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BetterU: Productivity and Well-Being Application
BetterU : Goals Assistance (shared), Emotion Diary Note, Focus Timer, User, Report

ABSTRACT

BetterU is a mobile application designed to help users improve their productivity and emotional well-being by offering intelligent task management and emotional support. Many individuals, particularly students and working professionals, face challenges in managing overwhelming daily tasks, leading to stress, burnout, and social isolation. Traditional productivity tools often fail to address emotional well-being, leaving users without adequate support for mental health. BetterU solves this by integrating several features: a Goals Assistance module for task organization, an Emotion Diary Note for emotional reflection, a Focus Timer to enhance concentration, and a Report module for tracking progress. By combining task management with emotional support, BetterU offers users a holistic approach to balance productivity and mental health. The app will be developed using Flutter for cross-platform functionality and AI technologies for intelligent task extraction and personalized planning, aiming to improve users' overall well-being and work-life balance. (143 words)

PROBLEM

1. Mental Health Crisis and Emotional Well-being

In recent years, the incidence of **mental health problems has been increasing globally, and Malaysia has demonstrated a similar upward trend**. According to the World Health Organization (2023), mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and stress are among the leading causes of disability worldwide. In Malaysia, mental health issues have become increasingly prevalent across all age groups, attracting significant concern from both policymakers and the general public. The Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH, 2024) reports that approximately 29% of Malaysian adults suffer from mental health-related conditions, indicating a substantial rise compared to previous years.

This mental health burden is **particularly severe among youth populations**. The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS, 2023) highlights that 20.8% of Malaysian individuals aged 16 to 24 experience various forms of psychological distress. These often manifest as symptoms of depression, anxiety, or suicidal ideation, which can result in self-harming behaviours. The growing incidence of adolescent suicide cases further emphasizes the urgency of the problem, underscoring mental health as a critical public health concern in the country.

Despite increasing awareness, **mental health stigma remains deeply rooted in Malaysian society**. Cultural misconceptions and negative attitudes toward psychological illness discourage many individuals from seeking treatment, especially in rural communities where mental health literacy and service availability are limited. Stigmatization, as noted by Abdul Rashid(2023), not only

impedes early intervention but also perpetuates emotional suppression and social isolation among those affected.

A critical obstacle in addressing Malaysia's mental health crisis is the **shortage of trained mental health professionals**. According to Ahmad Adlan (2022), Malaysia has only 0.25 psychiatrists per 100,000 people, significantly below the World Health Organization's recommended ratio of 1.0 per 100,000. This shortage is exacerbated by uneven geographical distribution, where urban centers have better access to mental health services compared to rural regions, limiting diagnosis, counseling, and follow-up services for large segments of the population, particularly in East Malaysia and underserved communities.

Beyond institutional barriers, **socio-economic factors play a significant role in the deterioration of mental health**. **Financial insecurity, job instability, academic pressure, and social discrimination contribute to psychological distress**. For instance, a study by Abdul Yazid (2023) found that individuals with lower socioeconomic status are less likely to seek mental health help due to higher stigma and lower mental health literacy. The COVID-19 pandemic further compounded these challenges by triggering widespread unemployment, income loss, and social disconnection. Research by Bahmad (2021) indicates a notable increase in mental health-related issues during the pandemic, with patients exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), generalized anxiety disorder, and panic attacks.

These findings suggest that the **mental health crisis in Malaysia is not only a medical issue but also a deeply systemic social problem. Its wide-reaching impact on individuals, families, and economic productivity demonstrates its practical relevance and confirms the need for sustained attention**.

2. Work-Life Imbalance and Burnout

Work-life imbalance has **emerged as a major occupational health issue in Malaysia, affecting employee well-being, productivity, and retention**. As work demands increase and digital technologies integrate into daily life, individuals are increasingly struggling to maintain a healthy separation between work responsibilities and personal time. The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF, 2023) reports that 55% of employees in Malaysia are unable to achieve adequate work-life balance, largely due to rising employer expectations, technological overreach, and the pressure to remain constantly available.

