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Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization  
Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology  
(SEAMEO INNOTECH)

## **Teacher Motivation in Southeast Asia: Current Trends and Insights**

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Katherine P. Torralba, and Ma. Lovena V. Moneva, PhD, PhD



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## Abstract

All around the world, there has been a shortage of teachers to reach an effective student-teacher ratio, impacting the quality of education. To address this growing concern, SEAMEO INNOTECH began its work to identify motivating factors for teachers to stay in the profession. What started as a study in the Philippines expanded to other countries in Southeast Asia and transformed into the *Regional Teacher Motivation Study*. The first phase, concluded in 2024, identified three core and five contributing motivating factors influencing teachers' decisions to remain in the teaching profession. These factors form the Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession (SEA-TM). The current study, the second phase of the research, aims to examine the different aspects of teacher motivation to stay in the profession based on the SEA-TM. Quantitative data were gathered using a survey derived from the SEA-TM and distributed to ten participating countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. As the first regional paper, this discussion paper focuses on the results of the descriptive statistics employed to determine teacher respondents' level of motivation for staying in the profession. The results show that teachers in Southeast Asia are highly motivated. They also generally agreed with statements related to all eight factors that contribute to teacher motivation to stay.

## Background

### Introduction

Teachers are considered the primary drivers of education and have a significant impact on student learning. As such, it is essential to ensure that students are taught by high-quality teachers every day and that there are sufficient teachers to fill the classrooms.

However, there is a shortage of teachers globally. According to UNESCO (2023), 44 million primary and secondary school teachers are needed to attain quality education. In Southeast Asia alone, there is a need for 3,050,000 teachers in primary education and 1,490,000 teachers in secondary education by 2030. To achieve this goal, it is essential to attract more teachers into the profession and reduce the number of teachers who leave. Hence, recruitment and retention of teachers should be part of the education agenda.

The challenge of preventing teachers from leaving the profession is a pressing concern. A person's career decisions - including the choice to enter, remain in, direct, and stay committed to the profession are largely driven by motivation (Han & Yin, 2016; Ulfathmi et al., 2021). In the context of teaching, motivation refers to the reasons that attract individuals to teaching and guide their behaviors to achieve personal and professional goals, and, relevant to this study, what sustains them to continue teaching (Han & Yin, 2016; Sinclair, 2008). Motivating factors are categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic motivators. Intrinsic motivating factors are associated with one's relationship with their job, and factors that reward their need to reach their aspiration (Maund, 2001, as cited in Kumar & Hossain, 2017). This includes achievement, recognition, love, interest, and passion. In contrast, extrinsic motivating factors are associated with tangible rewards such as salary, physical surroundings, job security, and interpersonal relationships. (Rees and McBain, 2004

as cited in Kumar & Hossain, 2017) Both intrinsic and extrinsic factors play an important role in motivating teachers to stay in the profession, though their influence may vary depending on their personal and cultural values and priorities.

Since 2018, SEAMEO INNOTECH has been working with the Philippine Department of Education to understand the motivations of teachers for entering and remaining in the profession. Building on this effort, this initiative expanded across Southeast Asia through the Regional Teacher Motivation Study.

The first phase of the study was concluded in 2024, wherein the Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession (SEA-TM) was developed. The SEA-TM identified eight factors that motivate teachers to stay in their teaching careers. These are divided into two categories, core factors and contributing factors. Based on the framework, *Core Factors* need to be fulfilled for teachers to remain in the profession. This includes *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment*, *Teaching as Interest and Passion*, and *Sense of Growth and Development*. *Contributing Factors* have been described to help sustain teacher motivation when the first three core factors are not fulfilled. This has been identified as *Sense of Being Respected and Valued*, *Teacher Well-being*, *School Environment*, *Salary, Incentives, and Benefits*, and *Government Laws and Policies* (Umali, et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the second phase of the study was implemented from 2024 to 2025 using a quantitative approach. The study aimed to 1) determine the relationship among the different factors that motivate teachers to stay in the teaching profession; 2) develop a per-country framework for the motivations of teachers in Southeast Asia to stay in the profession; and 3) provide policy recommendations.

## **Research Objectives**

As the first of two regional papers, this discussion paper aims to examine the following across each participating country and the Southeast Asian region as a whole:

1. Demographic profile of teacher respondents in Southeast Asia;
2. The level of teacher motivation for each participating country and across the region; and
3. Teachers' level of agreement on how each factor influences their motivation to remain in the teaching profession.

## Literature Review

Three core factors and five contributing factors were identified in the Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession (SEA-TM) (Umali et al., 2024). Several studies have been conducted about how each one influences the teachers' decision to continue with their teaching careers.

### Core Motivating Factors

#### ***Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment***

A key factor motivating teachers to remain in the profession is a strong sense of purpose and fulfillment. Purpose is defined as a meaningful, long-term goal that benefits both the self and society (Moberg & Kuusisto, 2024; Tirri & Kuusisto, 2016). In education, this manifests through personal aspirations—such as financial or professional growth—and the desire to positively impact students' lives. This sense of purpose influences other motivational factors like development, respect, well-being, and compensation. Teachers also find purpose in their passion for teaching and concern for learners. Purpose in education can be viewed as either contributing to society or being intentional in teaching practices (Quinn, 2016). Importantly, a teacher's purpose may evolve over time; while many enter the field with clear goals, they remain open to new directions, including career changes (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2016).

#### ***Teaching as an Interest and Passion***

With many educators leaving the profession, identifying those with genuine passion for teaching is crucial (Phelps & Benson, 2012). Passion involves a strong commitment to an activity seen as meaningful (Serin, 2017), and in teaching, it

reflects a love for the subject, enthusiasm for sharing knowledge, and care for students' growth. Passionate teachers strive to deepen their expertise, refine their teaching methods, and support students in reaching their potential. While passion enhances teaching quality and student outcomes, it alone cannot sustain teachers long-term. Burnout from heavy workloads, poor leadership, and lack of balance can diminish motivation (Nwoko et al., 2025), and excessive passion may even lead to emotional exhaustion (Fernet et al., 2014). To maintain healthy levels of passion, support systems like mentoring, professional development, and emotional support are essential (Rampa, 2014; Santoro et al., 2012; Serin, 2023).

### ***Sense of Growth and Development***

A sense of growth and development is a key motivator for teachers to stay in the profession. Teachers progress through career stages—from preparation and induction to competency building, enthusiasm, stability, and eventually retirement (Lynn, 2002). During the middle stages, they seek professional development to enhance their skills and improve student outcomes (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Many pursue graduate studies or leadership roles, which foster personal and professional growth, confidence, and satisfaction (Sevim & Akin, 2021). However, balancing advanced studies with teaching can lead to stress due to time constraints and unmet expectations (Caraig, 2024; Sarigöz, 2025). Interestingly, teachers with higher academic achievement may feel less job satisfaction, possibly due to a mismatch between their ideals and school realities (Abd-El-Fattah, 2010; Triyanto, 2016), though motivation may still remain high regardless of education level (Eskildsen et al., 2004; Qin et al., 2017; Wiyono, 2016).

## **Contributing Motivational Factors**

### ***Sense of being Respected and Valued***

In Southeast Asian cultures, deep respect for authority figures, including teachers, is strongly ingrained (Macasaet & Maranan, 2015; Villacorta, 2002). Teachers are seen not only as educators but also as moral role models, often regarded by parents as key figures in their children's development (Uy, 2015; Umali et al., 2024). This cultural esteem contributes to teachers' motivation to stay in the profession, as feeling respected and valued is a core factor in the SEA-TM framework. Teachers feel appreciated when their contributions are recognized and when they are included in decision-making processes, which enhances job satisfaction and self-efficacy (Oblina et al., 2021; Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013).

### ***Teacher Well-being***

Teacher well-being is a vital factor in the SEA-TM framework, as it enables educators to manage the daily demands of their profession effectively. When teachers feel hopeful, resilient, and optimistic, their motivation increases (Zewude & Hercz, 2022). However, stressors like time pressure, discipline issues, and low student motivation can negatively impact well-being. While some teachers adopt positive coping strategies, others may resort to maladaptive ones, leading to burnout and higher attrition rates (Brasfield et al., 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Supportive relationships within the school, such as collegial and supervisory support, a positive culture, and a sense of belonging, are crucial for well-being (Cheung et al., 2022). Additionally, instructional support is essential, especially when working with students who have behavioral or learning challenges (Rae et al., 2017).

### ***School Environment***

The school environment plays a significant role in shaping teachers' experiences and motivation in Southeast Asia. A safe and supportive atmosphere, marked by trust among colleagues, leaders, and students, as well as protection from harm, boosts job satisfaction, commitment, and retention (Adebayo & Ileuma, 2023; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Access to adequate materials and facilities also enhances teaching quality and motivation, while lack of resources can lead to stress and dissatisfaction (Jaminal, 2019; Buckley et al., 2004). Additionally, classroom conditions, especially class size, affect teachers' workload and ability to focus on instruction. Smaller classes help reduce stress and improve job satisfaction (Laitsch et al., 2021).

