
**INTRODUCING THE LIFE COACHING PROGRAMME ON EMPLOYEE
WELL-BEING IN THE JAPANESE CORPORATE SECTOR**

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Abstract

This study examines the demand for life coaching solutions in the Japanese corporate environment, where rigid hierarchies and long working hours all contribute to employee turnover, stress, burnout, and a reduction of productivity. To address these difficulties, this research explores the viability of deploying an AI-integrated life coaching platform that promotes well-being, productivity, fulfilment, and organisational benefits through internal mobility. In addition to a survey of potential users, who are employees in Japanese companies, qualitative interviews were conducted with company managers, human resource professionals, and qualified life coaches. Thematic analysis and statistical interpretation revealed a strong desire for tailored assistance that connects career paths to individual values. Based on these findings, a development plan for a structured coaching product was presented, which included an AI-powered diagnostic, a self-reflection module, and a career modification process with the coach. Cost-effectiveness simulations were also run to calculate the possible return on investment from lower turnover by internal mobility. The findings demonstrated promising benefits for employees as well as companies, although the sample size and conceptual phase constrained the study. Future studies should focus on pilot implementation and long-term evaluation to further understand the platform's practical effectiveness and organisational integration.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Motivation

Many young individuals with ambitions and dreams join the workforce in Japan's corporate society. However, because of a culture that puts an unreasonable value on results, demands unreasonably long working hours, and preserves an excessive age-based hierarchy, they frequently face irrational circumstances and psychological difficulties. Significant occurrences of depression, adjustment disorders, and even suicide are caused by the build-up of daily stress brought on by these cultural variables. According to research, people who work 55 hours or more a week are much more likely to suffer from mental illness, a phenomenon known as "karoshi," or death by overwork, which highlights how serious these issues are (Kuroda & Yamamoto, 2021). Research also indicates that workplace burnout leads to loss of productivity and employee turnover, affecting overall performance and the work environment (Khamisa et al., 2015). We believe that bringing in life coaches can be a useful intervention to deal with these problems in such a setting. A life coach's job is to assist workers in defining the lives they want to live as people and as souls so they can live more satisfying lives. Life coaches provide people the chance to evaluate whether their current circumstances are in line with their visions and values by helping them define their goals, desired emotions, and fundamental values. If there are differences, life coaching assists in identifying what needs to be changed and encourages decision-making that promotes harmony in both personal and professional life. Life coaching gives businesses several advantages by encouraging employees' mental stability and well-being. Such measures directly result in increased productivity, less turnover, and increased employee satisfaction. This research examines the need and demand for life coaches in Japanese corporate society and evaluates the possibilities of navigating deeply rooted problems with work culture.

1.2. Problem Definition

Because of the rigorous hierarchies, long workdays, and results-driven demands, the Japanese corporate environment is defined by high levels of stress, burnout, and mental health problems. These cultural elements have a major influence on organisational results and employee well-being by contributing to pervasive psychological issues (Kuroda & Yamamoto, 2021). In order to promote healthier workplaces and increase employee satisfaction and productivity, these issues must be addressed.

1.3. The Objective of Research

The goal of the research is to examine the psychological difficulties that workers in Japanese corporate settings encounter and assess life coaching as a possible solution. The study specifically aims to pinpoint and examine the organisational and cultural elements—such as lengthy workdays, age-based hierarchies, and results-driven demands—that contribute to high levels of stress, burnout, and mental health problems. This study also examines the global effects of life coaching interventions and their potential to improve employee well-being by fostering psychological resilience, aligning personal values with professional goals, and cultivating self-worth. According to research, improving job happiness and workplace harmony requires that personal and professional values be in line (Peters et al., 2020). Additionally, it has been demonstrated that life coaching lowers stress while boosting resilience and happiness (Mert et al., 2021). This paper aims to establish the theoretical groundwork for implementing culturally relevant life coaching that is adapted to the particular difficulties of the Japanese corporate environment by combining findings from workplace psychology, organisational behaviour, and life coaching research. By doing this, the study hopes to create happier workplaces, encourage a culture that values individuality, and boost overall fulfilment.

1.4 Research Question

This study seeks to explore the following question: “In the Japanese corporate setting, how can culturally specific life coaching programmes manage stress, mental health concerns, and deteriorating well-being while encouraging employee alignment with company values to boost productivity and foster entrepreneurial growth?” By researching this question, the research seeks to understand how life coaching approaches might be implemented to fit the corporate culture of Japan to reduce stress and encourage alignment between individual and corporate objectives. The project will examine how culturally relevant coaching methods can help workers achieve higher levels of life satisfaction while also helping businesses create healthier workplaces, increase employee retention, and stimulate productivity and entrepreneurship.

1.5 Overview of Methodology

The study develops and assesses life coaching programmes suited to Japanese corporate culture using a design science research (DSR) methodology. The curriculum combines contemporary coaching methods with traditional Japanese values like group harmony, or “wa.” The programme guarantees

accessibility and adaptability to individual needs through the use of online platforms and AI-driven assessments.

1.6 Brief Work Plan

For two years, the study will be carried out in five stages:

Planning and Preparation: Choosing tools and platforms, and recruiting participants.

Artefact Development: Creating culturally appropriate coaching modules.

Programme Deployment: It will be pilot-tested and improved in response to user feedback.

Evaluation and Analysis: Gathering and analysing data before and after the programme.

Reporting and Distribution: Creating publications and reports.

1.7 Structure of the Dissertation

The structure of this paper is as follows:

Section 1 provides the introduction, including the problem definition, research question, and research objective.

Section 2: Literature Review: Provides an overview of pertinent research on life coaching, workplace stress, and Japanese cultural dynamics.

Section 3: Methodology explains qualitative and quantitative research held for the thesis.

Section 4: Explaining the artefact and the process of developing the artefact using the design science research with the result of interviews and surveys.

Section 5: Conclusion summarises the main points and limitations of the research and suggests future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Search Results

The literature review in this chapter is based on the keywords that were searched for using Scopus databases. The search using Scopus yielded 1837 publications in total. The most relevant scientific works on the topic of this study were found by using the PRISMA approach as shown in Table 1 (Moher et al., 2009). The goal of analysing these pertinent scientific publications is to summarise their key findings and weaknesses.

Table 1. Representation of Scopus Research Trials

	Search string	Number of papers	File name and date	Assessment of the results
1st search	TITLE-ABS-KEY (*coaching AND *H AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “PSYC”) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “BUSP”) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “NEUR”) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “SOCP”) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “ENVI”) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “ARTS”))	1837	Scopus_result_1 Wednesday, 15th of January 2025	The first Scopus search string searched for anything that fell into “life” and “coaching” categories. In addition, only those that fell under sociology, psychology, business, neuroscience, art and environmental studies were displayed. The results were interesting, but unfortunately, more than half of the documents were irrelevant to the research topic.
2nd search	(TITLE-ABS-KEY- AUTH (*coaching	424	Scopus_result_2	The second search, in which the new keyword “business” was

	AND *life) AND REF (*business)) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "NEUR") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ENVI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS"))		Wednesday, 15th of January 2025	added, hit more articles and yielded more relevant and consistent results with the research topics and keywords than the previous search. As a result, it successfully displayed a lot of literature for further analysis and research. However, there are still too many articles. Thus, the next search will need to be narrowed down.
3rd search	(TITLE-ABS-KEY- AUTH (*coaching AND *life) AND REF (*business) AND REF (*culture)) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "PSYC") OR LIMIT- TO (SUBJAREA , "BUSI") OR LIMIT- TO (SUBJAREA , "NEUR") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI"	192	Scopus_result_3 Wednesday, 15th of January 2025	The third search hit articles more specifically related to the topic of life coach business from a cultural perspective. As a result, it successfully displayed the literature for further analysis and research. Since it showed very interesting works, I chose several articles about the life coach business from a cultural perspective from this search by screening the title abstract and reading parts of the papers. After that, the screening with the

	) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ENVI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS"))			keyword continued since it needed more articles that also talked about Japanese cultural perspectives.
4 th search	(TITLE-ABS-KEY- AUTH (*coaching AND *life) AND REF (*business) AND REF (*culture) AND REF (*japan)) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "NEUR") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ENVI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS"))	22	Scopus_result_4 Wednesday, 15th of January 2025	The fourth search hit articles more specifically related to the topic of life coach business from a Japanese cultural perspective. As a result, it successfully displayed the literature for further analysis and research.

In conclusion, combining different keywords for Scopus leads to the most useful result. For example, the most useful result was searched with the keywords: “life”, “coach*”, “business”, “culture” and “Japan”. It is very important not to use too specific words that could leave out

important articles. In other words, it is more practical to use a mixture of general keywords that are related to the topic.

2.2. PRISMA Flow Diagram

The following paragraph presents the PRISMA 2009 Flow Diagram, as shown in Figure 1 (Moher et al., 2009), leading to helpful research articles.

