



How Ikigai changes throughout lifespan

Jessica Wisanwanit^a, Kanticha Raksasaksakul^b, Paphawarin Rattanaicha^c

Paramate Jiembanjong^d, Poomdecha Suwannarat^e, Thananyaporn Duanthaveesuk^f

^aPrincess Chulabhorn Science High School, Trang, Thailand

^bTriam Udom Suksa Pattanakarn School, Bangkok, Thailand

^cSatriwithaya 2 School under the royal patronage of HRH The Princess Mother, Bangkok, Thailand

^dAssumption College, Bangkok, Thailand, ^eDebsirin School, Bangkok, Thailand

^fSatit Bilingual School of Rangsit University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

Abstract

Ikigai is a life philosophy referring to the purpose of life, which varies due to different factors including gender, age, status, occupation, and surrounding environment. In our study we used data on an individual's concept of ikigai, supplied from a Google form survey given to participants in Thailand. The survey contains two parts, first is the individual's personal information. The second part is on ikigai, where the participants have to answer questions given in the Google form. The data gathered from the survey will be analyzed, as well as identify the trends from the answer, which were the most, second, and least chosen. From this survey, the question "What You Love?" most responses were the answer Traveling and Relaxing, "What The World Needs?" most responses were the answer Good Politics and Public, "What You Can Be Paid For?" was Earned Income, and last is the question "What You Are Good At?" which most responses were the answer Social Skills. The results are varied due to the differences in age, generations of people, and the region where the participants lived. From our research it can be stated that the surroundings and age have an effect on how someone sees the value of life, and how the individuals' ikigai are varied. The participants choose to live the life that makes them happy, surrounded by people and the place they love, where they can gain a balanced life.

Acknowledgement

Before all else, we sincerely appreciate everybody who has supported this research. We are deeply thankful to the large number of participants that we received. As all of the kindness that supports us, the research was accomplished and successful. If we do not receive all of your support, otherwise this research will not be successful.

First and foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to survey respondents for devoting your valuable time to do our questionnaire. Owing to how IKIGAI changes throughout lifespan research is a survey research; your response is valuable for us. In survey research, answers of respondents are not only information, but also the different perspectives, which resulted in diversity of data from several factors. For instance, gender, age, status, occupation and dwelling. These absolutely cause a variety of information. This actively demonstrates that no matter what age or gender participants are, it provides beneficial data and completely comprehensive content.

Moreover, we are eternally grateful to our parents and family who always support and encourage us. They have been our supporters, although when we have difficult times, they are always by our sides.

Last but not least, we really appreciate all the help that our colleagues gave. We always support and help each other. Furthermore, we attempted and determined to work, as a result, the research is complete.

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Introduction

The definition and purpose of life vary amongst different people, depending on the circumstances. There have been inquiries on this particular topic, whether there are possibilities to be able to live a long and more meaningful life. As a matter of fact, there is a supporting philosophy confirmed by residents from a community in Japan. As well as a reference of the Japan demographic in 2020, it indicates that this country has one of the highest life expectancies in the world. They devote their lives to the Japanese philosophy known as IKIGAI.

Studies by Dan Buettner about “Blue Zones” show that each zone uses this philosophy by adapting it to their situations. IKIGAI can be referred to as the purpose of life. One of the first researchers on this specific topic, Kamiya (1996) defined IKIGAI as a source or an object that leads us to perception, awareness or also known as the ikigai feeling. It is the life philosophy entailing life values, relationships, roles in life, and goals.

However, due to the diversity of people, from their gender, age, status, occupation, as well as their surrounding environment. These factors make every individual's perspective and purpose of life vary, making every individual's IKIGAI different from the others.

In our study, we focused on the source and object that leads to IKIGAI; we had various people fill out a survey form on their perception of IKIGAI and the balance of life. The sample group is different in gender, age, status, occupation, and where they live. Specifying the scope of our research to be Thai people. Considering these different factors, we explored how the different age groups and other factors are correlated to the different perspectives of IKIGAI.

Literature Review

This article will discuss the relationship between the IKIGAI philosophy and the way of life. The authors found that from the questionnaires conducted by the test subjects, it was shown that the IKIGAI philosophy could determine the purpose of life and differentiate people at different ages, and gender that indicates that there is a purpose in different lifestyles. This raises the question of how IKIGAI affects people's lifestyle decisions.

