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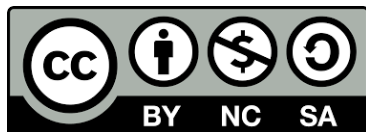
Teacher Motivation for Staying in the Profession: Insights from Thailand

Lee Thunder T. Bernasor, Hiyas S. Clamor-Torneo,
Sherlyne A. Almonte-Acosta, PhD, Katherine P. Torralba, and
Erlene G. Umali

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Abstract

Understanding what motivates teachers is essential for Ministries of Education to sustain a dedicated and stable teaching workforce. This study explored teacher motivation to remain in the teaching profession in Thailand, along with factors that influence them. A survey was done to collect the data. Descriptive statistics revealed that the majority of Thai teacher respondents are motivated to continue their service. They also view the examined motivational factors positively and consider them relevant to their decision to stay. Inferential analysis unveiled the association between motivation levels and length of teaching. Statistically significant differences in motivation were also found among teacher respondents based on frequency of salary increases, provision of teaching and learning resources, adequacy of school facilities, highest education attainment, promotion history, and frequency. Using hierarchical regression analysis, a predictive model was developed that identified a combination of motivational factors and demographic characteristics that influence teacher respondents' decision to remain in the profession. Policy recommendations were proposed based on the study's findings to address both individual and systemic aspects that could improve teacher motivation.

I. Introduction

Thailand, like many countries in Southeast Asia, places significant value on the role of teachers in society. With a total of 542,580 teachers across various educational sectors, including basic education, vocational training, and non-formal education, the country's educational workforce plays a pivotal role in shaping future generations (Ministry of Education, 2021). The largest share of these educators is in the public basic education sector, comprising over 393,000 individuals, followed by private basic education with more than 106,000 teachers. These figures highlight the scale and diversity of the teaching profession in Thailand and underscore the need to explore the motivations that sustain teacher engagement and retention.

The teaching profession in Thailand enjoys a culturally ingrained status of high regard. Teachers are commonly referred to as "second parents," a label that reflects their deep involvement not only in academic instruction but also in moral and social development. They are perceived as moral compasses and pillars of community life, particularly in rural areas where they often serve as community leaders (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2023). This societal esteem is rooted in traditional Thai values that associate knowledge with virtue and respect, aligning with Buddhist philosophies that prioritize the transmission of wisdom and moral guidance (Srinok, 2021).

Despite improvements in numbers over time, Thailand continues to face teacher shortages. Small rural schools are most affected due to uneven distribution of teachers (Lathapipat & Sondergaard, 2016). The shortage is also striking in certain subjects, such as Mathematics and Science, and has spillover effects on other subjects as teachers are forced to teach outside of their specialization (Pholphirul et al., 2020). This scenario necessitates examining teacher motivation.

Understanding the nature of teacher shortages requires a closer look at the underlying motivational factors that influence teachers' decisions to remain in the profession. Motivation has been defined in numerous ways by researchers. It is considered a "driving force behind all actions", influencing "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it" (Dörnyei, 2001, as cited in Syamananda, 2017, p.121). Han and Ying (2016) also define the concept as "reasons that emanate from individuals' intrinsic values to choose to teach and sustain teaching... influenced by a number of contextual factors" (p.3). Richardson (2014, as cited in Mangaleswarasharma, 2017), on the other hand, describes it as "internal and external factors that stimulate desire or energy in teaching to be continuously interested and committed to make their best effort to support students' learning goals" (p.2). These definitions reflect the interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for teachers' persistence in their roles.

Motivation in this study refers to the factors that influence teachers to remain in the profession. Drawing on Umali et al.'s (2024) Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession, the construct comprises core and contributing factors that affect teachers' decisions to remain in the profession. Core factors are primary drivers that support teachers to remain in their careers; these are a sense of purpose and fulfillment, interest and passion for teaching, and a sense of growth and development. Contributing factors, on the other hand, are those that may enhance or support the core factors. These include a sense of being respected and valued, teacher well-being, school environment, salary, benefits and incentives and government laws and policies (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession



Several studies have examined teachers' motivations in Thailand. Haruthaithanasan (2018) found that educators in Southern Thailand exhibit motivation levels influenced by several factors, including achievement, recognition, relationships with others, school policies and administration, work conditions, and security needs. He also reported that administrative reforms implemented from 2009 to 2018 positively affected teacher motivation, providing teachers with academic freedom, shared instructional responsibility, and opportunities for school development. Likewise, instructional reform, which emphasized a constructivist approach to learning, enhanced motivation and challenged teachers to achieve more.

Investigating Thai teachers' motivation to enter the profession, Hayes (2008, as cited in Prabjandee, 2020) discovered that mid-service English teachers were encouraged to go into teaching due to "influence of their schooling", such as having inspiring English teachers and loving the language, and "sociocultural and

economic influences” (p. 50). Likewise, Prabjandee (2014, as cited in Prabjandee, 2020) unveiled that in-service English teachers’ decision was also influenced by experiences in school and family’s aspirations. Other factors were also identified, such as teaching as a calling and a sense of pride in the profession.

Moreover, Wiboolyasarin et al. (2025) examined the factors that affect pre-service teachers’ decision to join government teaching posts and their continued engagement in the profession. Their study highlighted an interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that influence pre-service teachers’ career paths, including “Profession with High Status, Social Value, Passion for Teaching, Incentive and Intention, and Personal Condition”. These factors vary across respondents’ gender, academic year and socioeconomic status, calling for more tailored measures to address pre-service teachers’ needs.

On the other hand, Tulyakul (2019) found that motivation is associated with both the implementation of classroom management strategies and teaching effectiveness among physical education teachers in Southern Thailand. Motivation has a mediating effect on both aspects, as motivated teachers go the extra mile to support their learners and facilitate learning.

In recognition of the importance of investigating teacher motivation, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, through its Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO INNOTECH), initiated the Regional Teacher Motivation Study with the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Sustainability (SEAMEO SEPS). The study aims 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.

The study employed a quantitative approach, collecting data via a survey questionnaire developed from the Southeast Asian Framework on Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession (Umalı et al., 2024) and other relevant literature. The questionnaire was validated by content experts and country representatives and was translated into local languages. The SurveyMonkey platform was used to administer the questionnaire via convenience sampling. A total of 2,947 valid responses were obtained from educators in Thailand. Table 1 presents the characteristics of survey participants. The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Hierarchical regression analysis was done to develop the country model on teacher motivation.

Table 1
Profile of Survey Respondents in Thailand

	Count	Percent
Age in years		
18-24	163	5.5
25-34	1027	34.8
35-44	851	28.9
45-54	668	22.7
55-64	220	7.5
65-74	18	0.6
Gender		
Male	580	19.7
Female	2331	79.1
Prefer not to say	19	0.6
Other	17	0.6
Marital status		
Single	1412	47.9
Married	1317	44.7
Divorced/ Annulled/ Separated	142	4.8
Widowed	34	1.2
Prefer not to say	42	1.4
Highest educational attainment		
Diploma Level	59	2.0
Bachelor's Degree	2202	74.7
Master's Degree	646	21.9
Doctoral Degree	40	1.4
Type of school		
Public	1562	53.0
Private	1385	47.0
School location		
Urban	14112	35.8
Rural	25348	64.2
Length of teaching		
Early Career (1 to 5 years)	796	27.0
Mid-Career (6 to 10 years)	671	22.8
Experienced (11 years and Up)	1480	50.2
Total	2947	100

II. Results and Discussion

This section presents the key findings of the study on teacher motivation in Thailand, focusing on educators' overall commitment to staying in the teaching profession and the primary factors that influence this motivation. Through descriptive analysis, the study explores teachers' views across the core and contributing factors of motivation (Umali et al., 2024). These aspects are illustrated through a combination of visual representations and narrative descriptions, highlighting trends in professional development participation, workload distribution, commuting challenges, and financial responsibilities. Additionally, inferential and correlational analyses examine the relationships among these factors, assessing how variations in salary, working conditions, career progression, and access to training opportunities relate to teachers' intentions to stay in the profession. The section concludes with a predictive model that pinpoints the most influential drivers of teacher motivation, providing evidence-based recommendations to guide policy decisions and enhance long-term teacher retention in Thailand.