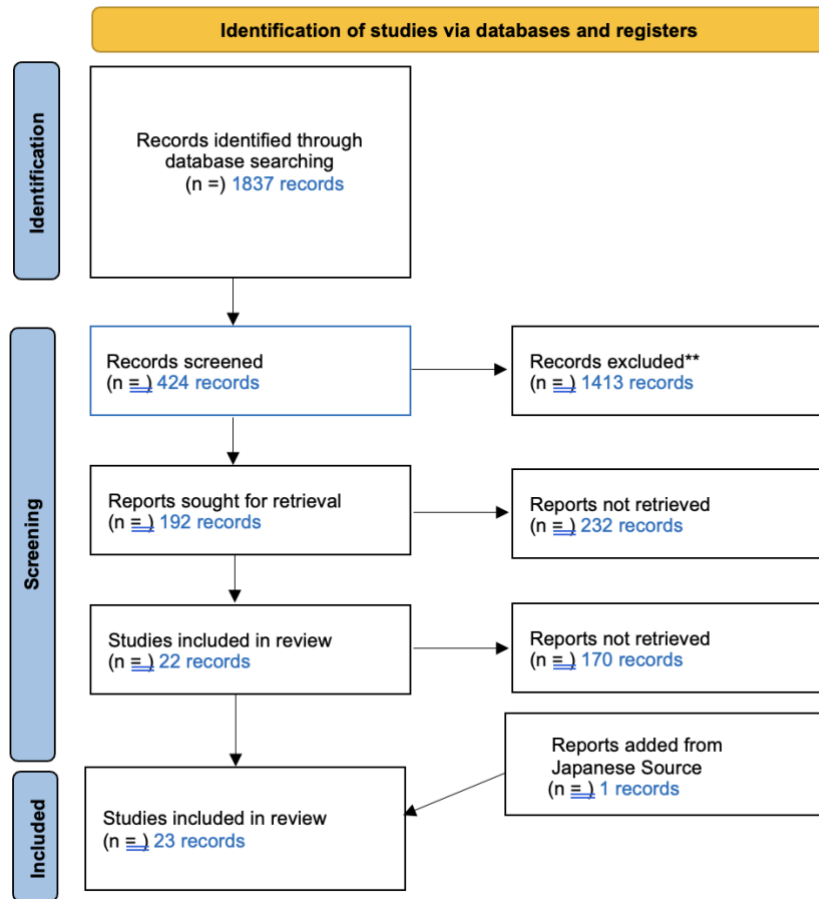


Figure 1. PRISMA 2009 Flow Diagram (Moher et al., 2009)

In total, 1837 records resulted in Scopus, and extra research in Japanese with the keywords “life coaching” and “Japan” was conducted in J-stage, allowing me to access cultural perspectives on the topic. After analysing the abstracts, introductions, and conclusions of these 192 records on Scopus, 170 were judged less relevant than the others and could not be utilised in this study. Thus, they were excluded. In the analysis, 23 references were selected that contained the information necessary for this case. Japanese references were also included in the list.

2.3. Literature Contributions

The following analysis shown in Table 2 is the literature contributions to this thesis.

Table 2. Analysis of Researched Articles

Paper	Type	Contribution	Future research Limitations
Employee Satisfaction in Sport: Development of a Multi-Dimensional Model in Coaching (Dixon & Warner, 2010)	Qualitative research study	This study provided valuable insights for this paper. This study emphasises the need for satisfaction and dissatisfaction to be treated as completely separate constructs. In other words, it is consistent with the goal of developing a life coaching framework that aims for both positive development (resilience and goal alignment) and the resolution of negative experiences (stress and low self-worth). Furthermore, this study touts the importance of focusing on cultural norms and affirms the importance of tailoring	A limitation is the focus on intercollegiate coaches within a specific cultural and professional context, which limits the potential for other industries and roles outside of sports coaching and requires broadening the scope of the study.

		development to Japanese professionals' specific needs and values.	
The impact of work-related values and work control on the career satisfaction of female freelancers (Peters et al., 2020)	Empirical research study	This paper provides important implications for the present study. First, this paper examines the impact of intrinsic work values on women's independence and career satisfaction. It emphasises the importance of creating a work environment that is consistent with personal values and that congruence between life and work values is a major factor in job satisfaction. This concept shares some common ideas with my project, which aims to use life coaching to increase satisfaction among young professionals in Japan who view work as a part of their lives.	Since this paper focuses on female freelancers in the Dutch market, many of whom were knowledge workers, there are difficulties in generalising. Future research could expand to different types of freelancers and employees in more diverse countries and industries to better understand the commonality of the results.
Organisational justice, life satisfaction, and happiness: the	Empirical research study	According to this paper, when the workplace is a fair environment, employees are more likely to express themselves,	The main limitation of this paper is that it focuses on a specific Turkish firm, which limits the

mediating role of workplace social courage (Mert et al., 2021)		which can improve their sense of well-being and satisfaction. This idea contributes to the possibility of eliminating the challenge of strict hierarchies unique to Japan as an organisation, and suggests that through life coaching, it may help young professionals in Japan to become more confident and express their individuality.	generalizability of the results to other sectors and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, it does not take into account variables such as job position, income level, and industry differences with respect to the likelihood of self-expression in the workplace. Future studies should use more diverse data and consider different cultures, sectors, and roles.
The buffering effects of virtual coaching during crisis: A quasi-experimental study of changes in well-being, work, and social outcomes before and	Experimental research study	This study shows that virtual coaching during COVID-19 significantly improved participants' sense of well-being, resilience, life satisfaction, and social connectedness in the face of stress. These results support the possibility that providing life coaching may be a solution to make life	As for the group receiving and not receiving coaching, this was self-selected by the participants. Therefore, the effectiveness of the coaching cannot be fairly determined because it reflects the intentions of the participants before the experiment was

during the COVID-19 pandemic (Auer et al., 2022)		easier for young Japanese professionals facing intense work-related pressure and stress. Furthermore, the study's focus on virtual coaching aligns well with the online coaching platform in this project.	conducted. Furthermore, the lack of demographic data on the participants limits our understanding of how individual characteristics influence coaching outcomes.
Reconstructing the History of Coaching (Haraguchi, n.d.)	Conceptual research paper	The paper addresses the main difficulties in implementing life coaching in the highly hierarchical and group-oriented Japanese corporate culture. For example, traditional communication and hierarchical structures can make coaching feel countercultural. Cultures that favour group harmony often discourage open communication and personal expression, in contrast to the individual preference-focused nature of coaching. In addition, traditional responses that emphasise productivity	Because this paper focuses on reconstructing the historical evolution of coaching, it does not extensively investigate the effectiveness of coaching in the context of contemporary Japanese firms. It does, of course, provide a detailed perspective on the cultural and structural challenges of implementing coaching in Japan, but it does not provide evidence on the outcomes for young Japanese professionals. Therefore, future

		may be preferred rather than implementing coaching as part of well-being. It may be an objection to the introduction to coaching.	research should examine the effects of coaching interventions on the mental health of young Japanese employees.
An Effectiveness of Group Model Coaching for Improving Life Balance Among Youth (Hussein et al., 2023)	Interventional study paper	The study shows how well the GROUP model coaching framework works to help young people balance their lives, especially when it comes to dealing with personality and discipline difficulties. In order to assess and reduce stress in Japanese corporate environments, it highlights organised techniques such as the “Wheel of Life,” which might be modified for our culturally specific coaching programme.	The study’s relevance to other groups, such as corporate personnel, is limited by its concentration on a small, unique population—school students. Furthermore, a brief intervention time and dependence on self-reported data call for additional study to evaluate wider and longer-term effects.
Coaching Leaders Toward Favorable Trajectories of Burnout and Engagement (Brooks et al., 2023)	Original research	It demonstrates how a 10-week executive coaching intervention employing the structured GROW model effectively lowers burnout characteristics (emotional tiredness, cynicism, and personal	Its limitations include the absence of long-term follow-up to evaluate long-lasting benefits, the cultural differences of Spanish participants, and the lack of an analysis

		inefficacy) and increases vigour, a crucial engagement component. These findings support the inclusion of culturally appropriate coaching frameworks and are consistent with our study's focus on enhancing resilience, well-being, and goal alignment in Japanese corporate environments.	identifying the most effective coaching approaches. Future research should fill in these gaps to increase applicability.
Self-experimentation coaching as a resource for life skills development in sport (Gaion, Teixeira, Santos, & Milistetd, 2024)	Case study	It demonstrates how well self-experimentation coaching works to develop life skills like goal-setting and emotional control. These insights, which provide useful techniques like introspective self-questioning and self-monitoring for individualised growth, are in line with our framework's objectives of improving stress management and self-worth for Japanese professionals.	Because it relies on qualitative approaches and focuses on a single self-researcher, the publication admits its limitations in generalising findings. This implies that larger, more varied research is required to confirm the suitability of self-experimentation coaching in various settings, including Japanese business settings. Furthermore, the reported sustainability

			advantages are questioned due to the lack of long-term follow-up.
Employee Development Programs as Catalysts for Suicide Prevention and Organisational Change (Bilderback, 2024)	Conceptual Paper	Through treatments like coaching and work enrichment, the article emphasises the value of Employee Development Programs (EDPs) in preventing mental health crises like burnout and suicide. This supports our emphasis on life coaching as a strategy to lessen mental health issues in Japanese workplaces. In particular, the research supports developing and using culturally specific life coaching modules by demonstrating how coaching programmes reduce work-related stressors and enhance resilience and well-being.	The study calls for more empirical evidence to validate the effectiveness of EDPs across diverse cultural and organisational contexts, a limitation relevant to our study's goal of understanding coaching impacts within Japanese companies. Additionally, it highlights challenges in studying mental health outcomes due to the sensitivity and complexity of factors like burnout and workplace hierarchy.
Positive Time Use: A Missing Link Between Time Perspective,	Original research	It offers a theoretical framework and empirical data on the effects of balanced time use on well-being, which greatly	A small and context-specific sample size, possible overfitting of the models suggested, and the requirement

Time Management, and Well-being (Osin & Boniwell, 2024)		advances our research. Its focus on efficiency, activity balance, and self-congruence fits well with the elements of our life coaching framework, especially when promoting self-worth, managing stress, and coordinating personal and professional objectives. The concept provides a fundamental viewpoint for creating coaching modules that are suited to Japanese business culture by integrating time management and subjective well-being.	for longitudinal research to prove causation are some of the limitations addressed in this work. These differences show how further study is required to extrapolate results to various organisational and cultural contexts.
Mumpreneurs' Decision-making (Ameen, Hoelscher, & Hughes, 2024)	Qualitative research paper	It adds to our literature review by providing information on coping techniques and ways to make decisions in challenging and unpredictable situations. In particular, it examines how people balance conflicting objectives and cope with stress, which is consistent with our	The study only includes mumpreneurs in the UK and focuses mostly on their experiences with children under the age of eleven. It ignores cultural differences and the unique difficulties encountered in other socioeconomic environments,

		emphasis on treating psychological stress and building resilience in trying circumstances. The creation of life coaching modules suited to the Japanese corporate environment can benefit from its emphasis on strategies like flexibility, self-assurance, and self-control.	including Japan. Furthermore, the use of qualitative interviews in the absence of longitudinal tracking restricts its capacity to document how coping mechanisms and decision-making processes change over time.
Coaching Approach as a Sustainable Means of Improving the Skills of Management Students (Seemann et al., 2024)	Empirical research paper	It supports our research by highlighting how coaching improves self-development, stress management, and communication skills—all of which align with our objective of tackling psychological issues in Japanese corporate settings. The study’s emphasis on raising awareness, enhancing goal-setting, and encouraging positive attitudes in management and academic contexts clearly supports the goals of our framework,	One of its main limitations is that it is mostly quantitative, which might not adequately reflect the subtle behavioural changes brought about by coaching. It recommends more in-depth qualitative research and more extensive surveys conducted at other institutions in the future to shed light on the effects of coaching, which might help improve the creation

		particularly when it comes to developing coaching modules that are suited to Japanese corporate culture.	and validation of our framework.
Beyond Coping and Adaptation: Toward a Sociology of Coaching (Stănciulescu, 2024)	Conceptual research paper	It brings sociological ideas like social structures, cultural identities, and normative systems at the centre of coaching methods, bringing about a new paradigm shift in coaching that is informed by sociology. This supports our goal of creating a coaching framework that is culturally appropriate in order to address the mental health issues faced by Japanese business workers. In particular, the paper's focus on transdisciplinary frameworks and socio-cultural awareness can help us build coaching modules that effectively handle Japan's intricate organisational and cultural structures.	The study acknowledges its main purpose is to present a conceptual framework; it offers no empirical support for the suggested paradigm. It indicates a restriction in the model's immediate application across multiple coaching environments and calls for future multidisciplinary research to test its usefulness in various cultural and socioeconomic contexts.