Gordon Mathews (1996) analyzes that the "Japanese identity" is a deeply social center. Which has three levels of cultural heritage a deep level of the taken-for-granted, at which selves do not comprehend their shaping; the middle level of shikata ka nai - "what can't be helped" - which one understands but cannot easily resist their shaping; and the shallow level of the cultural supermarket of their choice. Their deformation is found in the IKIGAI philosophy, which means "What makes one's life look as worthy of being the most" is often related to work, family, and dreams.

Sone and Toshiyama (2008) examined the relationship between feelings of "A life worth living (ikigai)" with the risk of specific death. Psychological factors play an important role in the risk of illness and death. However, the relationship between negative psychological factors and the risk of death is unclear. The study was conducted with 43,391 Japanese volunteers to test whether the subjects perceived ikigai's feelings. They were asked the question, "Do you have ikigai in your life?" It was found that subjects without ikigai were associated with an increased risk of all-cause mortality at risk of death. Increased due to cardiovascular disease and external causes.

Kentaro Monri and Yu Kaiho (2017) tested the hypothesis that the elderly thought that IKIGAI those who did not study IKIGAI philosophy or those who did not know IKIGAI were more at risk of developing disabilities at work. Recent studies have shown that the IKIGAI philosophy affects death. Its purpose was to study the relationship between IKIGAI and disability in incidents occurring in the elderly. The result was disability among 442 people. Of those who disagreed with the IKIGAI philosophy was 0.9, 0.61 (0.36–1.02) for the "uncertain" group, and those who agreed 0.3, the research showed that the belief level of the IKIGAI philosophy affected disability.

Kasidit Thongvipol and Ruenglada Punyalikit (2020) educate the lifestyle of the new aged Initially found most of the elderly people have passed the hierarchy of needs Fundamentals of Maslow's theory from the first stage of physical needs, the second stage of life security needs to the third stage of love needs. Acceptance from family and society. However, when society changes, the elderly new freedom of life and having better health makes it possible to know the value of self-efficacy until being praised by society by participating in. It is a social contribution that will achieve its ultimate needs, that is the values generated by the common good, in line with the IKIGAI, Japanese Reason for Living. It was discovered in people who lived over 100 years to create happiness in their lives both physically and mentally by discovering oneself through questions that would enable them to recognize the value of everyday life.



Methodology

In this investigation, we are administering a survey in a Google form format in order to collect data about IKIGAI from the participants in Thailand. According to the survey, the participants are not limited by their age, gender, and occupation.

In the survey, we separated it into two parts. For the first part, participants have to fill in the personal information, which are gender, age, marital status, occupation, and place of residence. For the second part is IKIGAI, participants have to choose the given choices in the topic of what they love, what they care about, what the world needs, and what they can get paid for. Lastly, the final question of the survey is to combine the four parts of IKIGAI and answer what you think about your IKIGAI in an open-ended answer. In addition, we have provided general information about IKIGAI in the survey, for this reason, participants will have a better understanding of IKIGAI.

Topic	Amount (Percentage, %)
Gender	
Male	31.4
Female	68.6
Age	
Adolescence (Ages 12-20)	73.333
Early Adulthood (Ages 21-35)	6.667
Midlife (Ages 36-50)	7.619
Mature Adulthood (Ages 51-80)	12.381
Regions of Thailand	
Northern	22.857
Northeastern	17.143
Eastern	4.762
Central	45.238
Southern	9.524

The data gathered from the survey will be analysed by separating main topics into subtopics, then find the trends from the answer of the participants, which is the most, second and least chosen respectively. Moreover, from those answers of the survey will be analysed by including the trends from the age.

What you LOVE	Amount (Percentage, %)
Family	16.2
Traveling and relaxing	23.8
Hobbies	9.5
Social activities	3.8
Spend time with family	9.5
Spend time with who you love	23.8
Self-development	9.5
All of above	1
Freedom	1
Encourage people with music	1
Being myself	1