### ***Salary, Incentives, and Benefits***

Salary, incentives, and benefits are important factors influencing teachers' motivation to stay in the profession. Teachers possess specialized skills that deserve fair compensation, which supports high-quality education (Ahmed, 2024). Countries offering higher teacher salaries tend to have better educational outcomes (Akiba et al., 2012), yet many teachers still earn less than other professionals (Mizala & Romaguera, 2005). Low pay contributes to poor performance, high attrition, and even migration for better opportunities, leading to brain drain in some education systems (Kambuga, 2023; Granger et al., 2022). While studies show mixed results on salary's direct impact on motivation (See et al., 2020), it remains a practical factor in teachers' decisions to remain in or leave the profession.

### ***Government Laws and Policies***

Government laws and policies are the final key factor in the SEA-TM framework, shaping teacher standards, preparation, working conditions, and retirement. These policies influence how other motivational factors, like infrastructure, salaries, and supervision, are implemented and sustained. In Southeast Asia, regional frameworks such as the SEA Teacher Competency Framework (SEA-TCF) guide teacher development and competencies, though each country adapts these to its context (ASEAN Secretariat, 2025; Teachers' Council of Thailand et al., 2018). While teachers may not feel the direct impact of policies daily, studies show that policy environments affect their motivation and job experience (Chiong et al., 2017). Effective policies require clear implementation, flexibility, and ongoing evaluation (Howlett, 2018). However, policies like performance-based evaluations can both motivate and pressure teachers, depending on how fair and realistic they are (Finnigan & Gross, 2007; Mintz & Kelly, 2021). Thoughtful design and assessment of policies are essential to support teacher motivation.

## Methodology

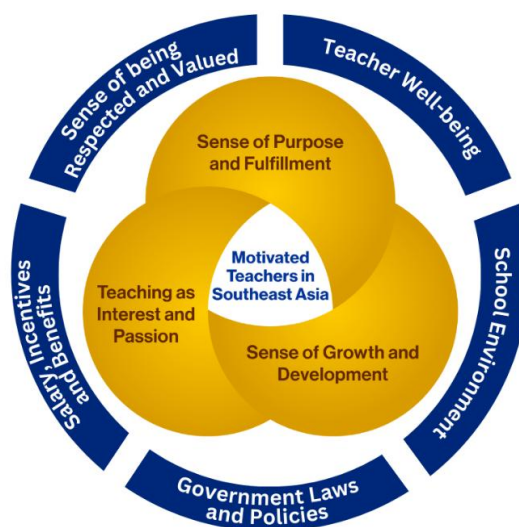
This phase of the study employed a quantitative approach to attain research objectives.

## Instrumentation

The development of a survey questionnaire followed a structured and collaborative approach to ensure the instrument's validity, cultural relevance, and linguistic appropriateness across participating Southeast Asian countries. Initially, a draft version of the survey questionnaire was constructed, drawing on key concepts from the Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession (see Figure 1), as well as a comprehensive review of relevant literature on teacher motivation and retention.

**Figure 1**

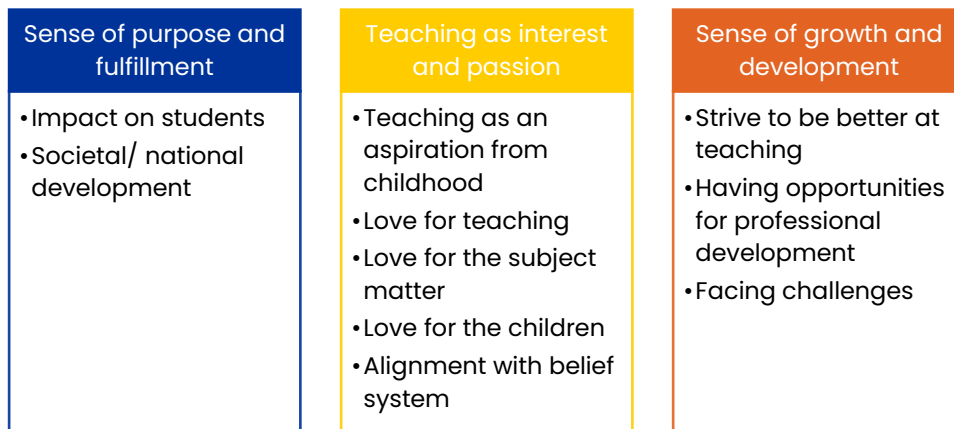
*Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession*



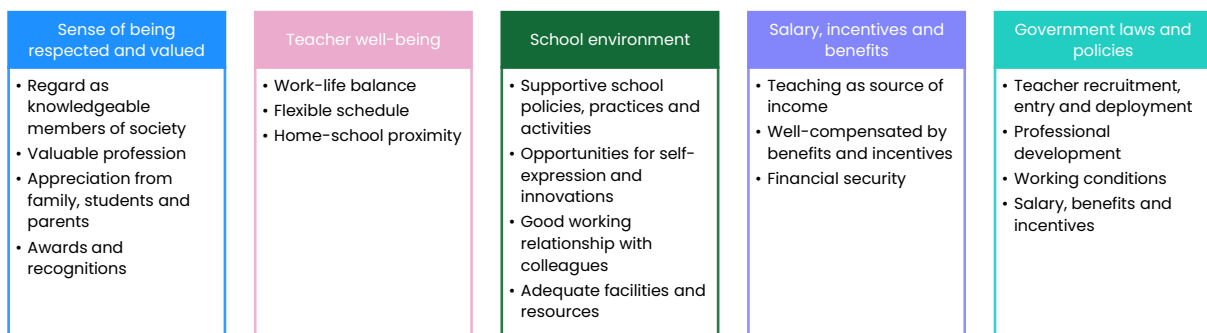
Operational descriptors were also adopted for each factor, and these served as guides in developing the statements in the questionnaire (see Figures 2 and 3). Inputs from team members of the Educational Research Unit (ERU) were incorporated during this drafting phase.

**Figure 2**

*Operational Descriptors of Core Factors Affecting Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession*

**Figure 3**

*Operational Descriptors of Contributing Motivational Factors Affecting Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession*



Following the internal review, the draft questionnaire was submitted for expert validation. Content experts and country representatives were consulted to assess the clarity, relevance, and contextual appropriateness of the items. Their feedback was used to revise and refine the instrument, improving both its conceptual soundness and practical applicability across diverse national contexts.

To facilitate broad regional participation, the finalized questionnaire was translated into eight languages: Khmer, Bahasa, Lao, Malay, Burmese, Thai, Tetum, and Vietnamese. Translations were supported by ChatGPT. These versions were then reviewed and cross-checked by research team members using a combination of ChatGPT and Google Translate, alongside manual verification for contextual accuracy and natural language use by the country representatives.

Subsequently, the translated questionnaires were digitized and hosted on SurveyMonkey to facilitate online data collection. The survey links were distributed to country representatives for a final round of review, during which minor refinements in translation were made to address any lingering linguistic or cultural discrepancies.

Pilot testing was then conducted in nine of the ten participating countries. A Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.914 was obtained, which indicates excellent reliability and consistency among the items. This was calculated for the motivational statements, and pilot respondents also rated the questionnaire based on several criteria (i.e., easy to understand, clearly stated, platform navigation, and questionnaire length). Finally, the survey questionnaire was finalized considering the results of the pilot test.

## **Data Collection**

Data collection commenced in October 2024 through the distribution of survey links and QR codes, which were disseminated by country representatives through their respective communication channels using convenience sampling. The use of convenience sampling, however, limits the generalizability of the research findings to only its sample. For Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, data gathering took place between October and November 2024, while for the remaining participating countries, data collection extended from October 2024 to January 2025. Vietnam conducted its data gathering separately, from February to March 2025. A total of 61,450 survey responses were successfully collected from the ten participating countries.

## **Data Processing**

Initial data cleaning began in December 2024 for the first three countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand). The process was repeated in March 2025 to include data from the remaining six countries, while Vietnam's data underwent cleaning in April 2025. Out of 61,450 total survey responses, 53,815 valid responses were retained after data cleaning. A total of 7,635 observations were removed due to incomplete survey results and anomalous responses. Table 1 presents a summary of the data cleaning done:

**Table 1**
*Summary of Data Cleaning Done*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Raw Observations</b>	<b>Clean Observations</b>
Brunei Darussalam	1,455	1,168
Cambodia	435	352
Indonesia	9,706	8,064
Lao PDR	372	287
Malaysia	484	426
Myanmar	245	206
Philippines	651	503
Thailand	3,579	2,947
Timor-Leste	444	402
Vietnam	44,079	39,460
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61,450</b>	<b>53,815</b>

## Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods with the aid of Microsoft Excel and JASP (v.0.19.3.) software. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and mean scores, were computed to provide an overview of participants' demographic characteristics and responses to motivational factors.

## Results

### Demographics

#### *Distribution*

The survey collected responses from a total of 53,815 teachers across ten Southeast Asian countries (see Table 2).