Rethinking Informal Workplace Learning in Times of Complexity (Lokhtina & Faller, 2024)	Conceptual research paper	It adds to our research by highlighting how important it is to have culturally aware, flexible learning environments in order to handle difficult problems. Our emphasis on life coaching for Japanese workers is in perfect harmony with its insights into informal learning and coaching frameworks in dynamic and hybrid work environments. Its examination of virtual tools and relational learning settings, in particular, can help us with the technology and design of our life coaching framework.	The obstacles of adopting informal workplace learning in dynamic situations are highlighted in this research, particularly the complexity of creating relational spaces and culturally appropriate learning resources. Furthermore, their reliance on particular case studies limits the findings' generalizability, suggesting the need for more extensive empirical confirmation.
Effectiveness of Purpose-Based Career Coaching on Career Decision-Making (Otu, 2024)	Empirical research	It supports our study by providing empirical evidence of how purpose-aligned coaching frameworks boost personal decision-making and satisfaction, which is similar to the goal of our research, which is to	The study's context-specificity (conducted in Nigeria) and small sample size (80 participants) may restrict the findings' generalizability to other organisational or cultural contexts, such

		match professional and personal objectives to improve well-being in demanding corporate cultures. our emphasis on developing spiritual resilience and resolving psychological issues at work is directly supported by the incorporation of spiritual and existential aspects into career coaching.	as Japanese corporate settings.
Health and Wellness Tourism (Smith & Puczkó, 2009)	Conceptual research Paper	It draws attention to the rising demand for holistic health and stress management techniques like life coaching. Its examination of the psychological advantages of wellness travel is consistent with our study's focus on enhancing mental health and building resilience in Japanese workers. Additionally, our framework, which is designed for Japanese professionals, is enhanced by the investigation of	It primarily discusses Western and international viewpoints, with little attention paid to corporate wellness applications such as those in our study. It is devoid of the specific framework or model for organisational well-being that our artefact seeks to offer.

		culturally sensitive methods, such as incorporating traditional values.	
Are healthcare middle management jobs extreme jobs? (Buchanan et al., 2013)	Qualitative research study	It adds to the literature review by bringing insight into the psychological effects of harsh working conditions, such as long hours, hectic schedules, and competing priorities. These issues are similar to those faced by young Japanese professionals in corporate settings that are hierarchical and high-pressure. It emphasises the importance of treating these issues with organised support networks, such as life coaching, that prioritise mental health and overall well-being.	The study admits its shortcomings, which restrict how broadly its conclusions can be applied, including its dependence on limited sample size and qualitative methodologies. Additionally, it highlights the need for more investigation into the precise origins and wider ramifications of extreme work profiles in various organisational and cultural contexts.
A Framework for Developing Women Leaders: Applications to Executive Coaching	Conceptual research Paper	It supports our study by offering a conceptual framework that combines leadership development with elements such as difficult organisational settings, work-life balance,	The study recommends empirical testing of its concept by looking at factors like influence and self-confidence in various organisational settings. Additionally, it

(O'Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2015)		and stages of life and career. This is consistent with our emphasis on creating life coaching frameworks that are adapted to particular cultural difficulties. Our lessons on self-worth and emotional resilience are similar in that they emphasise impact, authenticity, and self-confidence as components of a leadership presence.	draws attention to the necessity of tailored coaching resources, which is a constraint that pertains to our work in cultural adaptations for Japanese corporate settings.
The Supervision Process in Social Work: Emotional Dissonance and Acting (Viviani, 2023)	Qualitative research study	It contributes by emphasising social workers' emotional and psychological difficulties, especially emotional dissonance and the necessity of efficient emotion management techniques. These observations are similar to young Japanese professionals' pressures in high-pressure, hierarchical work environments. Our focus on life coaching frameworks intended to	It doesn't examine the long-term effects of emotion regulation training, which leaves space for more research into sustainable methods.

		address emotional resilience and mental well-being in professional settings is in line with the study's emphasis on training programs for emotional awareness.	
Coaching as a Developmental Intervention in Organisations: A Systematic Review of Its Effectiveness and the Mechanisms Underlying It (Grover & Furnham, 2016)	Systematic literature review	It shows that coaching is a useful strategy for raising workplace productivity since it improves job performance, leadership abilities, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction. According to the review, coaching helps young professionals in hierarchical work cultures develop self-efficacy, stress management, and goal alignment. This paper gives this research on the advantages of life coaching a solid empirical basis by examining the mechanisms of coaching efficacy, such as goal setting and psychological empowerment.	It is challenging to determine the actual efficacy of coaching because much research relies on self-reported data rather than objective performance measurements. Longitudinal studies using experimental designs should be the main focus of future research in order to assess long-term organisational and individual results.

High-Performance Coaching for Managers: A Step-by-Step Approach to Increase Employees' Performance and Productivity (Rothwell & Bakhshandeh, 2023)	Conceptual research	It supports this study by demonstrating how performance coaching enhances productivity, well-being, and leadership—key aspects of the proposed life coaching framework. It aligns with the DSR approach, providing structured coaching techniques to address workplace stress, goal alignment, and resilience. Its step-by-step coaching model can help develop a culturally adapted framework for young Japanese professionals in high-pressure corporate environments.	The book does not thoroughly examine longitudinal research on coaching's long-term effects on organisational performance; instead, it concentrates on management coaching. Future studies should examine the effects of high-performance coaching on mental health, employee retention, and long-term productivity in various cultural contexts, such as the business environment in Japan.
A Coaching-Based Leadership Programme for Women Postdoctoral Fellows at the National Cancer Institute that Cultivates	Empirical study	The study supports the findings by demonstrating how coaching improves networking, work-life balance, goal-setting, career planning, and self-confidence, all of which increase productivity and job happiness. These results support this	The study's results are less applicable to larger corporate contexts since it is restricted to a particular group of women enrolled in STEMM postdoctoral programmes. To evaluate coaching's broader application,

Self-confidence and Persistence in STEMM(Sutton et al., 2024)		research by showing how organised coaching may assist young Japanese professionals in navigating hierarchical work cultures, coordinating their personal and professional objectives, and maintaining career advancement in rigorous corporate settings.	future studies should examine its effects in other industries, cultural situations, and career phases.
Navigating a Path: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Transitions in Sport Coaching (Dieffenbach et al., 2025)	Qualitative research study	In line with its objective of enhancing the well-being of Japanese professionals, this research demonstrates how coaching promotes career flexibility, resilience, and stress management. It emphasises psychological growth, support networks, and mentoring, reaffirming the value of coaching in lowering burnout and raising job satisfaction. The life coaching model can benefit from its insights on transition frameworks and coaching approaches,	While the study provides valuable insights into coaching and career transitions, its focus on sports coaching may limit direct applicability to corporate settings. Future research should explore how these principles translate into corporate environments, particularly in non-Western cultural contexts like Japan.

despite its emphasis on
sports coaching.

The reviewed research shows how urgently culturally specific life coaching interventions are needed to address the mental health issues brought on by high-pressure, hierarchical work situations in Japan. They emphasise how crucial it is to match one's own values with one's professional objectives, build resilience, and encourage emotional health, self-expression, and job satisfaction. The studies highlight how coaching may improve productivity and organisational harmony while addressing emotional dissonance, stress, and burnout. Furthermore, for individualised and scalable interventions, they endorse using flexible, evidence-based coaching frameworks that integrate digital technologies, such as AI-driven platforms. Therefore, the creation of a life coaching programme based on design science research (DSR) is directly influenced by these insights, guaranteeing its effectiveness, relevance, and cultural suitability for young Japanese workers. Based on the literature review, the framework meets the needs of both individuals and organisations by fusing traditional Japanese values with cutting-edge stress management strategies and thorough assessment procedures, resulting in a more balanced and healthy corporate culture.

In summary, this chapter reviews a significant quantity of material from 1837 articles that were collected from Scopus and J-Stage. The PRISMA method was used to extract the most relevant scientific publications, and their contributions and limitations were examined.

2.4. Identifying Research Gaps

There are still a lot of gaps in the literature, even though it offers useful insights into workplace stress, life coaching interventions, and cultural influences. Studies by Mert et al. (2021) and Haraguchi (n.d.) draw attention to the challenges in balancing individual well-being with hierarchical norms in Japanese corporate culture. Also, although the advantages of virtual coaching are illustrated by Auer et al. (2022), its relevance to the particular stressors of Japan, like “karoshi,” has not been investigated. Additionally, the potential of structured coaching frameworks such as GROW is also demonstrated by Hussein et al. (2023) and Brooks et al. (2023), although their research does not take into consideration the required cultural adjustments. Also, although Osin and Boniwell (2024) and Peters et al. (2020) stress the importance of balancing personal and professional values for happiness, their research is primarily Western-centric and not relevant to Japan. Furthermore, as mentioned by

Lokhtina and Faller (2024) and Brooks et al. (2023), the incorporation of AI-driven tools and the long-term effects of coaching interventions are still not well studied in Japanese contexts. To improve workplace well-being and productivity in Japan, these gaps must be filled by creating culturally specific life coaching programmes that strike a balance between individual development and group harmony, utilising technology to make them accessible, and assessing long-term results.