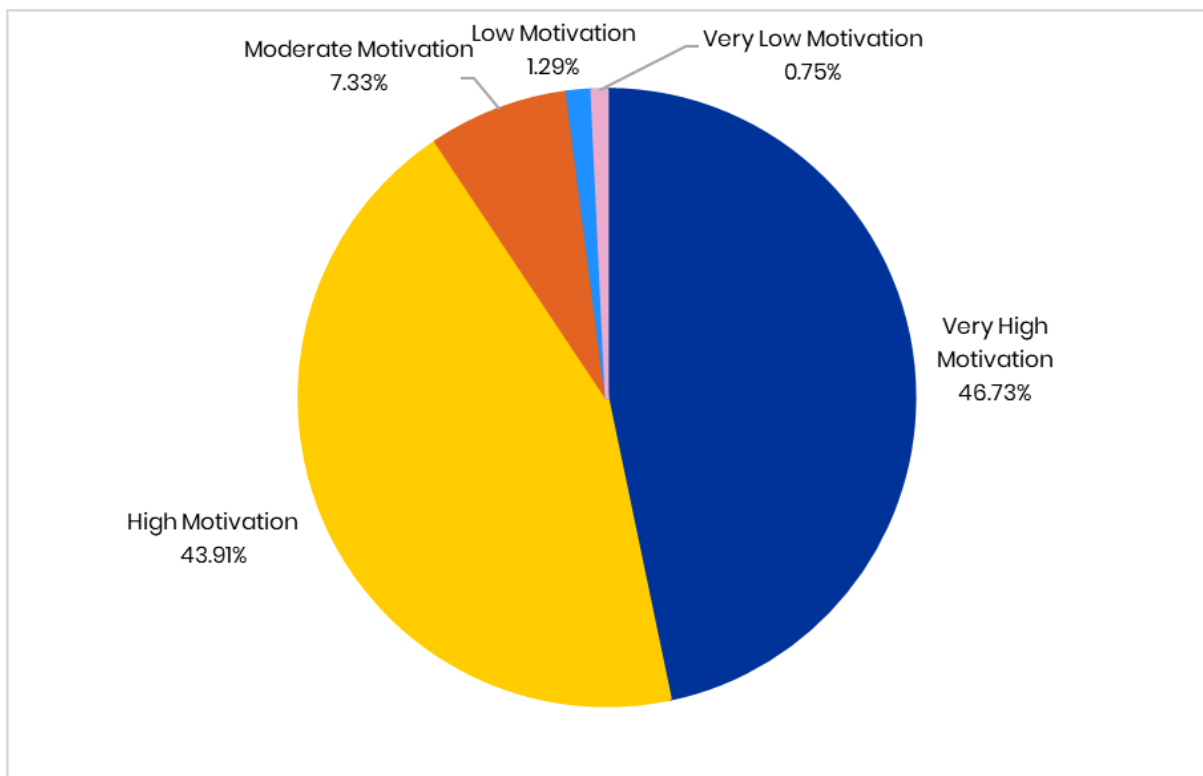
Level of Motivation of Teachers to Remain in the Profession

The overall motivation levels of teachers in Thailand, as shown in Figure 2, reveal that most respondents demonstrate a strong commitment to their profession. Specifically, 46.73% of teachers reported experiencing very high motivation, while an additional 43.91% indicated high motivation. Combined, these figures show that over 90% of the teachers surveyed possess either high or very high levels of motivation, reflecting a generally positive outlook toward their roles and responsibilities in the education sector. A smaller portion of respondents, 7.33%, reported a moderate level of motivation, suggesting that while they may still be

engaged in their work, certain factors might be limiting their full professional enthusiasm or satisfaction. Meanwhile, only 1.29% of teachers expressed low motivation, and an even smaller percentage (0.75%) reported very low motivation. These relatively low figures for demotivation indicate that only a minor segment of the teaching population may be at risk of disengagement or burnout. The data suggests that teacher motivation in Thailand remains robust, with a significant majority of educators maintaining a high level of enthusiasm and commitment to their profession.

Figure 2

Percentage of Thailand Teacher-Respondents According to their Level of Motivation to Stay in the Profession



Factors Relevant to Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession

The survey analyzed eight factors pertinent to teacher motivation for remaining in the profession. Teacher respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement with statements pertaining to the eight motivational variables using a six-point scale ranging from 1, denoting "strongly disagree," to 6, indicating "strongly agree."

Core Factors of Teacher Motivation. The subsequent sections present Thai teacher respondents' agreement levels with statements related to the three core factors of motivation for remaining in the profession, namely, 'sense of purpose and fulfillment', 'teaching as interest and passion', and 'sense of growth and development'.

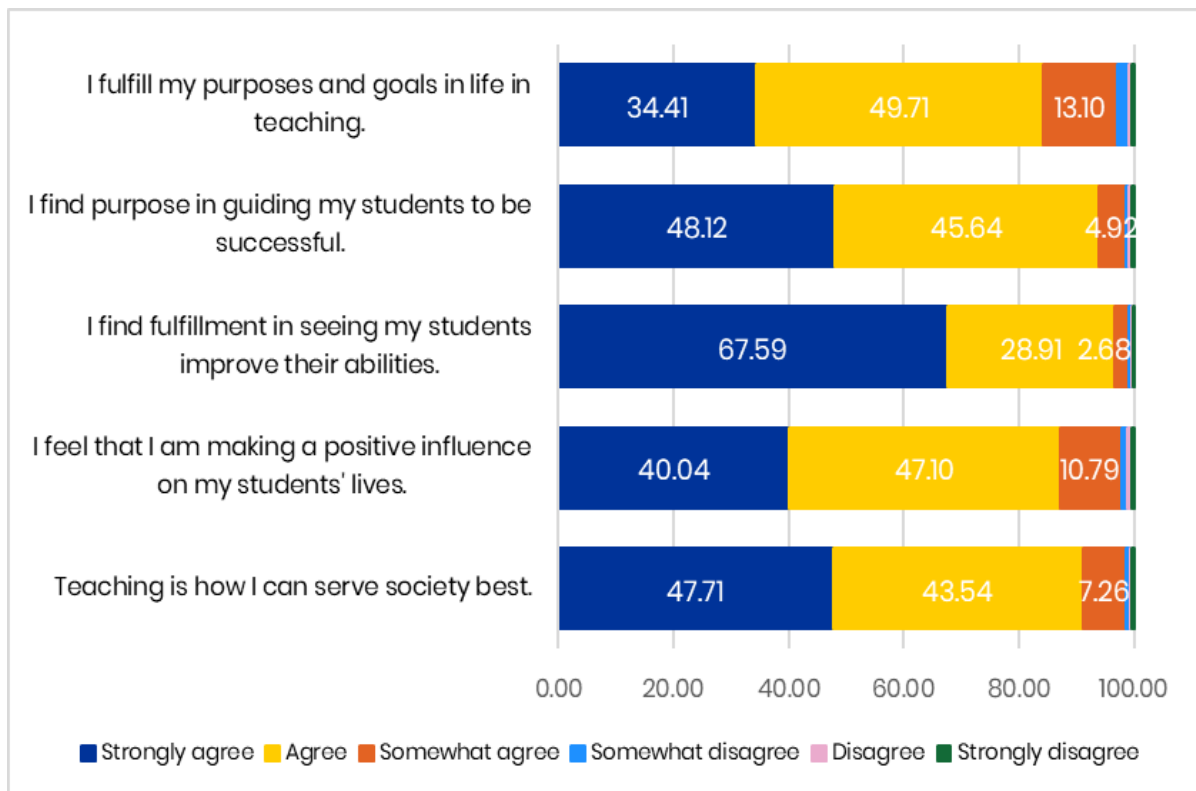
Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment. The first core motivational factor centers on teachers' perceptions of their impact on learners and their contribution to society.