One of the primary contributors to this imbalance is **Malaysia's pervasive culture of overwork**. In sectors such as finance, healthcare, and education, extended working hours and unpaid overtime have become normalized. The Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF, 2024) found that approximately 45% of workers in high-pressure occupations frequently work beyond standard office hours and experience difficulty taking adequate breaks. Such patterns of overwork contribute directly to burnout, a psychological syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment, and depersonalization (World Health Organization, 2023).

Burnout is increasingly prevalent among Malaysian employees. A national survey by PwC Malaysia (2024) revealed that 70% of respondents experienced high levels of stress, with many reporting feelings of detachment, fatigue, and disengagement from work. These symptoms are particularly pronounced in industries with high performance demands and limited workplace support. Moreover, the normalization of remote work and digital communication platforms, **especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, has further blurred the boundaries between**

work and home life. The expectation of 24/7 connectivity creates an "always-on" culture that severely compromises rest and recovery.

The consequences of burnout are far-reaching and extend beyond individual suffering. Burnout has been linked to several physical health problems, including insomnia, cardiovascular disorders, and chronic musculoskeletal pain (World Health Organization, 2023). From an organizational perspective, burnout leads to decreased productivity, higher absenteeism rates, and increased turnover. Employees experiencing burnout are more likely to make errors, miss deadlines, and exhibit low morale. According to PwC Malaysia (2024), dissatisfaction related to burnout is a key driver of attrition, with many workers seeking career changes or early retirement to avoid further psychological strain.

The persistence of these issues in Malaysia reflects a broader structural failure to support sustainable work practices. As the country continues its transition toward a digitally connected economy, the lack of institutional safeguards for worker well-being has emerged as a critical societal problem. **The relevance of this issue is evidenced by its measurable impacts on employee health, organizational performance, and national productivity.**

SOLUTION

Solution 1: Addressing Mental Health Crisis and Emotional Well-being

BetterU mobile application integrates multiple interactive and intelligent modules that provide emotional support, daily structure, and psychological insight to users. Through consistent engagement with the system, users are encouraged to reflect on their emotions, manage their daily responsibilities, and gradually build healthier mental routines. The following explanation describes how the modules contribute to resolving the issue effectively.

A. **Goals Assistance Module (Shared) :**
   This module supports emotional stability by **minimizing cognitive overload and improving the user's sense of control**. Users can provide input through speech, allowing the system to extract actionable tasks automatically. Once tasks are identified, the system generates a personalized schedule and auto-plans daily or weekly goals. Users can mark their progress, and the system will adjust the remaining schedule accordingly. These features reduce the mental burden caused by unorganized or excessive responsibilities. The smart advisor function provides timely suggestions to users based on their behavior, and the smart reminder keeps users aware of their tasks without creating pressure. This level of structure helps users regain a sense of order, which is essential in managing emotional stress.

B. **Emotion Diary Note Module:**
   This module acts as the emotional anchor of the application. Users are allowed to input diary entries in the form of text, image, or speech. The system supports mood selection to accompany each entry, enabling users to associate specific emotions with their recorded experiences. Through natural language analysis, the system can evaluate the user's emotional expressions to detect emotional trends and fluctuations over time. This feature **enables users to develop better emotional self-awareness and track their mental state with clarity**. Furthermore, the momentary library feature within this module allows users to collect significant memories, both positive and negative, which can **later serve as reflective tools in their emotional healing journey**.

C. Focus Timer Module:
This module is designed to **foster concentration and support emotional regulation through structured focus periods**. Before starting a task, users can activate a focus timer, during which their screen will display a gamified treasure-digging process. If the user exits the app or switches to other activities, the digging process fails, encouraging them to remain focused. By completing sessions, users earn coins that can be redeemed for rewards such as avatar frames, visual themes, or access to new challenges. This reward system **promotes self-discipline and offers positive reinforcement**, both of which contribute to improved emotional resilience and personal satisfaction.