2.5. Critical Analysis

Implementing culturally specific life coaching in Japan presents both opportunities and challenges, according to the literature. Although Haraguchi (n.d.) warns that Japan's group-oriented norms may clash with coaching's emphasis on individuality, Mert et al. (2021) emphasise how coaching can promote fairness and individual expression while dismantling strict hierarchies. However, by matching coaching methods with cultural values like harmony (*wa*), this conflict can be lessened. When culturally adjusted, structured coaching frameworks are effective in managing stress and resilience, as demonstrated by Hussein et al. (2023) and Brooks et al. (2023). The potential of virtual coaching is further highlighted by Auer et al. (2022), who suggest that it could be accessible and appropriate for Japan's tech-savvy workforce. More validation in Japan is necessary, though, as many studies—like Peters et al. (2020)—focus on Western contexts. Cultural resistance is legitimate, but it shouldn't be viewed as an impassable obstacle. Rather, it offers a chance to modify coaching techniques that uphold and protect Japan's cultural identity while fostering worker satisfaction. Life coaching can offer a significant link between traditional values and contemporary workplace requirements by striking a balance between individual fulfilment and group harmony.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design Overview

The demand for and perception of life coaching programmes in the Japanese business sector is assessed in this study using a qualitative and quantitative research approach. Three major stakeholder groups will be surveyed in the study: life coaches, HR and management representatives, and potential users (workers). A thorough grasp of the possible acceptability and perceived value of life coaching in the workplace is made possible by the combination of interviews and survey data.

3.2. Objective

The primary objective of this research is to evaluate how Japanese corporate workers, HR and management representatives, and professional coaches see and desire life coaching services, which helps to fulfil the objective of the research, which is to examine the psychological difficulties that workers in Japanese corporate settings encounter and assess life coaching as a possible solution. The knowledge gained from this approach will guide the creation of a coaching programme designed to specifically address the requirements of Japanese businesses and their employees. A convenience sample strategy was used for this investigation. Employees who actively participate in corporate organisations, HR/management members in charge of employee well-being initiatives, and life coaches with prior expertise or interest in corporate coaching were chosen as participants based on their relevance to the research goal.

3.3. Sampling Strategy

A convenience sample strategy was employed, with individuals recruited via professional networks and social connections. This sample for the survey and interviews is related to several organizations from various sectors such as consultancy, beauty, marketing and infrastructure. A convenience sample strategy was used for this investigation. Employees who actively participate in corporate organisations, HR/management members in charge of employee well-being initiatives, and life coaches with prior expertise or interest in corporate coaching were chosen as participants based on their relevance to the research goal. A purposive sampling was used to ensure the participants had relevant information and viewpoints on coaching, workplace dynamics, and employee well-being in Japan. Efficient data gathering from stakeholders directly involved in or impacted by future coaching implementations was made possible by the sample's focused character.

Participants:

The study engaged three categories of participants:

- Corporate employees (potential users)
- Human resource and management representatives
- Certified life coaches

Sample Size:

- 85 potential users (employees)
- 2 HR managers and company executives
- 2 certified life coaches

3.4. Data Collection**Interviews:**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two key stakeholder groups:

- **HR managers and management (n=2)**
- **Professional life coaches (n=2)**

The interview questions were designed to explore participants' understanding of employee well-being, openness to life coaching as a workplace intervention, anticipated benefits, and potential barriers to adoption.

Surveys:

A structured survey was distributed to **85 potential users** (employees) from various corporate backgrounds. The survey focused on:

- Alignment between their values/purposes and current job
- Awareness and perception of coaching as a support system
- Exploring genuine attitudes toward work
- Expectations for support in professional and personal development

The survey includes closed questions for quantitative insights.

3.5. Data Analysis Process

The collected data was analysed using qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate the demand and perception of life coaching within Japanese corporate environments.

Qualitative Data: Thematic Analysis of Interviews

The interviews conducted with HR managers and professional life coaches were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. An inductive approach was applied to identify emerging themes without imposing predefined categories. The transcripts were carefully reviewed and coded to extract key ideas, which were then organised into broader themes reflecting organisational attitudes toward life coaching, perceived benefits and challenges, and cultural compatibility with corporate norms. This process provided rich, contextual insights into the perceived feasibility and relevance of implementing life coaching programmes in Japanese workplaces.

Quantitative Data: Characteristic Evaluation of Survey Findings

Descriptive statistical techniques were used to examine survey data from 85 workers (possible consumers). All of the survey's questions, which are shown in the annexe, were closed-ended and intended to delve into the following topics:

- The extent to which current employment positions and their own beliefs or life goals correspond
- Knowledge of and attitudes toward coaching as a method of assistance for both professionals and individuals
- The capacity and readiness of workers to honestly consider their actual views regarding their jobs
- Expectations for assistance to improve one's career and personal development

These quantitative findings clearly showed interest levels, possible demand, and how well the suggested life coaching service matched employee needs. Together, these analytic methods enabled a structured and evidence-based understanding of employee demand for life coaching and informed the development of a culturally appropriate coaching programme for Japanese companies.

4. Artefact and Evaluation

4.1. Design Science Research Methodology

The coaching platform is a hybrid system that combines AI-based diagnostics, modular self-discovery tools, and human coaching. It will be developed and evaluated using a Design Science Research (DSR) methodology, as shown in Figure 2 (Hevner et al., 2004). The goal is to help employers match their professional goals with their personal beliefs while simultaneously providing quantifiable advantages to businesses. With its emphasis on traditional values like respect for hierarchy and group harmony (wa), the curriculum represents the distinct viewpoints of Japanese society and culture. It is particularly well-suited for the Japanese business environment. In the first phase, the qualities necessary to build the artefact, such as people, organisations and technology, are discussed below.

People: The platform focuses on workers with emotional and psychological difficulties in a high-pressure work environment, particularly younger people. It enables people to take empowered actions that align with their inner values, lower stress levels, and define their purpose.

Organisations: The programme is also designed to address organisational issues such as undesired high turnover, high absenteeism, and low engagement due to mental health concerns. Enhancing job fit and employee well-being helps businesses maximise talent deployment, reduce losses and increase productivity.

Technology: The system includes interactive self-guided lessons, online coaching tools for scheduling and tracking, and AI-powered diagnostics. Human coaches provide empathy, company-specific knowledge, and personal context to produce a comprehensive and approachable solution.

The second phase considers the steps to develop, build, justify and evaluate the artefact below.

Develop/Build:

The artefact includes:

- Culturally tailored modules
- AI tools for pattern recognition and value discovery
- A structured coaching process aligned with company contexts

It supports individuals in designing careers aligned with purpose while improving team function and workplace fit.

Justify/Evaluate: Pre- and post-programme data on value-role alignment, stress levels, retention intention, and productivity perception will be used to evaluate effectiveness. The impact will be further confirmed by qualitative interviews and organisational indicators (such as attrition and departure rates).

As the third step, the foundation of the artefact is considered as below.

Foundations: This study is based on theories from organisational behaviour, self-development, and Japanese cultural values, ensuring both practical impact and cultural alignment.

- **Organisational behaviour** guides the platform's design by highlighting job-value alignment and the significance of fulfilling work. For example, Hackman & Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model highlights how purpose-aligned roles increase motivation and engagement.
- **Self-development theory**, which includes Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977), serves as the foundation for activities such as vision-setting and belief-shifting, which assist individuals in gaining clarity and confidence in their life and career choices.
- **Japanese workplace cultural standards** such as wa (harmony), hierarchy, and indirect communication are included in the coaching approach. They cover emotional balance and respect traditional workplace dynamics.

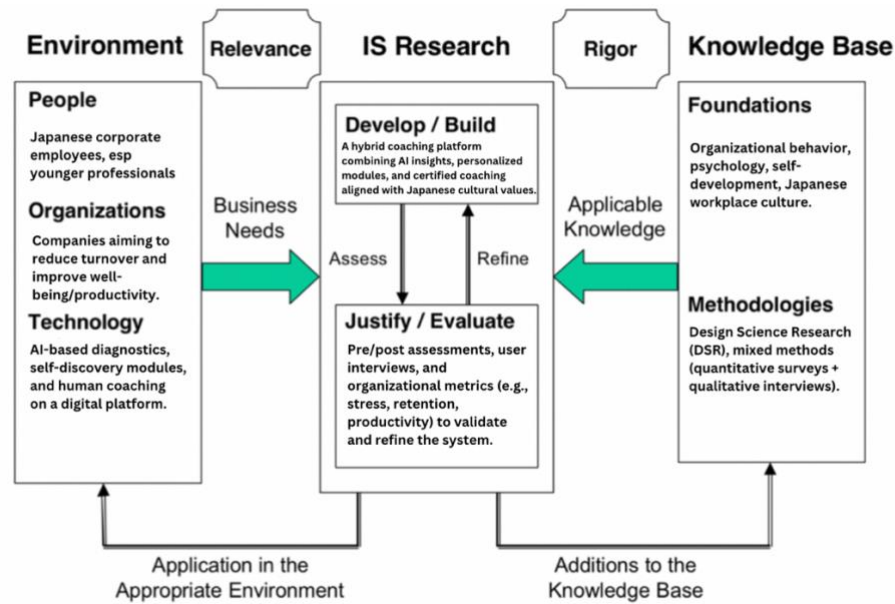


Figure 2. Design Science in Life-Coaching Programme for Japanese Companies

4.2. Development of the Life Coaching Programme

An AI-powered tool called the Life Alignment Coaching Platform has been developed to assist employees in coordinating their jobs with their life's purpose and fundamental values. The product's structure is based on three main components: the AI Diagnosis, which shows the difference between someone's current reality and their true desires; Self-Discovery Modules, which aim to eliminate limiting beliefs and investigate intuitive motivations; and human coaching, which allows employees to apply insights into their work lives with the help of certified corporate coaches. The interaction model is triadic: corporations use employee data, which individuals agree to improve HR strategies, people acquire insights through AI and coaching, and coaches offer individualised help to close the gap between self-awareness and actual implementation. As a premise, it is essential to ask the leaders of the organisations about their responsibility for career management to fulfil the workers' needs, such as having enough open opportunities to ensure that there is real feasibility to fulfill the aspirations, motivations and goals of the employees that are aligned with company needs.