The responses from teachers indicate a strong sense of purpose and fulfillment derived from their profession. Most respondents (47.71%) strongly agreed that teaching is the best way they can serve society, while another 43.54% agreed with the statement, showing that over 91% of teachers perceive their work as a meaningful societal contribution. Similarly, 87.14% of teachers either strongly agreed (40.04%) or agreed (47.10%) that they are making a positive influence on their students' lives, with only 1.07% expressing disagreement. Notably, the highest level of strong agreement (67.59%) was observed in the statement "I find fulfillment in seeing my students improve their abilities," reflecting a deeply intrinsic satisfaction in witnessing student growth. A comparable trend was evident in the statement "I find purpose in guiding my students to be successful," with 48.12% strongly agreeing and 45.64% agreeing. Finally, 84.12% of respondents

acknowledged that they fulfill their personal goals and life purposes through teaching, demonstrating the profession's alignment with their broader aspirations. Overall, these results underscore the profound emotional and existential rewards that Thai teachers associate with their vocation, as reflected in a mean score of 5.35 (rated 'strongly agree').

Figure 3

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment



These findings align with Jitpraneechai's (2019) study, which indicated that a large portion of Thai EFL tertiary teachers' motivation was intrinsic, such as helping their learners improve. This factor also emerged in Syamananda's (2017) research with Thai university EFL teachers, who likewise recognize the importance of sharing their knowledge for the benefit of their students. These intrinsic reasons often encourage educators to continue despite the hardships they face (Davis & Wilson, 2000, as cited in Jitpraneechai, 2019).

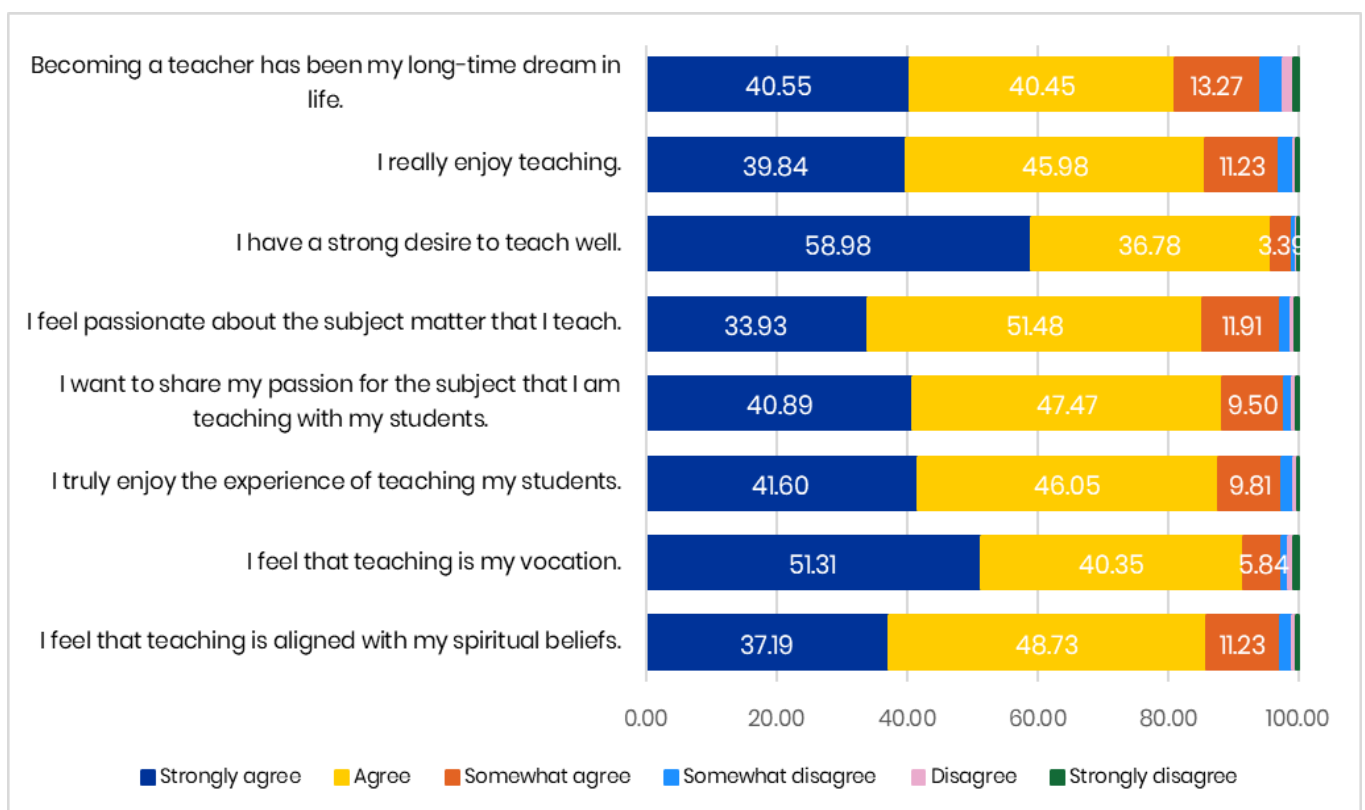
Teaching as Interest and Passion. The factor 'teaching as interest and passion' concerns teachers' aspirations from childhood, the love for the craft, love of subject matter, care for children, and alignment with one's belief system.

Teacher-respondents showed a strong alignment between their personal interests, passions, and their chosen profession. When asked about the connection of their profession with their spiritual belief, 37.19% strongly agreed and 48.73% agreed, indicating that 85.92% of teachers view their work as spiritually significant. The belief that teaching is their vocation was affirmed by 51.31% who strongly agreed and 40.35% who agreed, pointing to a deep personal identification with the profession. Enjoyment in the teaching experience was also high, with 41.60% strongly agreeing and 46.05% agreeing that they truly enjoy teaching their students. Furthermore, 88.36% of teachers expressed a desire to share their passion for their subject matter, suggesting that passion is not only internal but also outwardly directed toward students. More than half (51.48%) agreed and 33.93% strongly agreed that they feel passionate about their subject area. An overwhelming 95.76% of respondents reported having a strong desire to teach well, with nearly 59% strongly agreeing with this statement. When asked whether they really enjoy teaching, 39.84% strongly agreed and 45.98% agreed, again affirming the profession's emotional rewards. Finally, while slightly lower, 81.00% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that becoming a teacher had been their long-time

dream, illustrating that for many, teaching is not only a career path but a fulfillment of a lifelong aspiration. Overall, the mean score for this factor is 5.27 (rated ‘strongly agree’) indicating that Thai teacher-respondents feel their profession is aligned with their interest and passion.