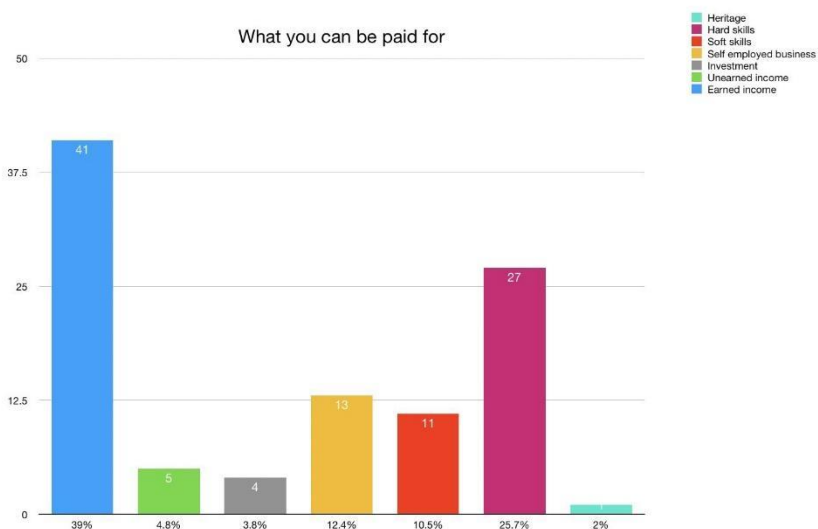
What you GOOD AT	Amount (Percentage, %)
Self-appreciation	25.7
Self-Management	21.9
Manipulate others	4.8
Social skills	30.5
Talent	14.3
Optimistic	1

What you can be PAID FOR	Amount (Percentage, %)
Earned income	39
Unearned income	4.8
Investment	3.8
Self-employed business	12.4
Soft skills	10.5
Hard skills	25.7
Heritage	2

What the World NEEDS	Amount (Percentage, %)
Peace and secure	4.8
Sharing and sacrifice	21
Knowledge and Innovation	4.8
Having good environment	11.4
Good politics and public management	24.8
Accepts responsibility and self-discipline	13.3
Equality in society	18.1
All of above	2

Data Analysis

What you can be PAID FOR

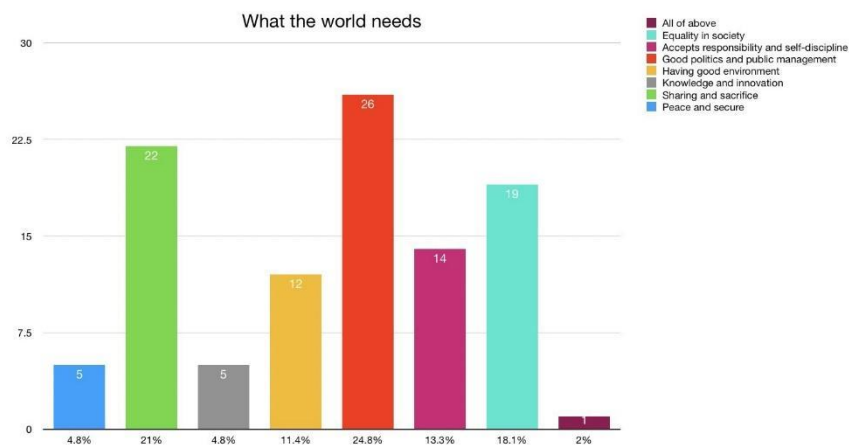


According to the survey in the aspect of “What you can be PAID FOR”, the bar graph shows that most people, approximately 40 percent, answered an earned income as the highest thing they can be paid for, following by hard skills that refer to knowledgeable skills for working, abilities to apply trainable techniques and other measurable knowledge in which accounts for 25.7 percent. The least answered choice is the income from heritage, accounting for a percentage of 2. In accordance with the majority of answers, the source of most income is the earned income from their full-time jobs as most people still attach to the idea that doing a job with constant income provided is the most secure according to several reasons, for example, the financial security of full-time jobs is still an outstanding manner and is better than any other types despite the company’s financial status. People still get paid the same even if the company gains more or less profits. Working a full-time job also provides them good welfare such as coverage in medical treatments or life insurance. Besides, if they work in profitable big-sized companies, they can receive extra payment. These are the main reasons why the most chose this choice. The following most-answered option is hard skills that refer to knowledgeable skills for working, abilities to apply trainable techniques, and other measurable knowledge, which are significant qualities to make money for individuals, both full-time and freelance jobbers. The needed hard skills are analytical reasoning skills, matching skills, problem-division skills, and skills to utilize the limited resources

for the best results. In the digital era where countless information is available, the use of analytical skills allows them to make the right decision. People Management skills such as coaching and distributing power to subordinates are also important. While heritage is the least selected choice due to different factors of each family, so there are only some families that can pass on heritage to their offspring.