The following are five structured modules on the platform:

AI Diagnosis: This module analyses historical decision-making patterns, future self-reflection, and conflicts between intuition and rationality using AI and natural language processing technologies. Employees answer questions such as “What decisions do you regret, and why?” and “When did you

last feel truly alive at work?” The AI uses this information to create a customised map highlighting gaps between a person’s inner ambition and their current path.

Limiting Beliefs Workshop: This module identifies subconscious limitations by using AI to identify cognitive patterns. Introspective questions such as “Whose expectations are you trying to meet?” and “What inner voice tells you that you’re not ready?” are posed to participants. The objective is to expose self-defeating stories that have been buried so they may be reviewed and reframed.

Career Design: This module asks users to consider their beliefs and prior accomplishments in order to envision their ideal work-life balance. Among the prompts are “What legacy would you like to leave through your work?” and “What recurring theme or passion shows up in your proudest moments?” Participants in this approach can better express relevant career paths consistent with their true identity.

Job Crafting in the Company: This AI-assisted tool recommends jobs, projects, or activities based on employee inputs and internal HR data that align with interests, abilities, and personal values. Workers investigate issues such as “What aspects of your job give you energy vs. drain you?” and “How can you modify your current position to better showcase your special talents?” This makes a proactive approach to internal career development possible.

Dedicated Corporate Coaching: Through sessions, certified coaches assist participants in transforming insights into tangible actions. Goal execution, emotional resilience, boundary setting, and stress management are among the main areas of focus. “What’s one behaviour you’re ready to change this month?” is a question coaches could pose. Or “How are you going to hold yourself to your new vision?”

This framework supports significant, long-lasting change by combining AI-driven insights with human coaching to foster personalised development, strategic career management, and increased organisational productivity.

4.3 Implementation Plan

Work plan (implementation plan): A comprehensive two-year work plan has been developed to direct the platform’s deployment, as shown in Figure 3. Its five overlapping stages are planning and preparation, artefact development, programme deployment, evaluation and analysis, and reporting and dissemination.

Phase 1: Planning and Preparation (Months 1–6)

This phase involves selecting tools and platforms and recruiting participating companies and employees.

Phase 2: Artefact Development (Months 4–12)

This phase includes designing culturally tailored coaching modules, customising content for the Japanese context, and building AI-driven platform features.

Phase 3: Programme Deployment (Months 10 – Year 2, Month 3)

Pilot sessions are launched, and feedback is collected to refine the programme before broader implementation.

Phase 4: Evaluation and Analysis (Year 2, Months 1–9)

Pre- and post-programme data is gathered to assess coaching’s impact on value alignment, stress reduction, and job satisfaction.

Phase 5: Reporting and Dissemination (Year 2, Months 7–12)

Final results are compiled into a report and submitted for publication.

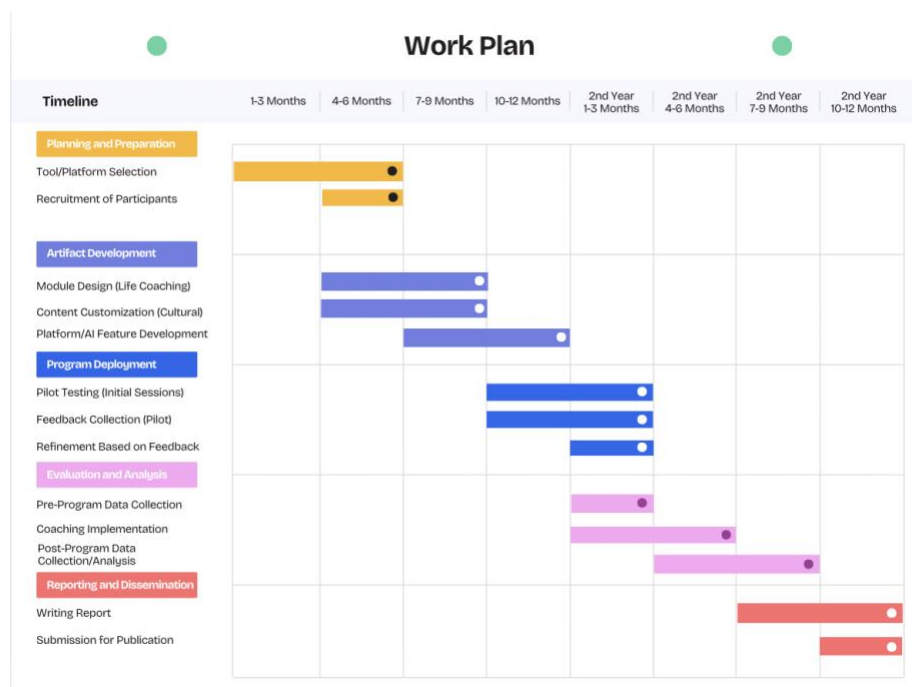


Figure 3. Work Plan

4.4. Key Findings

Perspective of Life Coach: According to the interviews, the service has considerable potential for encouraging employees to reflect on themselves and manage their careers. The idea of the AI-powered analysis was particularly praised for its ability to visualise individual value systems and cognitive tendencies—insights that would typically require multiple sessions to uncover. Regarding that, one of the coaches said that “the platform would promote deep self-awareness, job reassignment, and educated career decision-making, adding value to both individual employees and companies”. Also, another coach referred that “many young people in the field often wonder if they will ever find fulfillment, or if they will be able to continue working as they are. They rarely have a chance to put into words what they value and what they want to be in the future” which also indicates the demand of the platform to visualize their desires and future career direction. Additionally, she expressed that “if an employee's strengths and values are extracted in advance using AI, it will make it easier for the supervisor to have a dialogue with the employee about their career paths and for the employee to have confidence in himself/herself. It can also be used for job crafting, i.e., how to arrange roles within the company to increase satisfaction of the employees.” If AI and coaching can help bring out these issues, they can help clarify the direction of their careers. This results support the idea that this platform would clarify what individual employees desire internally and help them make decisions aligned with their values and companies’ needs through AI diagnosis, self-discovery modules, and human coaching.

Perspectives of Management and HR: The platform's capacity to improve employee productivity and motivation by representing internal mobility as a feasible and motivating solution for resignation was valued by management and HR stakeholders in terms of internal mobility as strategic career management. An HR person clarified “People frequently believe that quitting is the only option if they feel stuck. However, the whole outlook shifts when there is an internal opportunity to transition into a more suitable position.” In fact, employee career satisfaction and organizational retention are greatly increased when they have the chance to move to more appropriate roles when their existing tasks are misaligned (Rothwell & Bakhshandeh, 2023). Coaching is presented as an active career management tool since it was recognized for its function in assisting people in rediscovering their internal drive and sense of purpose (Mert et al., 2021). They also emphasized the platform's capacity to facilitate increased productivity. A management person made the following observation: “The team as a whole disadvantages when someone lacks motivation. Everyone benefits if this platform enables people to find once again their motivation.” Thus, the service was viewed as beneficial for both individual

fulfillment and sustaining group performance through position reassignment in line with personal beliefs (Sutton et al., 2024). Additionally, they both agreed that there is a potential that the platform has the capacity to locate and engage high-potential workers who had previously gone unnoticed, boosting employee efficiency and productivity overall (Rothwell & Bakhshandeh, 2023). Financially speaking, the manager and HR person agreed that retaining even one person during internal changes may result in significant cost savings, given that training and onboarding a replacement frequently costs more than ¥10 million (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2023). According to one HR person "We can save a significant amount of money on hiring and training expenses with only one effective internal change. Thus, rather than being a cost, this service is a strategic investment." Finally, it was believed that helping employees achieve personal and professional alignment would improve both the company's internal culture and its exterior employer branding. One manager said that "Encouraging workers to follow their passions is not only good human resources; it makes us a desirable place to work."

Potential User Survey Results: (Background of the respondents is below)

- As shown in Figure 4, the majority of poll respondents were in their 20s and 30s, with each group accounting for 35% of the total. Respondents in their 40s accounted for 18%, while those in their 50s and older accounted for a lesser proportion (9% and 2%, respectively), showing a largely younger demographic.

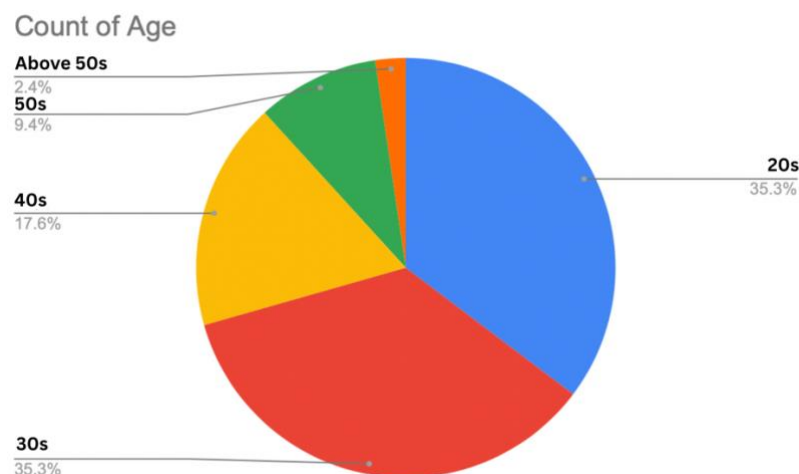


Figure 4. Age distribution

- As shown in Figure 5, female respondents made up 94% of the sample, while about 5% identified as male.

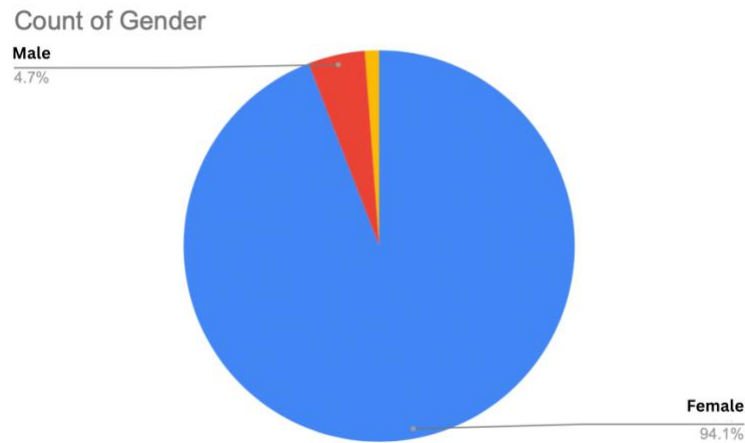


Figure 5. Gender distribution

- As shown in Figure 6, the vast majority of responders which was 80% were general employees, with management and others accounting for 9% and only 1% identifying as executives. This shows that the survey is mostly based on the viewpoints of non-managerial employees.