Figure 4

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Perception of Teaching as Interest and Passion



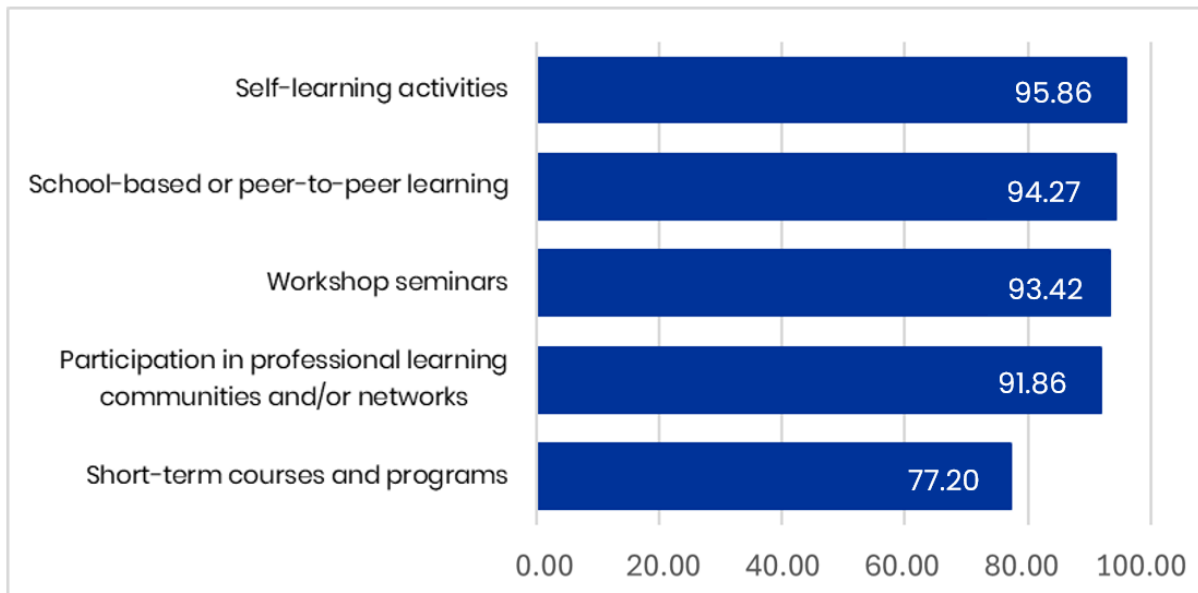
Prabjandee’s (2020) study, which examined Thai English teachers’ reasons for entering the profession, also revealed that passion plays a big part in their motivation. Out of the five main reasons, research participants highlighted their love for the English language, seeing teaching as their dream profession, and enjoying the act of teaching as factors for them to become teachers.

Sense of Growth and Development. The core factor ‘sense of growth and fulfillment’ deals with teachers’ desire to be better in their craft. This connotes opportunities for professional development and the ability to meet challenges as part of their growth.

Figure 5 reveals a strong culture of continuous learning and professional growth among teacher-respondents in Thailand. A remarkable 95.86% reported participating in self-learning activities, reflecting a high level of personal initiative and commitment to lifelong learning. Similarly, 94.27% engaged in school-based or peer-to-peer learning, suggesting that collaborative and context-based learning strategies are widely embraced within school communities. Participation in workshop seminars was also substantial, with 93.42% of teachers attending these structured development sessions, indicating a robust uptake of formal training opportunities. Furthermore, 91.86% indicated active participation in professional learning communities and networks, underscoring a strong commitment to cultivating and sustaining collaborative relationships as part of their ongoing pursuit of professional growth and mastery. Engagement in short-term courses and programs was slightly lower but still high at 77.20%, showing that while less common than other forms of development, many teachers still invest in time-bound learning initiatives. Overall, these findings illustrate that Thai educators are actively involved in diverse professional development formats, enhancing their skills and knowledge across both formal and informal settings.

Figure 5

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents Engaging in Professional Development

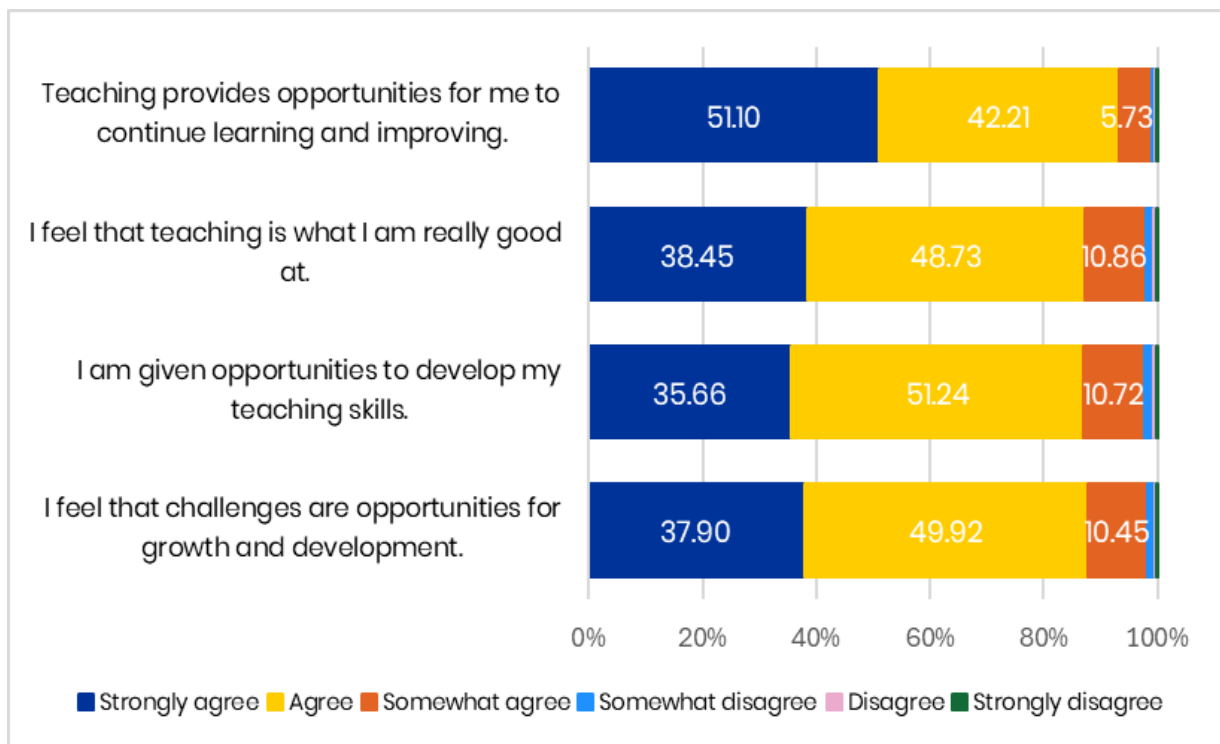


Moreover, teacher-respondents expressed a highly positive outlook on professional growth and skill development. A combined 87.82% either strongly agreed (37.90%) or agreed (49.92%) that challenges in teaching serve as opportunities for growth and development, with less than 2% expressing disagreement. Similarly, 86.90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are provided with opportunities to enhance their teaching skills, suggesting a general perception of institutional support for professional growth. In addition, 87.18% expressed confidence in their teaching competence, with 38.45% strongly agreeing and 48.73% agreeing, a finding that points to a robust sense of professional self-efficacy among the participants. Additionally, the belief that teaching offers continued opportunities for learning was affirmed by most teachers (93.31%), with more than half (51.10%) strongly agreeing. These results demonstrate that Thai educators not only value professional development but also view teaching as a field that continually offers opportunities for personal and professional growth. This perspective likely contributes to their sustained