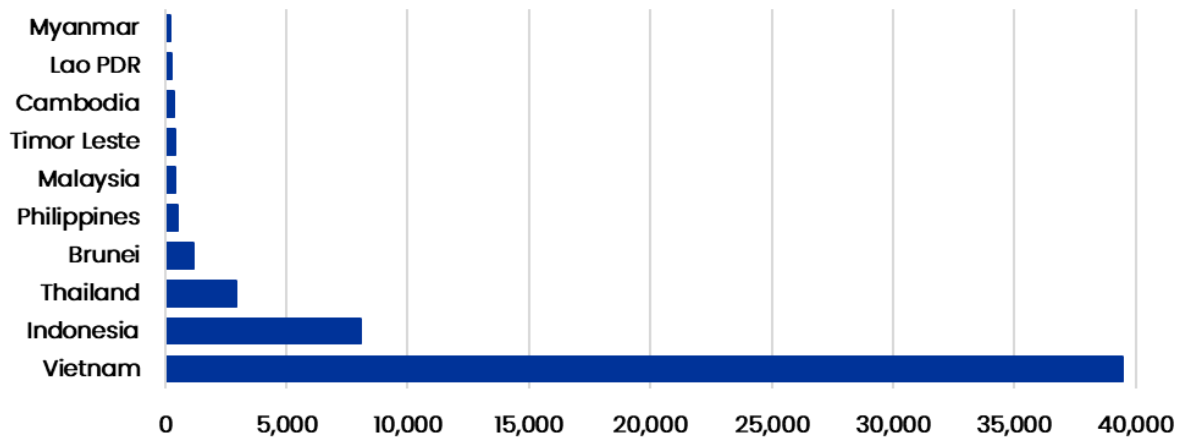
**Table 2**

*Distribution of Teacher Respondents by Country*

Country	f	%
Vietnam	39,460	73.33
Indonesia	8,064	14.99
Thailand	2,947	5.48
Brunei	1,168	2.17
Philippines	503	0.94
Malaysia	426	0.79
Timor-Leste	402	0.75
Cambodia	352	0.65
Lao PDR	287	0.53
Myanmar	206	0.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,815</b>	<b>100</b>

The data shows a highly uneven distribution of respondents (see Figure 4), with Vietnam comprising the vast majority at 73.33% ( $n = 39,460$ ), followed by Indonesia with 14.99% ( $n = 8,064$ ). These two countries alone account for 88.32% of the entire sample, significantly influencing regional means and interpretations. Other countries contributed smaller proportions, with Thailand (5.48%) and Brunei

(2.17%) following. Countries with less than 1% representation each include the Philippines (0.94%), Malaysia (0.79%), Timor-Leste (0.75%), Cambodia (0.65%), Lao PDR (0.53%), and Myanmar (0.38%). The large variation in survey turnout across countries may stem from the varying support of Ministries of Education for the research project and the differences in the research team's capacity to collect data from all provinces.

**Figure 4***Distribution of Respondents by Country*

The significant disparity in sample sizes has critical ramifications for the interpretation of cross-country comparisons. Countries with a limited number of participants (e.g., Myanmar and Lao PDR) may demonstrate elevated standard errors and increased variability in mean scores, necessitating careful interpretation. In contrast, Vietnam's enormous sample size produces better statistically reliable estimates; however, it may unduly influence the regional averages. The disparity indicates that although regional trends provide valuable information, country-specific analyses must consider sample size to prevent overgeneralization or misrepresentation.

## **Gender**

The gender distribution of teacher respondents across Southeast Asia reveals a predominantly female teaching workforce, with regional figures showing that 75.12% identify as female, compared to 23.47% male, 0.53% who preferred not to disclose their gender, and 0.89% identifying as another gender. Country-specific patterns further emphasize this trend (see Table 3 and Figure 5).

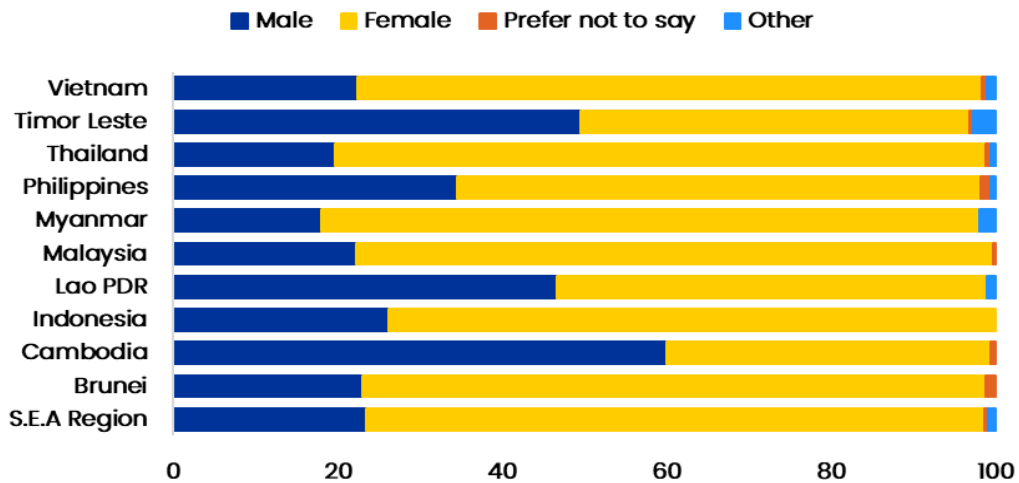
**Table 3**

*Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Gender across Southeast Asian Countries*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Prefer not to say</b>	<b>Other</b>
S.E.A Region	23.47	75.12	0.53	0.89
Brunei	22.95	75.86	1.20	0.00
Cambodia	59.94	39.49	0.57	0.00
Indonesia	26.15	73.85	0.00	0.00
Lao PDR	46.69	52.27	0.00	1.05
Malaysia	22.30	77.47	0.24	0.00
Myanmar	17.96	80.10	0.00	1.94
Philippines	34.59	63.62	1.19	0.60
Thailand	19.68	79.10	0.65	0.58
Timor-Leste	49.50	47.26	0.50	2.74
Vietnam	22.36	75.92	0.61	1.12

**Figure 5**

*Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Gender across Southeast Asian Countries*



For instance, Malaysia (77.47%), Vietnam (75.92%), and Brunei (75.86%) reported the highest proportions of female teachers. Conversely, Cambodia stands out with a majority male representation (59.94%), followed by Timor-Leste (49.50%) and Lao PDR (46.69%), where the gender balance is more equitable. Countries like Myanmar (1.94%), Timor-Leste (2.74%), and Vietnam (1.12%) also recorded higher proportions of respondents identifying as "Other". Meanwhile, the proportion of those who preferred not to disclose their gender remained low across all countries, peaking at only 1.20% in Brunei and 1.19% in the Philippines. These findings highlight both the regional dominance of female educators and the varying gender dynamics that exist between individual Southeast Asian countries.

## Age

The age distribution of teacher respondents across Southeast Asian countries shows that the majority fall within the 35–44 and 45–54 age brackets. At the regional level, 40.92% of respondents are aged 35–44, followed by 32.77% aged 45–54, indicating that most respondents are in their mid-career phase (see Table 4).

**Table 4**

*Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Age Category across Southeast Asian Countries*

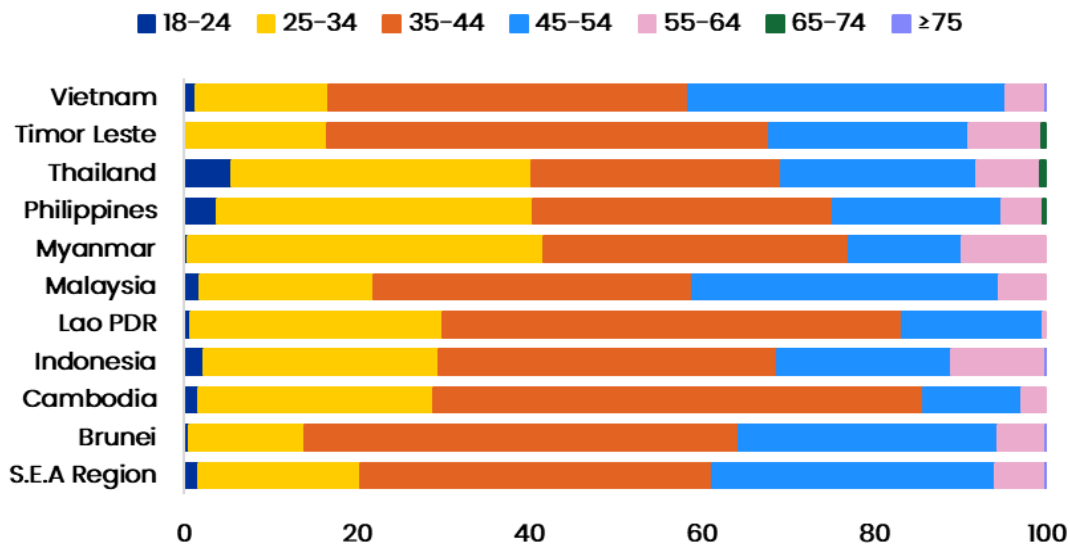
Country	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65–74	≥75
S.E.A Region	1.67	18.75	40.92	32.77	5.84	0.05	0.01
Brunei	0.60	13.44	50.34	30.05	5.48	0.00	0.09
Cambodia	1.71	27.27	56.82	11.36	2.84	0.00	0.00
Indonesia	2.22	27.37	39.17	20.28	10.93	0.03	0.01
Lao PDR	0.70	29.27	53.31	16.38	0.35	0.00	0.00
Malaysia	1.88	20.19	36.85	35.68	5.40	0.00	0.00
Myanmar	0.49	41.26	35.44	13.11	9.71	0.00	0.00
Philippines	3.78	36.78	34.79	19.48	4.77	0.40	0.00
Thailand	5.53	34.85	28.88	22.67	7.47	0.61	0.00
Timor-Leste	0.00	16.67	51.24	23.13	8.46	0.50	0.00
Vietnam	1.30	15.44	41.71	36.81	4.72	0.01	0.00

Country-specific distributions reveal some variation in age group dominance (see Figure 6). For example, Cambodia and Lao PDR have the highest concentration of participants aged 35–44, with 56.82% and 53.31% respectively. Vietnam stands out with a higher share (36.81%) in the 45–54 category, while Malaysia shows a near-even distribution between 35–44 (36.85%) and 45–54

(35.68%). Countries such as Myanmar and the Philippines present a relatively higher proportion of younger participants aged 25–34 (41.26% and 36.78%, respectively), suggesting a slightly younger teaching workforce in these nations. Thailand also shows notable participation from the 25–34 age group (34.85%) and is the country with the highest proportion in the 18–24 group at 5.53%.