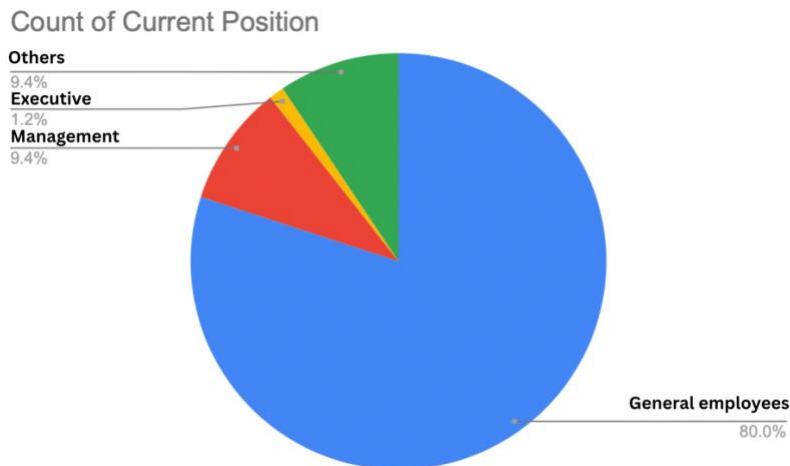


Figure 6. Distribution of current position

Survey results from 85 potential users revealed a significant unmet need for individualised, values-based career support:

- 75% of respondents rated 3 or lower (on a 5-point scale) when asked if their current job aligns with what they truly desire to do as shown in Figure 7, indicating common misalignment between personal goals and job roles.

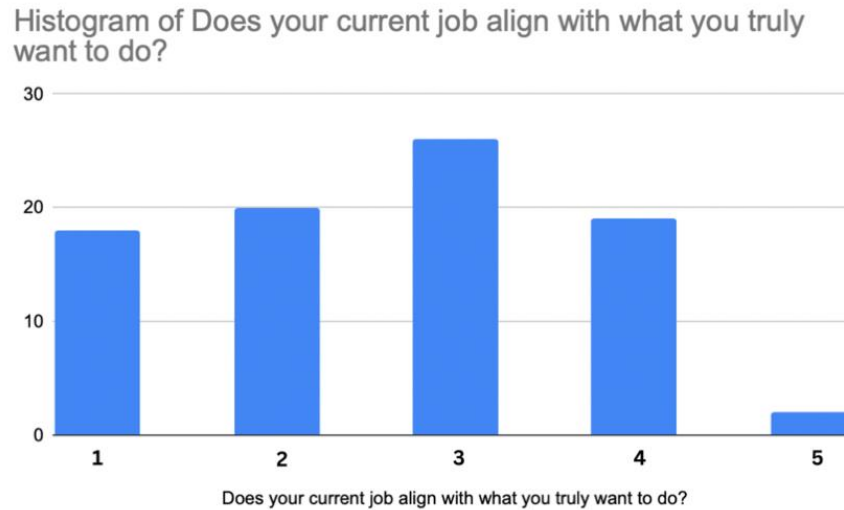


Figure 7. Histogram of “Does your current job align with what you truly want to do?”

- 65% rated 3 or less on the question of whether they can express their authentic self at work, suggesting a lack of psychological security or cultural fit as shown in Figure 8.

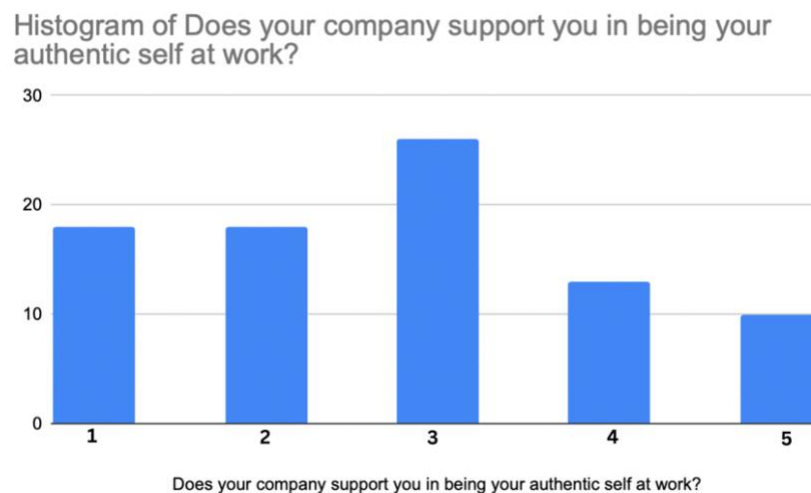


Figure 8. Histogram of “Does your company support you in being your authentic self at work?”

- 77% reported a low frequency of joy or vitality in their current work, showing emotional disconnection from routine duties as shown in Figure 9.

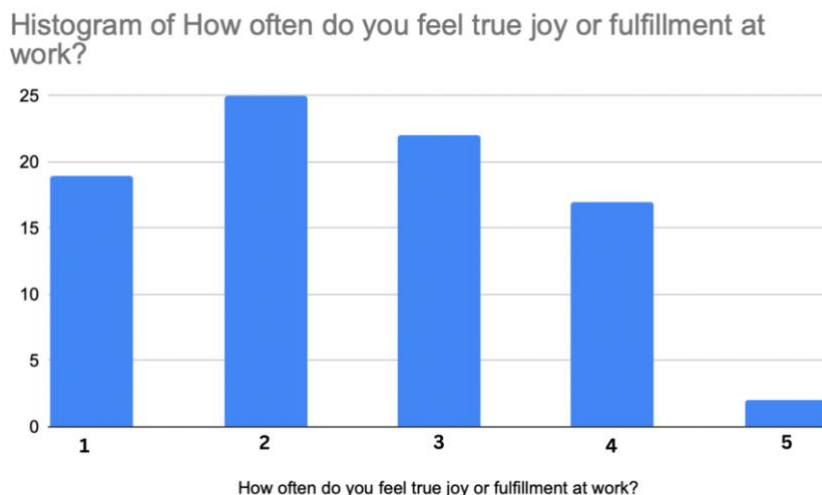


Figure 9. Histogram of How often do you feel true joy or fulfilment at work?

- 77% reported that the current job does not feel as a calling as in their life purposes which indicates that more than half of respondents have not been able to meet their fulfillment as a life purpose as shown in Figure 10.

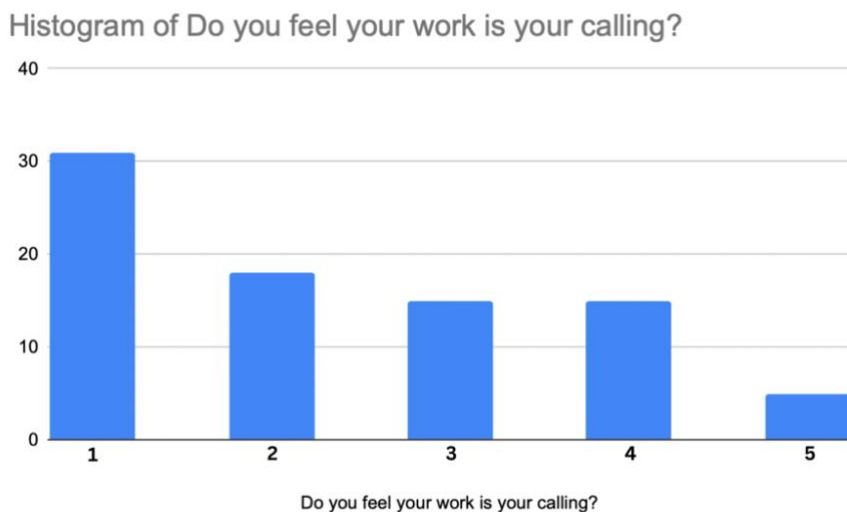


Figure 10. Histogram of Do you feel work is your calling?

- 81% claimed they would leave their present work if financial or stability worries were removed, indicating substantial underlying unhappiness and a yearning for change as shown in Figure 11.

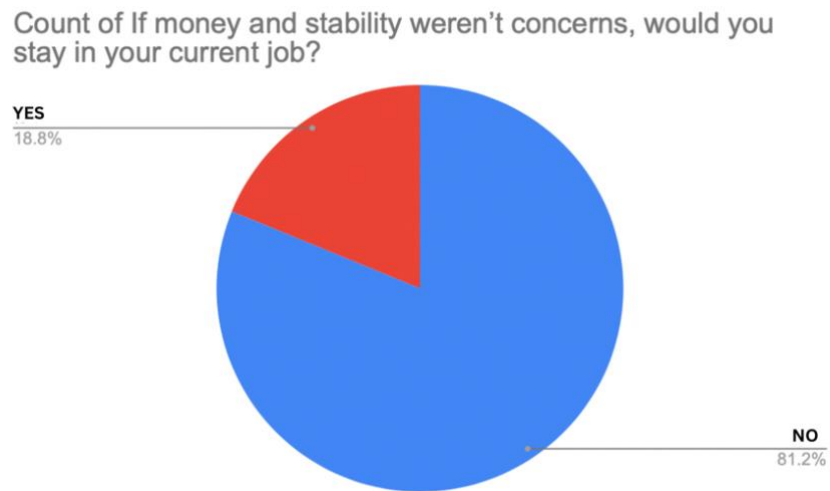


Figure 11. Count of If money and stability weren't concerns, would you stay in your current job?

- Finally, 25% identified a “lack of confidence” as the significant impediment, as shown in Figure 12, to reaching their ideal work style, emphasising the need for mentoring that fosters self-esteem and inner trust. The biggest barrier to working the way they truly want is financial concerns, which was 45%. It indicates that many people stay in a job that does not satisfy them because of financial reasons.

Count of What is the biggest barrier to working the way you truly want?