motivation and long-term engagement in the profession. Overall, the mean score for the factor ‘sense of growth and development’ is 5.27 (rated ‘strongly agree’), suggesting its relevance for Thai teacher-respondents’ motivation.

Figure 6

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Sense of Growth and Development



Contributing Factors of Teacher Motivation. The succeeding portions report Thai teacher-respondents’ agreement levels with the contributing factors of motivation in staying in the profession. Factors examined include ‘sense of being respected and valued’, ‘teacher well-being’, ‘school environment’, ‘salary, incentives and benefits’, and ‘government laws and policies’.

Sense of Being Respected and Valued. Teachers are motivated by being regarded as knowledgeable members of society and take pride in their profession's value. Most educators also place importance on the appreciation they receive from their families, students, and parents, and awards and recognition.

Figure 7 shows that a considerable number of teacher-respondents feel respected and valued both within their professional environments and in the wider community. When asked whether teachers receive recognition from national agencies or private organizations through awards and other acknowledgments, many respondents (77.84%) either strongly agreed (26.16%) or agreed (51.68%). However, 17.14% only somewhat agreed, and a small percentage (5.02%) expressed some level of disagreement, indicating that while recognition exists, there may be inconsistencies in how it is experienced across contexts. Recognition within the school setting appears to be more robust. 88.36% of teachers reported that they are acknowledged by their colleagues, with 35.15% strongly agreeing and 53.21% agreeing. A slightly lower but still substantial 77.88% felt recognized by school administrators, although a larger portion (15.54%) indicated only somewhat agreement, and a combined 6.58% disagreed to varying degrees, suggesting some variability in leadership support or visibility of teacher contributions.

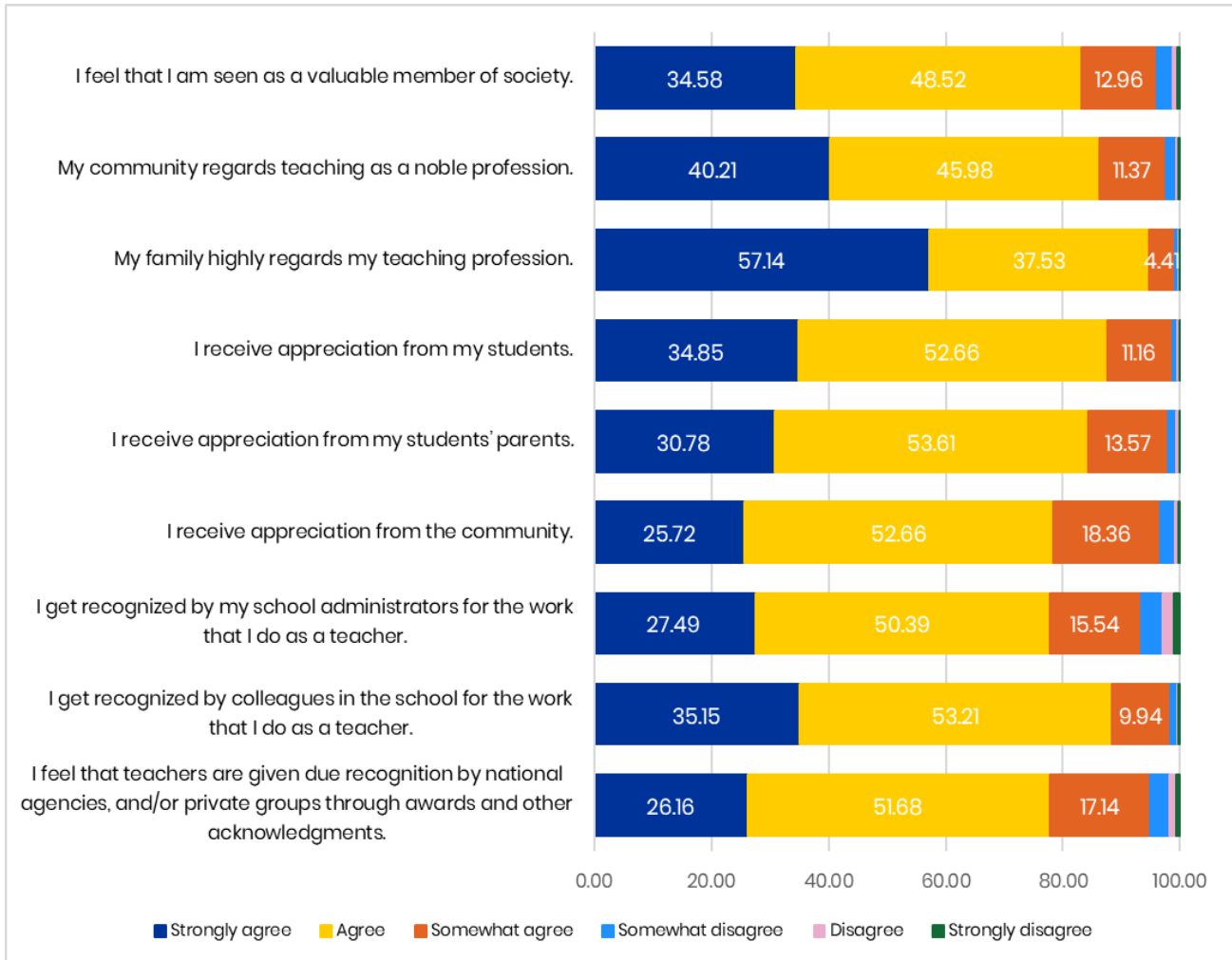
The appreciation of one's community also emerged as a positive factor. A combined 78.38% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they receive appreciation from their local community, with only 3.27% reporting disagreement. Similarly, 84.39% of teachers felt appreciated by their students' parents, with 30.78% strongly agreeing and 53.61% agreeing. Appreciation from students themselves was affirmed by 87.51% of teachers, again highlighting the emotional rewards of teaching and the mutual respect built within classrooms. On the personal side, 94.67% of teachers reported that their family holds their profession in high regard, with 57.14% strongly agreeing. This suggests strong familial support, which can play

a crucial role in sustaining motivation and morale. Furthermore, 86.19% believed that their community continues to view teaching as a noble profession, reinforcing the societal esteem attached to the role. Finally, when asked if they feel seen as a valuable member of society, 83.10% responded positively, though 12.96% expressed only moderate agreement, and a small group (3.94%) disagreed to some extent. These findings point to an overall climate of respect for teachers in Thailand, while also highlighting areas where recognition and appreciation may be further strengthened, particularly at the institutional and national levels.