The most diverse age range is from the earned income, found in adolescence (Ages 12-20). This group contributes the majority of the portion due to the relation of their career paths and faculties they are in as well as little work experience, thus working a full-time job is seen to be the most secure option. The second-largest portion is the mature adulthood (Ages 51-80) as the traditional norms of the old-fashioned society that mainly flavors high income from full-time jobs whereas the heritage, the least selected one is mostly selected by the adolescence group as they are in studying age range and do not earn income from working.

What the World NEEDS

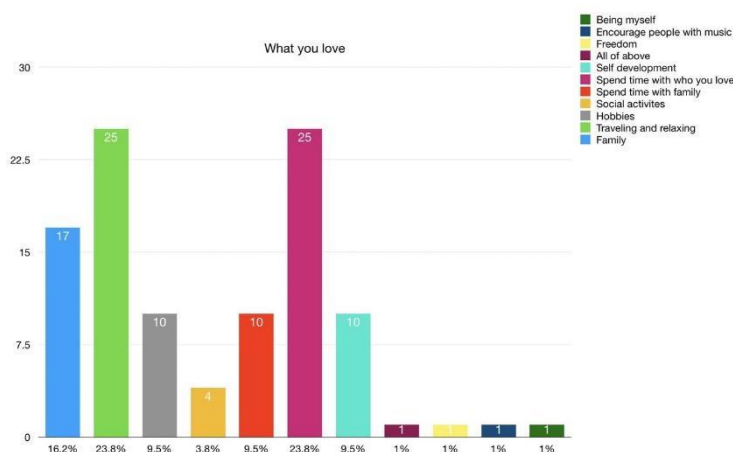


Referring to the survey in the aspect of “What the World NEEDS” from the bar graph, it illustrates that the majority believes what the world needs the most is good politics and public management with a percentage of 24.8, following by social equality accounted for 18.1 and the least selected choice is peace and security, approximately 4.8 percent. From the answers under the title of What the World NEEDS, good politics and public management is the most selected answer since the majority of people give importance to good politics and management as they are related to our lives in all aspects: the economy, utilities, equality of people in society,

and basic rights of people which are an index indicating the quality of lives in that particular country. We should give importance to politics and management because they have a significant impact on us. The second-largest portion is social equality, concerning the distribution of social goods and burdens such as income, wealth, opportunity, education, and health care. If equity occurs in society, social inequality issues or a gap between the wealthy and the poor will be lessened. Apart from that, the least selected choice is peace and security, which is actually also essential. If descending the priorities, we will see that having peace and security is actually a result of good politics. That is the reason why the choice has the least selection.

In terms of the different age range, we found that good politics and public management is mostly selected by adolescence (Ages 12-20) as people of generation Z give importance to equality, diversity, and transparency due to the era of Internet of Everything. Transparency and assessment are important as part of good politics and management. The following one is social equality in which reflects the idea of generation Z, all people are equal despite sex, level of education, and financial status. Because of this idea, the choice is made mostly by adolescence while midlife and mature adulthood consider more about aiding and sharing.

What You Love

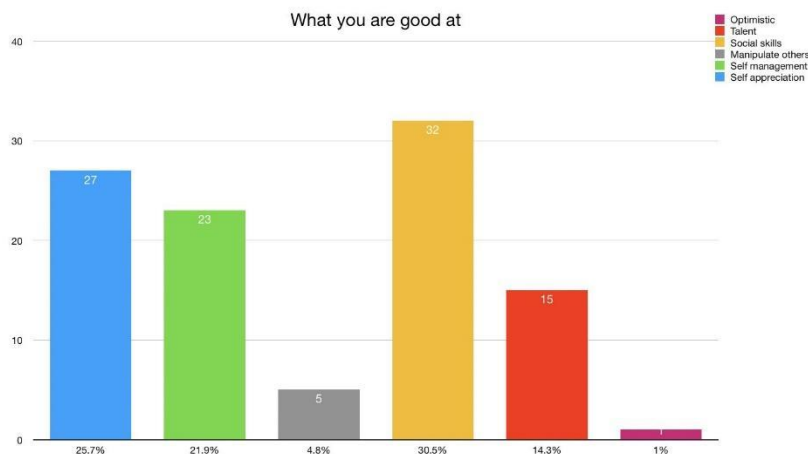


In accordance with the study, we found that the things people love the most are traveling, relaxing, and spending time with whom they love with a percentage of 23.8 for both choices. From all the answers, the following most selected choices are family, hobbies, spending time with family, self-development, and social