D. Report Module:
This module generates summaries based on data collected from the user's activities, such as emotion diary entries, task completions, and focus timer sessions. The system compiles this information into visual and textual reports that reflect emotional patterns, productivity levels, and overall engagement. By providing users with detailed insights into their own behaviors and emotional changes, this module **encourages self-reflection and awareness**. Users are able to identify which actions contribute to positive outcomes and which situations lead to distress, thereby helping them **make informed decisions for future behavior**.

Solution 2: Addressing Work-Life Imbalance and Burnout

To respond to the increasing challenge of work-life imbalance and burnout, BetterU offers a comprehensive mobile application system that integrates daily planning, productivity tracking, and personal wellness features. The system does not merely offer reminders or timers but instead builds a smart environment that empowers users to balance professional and personal responsibilities in a more structured and emotionally sustainable manner. The following explanation describes how the modules contribute to resolving the issue effectively.

A. Goals Assistance Module (Shared) :
Work-life imbalance often stems from disorganized or excessive responsibilities that lead to chronic stress and fatigue. The Goals Assistance module plays a central role in **reducing this burden by automatically extracting tasks from user input**, whether spoken or visual. Once tasks are identified, the system organizes them into a feasible schedule, prioritizing workload distribution to prevent overcommitment. This intelligent auto-planning helps users set clear boundaries between work and rest, promoting better time allocation and reducing decision fatigue. As users complete tasks, the system updates their schedule and offers suggestions through the smart advisor, reinforcing a balanced workflow. Smart reminders help users stay on track without overwhelming them, making the overall experience more manageable and less stressful.

B. Emotion Diary Note Module:
Burnout is not only a physical condition but also an emotional one. The Emotion Diary Note module allows users to document their mental and emotional responses to their daily experiences. Through text, speech, or image input, users can freely express their thoughts, which the system then analyzes to detect signs of emotional strain or distress. When used regularly, the diary enables users to monitor emotional fatigue patterns and identify specific stressors, such as overwork, difficult tasks, or conflicts. The ability to reflect on these entries **fosters emotional clarity and encourages users to take action before reaching critical burnout**.

C. **Focus Timer Module:**
This module supports users in maintaining attention during work hours while also encouraging scheduled breaks. When users start the timer, they are immersed in a gamified experience that rewards sustained focus. By making concentration feel rewarding and enjoyable, the system counters mental exhaustion, one of the key symptoms of burnout. The visual representation of progress and the collection of virtual treasures create positive reinforcement loops, which help restore motivation. The inability to multitask during the focus session ensures that users are fully present, thereby increasing work efficiency and reducing the time needed to complete tasks. Over time, this structured approach **promotes healthier working habits and discourages overextension**.

D. **User Module:**
The User module facilitates personalization and consistent user experience. By registering and managing personal preferences, users can tailor notification settings, visual themes, and diary visibility to match their lifestyle. This control enhances comfort and allows the application to integrate smoothly into both professional and personal contexts. This level of customization ensures that the system remains a helpful tool, not an additional stressor, thereby **supporting a more balanced and empowering user experience**.

E. **Report Module:**
This module synthesizes data across all user activities to provide a visual and analytical overview of task load, focus duration, mood trends, and engagement consistency. These reports give users concrete evidence of their work habits and emotional states, helping them identify when imbalance is occurring. For instance, if the report reveals consecutive days of intense focus sessions without sufficient emotional expression or rest, the user is alerted to adjust their pace. This feedback system not only **raises awareness** but also serves as an internal check-in mechanism to **prevent long-term exhaustion**. Users are more likely to maintain balance when they understand how their daily behaviors contribute to overall well-being.