Overall, the mean score for the factor is 5.15 (rated 'agree'), showing its relevance for Thai teacher-respondents.

Figure 7

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Sense of Being Respected and Valued



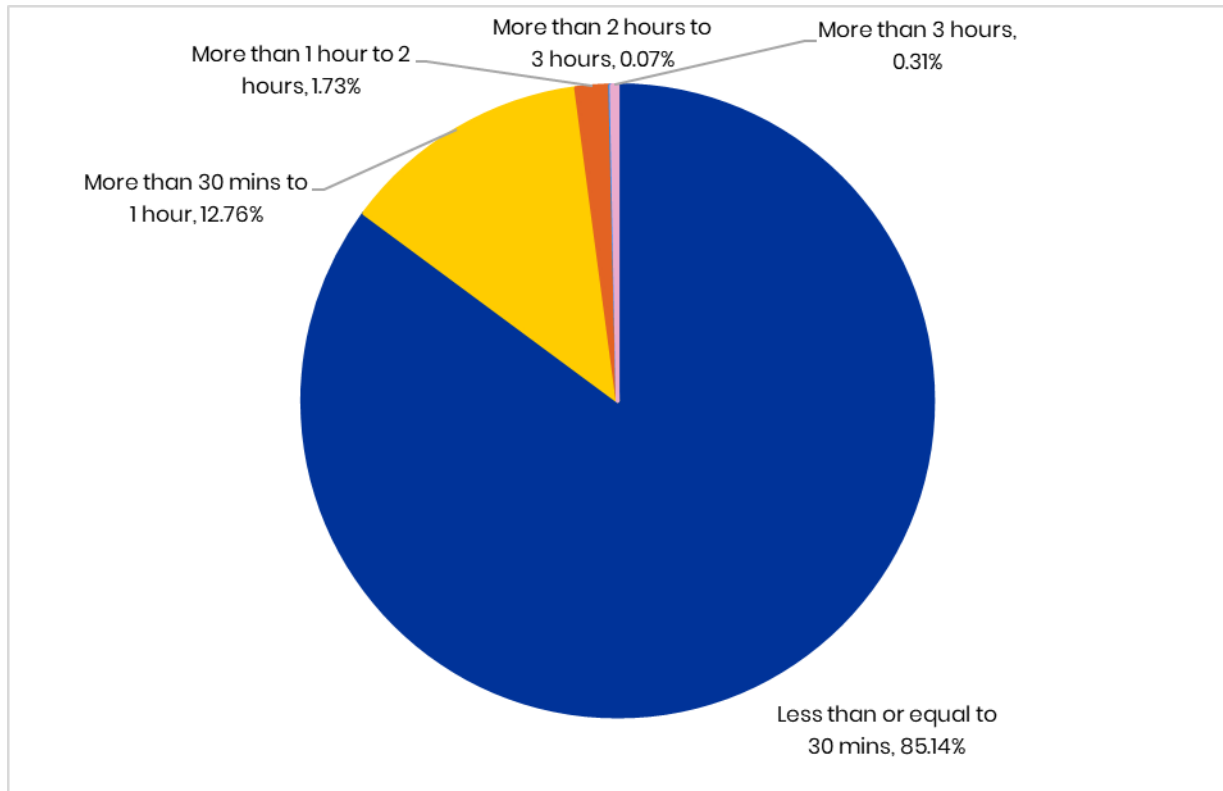
Teacher Well-being. Several aspects of well-being were identified as important for sustaining teacher motivation. These include having a balance between one’s personal and professional activities, having a flexible schedule, and the proximity of one’s home to the school.

Considering teachers' work-life balance, they spend an average of 20.9 hours per week teaching. Majority of them (87.55%) are also engaged in nonteaching-related tasks, spending an average of 9.7 hours per week on tasks such as being assigned as classroom advisers, subject coordinators, club moderators, sports coaches, co-curricular and extracurricular committee members, project or program coordinators, community involvement services, and other school administrative committees (planning, facility management, etc.). The number of hours reported by survey respondents exceeds the typical expectations for primary and secondary teachers: at least 12 hours per week for teaching and at least 8 hours per week for non-teaching-related tasks (Amatavivat, 2023). Workload is highly dependent on the context of educational institutions. For example, teachers in small schools have more duties to fulfil, whereas large schools in urban areas often have sufficient staff to support non-teaching tasks, allowing teachers to focus on teaching (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2023).

In addition, Figure 8 shows that the majority of teacher respondents experience relatively short travel times to their respective schools. A significant 85.14% of respondents reported that their one-way travel time is 30 minutes or less, indicating a high level of geographic accessibility to their workplace. This could contribute positively to teachers' daily routines and work-life balance. Another 12.76% of the respondents travel between 30 minutes to one hour, while a small portion (1.73%) reported commuting for more than one hour but less than two hours. Very few teachers face extended commutes, with just 0.07% traveling more than two but less than three hours, and 0.31% traveling for more than three hours. These findings suggest that for most Thai teachers, proximity to their workplace may not be a significant barrier, though a small minority may still face challenges related to long-distance travel.

Figure 8

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents Based on their One-way Travel Time to School



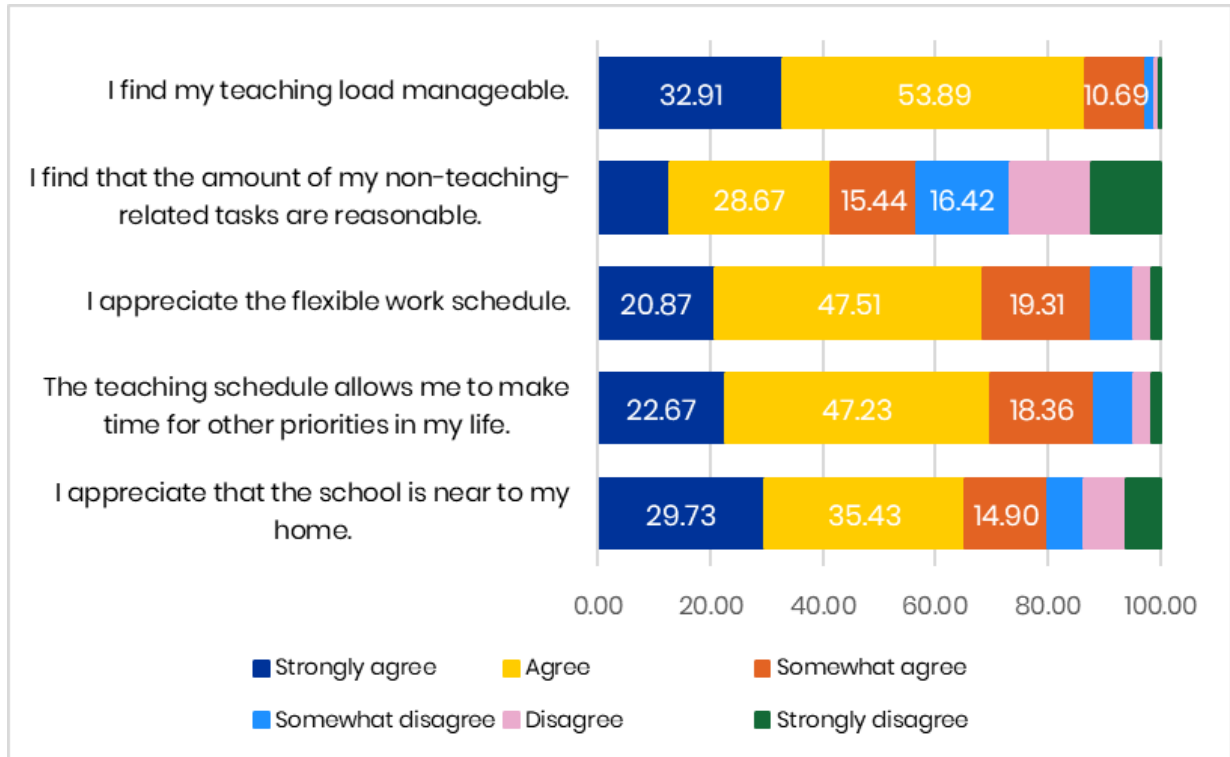
The data on teachers' sense of well-being presents a mixed but generally positive outlook. When asked if they appreciate the school's proximity to their homes, 65.16% either strongly agreed (29.73%) or agreed (35.43%), while 14.90% somewhat agreed. However, nearly 20% expressed some level of disagreement, indicating that location remains a concern for a portion of the teaching workforce. Regarding work-life balance, the majority (69.90%) agreed or strongly agreed that their teaching schedule allows them to attend to other life priorities. Similarly, 68.38% of respondents reported appreciation for their flexible work schedules. These responses suggest that many teachers benefit from time structures that support their personal and professional responsibilities, though around 12%