### Figure 6

*Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Age Category across Southeast Asian Countries*



In contrast, older age brackets (55–64 and above) consistently show low representation across all countries, with percentages rarely exceeding 10%. The highest proportion in the 55–64 group is in Indonesia (10.93%) and Timor-Leste (8.46%). Very few participants fall within the 65–74 and ≥75 categories, indicating limited participation from the post-retirement demographic. This data reflects a primarily mid-career teaching population across the region, with minor but notable variations among countries in terms of younger or older workforce proportions.

## **Marital Status**

The marital status distribution of teacher respondents across Southeast Asian countries reveals that the vast majority are married, indicating a predominantly family-oriented workforce in the region. At the regional level, 83.96% of teachers are married, while 10.20% are single. Teachers who are divorced, annulled, or separated account for 3.11%, followed by 1.43% widowed and 1.30% who preferred not to disclose their status (see Table 5).

**Table 5**

*Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status across Southeast Asian Countries*

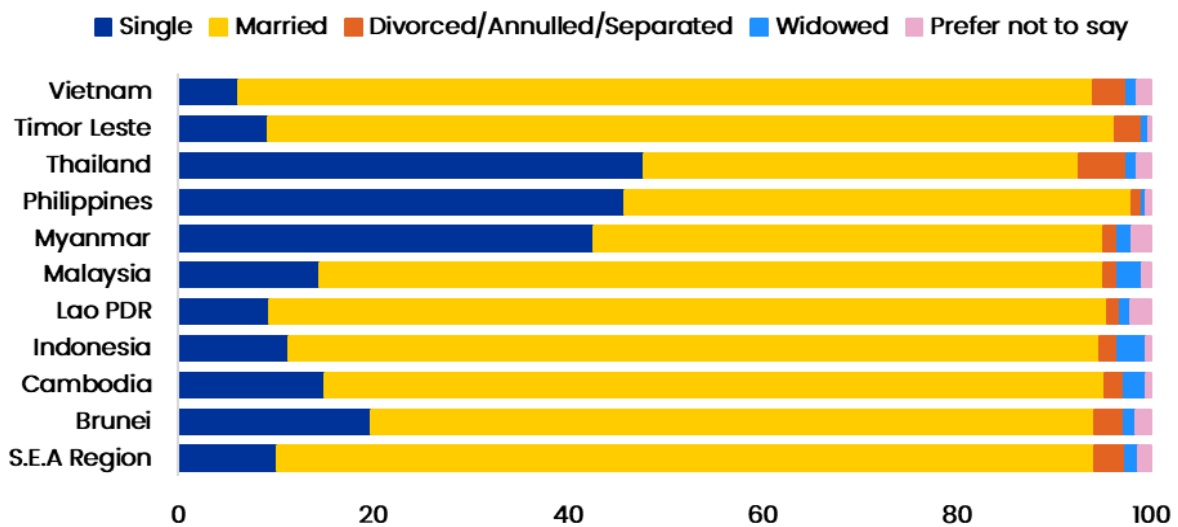
<b>Country</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Married</b>	<b>Divorced/ Annulled/ Separated</b>	<b>Widowed</b>	<b>Prefer not to say</b>
S.E.A Region	10.20	83.96	3.11	1.43	1.30
Brunei	19.86	74.32	3.00	1.20	1.63
Cambodia	15.06	80.11	1.99	2.27	0.57
Indonesia	11.42	83.30	1.79	2.95	0.55
Lao PDR	9.41	86.06	1.39	1.05	2.09
Malaysia	14.55	80.52	1.41	2.58	0.94
Myanmar	42.72	52.43	1.46	1.46	1.94
Philippines	45.92	52.09	0.99	0.40	0.60
Thailand	47.91	44.69	4.82	1.15	1.43
Timor-Leste	9.20	87.07	2.74	0.75	0.25
Vietnam	6.15	87.91	3.34	1.15	1.45

Country-specific data shows some variation in marital status composition (see Figure 7). Vietnam and Timor-Leste report the highest proportions of married

teachers, at 87.91% and 87.07%, respectively, closely followed by the Lao PDR (86.06%) and Indonesia (83.30%). These figures reflect a teaching workforce where marriage is highly prevalent, suggesting a long-term stable or mature teaching population in these countries.

**Figure 7**

*Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status across Southeast Asian Countries*



In contrast, countries such as Thailand, the Philippines, and Myanmar present a different profile, characterized by a higher share of single teachers. Thailand records the highest proportion of single teachers at 47.91%, followed by the Philippines (45.92%) and Myanmar (42.72%), indicating the presence of a younger or possibly unmarried teaching demographic in these countries. This is further reflected in their relatively lower shares of married teachers, with Thailand at 44.69% and the Philippines at 52.09%—the lowest in the region.

Divorced, annulled, or separated teachers form a small portion across the region but reach a peak of 4.82% in Thailand, followed by Vietnam (3.34%) and Brunei (3.00%). Meanwhile, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Malaysia also hold modest shares in this category, ranging from 1.41% to 2.27%. The Philippines has the lowest representation at 0.99%, possibly due to cultural or legal factors affecting marital dissolution. Widowed teachers make up a small portion in all countries, with the highest shares seen in Indonesia (2.95%), Cambodia (2.27%), and Malaysia (2.58%), while countries like the Philippines (0.40%) and Timor-Leste (0.75%) report lower values. These figures may correlate with the age structure of the workforce or socio-demographic longevity patterns.

The percentage of teachers who chose not to disclose their marital status remains consistently low, with the highest in Lao PDR (2.09%) and the lowest in Timor-Leste (0.25%), reflecting a general openness in reporting personal information across the region. Overall, the data reflect a largely married teaching population in Southeast Asia, with exceptions in countries like Thailand, the Philippines, and Myanmar, where singlehood is more prominent. These distinctions may be linked to broader cultural, demographic, or career-entry age patterns within each national education system.

### ***Length of Teaching***

The professional development and career trajectory of teachers have different phases with distinct characteristics and tasks (Ngan, 2023). For this study, a teacher's career is divided into three phases: early career (1 to 5 years), mid-career (6-10 years), and experienced (11 years and up). Teachers in their *Early Career* adapt to their new role, develop their competencies in their content and pedagogical knowledge, and build relationships with their colleagues. Teachers in their *Mid-career* attempt to stabilize their sense of self-efficacy in their jobs and

begin to develop mastery in teaching. Lastly, *Experienced* teachers have attained mastery in teaching and produce and share knowledge.

The distribution of teachers across different career stages in Southeast Asia reveals significant variability among countries, reflecting diverse educational system dynamics, workforce patterns, and teacher retention trends. Overall, respondents from the Southeast Asian region are predominantly composed of experienced teachers, with 76.13% of educators having more than 11 years of teaching experience. This regional trend toward a seasoned workforce is most pronounced in Lao PDR (84.67%) and Vietnam (80.55%), suggesting strong teacher retention or a relatively low influx of new educators. Similarly, Malaysia (73.47%) and Timor-Leste (65.92%) also show high proportions of experienced teachers, indicating mature teaching populations (see Table 6 and Figure 8).

