructure and bursting urban centers is thus expected to rise significantly (Adhia, 2021).

### **6.4 The way ahead**

In a culture that is often associated with elaborate extravaganza, a minimalist lifestyle has found many takers who have managed to adopt it while also retaining the essence of their cultures. Even in the affluent corners of India, where people can afford to consume conspicuously, many are walking away from the tiresome update-and-upgrade consumerist lifestyle that ends up clogging their spaces and weighs on their minds (Goyal, 2018).

People in the West have adopted an individualistic approach characterized as having a more independent view of the self (Kitayama et al., 2000; Kitayama and Uskul, 2011). Western societies emphasize the importance of self-reliance, independence, and personal choice (Triandis, 1989; Fiske et al., 1998), making it easier for them to live a minimalist lifestyle. However, East Asian cultures are often very communal. People have an interdependent view of themselves. Their actions and cognitions are largely affected by the perceived thoughts and anticipated behaviours of significant others (Kitayama et al., 2000). Collectivism comes out as a dominant feature of the Indian mindset, which is why their authentic choice of leading a sustainable life takes a back seat. Therefore, fully decluttering one's space and lifestyle will take rigorous efforts to defy the societal norm of interdependence.

Even with its drawbacks, minimalism in India is not a new concept. Its roots lie in the eras of Buddhism and Christianity, making it an essential part of India. Minimalism in the 21st century has become a tombstone carving its way into fashion labels, food, fitness, architecture, digital space, and revamping the modern lifestyle into the paths of traditional and sustainable behaviours. On one hand, minimalism is the most pragmatic approach to life (Shah, 2020). However, it can also be difficult to fully adapt. Therefore, the future of Indian Minimalism tends to be subjective, plausible, and critical.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

- a. There are a lot of feasible minimalist options available in India when it comes to fitness. Some of them are Zumba, yoga, wrestling, or even simple running which everyone can add meaning and vitality to their life.
- b. Responsible buying is another important part of minimalism. The packaging, transportation cost, and other such factors should be considered before buying. Buying from a local vegetable vendor instead of a mall would prove to be better for both the parties involved.
- c. Processed and packaged food should not be one's preference because of the waste and health hazards they cause.
- d. Sustainable brands and online thrift stores should be supported due to time, economic and ideological convenience.



- e. People new to the concept should stay aware and not fall prey to new businesses that sell products at higher rates under the name of minimalism. People should be educated on how minimalism works and the benefits it has.
- f. A practical alternative to minimalism is to not directly plunge into decluttering the non-essentials since some people can be apprehensive while decluttering their existing possessions due to financial constraints.
- g. People should start taking small steps by recycling and upcycling their possessions. Instead of purchasing items that might be “needed” for this lifestyle, individuals can learn to repurpose and recycle belongings already around them.
- h. Another practical alternative is embracing the concept of Lagom. The English translation of the Swedish word is ‘not too little, not too much, just right. In essence, Lagom is all about balance and moderation. It encourages a sustainable lifestyle with a more balanced approach (Kapoor, 2020). The philosophy of minimalism is ‘less is more’, Lagom, on the other hand, embodies the golden mean of Aristotle. Not too little, not too much, just enough (Bruwer, 2018).

## **8.0 Conclusion**

Although the wave of minimalism or “less is more” philosophy seems fascinating to people, it comes with a mindful responsibility. Minimalism is a subjective choice to get rid of possessions that don't add meaning to our lives, and it's not a new concept when it comes to India. Indians have been acquainted with this concept since Gandhi's architecture, which was once considered rural and conservative. It was, in fact, modern (Tayyibji, 2019).

Humans are lured by high fashion labels and new gadgets and have been under the impression of feeling empty without such possessions. In a nutshell, all humans love consumerism. However, for the several past few years, consumers in India are turning their lifestyle to what it was back in Mahatma Gandhi's era: traditional and sustainable. Indians are followers of 'Jugaad' or frugal innovation. Be it a worn-out silk saree or close to end toothpaste, we know how to utilize possessions creatively and mindfully.

This rise in sustainability has been observed especially post the outbreak of Covid-19. People are focusing on devouring simple meals and staying fit with less equipment. Labels are inclined towards minimalist and thrift clothing; employees are cutting down on digital use and home decor is shifting from kaleidoscope colours to neutrals. People are recycling and upcycling and donating non-essentials. Indians are flocking towards a minimalistic lifestyle to save money and resources and to increase peace, clarity, space, and quality. Indian Minimalism has been here for a while and will continue to be in the future. It's a subjective choice that can be either embraced directly or accepted in only certain aspects of life.

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