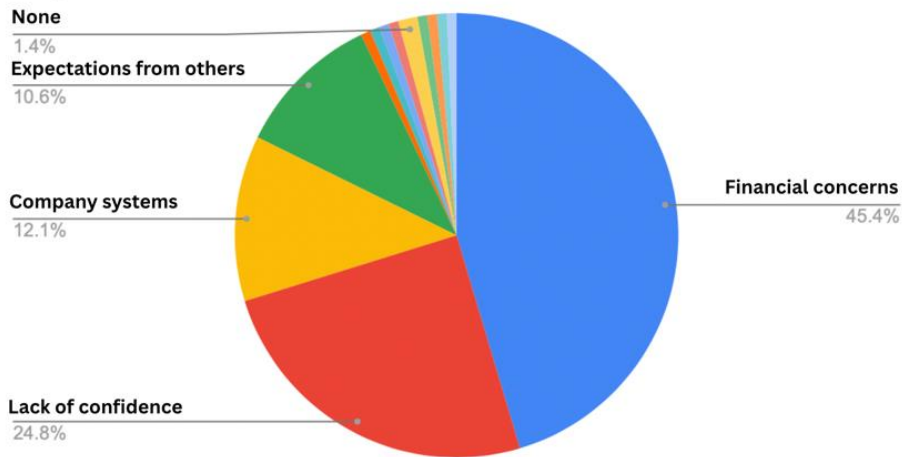


Figure 12. Count of What is the biggest barrier to working the way you truly want?

- As shown below, 31% acknowledged the need for “career support aligned with the value,” and 22% indicated that workload adjustment is needed, as shown in Figure 13. This result shows a strong desire for coaching that focuses on authenticity and life purpose. The other 32% indicates the need for work-life balance, which can also be solved by internal mobility improved by the life coaching platform.

Count of What kind of support do you want from your company?

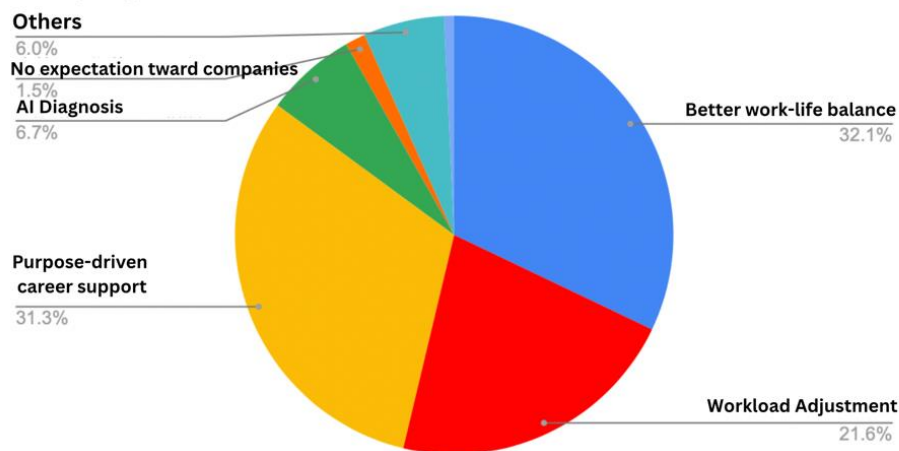


Figure 13. Count of What kind of support do you want from your company?

These findings indicate a pronounced gap between the personal aspirations of workers and the realities of their present positions at work. According to Figure 13, more than half of the respondents desire support and adjustment at their workplace, and this is exactly what the platform provides, such as purpose-driven career support, AI Diagnosis and work adjustment. Coaching services that assist individuals in clarifying their values, building confidence, and designing jobs that support emotional fulfilment and long-term involvement are definitely in demand. A platform that incorporates these psychological factors into organised career management assistance shows great promise for personal empowerment and organisational retention of workers.

4.5. Challenges Identified through Interviews and Strategies

Life coaches found some practical issues with the service's execution. Firstly, the abstract nature of AI-generated questions and diagnostics may provide challenges for younger or less experienced employees, particularly those who are unfamiliar with deep self-reflection. To improve usability, AI instructions should be designed to be concrete, accessible, intuitive and adjusted by experienced coaches. Users would be able to more readily engage with and uncover deeply rooted needs or motives that they had not previously presented. Furthermore, the success of coaching insights in promoting long-term behavioural change is dependent on supervisors' comprehension and support. As a result, it is critical to implement internal communication and training techniques that raise understanding of the coaching framework, particularly among management personnel, building a culture that encourages ongoing growth and alignment.

Management also expressed some challenges about the proper integration of external coaches within the company. Structured onboarding activities, such as participation in internal training programmes or temporary on-site involvement, were considered critical for coaches to grasp the corporate culture, get operational context, and establish relationships with workers and leadership. They also expressed concern about subscription models, noting difficulties in communicating prices to stakeholders and preserving budget transparency. Therefore, a strategy with reduced basic rates and extra charges based on real usage or performance results was regarded to be more feasible and appealing to companies. HR managers also stressed the need to use AI-generated reports to summarise employees' behaviours, ambitions, and decision-making tendencies. Such data would allow HR departments to provide individualised career paths and role recommendations, therefore increasing internal mobility and contributing to more strategic, data-driven personnel management.

4.6. Simulation of Cost-Effectiveness

This simulation was conducted to verify the cost-effectiveness (ROI) of introducing an AI x human life coaching platform for employees at a Japanese company in terms of retirement prevention, reduction of employees on leave, and productivity improvement. Assuming a 10% adoption rate (300 users) and coaching costs (¥300,000 per user per year), the total investment would be 90 million yen, based on the assumption that the platform would be introduced to a company with 3,000 employees. It is estimated that approximately 20% (60 users) of the users may choose to stay with the company instead of retiring due to improved self-awareness, alignment, and motivation. According to the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (2023), the cost of turnover per employee (including recruitment, onboarding, and lost productivity) is estimated to be approximately 10 million yen, and based on this estimate, up to 600 million yen in cost savings could be realised (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, 2023). In addition, previous research suggests that when individuals feel they are working in a way that is consistent with their core values, employee engagement tends to increase, and overall team morale and productivity increase (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2022; Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, 2023; Link and Motivation, 2020). In addition, according to Recruit Works Institute (2021), the annual price of coaching services with diagnostic functions and individualised support generally ranges from ¥200,000 to ¥400,000, and this platform's price of ¥300,000 per year is considered an appropriate level that falls within the market (Recruit Works Institute, 2021). Therefore, ROI is 567%, which is a substantial return and thus justifies the investment.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Contributions to Research and Practice

The research results presented insights into the ways AI-assisted life coaching can increase productivity, lower attrition, and improve employee engagement in the Japanese workplace. By combining AI diagnostics and human coaching for career management and emotional disengagement—problems frequently encountered in inflexible, hierarchical work environments—with scalable, customised, data-driven solutions, the suggested platform encourages personal alignment and empowers workers to pursue employment that aligns with their core values (Kuroda & Yamamoto, 2021; Takano et al., 2022). Interviews with HR and management professionals provided additional validation for this approach, demonstrating that the platform has potential as a strategic career management tool. They saw it as helpful in increasing internal mobility, reactivating disengaged employees, and, ultimately, improving both individual motivation and organisational productivity. The literature also backs up the claim that coaching interventions increase resilience and mental health (Auer et al., 2022; Bilderback, 2024; Brooks et al., 2023), boost motivation, self-efficacy, and satisfaction (Bandura, 1977; Peters et al., 2020; Otu, 2024), and give people greater control over their career path. Additionally, coaching has been demonstrated to improve performance in organized environments and psychological well-being (Grover & Furnham, 2016; Rothwell & Bakhshandeh, 2023), supporting the feasibility of the proposed platform. Research has specifically highlighted the beneficial impacts of coaching frameworks that are aligned with people's life goals and cultural contexts on goal-setting, stress management, and self-esteem (Osin & Boniwell, 2024; Hussein et al., 2023; Sutton et al., 2024). These studies demonstrate how coaching can reduce emotional dissonance, tension, and burnout while enhancing productivity and organizational harmony (Viviani, 2023; Buchanan et al., 2013). Additionally, they support the use of adaptable, evidence-based coaching frameworks that incorporate digital technologies, such as AI-driven platforms, for individualised and scalable interventions (Stănculescu, 2024; Lokhtina & Faller, 2024).

5.2. Limitations

There are several restrictions on this research. Firstly, a large portion of the data comes from a limited number of interviews, which could not adequately represent the range of viewpoints held by management, HR staff and life coaches in various corporate cultures. Secondly, even if the cost-effectiveness simulation offers a helpful numerical approximation, it is dependent on speculative

assumptions and secondary data, which means it could not be generally relevant to all business settings. Thirdly, the suggested platform is still in the conceptual and design phase, and neither actual measurements nor practical usage have been used to assess its actual efficacy.

5.3. Future Directions

It is hoped that the results of this research will lead to more research on the platform development in terms of organisational growth, career alignment, and employees' well-being. More in-depth organisational pilot projects should be applied to future studies to find out how well the proposed life coaching platform really works. Assessing its measurable impacts on worker productivity, retention, and motivation will be essential. Examining secondary benefits like decreased absenteeism and health-related costs might also be beneficial. Integrating quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from interviews can help researchers better understand not only what changes happen but also why those changes occurred. Furthermore, assessing the platform's effect on both human well-being and organisational performance would need careful consideration of key performance indicators (KPIs), including retention rate, stress reduction, career alignment, and user happiness. Pilot programs with sample companies will help indicate which age groups benefit most, and how much impact both individual users and corporate stakeholders gain from the service based on the KPIs. These observations will facilitate continuous modifications in the direction of an adaptable design. Lastly, the key to life coaching's long-term adoption will be how it is incorporated into current HR frameworks while respecting organisational culture and personal goals. In pursuit of for more authentic and fulfilling working lives, this research establishes the groundwork for a novel approach to workplace well-being that connects technology, human connection, and personal significance. The results of this thesis add to the continuing conversations about coaching technologies as an effective means of improving employee retention, motivation, and mental health at work.

6. Research on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study suggests a life coaching platform that combines AI and human support to assist Japanese corporate employees in aligning their jobs with their personal values and inner sense of purpose. The initiative addresses core workplace concerns such as disengagement, stress, and a lack of fulfilment by providing a scalable, tailored tool for reflection, career planning, and internal mobility. In doing so, it directly and indirectly contributes to several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015).