activity respectively. The least selected choices are freedom, encouraging people with music, being myself, and all of the above with 1 percent each. From the majority of the answers, people select traveling and relaxing, this is possibly due to traveling is a resting method that makes them relief. It might open their vision, fill in knowledge and experiences, and help them discover themselves. Anyway, it has some detrimental aspects such as travel expenses, obstacles, including risks that may occur at any time. The other thing that people love the most is spending time with whom they love. This might be due to the fact that it is heart-warmed to be on someone's side when they are sick, sorrowful, or delighted. They will not feel lonely and might feel like having a personal consultant. The least-loved ones are freedom, being themselves, and self-development. People may love individualism and freedom, but when it comes to the living basis, they alternate their love to other things, for instance, traveling or singing. Another least selected choice is encouraging people with music; the reason for this might be not all of them can play musical instruments.

According to the data, we found that people who responded to traveling and relaxing and spending time with who they love are in the adolescence age group (12-20 years old), following by midlife age (36-50), mature adulthood (51-80), and early adulthood (21-35), respectively. The first possible reason is during their adolescence, they wanted to travel, discovered new things, and explored new experiences and themselves. Secondly, they feel comfortable spending time with loved ones like friends, siblings, family members, or whoever they feel comfortable with as they make them feel secure and happy. Lastly, the respondents are mostly adolescents.

What you are GOOD AT



Pursuant to the study, it is found that what the respondents are good at the most is social skill which accounts for 30.5 percent of all answers, followed by self-appreciation, self-management, talent, and manipulating others respectively while optimistic mindset gets the least score of all with a percentage of approximately 1.

From the data collected, we found that most survey respondents answer social skills as the thing they are good at which may come from the fact that these days' people can contact and know each other easily in both direct and indirect ways. The reason for this is the Internet access; people have interactions and are involved in more social activities. The second-most selected answer is self-appreciation as people nowadays give themselves value, appreciate themselves, and do not attach too much on other things. In the meantime, manipulating others is selected by the minority, relating to the fact that people at the present have more self-identification, choose freedom over obedience or follow other's words easily as a result of excellent people control and management.

According to the data, the majority of people answering the social skill as the thing they are good at are classified in the age group of adolescence (12-20), followed by mature adulthood (51-80), early adulthood (51-80), midlife (36-50), and early adulthood (21-55), respectively. This could be because of the following reasons:

Firstly, nowadays, people in the adolescence group have wider social connections and meet many people in direct and indirect ways. The examples for the direct way happen while playing sports and participating in activities whereas the indirect way refers to connecting to others through social media or Internet. There is more likelihood of getting to know each other; the adolescents have to adopt social skills to get along with others. The other reason for this is the respondents are mostly adolescents

Conclusion

The results of research are varied in each main topic of IKIGAI due to the differences of ages, generations, occupations, gender of people and the places where they live. Consequently, this can be concluded that the surroundings and ages have a great effect on how someone thinks about the value of life in their own different ways. What they have experienced and what they are expected to be in the society have shaped people's diverse thinking about the meaning of their life. Most people never realised that they have chosen a life that they thought would bring them closer or further to the word "IKIGAI". In other words, they chose to live a life that they thought would make them happy, surrounded by people they love, get suitable pay in order for them to not only get a good quality of life, but also be able to live a balanced life. From this survey, it is found that the answer from the question What You Love, most respondents answered Traveling and Relaxing, the most chosen answer from What The World Needs is Good Politics and Public, the majority chose Earned Income from What You Can Be Paid, and lastly, What You Are Good At, the answer that most respondents responded is Social Skill. Each most chosen answer is analysed in our research paper. Therefore, finding IKIGAI in yourself when the ability is different for each person, causing different purposes in life leading to the equilibrium of life that are not the same.

This research could provide you some perspectives of how people think about their balanced life and give yourself a time to think about your own balance for a more meaningful, happier and longer life. Eventually, when all is said and done, it can be said that money, full-time employment, and some other external factors can all be considered as one of the important factors to sustain life, but it is just a small part of a good quality and balanced life. The people around you, the surroundings, your family and friends, peace and good political parties and any other factors are also crucial. This could lead you to find your IKIGAI as well. It is not a necessity for you to answer all these questions like others and your answers have no need to be the same as the most chosen answers, everyone has their own lifestyle and way to pursue happiness. The only necessity for everyone is to find your own IKIGAI. If you do not know how, read our article and we wish these would help you to pursue your happiness and balanced life.

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