disagreed to varying degrees, suggesting room for improvement in scheduling or workload distribution.

The perception of non-teaching responsibilities was notably more divided. Only 41.36% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the volume of non-teaching tasks was reasonable. In contrast, 43.20% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, with an additional 15.44% somewhat agreeing. These figures reflect concerns among a significant segment of teachers regarding administrative burdens or responsibilities outside their core teaching duties. On a more positive note, the teaching workload itself was generally seen as manageable. A strong majority (86.80%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their teaching load was reasonable, with only 2.51% expressing disagreement. This suggests that while non-teaching responsibilities may be a stressor, most teachers feel that their primary instructional duties are within a manageable range. Overall, the sense of well-being among Thai teachers appears generally favorable, particularly in terms of workload and schedule flexibility, though concerns remain about administrative burdens and, for a subset, the proximity of their schools to their homes, as reflected also in the overall mean score of 4.58 (rated 'agree').

Figure 9

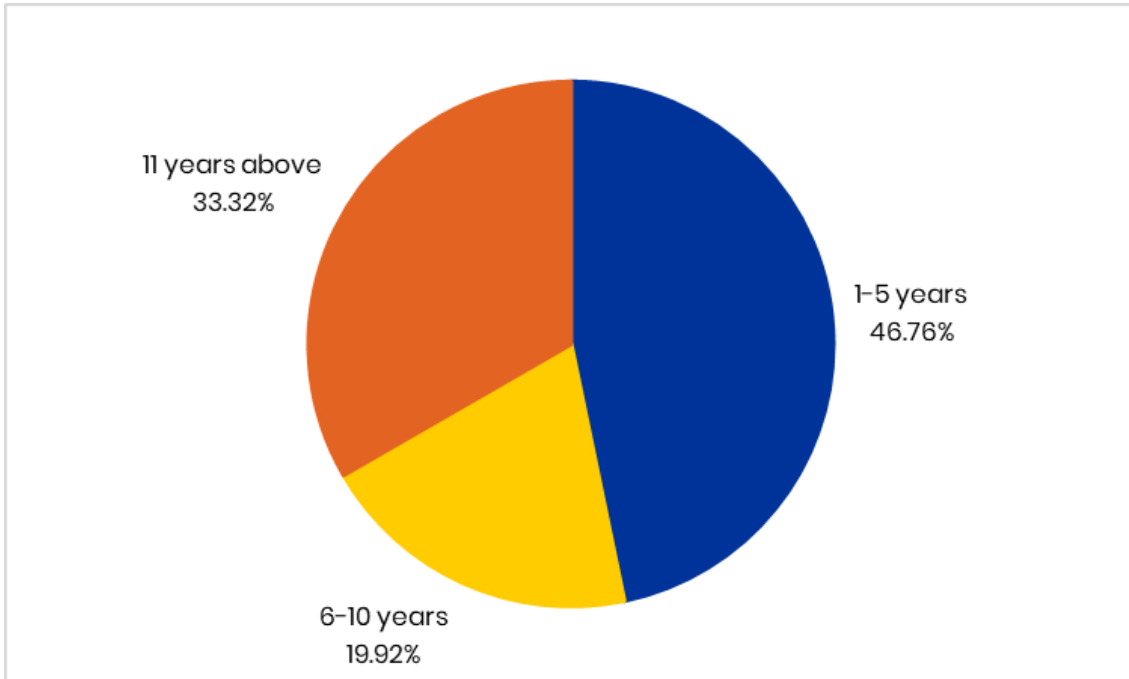
Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Sense of Well-being



School Environment. On average, teacher-respondents in Thailand have been teaching in their current school for about 8.9 years. Figure 10 shows that a large portion of them (46.76%) have been working at their educational institutions for 1 to 5 years, while 33.32% of the teacher-respondents have been teaching for 11 years and above.

Figure 10

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to their Length of Teaching in Current School



Additionally, most respondents believe that their teaching materials (63.49%) and school facilities (57.69%) are adequate (see Figures 11 and 12).

Figure 11

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Perception of Adequacy of Teaching Materials in School

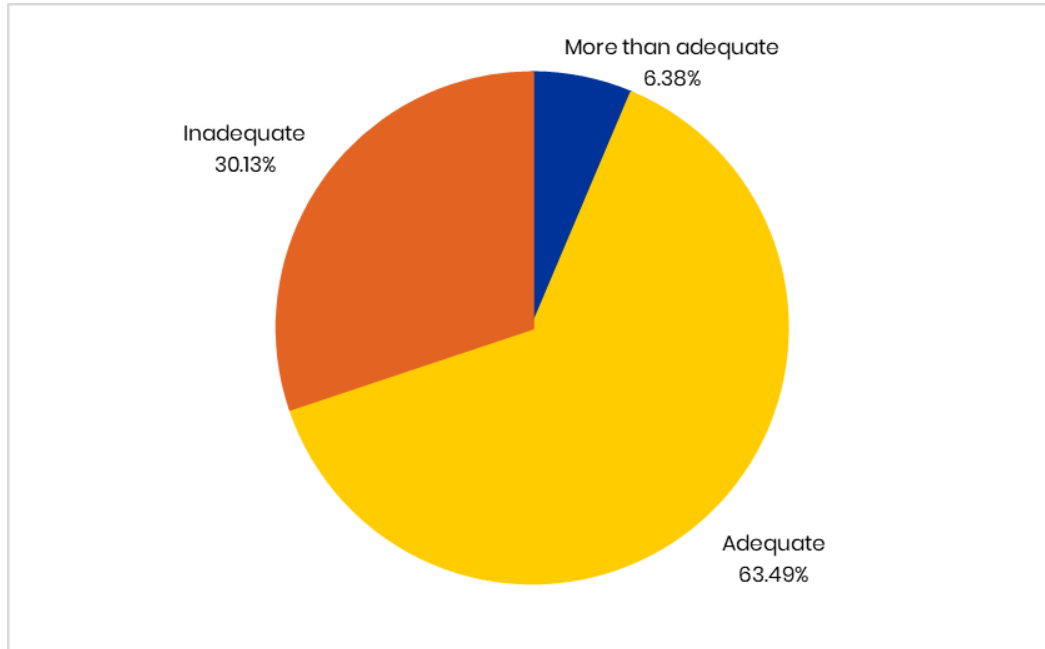


Figure 12

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Perception of Adequacy of School Facilities