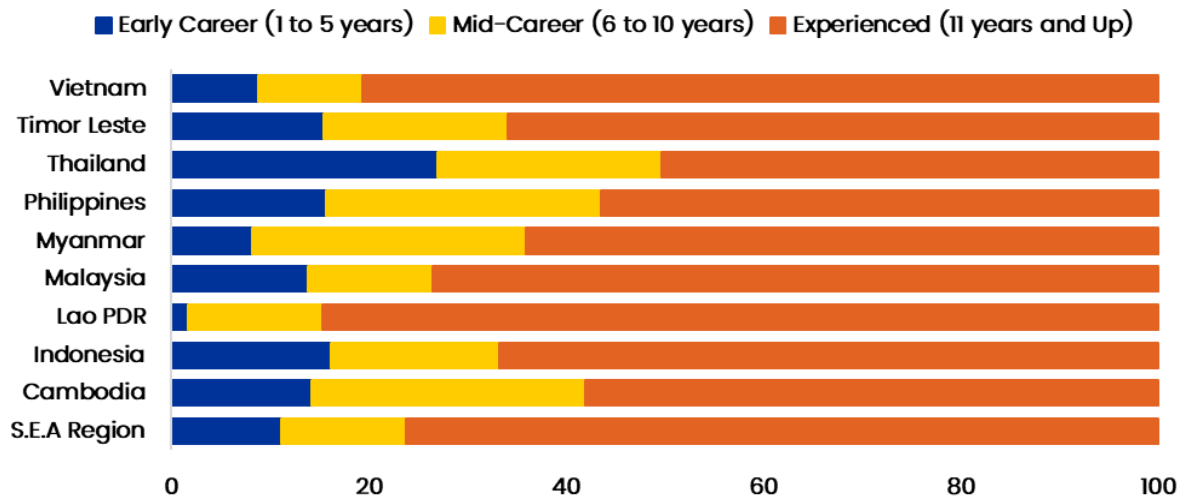
**Table 6**

*Percentage Distribution of Length of Teaching across Southeast Asian Countries*

Country	Early Career (1 to 5 years)	Mid-Career (6 to 10 years)	Experienced (11 years and up)
S.E.A Region	11.19	12.68	76.13
Cambodia	14.21	27.84	57.96
Indonesia	16.20	17.13	66.68
Lao PDR	1.74	13.59	84.67
Malaysia	13.85	12.68	73.47
Myanmar	8.25	27.67	64.08
Philippines	15.71	27.83	56.46
Thailand	27.01	22.77	50.22
Timor-Leste	15.42	18.66	65.92
Vietnam	8.91	10.55	80.55

**Figure 8**

*Percentage Distribution of Length of Teaching across Southeast Asian Countries*



On the other end of the spectrum, Thailand has the highest percentage of early-career teachers (27.01%), followed by Indonesia (16.20%), the Philippines (15.71%), and Cambodia (14.21%). These figures may signal either successful teacher recruitment efforts or challenges in long-term retention, which can further be explored in subsequent regional and country-level studies. Mid-career teachers, defined as those with 6 to 10 years of experience, are most prevalent in Cambodia (27.84%), the Philippines (27.83%), and Myanmar (27.67%), suggesting a relatively balanced workforce with many teachers approaching or transitioning into long-term careers. Interestingly, Lao PDR stands out with the lowest proportion of early-career teachers (1.74%). In contrast, the Philippines, Cambodia, and Myanmar display a relatively more even distribution across the three career stages, which could suggest both steady recruitment and stable career progression paths for teachers.

In summary, while most Southeast Asian countries have a strong base of experienced educators, there is significant inter-country variation in workforce composition. These differences may have important implications for educational

planning, particularly regarding succession, mentorship, professional development programs, and long-term teacher workforce sustainability in the region

### **Level of Teacher Motivation in Southeast Asian**

Teacher respondents were asked to rate their level of motivation to remain in the profession using a 10-point scale. The mean rating for the Southeast Asian region, as well as in each country, is shown in Table 8. The regional average across 10 countries is 7.90, which shows a high level of motivation. There is also minimal variability (SEM = 0.07), which indicates consistently strong motivation among respondents across the region. The data were interpreted using Table 7 below:

**Table 7**

*Interpretation of Scores of the Level of Teacher Motivation*

<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
8.20 – 10.00	Very High Motivation
6.40 – 8.19	High Motivation
4.60 – 6.39	Moderate Motivation
2.80 – 4.59	Low Motivation
1.00 – 2.79	Very Low Motivation

The data shows that Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Timor-Leste scored above the regional average. These countries exhibit stable and very high to high motivation levels for staying. This implies a positive engagement in the teaching profession. Lao PDR, the Philippines, Myanmar, and Cambodia fall below the regional average, but still show high levels of motivation. For these countries, the teachers are motivated to continue teaching given the current conditions that

they face. Brunei has the lowest level of motivation, although the level of motivation is still interpreted as high (see Table 8 and Figure 9).

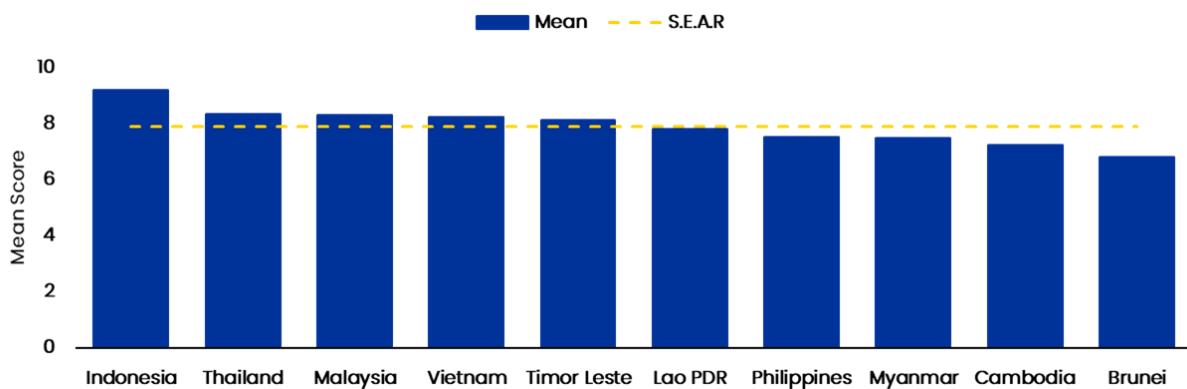
**Table 8**

*Mean Scores of Teacher Motivation Across Southeast Asian Countries*

Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	7.90	0.07	High Motivation
Indonesia	9.18	0.01	Very High Motivation
Thailand	8.35	0.03	Very High Motivation
Malaysia	8.31	0.07	Very High Motivation
Vietnam	8.22	0.01	Very High Motivation
Timor-Leste	8.13	0.10	High Motivation
Lao PDR	7.79	0.10	High Motivation
Philippines	7.52	0.09	High Motivation
Myanmar	7.48	0.13	High Motivation
Cambodia	7.22	0.10	High Motivation
Brunei	6.81	0.06	High Motivation

**Figure 9**

*Mean Scores of Teacher Motivation Across Southeast Asian Countries*



## Overall Mean Scores of Motivational Factors

Using a 6-point scale, teacher respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statements ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Table 9 was used to interpret the overall mean scores as well as the subsequent scores for each motivational factor:

**Table 9**

*Interpretation of the Mean Scores of Motivational Factors*

Mean	Interpretation
5.17 – 6.00	Strongly Agree/ Strongly Satisfied
4.34 – 5.16	Agree/ Satisfied
3.51 – 4.33	Satisfied
2.68 – 3.50	Somewhat Disagree/ Somewhat Dissatisfied
1.84 – 2.67	Disagree/ Dissatisfied
1.00 – 1.83	Strongly Disagree/ Strongly Dissatisfied

Table 10 presents the overall mean scores of various motivational factors of why teachers stay in their profession.

**Table 10**

*Overall Mean Scores of Motivational Factors*

Dimensions	Mean	SEM	Interpretation
Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment	5.13	0.003	Agree
Teaching as Interest and Passion	5.09	0.003	Agree
Sense of Growth and Development	5.09	0.003	Agree
Sense of Being Respected and Valued	5.05	0.003	Agree
Teacher Well-being	4.82	0.003	Agree

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School Environment	4.91	0.003	Agree
Salary, Incentives and Benefits	4.56	0.004	Agree
Perception of Government Policies	4.47	0.004	Satisfied

---

Among the eight dimensions, *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment* registers the highest average score at 5.13 (agree), suggesting it is the most positively rated aspect of teacher motivation. This is closely followed by *Teaching as Interest and Passion* and *Sense of Growth and Development*, both with a mean of 5.09 (agree), indicating that intrinsic motivation and opportunities for professional development are also rated highly.

The *Sense of Being Respected and Valued* follows with a mean score of 5.05 (agree), slightly lower but still above the midpoint, suggesting that interpersonal respect remains a significant contributor to motivation. *School Environment* and *Teacher Well-being* receive ratings of 4.91 and 4.82 (agree), respectively, indicating that teachers agree these factors contribute to their motivation to remain in the profession.

In contrast, *Salary, Incentives and Benefits*, and *Perception of Government Policies* receive the lowest mean ratings at 4.56 (agree) and 4.47 (agree), respectively. These findings highlight a noticeable distinction between core and contributing motivational factors, with the former generally receiving slightly higher evaluations. All dimensions demonstrate very low standard errors (ranging from 0.003 to 0.004), indicating a high level of consistency in responses across the sample.

## Core Motivational Factors

### *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment*

Overall, Southeast Asian teacher respondents agree that *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment* is their number one motivating factor for staying in the teaching profession, with a low standard error (Mean = 5.13, SEM = 0.003) (see Table 11 and Figure 10).