Critical Function of the Solution

1. Goals Assistance Module (Shared) : Provides intelligent task management to reduce cognitive burden and enhance planning efficiency

- Extracts actionable tasks from speech input
- Auto-generates personalized schedules based on user input
- Supports real-time progress tracking and adaptive rescheduling
- Offers context-aware suggestions through Smart Advisor

2. Emotion Diary Note Module: Facilitates emotional awareness and personal reflection for mental wellness

- Accepts diary entries via text, image, or speech
- Includes mood tagging to contextualize emotional state
- Analyzes language to detect emotional trends and patterns
- Stores meaningful entries within a momentary library for future review

3. Focus Timer Module: Promotes deep work and self-discipline through gamified focus sessions

- Enables users to initiate distraction-free focus periods, prevents multitasking by enforcing app usage limits during sessions
- Integrates a gamification system (e.g., treasure digging) to encourage task completion
- Awards in-app rewards including avatar frames, themes, and challenge points
- Fosters habit-building through challenge streaks and leaderboard rankings

4. User Module: Ensures secure, personalized, and consistent application experiences

- Supports user registration, login, and account management
- Stores and retrieves user preferences for a tailored interface
- Provides configuration options for notifications, themes, and diary visibility

5. Report Module: Generates actionable insights based on behavioral and emotional data

- Summarizes user activity including task completion, mood trends, and focus duration Visualizes engagement metrics through intuitive charts and graphs
- Highlights correlations between behavior and emotional health
- Supports user decision-making through regular self-assessment reports

Technologies Applied

- Programming Language: Dart
- Framework Used: Flutter
- Database: Firebase
- Version Control: Git + GitHub
- UI Design Tools: Figma
- AI Tools: Scikit-learn, Pandas

TARGET MARKET

1. Students (Secondary and University Level in Malaysia)

In Malaysia, students at both secondary and university levels are often overwhelmed by academic pressures, co-curricular commitments, and personal responsibilities. Many juggle exam preparations, assignments, part-time jobs, and family obligations, leading to heightened stress levels, disrupted routines, and emotional fatigue.

How Students Will Use the Solution:

Goals Assistance Module (Shared) :
This module assists students in breaking down overwhelming study plans, coursework, and life tasks into actionable goals. By converting spoken input into scheduled tasks and auto-generating study plans, the module helps students manage deadlines and avoid cognitive overload. Smart reminders and progress tracking allow students to stay organized and in control.

Emotion Diary Note Module:
Students can express their thoughts and emotions through text, image, or speech input. Through mood tagging and emotional trend analysis, the system supports students in understanding their emotional fluctuations, such as anxiety before exams or relief after presentations, thereby building better emotional self-awareness.

Focus Timer Module:
During study sessions, students can activate the gamified focus timer to prevent distractions and

maintain concentration. This module makes revision more engaging and helps build self-discipline by rewarding consistent focus with in-app rewards. It is especially useful during long exam preparation periods.

User Module:
Students configure their app environment based on personal study habits and academic calendar. They can customize notification frequency, theme preferences, and diary visibility settings. The system ensures privacy and continuity, allowing students to use the app seamlessly across sessions without fear of losing data or progress.

Report Module:
By compiling weekly and monthly summaries of study time, emotional states, and task achievements, the system helps students reflect on their academic progress and emotional well-being. These insights encourage them to identify what strategies work best and adjust their habits accordingly.

2. Working Professionals (Urban Office Workers in Malaysia)

Working adults, especially those in urban Malaysia, face increasing work-life conflicts due to high job demands, digital overexposure, and blurred work-rest boundaries in hybrid work environments. Many experience burnout, emotional detachment, and struggle to maintain consistent routines.

How Working Professionals Will Use the Solution:

Goals Assistance Module (Shared) :
Professionals use this module to organize work tasks, household responsibilities, and long-term goals. The auto-scheduling feature intelligently distributes workload to avoid overcommitment. By minimizing daily planning effort, the module reduces decision fatigue and restores a sense of control over personal and professional priorities.

