

# IKIGAI Purpose Assessment for Leaders and Businesses

## Analysis of Quantitative Data

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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of Ikigai, originating in Japanese philosophy as “a reason for being,” has gained increasing attention in organisational research as a holistic measure of purpose. While traditional psychology treats purpose as an individual trait, recent studies emphasise that meaning also arises from organisational culture, economic structures, and collective identity.

This project introduces the Ikigai Purpose Assessment for Leaders and Businesses, a quantitative framework capturing four dimensions of purpose: Love (what you love), Good (what you are good at), World (what the world needs), and Market (what you can be paid for).



Using an international sample (N = 2,195), the study examines how Ikigai differs between individuals and organisations, and how age, leadership, culture, and sector shape this difference. It further explores whether modern institutions are converging toward a market-oriented logic of purpose.

## METHODOLOGY

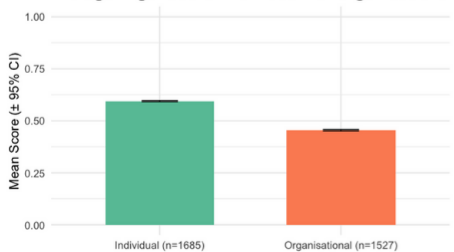
The initial dataset consisted of 3,000 responses across 92 variables. To prepare the material for statistical analysis, a multi-stage cleaning process was undertaken to remove duplicates, implausible values, and incomplete entries. Through nine systematic steps (df1-df9), the dataset was refined to 2,195 valid and high-quality observations, forming the basis for all analyses.

All statistical procedures were conducted in RStudio, using the ggplot2 package for visualisation and base R functions for data transformation. Descriptive and inferential analyses included two-sample t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and 95% confidence intervals to test for significant differences across demographic, cultural, and sectoral groups.

Ikigai was measured through 80 quantitative items (40 individual, 40 organisational) representing four dimensions: Love, Good, World, and Market. Comparative results across these dimensions formed the empirical foundation for the five hypotheses tested in this study.

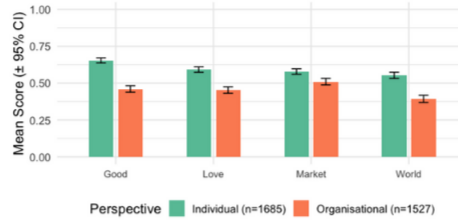
## RESULTS

Average Ikigai Score: Individual vs. Organisational



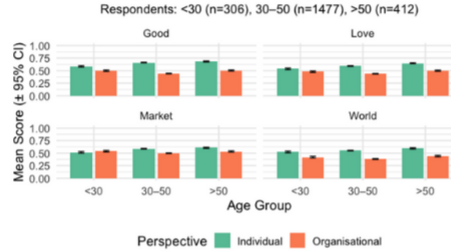
This finding indicates that people experience a stronger sense of purpose personally (M=60) than they perceive within their organisations (M=45), suggesting a persistent “meaning gap” between individual motivation and institutional culture.

Average Ikigai Score by Dimension



Ikigai scores by dimension for individual and organisational perspectives. Individual scores were consistently higher across all dimensions, with the largest gap in “Good” (0.65 vs. 0.45) and the smallest in “Market” (0.57 vs. 0.50). Pairwise tests confirmed significant differences between most dimensions, indicating that individuals emphasise “Good” most strongly, while organisations score lowest on “World.”

Ikigai Dimension Scores by Age Group



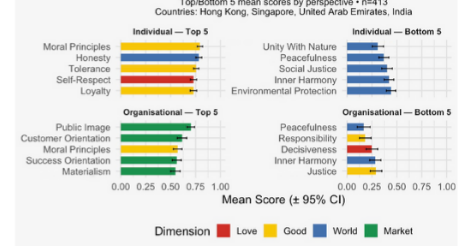
Individual Ikigai increases with age, especially between the <30 and older groups, reflecting greater purpose and life integration in later stages (Erikson, 1980; Frankl, 1963). Organisational Ikigai remains comparatively flat, except in the Market dimension among younger respondents, who show early-career optimism before the gap between personal and institutional meaning widens.

Ikigai Dimension Scores by Leadership Responsibility



Ikigai increases with leadership responsibility. Individuals managing larger teams report higher purpose, especially in the Good and Market dimensions, supporting Hackman and Oldham’s (1976) theory that greater responsibility and task significance enhance meaningful work.

Collectivist Countries: Highest & Lowest Ikigai Subdimensions



Across both cultural groups, individuals prioritise Moral Principles and Honesty, but differ subtly: individualist countries emphasise Performance, while collectivist countries stress Loyalty and Self-Respect.

At the organisational level, both converge on Market values, Customer Orientation, Performance, and Success, showing that institutional purpose is globally standardised.

The data show broad individual-level similarity with a small cultural accent (performance vs. self-regard/loyalty), and strong organisational convergence on market-oriented purpose. This is only partly consistent with Hofstede (1980); cultural differences are modest compared to the cross-cultural organisational pattern.

## CONCLUSION

The study finds a consistent divide between individual and organisational Ikigai. Individuals report higher purpose across all dimensions, grounded in moral and relational meaning, while organisations express purpose mainly through managerial and performance metrics. Ikigai strengthens with age and leadership responsibility, and while culture and sector shape its expression, these effects are modest.

Across countries, individuals share a common ethical foundation, honesty, tolerance, and benevolence, regardless of cultural background. Similarly, across industries, organisational Ikigai converges on performance, customer orientation, and success, even in public and social sectors such as education and health.

These patterns support institutional theory: modern organisations increasingly define purpose through efficiency and reputation, narrowing the space for moral and humanistic meaning. The resulting tension between individual and organisational Ikigai reflects a wider shift in work culture toward economic rationality.

By comparing Ikigai across individuals, organisations, cultures, and sectors, this research provides an integrated framework for understanding purpose in contemporary institutions and highlights the need to align measurable success with the deeper values that sustain human fulfilment.

## REFERENCES

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