**Table 11**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment" across Southeast Asian Countries*

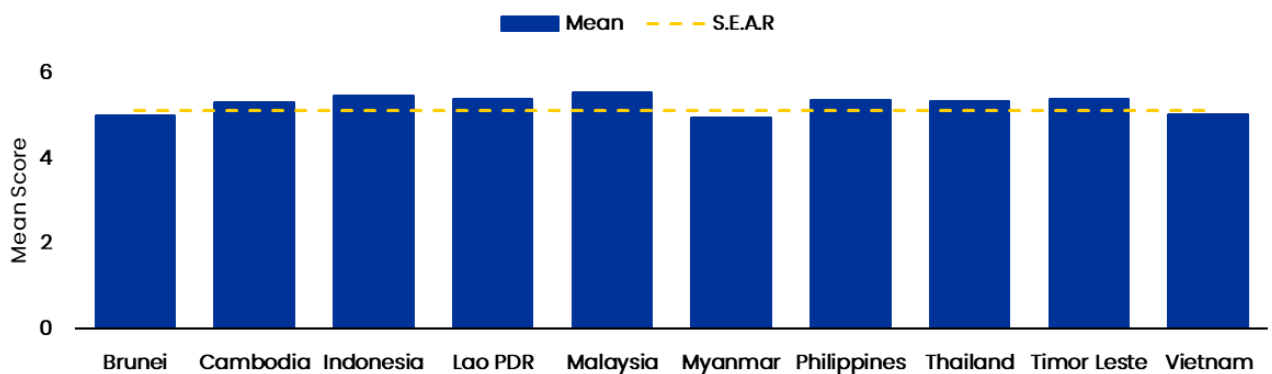
Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	5.13	0.003	Agree
Malaysia	5.55	0.025	Strongly Agree
Indonesia	5.46	0.007	Strongly Agree
Lao PDR	5.39	0.026	Strongly Agree
Timor-Leste	5.38	0.027	Strongly Agree
Philippines	5.37	0.037	Strongly Agree
Thailand	5.35	0.010	Strongly Agree
Cambodia	5.30	0.032	Strongly Agree
Vietnam	5.04	0.004	Agree
Brunei	5.00	0.019	Agree
Myanmar	4.95	0.037	Agree

Also, a majority of the countries (seven out of ten, except Vietnam, Brunei, and Myanmar) scored above the regional average, which shows strong agreement. This high rating coincides with the fact that this factor was identified as a core motivator. However, there are varying standard error values, from 0.003

(Vietnam) to 0.039 (Philippines), which suggest that some countries (i.e., Vietnam) more accurately estimate the sentiments of the countries' population. Some have lower levels of consistency of responses compared to others (i.e., Philippines), which may be due to variation in answers or the small sample size compared to the entire population of respondents.

**Figure 10**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment" across Southeast Asian Countries*



***Teaching as Interest and Passion***

The motivational factor with the second highest mean rating is *Teaching as Interest and Passion*, which generally has a high level of accuracy (Mean = 5.09, SEM = 0.003). A majority of the countries scored above the regional average (seven out of ten, except Cambodia, Vietnam, and Brunei). The high rating on this dimension confirms that teachers view their interest and passion as one of the core motivators for staying. Standard error ranges vary – the responses in Vietnam (SEM = 0.004) and Indonesia (SEM = 0.007) represent the perception of their populations, while the responses in Cambodia (SEM = 0.030), Myanmar (SEM = 0.031, and the Philippines (SEM = 0.035) are more varied within each country (see Table 12 and Figure 11).

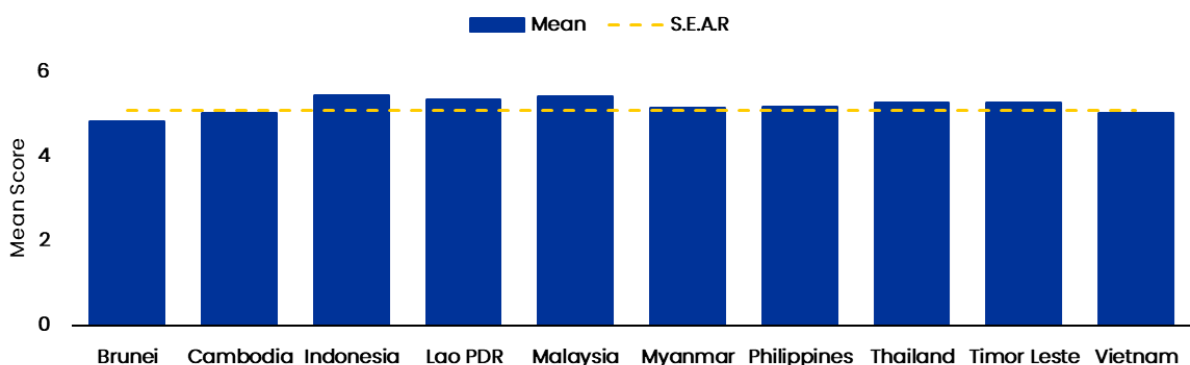
**Table 12**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Teaching as Interest and Passion" across Southeast Asian Countries*

Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	5.09	0.003	Agree
Indonesia	5.44	0.007	Strongly Agree
Malaysia	5.41	0.027	Strongly Agree
Lao PDR	5.35	0.028	Strongly Agree
Timor-Leste	5.27	0.026	Strongly Agree
Thailand	5.27	0.011	Strongly Agree
Philippines	5.18	0.035	Strongly Agree
Myanmar	5.14	0.031	Agree
Cambodia	5.03	0.030	Agree
Vietnam	5.01	0.004	Agree
Brunei	4.82	0.021	Agree

**Figure 11**

Mean Scores for the Factor "Teaching as Interest and Passion" across Southeast Asian Countries



### ***Sense of Growth and Development***

*Sense of Growth and Development*, which explores how teachers perceive their opportunities for professional and personal advancement, also has the second-highest rating, with a high level of consistency across the region (Mean = 5.09, SEM = 0.003). Seven out of ten countries (except Vietnam, Cambodia, and Brunei) scored higher than the regional average. Standard errors across countries vary, from 0.004 (Vietnam) to 0.036 (Philippines), indicating differences in the consistency of responses per country. Indonesia and Vietnam have higher SEM values, which reflect a unified view of the importance of this factor to motivating teachers (see Table 13 and Figure 12).

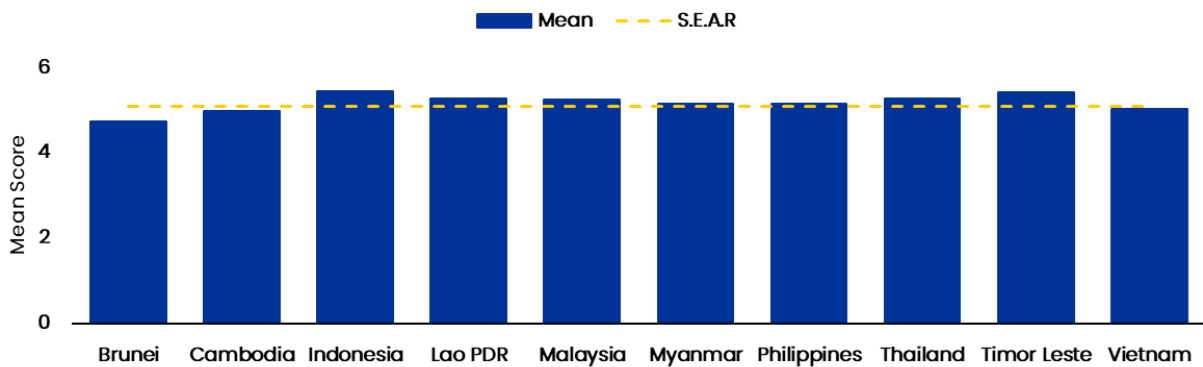
**Table 13**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Sense of Growth and Development" across Southeast Asian Countries*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.E.M.</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
S.E.A Region	5.09	0.003	Agree
Indonesia	5.43	0.006	Strongly Agree
Timor-Leste	5.40	0.024	Strongly Agree
Lao PDR	5.28	0.031	Strongly Agree
Thailand	5.27	0.011	Strongly Agree
Malaysia	5.25	0.027	Strongly Agree
Philippines	5.14	0.036	Agree
Myanmar	5.13	0.034	Agree
Vietnam	5.01	0.004	Agree
Cambodia	4.97	0.030	Agree
Brunei	4.73	0.020	Agree

**Figure 12**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Sense of Growth and Development" across Southeast Asian Countries*



## **Contributing Motivational Factors**

### ***Sense of being Respected and Valued***

Among the contributing motivational factors that motivate teachers to stay is the *Sense of being Respected and Valued*, which garnered the highest mean rating after the previously mentioned core factors (Mean = 5.05, SEM = 0.003). On average, teachers in Southeast Asia agree that this factor contributes to teacher motivation for staying in the profession, with all countries either agreeing or strongly agreeing with relevant statements. Only four out of ten countries scored above the mean: Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Thailand, and Lao PDR, with varying degrees of consistency of within-country responses. This might indicate that there are differences in how teachers from the countries value this factor as a motivator (see Table 14 and Figure 13).