Emotion Diary Note Module:
Professionals can record reflections on their workday and personal life through flexible input formats (text, voice, image). Emotional trend detection helps identify persistent stressors, such as overwork or interpersonal challenges. This reflection supports emotional clarity and early intervention before burnout escalates.

Focus Timer Module:
This module provides structured work intervals to enhance focus and prevent multitasking, whether during office hours or remote work. The gamified progress mechanic and reward system maintain motivation and encourage healthier, more efficient work routines.

User Module:
Professionals can configure app settings to align with their working hours, preferences, and lifestyle. Features like quiet hours, customizable reminder tones, and theme options ensure that the app integrates naturally into their routine. Personal settings are securely stored to maintain consistency across sessions.

Report Module:
Regular visual reports allow professionals to track how their work habits and emotional responses evolve over time. These summaries help users notice early signs of burnout or productivity dips and empower them to adjust routines for better work-life balance.

COMPETITION / CONTRIBUTION

Feature	BetterU	Microsoft To Do	Notion
Purpose & Focus	Emphasizes emotional well-being, work-life balance, and mental health support.	Basic task and to-do list management	Flexible task and content management for personal or team use
Emotional Support	Emotion Diary Note module tracks moods, supports reflection, detects burnout	Not available	Not fully integrated or user-friendly
Task Management	AI-assisted Goals Assistance for scheduling and progress tracking	Lacks automation	Lacks automation
Focus & Motivation	Gamified Focus Timer rewards attention and builds positive work habits	Not available	Not available
User Customization	Personalized app settings including diary privacy and visual preferences	Not available	Supports workspace customization
Progress & Reflection	Report module analyzes mood trends, task data, and productivity patterns	Not available	Supports visual progress views based on data manually set up by the user
Engagement & Motivation	Rewards for consistent focus, avatars, themes, and gamified challenges	Not available	Not available
Target Users	Individuals need balancing mental health and productivity (students, workers)	General users needing simple task tracking	Project teams or individuals managing information-rich workflows
Mental Health Awareness	Built-in tools for emotional insight and burnout prevention	Not available	Not available
Contribution to Stakeholders	Empowers users to maintain mental clarity, avoid burnout, and stay productive	Supports basic task organization	Enhances user collaboration, but lacks mental health support

MILESTONES

Proposed Development Model / Research Method : Incremental Model
This project adopts the Incremental Development Model, which breaks down the system development into smaller functional modules that are built and improved progressively. The model is ideal for projects that require user feedback and continuous refinement. Each module: Goals Assistance, Emotion Diary Note, Focus Timer, User, and Report, will be developed in

iterations. Early increments will focus on core functionalities such as goal setting and diary entries, while later stages will enhance personalization, data visualization, and AI-driven features. This approach allows early testing and validation of individual components, ensures better risk management, and supports flexibility in adapting to changes based on user feedback and evaluation throughout the development cycle.

Project Schedule:

ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOME	COMPLETION DATE
Submission of Project Proposal	Approval of proposed idea and selected development model	18/4/2025
Research Finding	Literature review, technology evaluation, problem validation	28/6/2025
Submission of Project I Portfolio	Full documentation of design, findings, and planning	8/9/2025
Initial System Preview	Demonstrate early prototype to supervisor	26/9/2025
Prototype Development	Functional prototype with basic modules	31/10/2025
Preparation of Test Plan and Test Cases	Test plan and test cases reviewed by supervisor	7/11/2025
Prototype Preview	Feedback and improvement suggestions from supervisor	21/11/2025
Final System Development	Completed application with integrated modules	21/11/2025
Final System Testing	Full testing with usability feedback and final refinements	28/11/2025
Submission of Draft Report	Preliminary version of complete project report	12/12/2025
Submission of Final Report	Finalized report and completed system submission	19/12/2025

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APPENDIX