Table 3. Analysis of Goals, Contribution and Indicators towards SDGs Goals

SDGs	Goal & Target	Contribution	Performance Indicators & Metrics
3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Supports Target 3.4: "By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being."	- % of reductions in reported burnout or stress - % of increases in workplace vitality
4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Supports Target 4.4: "By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship."	- % of users of claiming enhanced clarity on career values and directions.
8	Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive	Supports Target 8.5: "By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value."	- Retention rate improvement - Cost saved per retained employee - Productivity improvement

	employment and decent work for all		
10	Reduce inequality within and among countries	Supports Target 10.2: “By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.”	- % of users feeling safe to express individuality at work

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Annex

Annex 1. Survey questions in original languages

Question 1: あなたの年齢を教えてください。

Question 2: あなたの性別を教えてください。

Question 3: 現在の役職を教えてください。

一般社員／管理職／経営層／その他

Question 4: 今の仕事は「本当にやりたいこと」と一致していますか？

全く一致していない～完全に一致している（５段階評価）

Question 5: 仕事に「自分らしさ（個性）」を発揮できていますか？

全く発揮できていない～完全に発揮できている（５段階評価）

Question 6: 仕事をしていて「心から楽しい・生きてる」と満足感を感じる瞬間はどのくらいありますか？

ほとんどない～毎日たくさんある（５段階評価）

Question 7: 現在の仕事に対して「これは自分の使命だ」と感じることはありますか？

ほとんどない～毎日たくさんある（５段階評価）

Question 8: 会社は「あなたが自分らしく働ける」ようにサポートをしてくれていると感じますか？

全く感じない～強く感じる（５段階評価）

Question 9: あなたが会社に求めるサポートは？

AI 診断／業務調整／ワークライフバランスの改善／ソウルに沿ったキャリア選択の支援

Question 10: もしお金や安定の心配がなかったら、今の仕事を続けますか？

はい／いいえ

Question 11: あなたが本当に望む働き方に近づくために、一番の障害になっているものは何ですか？

経済的な不安／家族や社会の期待／自信のなさ／会社の制度や環境／特にない／その他

Annex 2. Survey form in original languages

卒論研究：「心に寄り添った生き方を 実現するコーチングプラットフォーム」 に関する需要調査

イントロダクション

この度は、私のポルト大学大学院における卒業研究にご協力いただき、誠にありがとうございます。

🎯目的🎯

本アンケートは、日本国内で社員（何らかの組織の一員）として働く方々を対象に、どれほどの人が「自分のソウル（心）」に沿った生き方、言い換えれば、「心が満ち溢れた腑に落ちる生き方」、ができているのか、加えて、社員が自分らしく輝ける働き方を支援する組織体制があるのかを調査するものです。この調査結果をもとに、「ソウル（心）」に沿った生き方を可能にするコーチングプラットフォームの開発に役立てていきます。

🔍研究開発内容🔍

多くの人々は、日々の業務に追われる中で、「この仕事は自分に合っていないかもしれない」「本当は別の道を考えてい」と感じながらも、「今さら転職するのは難しい」「生活のために続けるしかない」「周りにどう思われるかが気になる」といった理由で、自分の本音に蓋をしてしまうことがあります。

私が開発する「ソウル・アライメント・コーチングプラットフォーム（SACP）」は、そうした心の奥に眠る声や情熱の正体と向き合い、現状とのズレを可視化し、制限を取り払うことで、自分らしく輝ける方法を見つけることをサポートするものです。

AI診断で価値観や行動パターンを分析し、自己探求モジュールで思考の枠を外し、認定コーチとの対話を通じて「本当にやりたいことを、今の会社でどう実現できるか」を具体化していきます。単なるキャリア相談ではなく、人生を輝かせ、本来の自分を取り戻し、心に沿ったしっくりくる人生にたどり着くための仕組みを提供するプラットフォームです。

❤️🔥私の情熱❤️🔥

私自身、日本企業で3年間、上司や周りの期待に応えるために必死になり、その結果、適応障害を経験しました。その過程で、無意識に自分の本音や個性を無理やり抑え込んで生きていたことに気づき、心の違和感の根本に向き合うことになりました。

この経験を経て、現在は願望実現コーチとして起業し、多くの人が心の声に従った生き方ができるようサポートしています。

このプラットフォームを世に出し、一人でも多くの方が自分に合った形で輝きを取り戻し、「心がしっくりくる」実感を持てる社会を実現することを目指しています。

みなさんのアンケートへのご協力が、その一歩となります。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします🙏

背景に関する質問

1. あなたの年齢を教えてください。

- ☐ 20代以下
- ☐ 20代
- ☐ 30代
- ☐ 40代
- ☐ 50代
- ☐ 50代以上

2. あなたの性別を教えてください。

- ☐ 男性
- ☐ 女性
- ☐ その他・未回答

3. 現在の役職を教えてください。

- ☐ 一般社員
- ☐ 管理職（課長・部長など）
- ☐ 経営層
- ☐ その他

心の声と現在の仕事の一致度合いについて

1. 今の仕事は「本当にやりたいこと」と一致していますか？

1: 全く一致していない ～ 5: 完全に一致している

2. 仕事に「自分らしさ（個性）」を発揮できていますか？

1: 全く発揮できていない ～ 5: 完全に発揮できている

あなたが輝いて働ける環境づくりに関する会社のサポート度合い

1.会社は「あなたが自分らしく働ける」ようにサポートをしてくれていると感じますか？

1:全く感じない ～ 5:強く感じる

2.あなたが会社に求めるサポートは？

- ☐ AI診断・キャリア相談
- ☐ 業務調整
- ☐ ワークライフバランスの改善
- ☐ ソウルに沿ったキャリア選択の支援
- ☐ その他

あなたの本音を探る質問

1.もしお金や安定の心配がなかったら、今の仕事を続けますか？

- ☐ はい
- ☐ いいえ

2.あなたが本当に望む働き方に近づくために、一番の障害になっているものは何ですか？

- ☐ 経済的な不安
- ☐ 家族や社会の期待
- ☐ 自信のなさ
- ☐ 会社の制度や環境
- ☐ 特にない
- ☐ その他

Annex 3. Survey questions in English

Question 1: What is your age?

Question 2: What is your gender?

Question 3: What is your current position?

【Staff / Manager / Executive / Other】

Question 4: Does your current job align with what you truly want to do?

【Not at all – Completely】 [5-point scale]

Question 5: Can you express your uniqueness and talents at work?

【Not at all – Fully】 [5-point scale]

Question 6: How often do you feel true joy or fulfilment at work?

【Almost never – Very often】 [5-point scale]

Question 7: Do you feel your work is your calling?

【Almost never – Very often】 [5-point scale]

Question 8: Does your company support you in being your authentic self at work?

【Not at all – Strongly】 [5-point scale]

Question 9: What kind of support do you want from your company?

【AI diagnostics / Workload adjustment / Better work-life balance / Purpose-driven career support/other】

Question 10: If money and stability weren't concerns, would you stay in your current job?

【Yes/No】

Question 11: What is the biggest barrier to working the way you truly want?

【Financial concerns / Expectations from others / Lack of confidence / Company systems / None
/ Other】

Annex 4. Survey form in English (translated version)

Graduation Research: Survey on the Demand for a Coaching Platform that Enables a Life Aligned with the Purpose

Introduction

Thank you very much for your cooperation with my graduation research at the University of Porto.

👉 Purpose 👉

This survey is aimed at individuals working in companies in Japan. It investigates how many people are living in alignment with their "values/purposes"—in other words, a fulfilling and resonant way of life—and whether their companies support working styles that allow employees to shine as their authentic selves. The results will be used to develop a coaching platform that facilitates such purpose aligned living.

👉 Research and Development Content 👉

Many people, while being busy with daily tasks, may feel that their current job doesn't suit them or wish they could explore a different path. However, due to reasons such as "changing jobs is difficult now," "I need to work to make a living," or "I'm worried about how others will perceive me," they often suppress their authentic feelings.

The **life coaching platform** that I am developing aims to help individuals uncover and face their inner voices and passions, visualize the gap between their current job and ideal life, and remove limiting beliefs in order to find a way to live authentically.

Through AI diagnosis of values and behavioral patterns, self-discovery modules that help break free from limiting thoughts, and dialogue with certified coaches, the platform will support users in concretely discovering how to realize what they truly want—even within their current workplace. This is more than just career counseling; it's a structure for reclaiming one's authentic self and achieving a fulfilling, soul-aligned life.

🔥 My Passion 🔥

I personally struggled with meeting unreasonable expectations during my three years working at a Japanese company, which led to an adjustment disorder. Through this experience, I realized I had unconsciously suppressed my true voice and individuality, and began confronting the root of my inner discomfort.

Now, as a life coach, I support others in living true to their hearts. My goal is to launch this platform into the society so that more people can regain their shine in a way that suits them and experience a sense of "soulful fulfillment."

Your cooperation with this survey is the first step. Thank you in advance. 🙏

Background Questions

1. **What is your age?**
 - Under 20
 - 20s
 - 30s
 - 40s
 - 50s
 - Over 50
2. **What is your gender?**
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other / Prefer not to answer
3. **What is your current job position?**
 - Staff
 - Manager (Section Chief, Department Head, etc.)
 - Executive
 - Other

Alignment Between Your Inner Voice and Current Job

1. **Does your current job align with what you truly want to do?**
1: Not at all □ 5: Completely
2. **Can you express your uniqueness and talents at work?**
1: Not at all □ 5: Fully
3. **How often do you feel true joy or fulfilment at work?**
1: Almost never □ 5: Very often
4. **Do you feel that your current job is your "calling"?**
1: Not at all □ 5: Fully

Company Support for Helping You Shine at Work

1. **Does your company support you in being your authentic self at work?**
1: Not at all □ 5: Strongly feel so
2. **What kind of support do you expect from your company?**
 - ☐ AI diagnostics
 - ☐ Workload adjustments
 - ☐ Improvement of work-life balance
 - ☐ Purpose driven career support
 - ☐ Other

Questions to Explore Your True Feelings

1. **If money and stability weren't concerns, would you stay in your current job?**
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
2. **What is the biggest barrier to working the way you truly want?**
 - ☐ Financial concerns
 - ☐ Expectations from others
 - ☐ Lack of confidence
 - ☐ Company system
 - ☐ None
 - ☐ Other