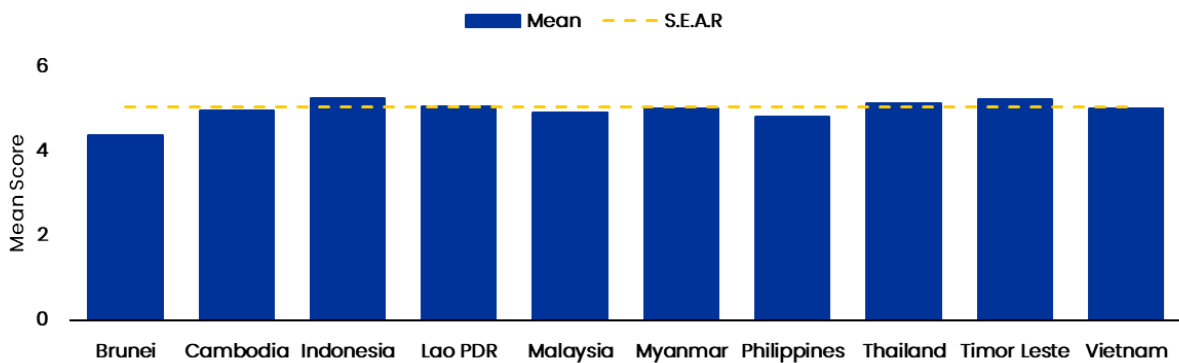
**Table 14**

Mean Scores for the Factor " Sense of Being Respected and Valued" across Southeast Asian Countries

Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	5.09	0.003	Agree
Indonesia	5.26	0.006	Strongly Agree
Timor-Leste	5.25	0.022	Strongly Agree
Thailand	5.15	0.011	Agree
Lao PDR	5.07	0.034	Agree
Vietnam	5.02	0.003	Agree
Myanmar	5.02	0.033	Agree
Cambodia	4.98	0.031	Agree
Malaysia	4.92	0.030	Agree
Philippines	4.83	0.039	Agree
Brunei	4.38	0.021	Agree

**Figure 13**

Mean Scores for the Factor " Sense of Being Respected and Valued" across Southeast Asian Countries



### ***Teacher Well-being***

On average, respondents in Southeast Asia agree that *Teacher Well-being* (Mean = 4.82, SEM = 0.003) contributes to teacher motivation for staying in the profession. Teaching is generally considered to be a profession that brings work-life balance, which brings some advantages, such as flexibility in schedule and having vacation days during school breaks, as well as proximity between home and work. However, only three out of ten countries scored higher than the regional average: Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Lao PDR. This might mean that, although teachers in all countries agree that this influences teacher staying, this might reflect how this factor may have been overlooked as teachers give more value to the welfare of children and fulfilling their purpose of contributing to society, even at the expense of their well-being. This result is also reflected on a lower level of relationship of *Teacher Well-being* with the level of motivation ( $\rho = 0.386, p < .001$ ). Overall, there is also a high level of consistency in the responses across the region in this measure. However, interpretation of this factor per country should be done with caution due to high standard errors (see Table 15 and Figure 14).

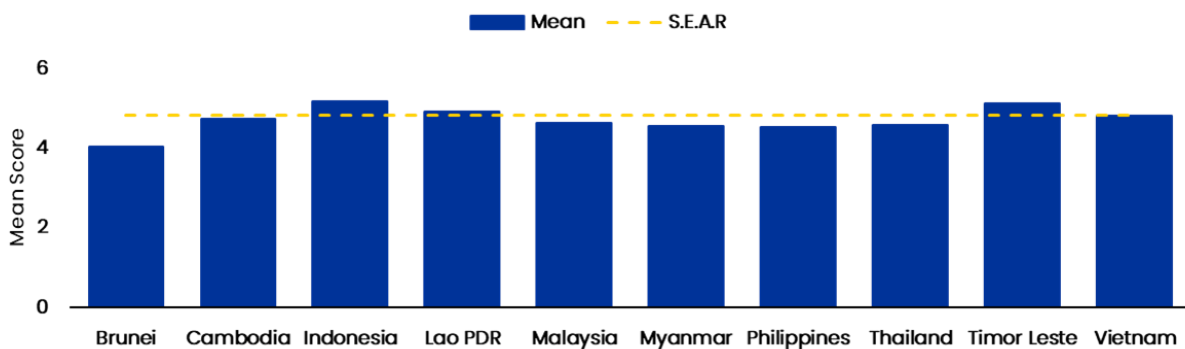
**Table 15**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Teacher Well-being" across Southeast Asian Countries*

Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	4.82	0.003	Agree
Indonesia	5.16	0.007	Agree
Timor-Leste	5.12	0.024	Agree
Lao PDR	4.92	0.034	Agree
Vietnam	4.80	0.004	Agree
Cambodia	4.75	0.033	Agree
Malaysia	4.62	0.035	Agree
Thailand	4.58	0.015	Agree
Myanmar	4.54	0.044	Agree
Philippines	4.52	0.047	Agree
Brunei	4.04	0.025	Somewhat Agree

**Figure 14**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Teacher Well-being" across Southeast Asian Countries*



### **School Environment**

The *School Environment* refers to the physical, social, and organizational conditions of schools. The average rating given by Southeast Asian teachers (Mean = 4.91, SEM = 0.003) means that the overall perception of and experience in the school setting potentially influences their motivation to stay in the profession. All countries either agree or strongly agree on the contribution of this factor. However, only two out of ten countries scored higher than the regional average (Indonesia and Timor-Leste), while others fell below the regional average. Most have high standard errors at the country level, reflecting the varied level of consistency of answers (see Table 16 and Figure 15).

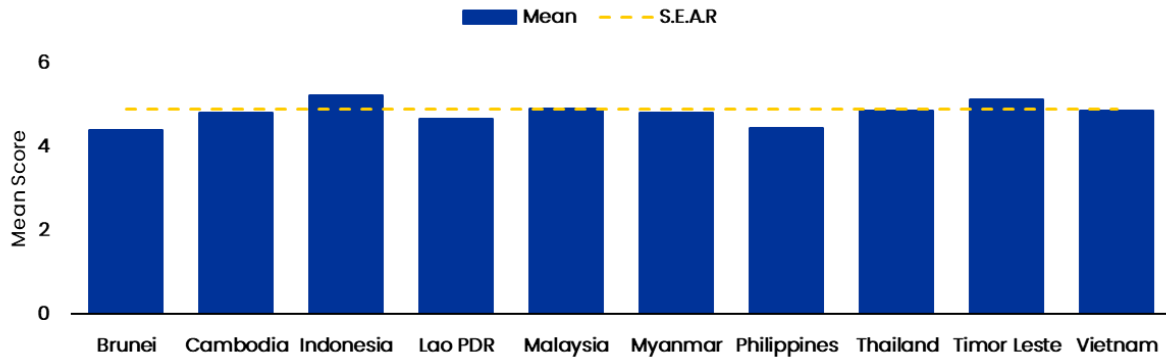
**Table 16**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "School Environment" across Southeast Asian Countries*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.E.M.</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
S.E.A Region	4.91	0.003	Agree
Indonesia	5.23	0.006	Strongly Agree
Timor-Leste	5.13	0.024	Agree
Malaysia	4.90	0.030	Agree
Vietnam	4.87	0.003	Agree
Thailand	4.85	0.014	Agree
Cambodia	4.82	0.034	Agree
Myanmar	4.81	0.040	Agree
Lao PDR	4.67	0.040	Agree
Philippines	4.45	0.044	Agree
Brunei	4.39	0.021	Agree

**Figure 15**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "School Environment" across Southeast Asian Countries*



**Salary, Incentives and Benefits**

Generally, Southeast Asian teacher respondents agree that *Salary, Incentives and Benefits* is a motivating factor for staying (Mean = 4.56, SEM = 0.004). With a high level of precision, the results show that out of the ten countries, six *Agree*, while four *Somewhat Agree* that this factor contributes to teacher motivation to stay. Further examination of individual cases shows that only Vietnam and Indonesia showed consistent responses, which means teachers in those countries had very similar views on the matter. This indicates that contexts and perceptions of the financial benefits of teaching vary within the countries. However, only three countries scored above the regional average: Timor-Leste, Indonesia, and Malaysia (see Table 17 and Figure 16).

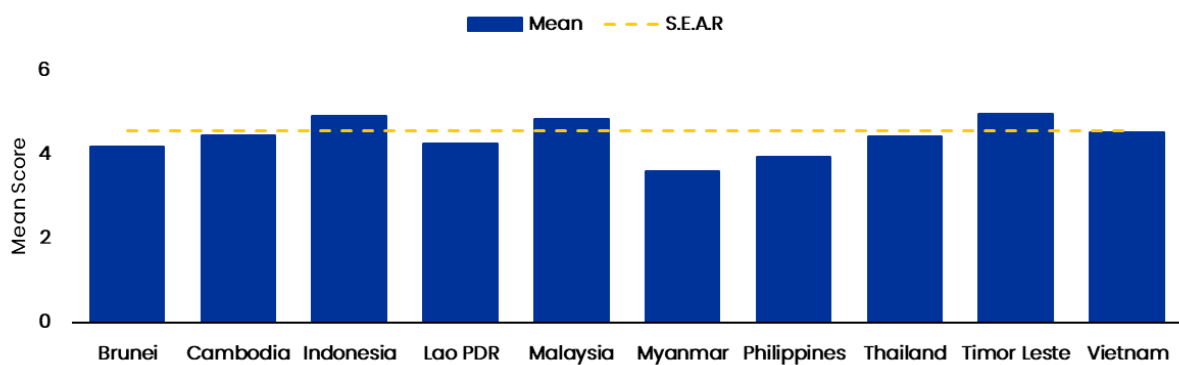
**Table 17**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Salary, Incentives and Benefits" across Southeast Asian Countries*

Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	4.56	0.004	Agree
Timor-Leste	4.97	0.034	Agree
Indonesia	4.90	0.009	Agree
Malaysia	4.84	0.036	Agree
Vietnam	4.51	0.004	Agree
Cambodia	4.44	0.041	Agree
Thailand	4.42	0.018	Agree
Lao PDR	4.26	0.052	Somewhat Agree
Brunei	4.19	0.025	Somewhat Agree
Philippines	3.94	0.057	Somewhat Agree
Myanmar	3.61	0.064	Somewhat Agree

**Figure 16**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Salary, Incentives and Benefits" across Southeast Asian Countries*



### ***Government Laws and Policies***

*Government Laws and Policies* refer to the teachers' perception of the alignment of national education policies with their teaching experience. On average, Southeast Asian teacher respondents are satisfied with government laws and policies on teachers, with a low level of variability across the region. Looking at per-country results, five out of ten are satisfied, while the other five are only somewhat satisfied with the laws and policies in place. However, among the motivators, it has the lowest mean rating (Mean = 4.47, SEM = 0.004). This means that teachers view external, systemic, or policy-level factors as contributory to staying, but desire more from these systemic measures. Four countries scored above the regional average, which implies a favorable impression of how national educational policies support teachers in Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The rest that falls below the average indicate a more critical view of teacher support from the government (see Table 18 and Figure 17).

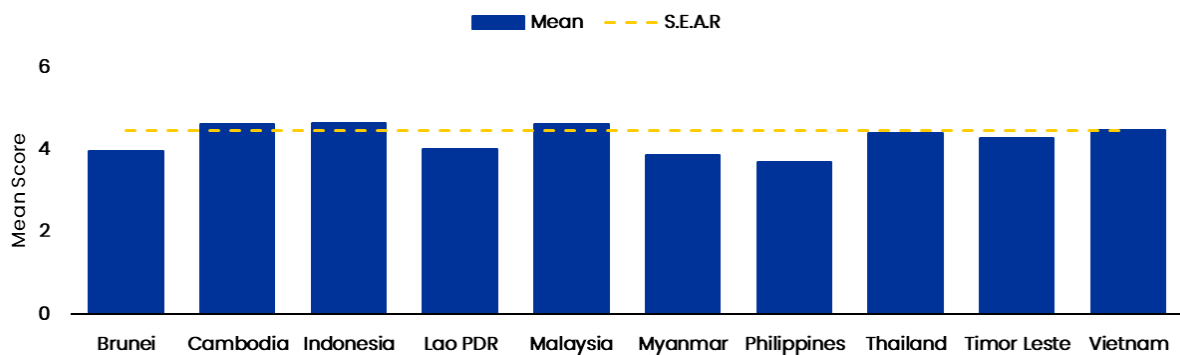
**Table 18**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Perception of Government Policies" across Southeast Asian Countries*

Country	Mean	S.E.M.	Interpretation
S.E.A Region	4.47	0.004	Satisfied
Indonesia	4.65	0.010	Satisfied
Malaysia	4.63	0.034	Satisfied
Cambodia	4.61	0.036	Satisfied
Vietnam	4.47	0.004	Satisfied
Thailand	4.39	0.017	Satisfied
Timor-Leste	4.29	0.045	Somewhat Satisfied
Lao PDR	4.02	0.048	Somewhat Satisfied
Brunei	3.97	0.026	Somewhat Satisfied
Myanmar	3.86	0.065	Somewhat Satisfied
Philippines	3.71	0.056	Somewhat Satisfied

**Figure 17**

*Mean Scores for the Factor "Perception of Government Policies" across Southeast Asian Countries*



## Discussion

In this section, the results of the descriptive statistics are interpreted per motivational factor.

### Core Motivating Factors

Three core factors were identified as primary drivers that motivate teachers to remain in the profession (Umali et al., 2024): *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment*, *Teaching as Interest and Passion*, and *Sense of Growth and Development*. The identification of these factors as core motivators is supported by the quantitative results in this current study, since these are the factors that received the highest mean rating for level of agreement.

#### ***Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment***

Among the eight motivating factors, Southeast Asian teachers rated *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment* the highest (Mean = 5.13, SEM = 0.003). According to Tiiri and Kuusisto (2016), *purpose* is the stable, long-term goal to contribute to the world beyond a self that is also meaningful to the self. Taking this definition, teachers view their work as a way to contribute to society in the long run - something bigger than themselves, and this can give meaning to their lives. However, this cannot be generalized for all countries since some have different levels of accuracy: Indonesia and Vietnam showed more consistent responses, better reflecting their country-wide perspectives. On the other hand, responses in Cambodia, Myanmar, and the Philippines are more varied, indicating less agreement among teachers within those countries.

### ***Teaching as Interest and Passion***

Having the second highest mean rating of *Teaching as Interest and Passion* (Mean = 5.09) supports the fact that this was identified as a primary motivator for teachers to stay in the profession. This factor has several aspects, including a love for the act of teaching, a love for the subject matter area, and a love for the learners. It is also related to a strong sense of professional growth (Rampa, 2014). Thus, according to Southeast Asian teachers, they are driven by their passion for the act of teaching, their interest in the subject matter, and their love for children.

### ***Sense of Growth and Development***

*Sense of Growth and Development*, having the third highest mean rating, supports the SEA-TM framework, which identifies that this factor is a core teacher motivator (Mean = 5.09). This shows that teachers might be encouraged to continue teaching if they perceive opportunities for them to grow in their careers.

### **Contributing Motivating Factors**

Aside from the core motivating factors, the results of the first phase of the research also identified five *contributing* factors (Umali et al., 2024). These factors support the core factors in teachers' decision to continue teaching: *Sense of being Respected and Valued, Teacher Well-being, School Environment, Salary, Incentives and Benefits* and *Government Laws and Policies*. This current study determined the teachers' level of agreement on how each contributes to teacher motivation for staying in the profession.

### ***Sense of Being Respected and Valued***

Society's positive regard towards the teaching profession is a motivator for teachers to continue on (Mean = 5.05). This is indicated by the high mean rating that the *Sense of Being Respected and Valued* had across the region. This might be because, in most Southeast Asian countries, teachers are highly-regarded members of society. In the school, teachers are appreciated by students and their families, since they contribute to learning and are perceived as reliable sources of knowledge for the community. They are also put on a high moral pedestal, expected to be a model of a good member of society (Umali et al., 2024).

### ***Teacher Well-being***

In general, the respondents agree that taking care of *Teacher Well-being* drives them to stay in the profession (Mean = 4.82). This finding suggests that teacher respondents feel they have attained a reasonable work-life balance, as supported by Ministries of Education setting a recommended number of working hours for educators. Also, teachers appreciate having flexible schedules, which gives them time for other priorities in their lives, and the close proximity of their homes to their schools.

### ***School Environment***

On average, teacher respondents agree that the *School Environment* contributes to teachers staying (Mean = 4.91). This result is reflected in how teachers feel that the psychosocial environment of their school is conducive for them to support their needs, practice innovation, and have good working relationships with their supervisors and colleagues. They also note that instructional and school facilities are provided for them, aiding their teaching practice.

### ***Salary, Incentives, and Benefits***

Southeast Asian teacher respondents agree that *Salary, Incentives, and Benefits* (Mean = 4.56) is a factor for teachers to stay. Though not as high as the other motivational factors, teacher respondents still appreciate that their profession is a source of income and financial security. They are also compensated with appropriate benefits and incentives.

### ***Government Laws and Policies***

In general, Southeast Asian teachers were satisfied with *Government Laws and Policies* related to teachers (Mean = 4.47). Despite not being as high as the other factors, teachers still appreciate the policies on teacher deployment, professional development, career progression, and working conditions that were set by their respective Ministries of Education and governments. The results show that it is important to listen to teachers' perspectives on regulations that affect them and those that might impact their reasons for staying in the profession.

## Summary and Conclusion

The results from the study gathered from the 10 Southeast Asian countries support the Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation for Staying in the Profession (SEA-TM) (Umali et al., 2024). In general, teachers in Southeast Asia are *highly motivated*. Individual countries' level of motivation ranges from *high* to *very high*.

Teachers also *agree* that the following factors influence their decision to stay in the profession: *Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment, Teachers' Interest and Passion, and Sense of Growth and Development*. These three core motivational factors had the highest ratings for agreement among those measured through a six-point scale. They also *agree* that the following factors contribute to *teachers* staying: *Sense of being Respected and Valued, Teacher Well-Being, School Environment, Salary Incentives, and Benefits*. Finally, they are *satisfied* with the *Government Laws and Policies* on teachers.

The study reinforces the relevance of the SEA-TM framework in the core and contributing factors that influence teacher motivation to remain in the profession. The quantitative findings reflect how these factors vary in strength across countries, reflecting important contextual differences. These insights not only validate the framework but also provide evidence-based direction for policy and are aimed at sustaining a motivated and committed teaching workforce in Southeast Asia.

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