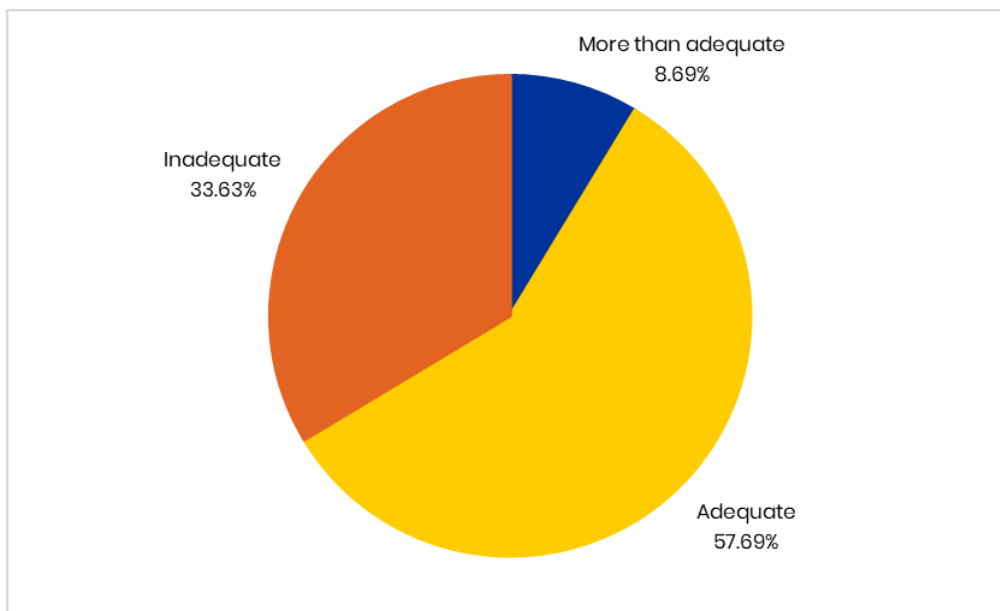
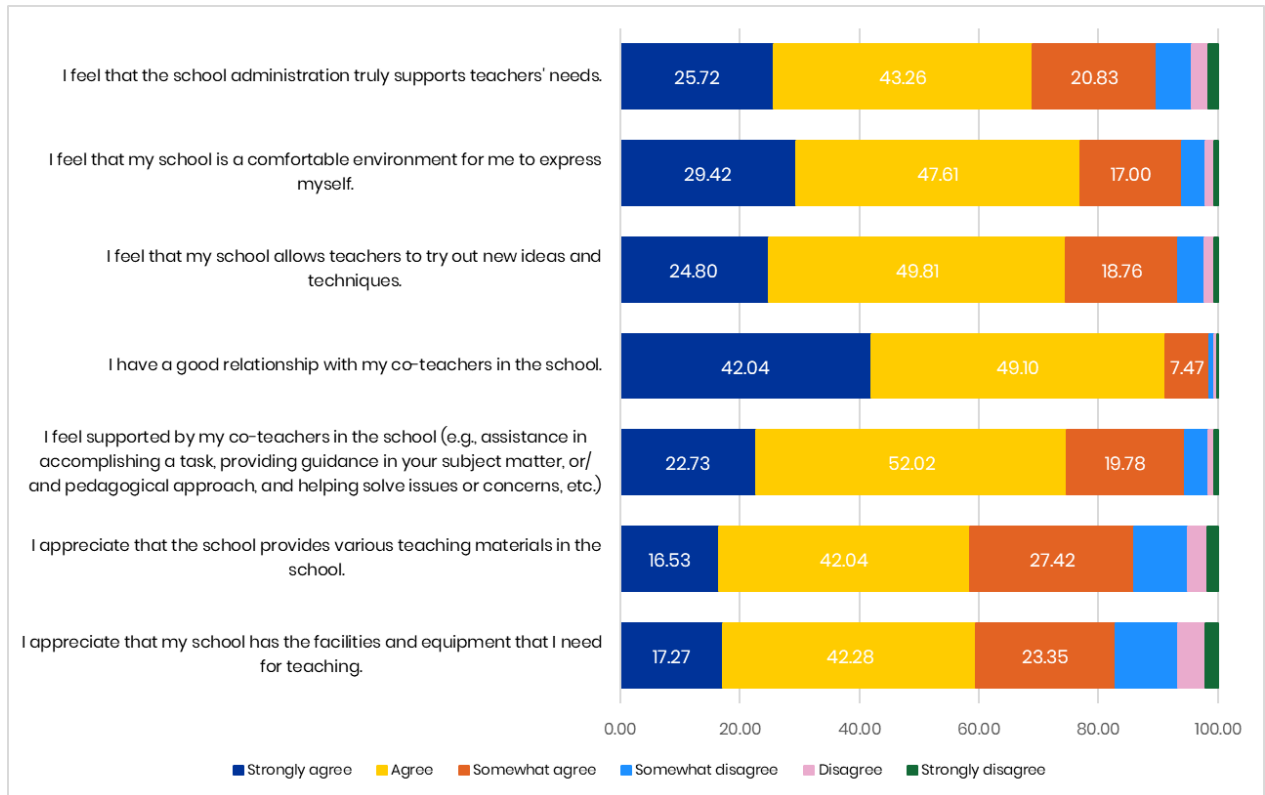


Figure 13

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Perception of School Environment



The perception of the school environment among teacher-respondents appears generally positive, though responses vary depending on specific aspects of the school context. When asked if their schools have the necessary facilities and equipment for teaching, 59.55% of teachers either strongly agreed (17.27%) or agreed (42.28%), while 23.35% only somewhat agreed. However, about 17% of respondents expressed varying levels of disagreement, indicating that, while a majority are satisfied, a notable portion still face limitations in infrastructure and resources. Similarly, 58.57% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their schools provide sufficient teaching materials, while 27.42% somewhat agreed. A smaller group (13.02%) disagreed in varying degrees, suggesting disparities in

material provisions across schools. This result highlights the need to ensure more equitable access to instructional resources.

Collegial support within schools is one of the most strongly endorsed aspects of the school environment. An overwhelming 74.75% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they feel supported by their co-teachers, and only a minimal percentage (5.47%) expressed disagreement. Furthermore, interpersonal relationships among colleagues were rated very positively, with 91.14% of respondents affirming that they have good relationships with their co-teachers. Only a marginal 1.39% disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating a highly collaborative and harmonious work culture. In terms of innovation and openness, 74.61% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their schools allow them to experiment with new ideas and teaching methods. Another 18.76% somewhat agreed, while just 6.61% expressed disagreement. This suggests that most teachers feel empowered to implement creative or progressive approaches in their teaching practices. Teachers' comfort in self-expression was also notably positive, with 77.03% strongly agreeing or agreeing that they feel at ease expressing themselves in their school environments. Meanwhile, 17% somewhat agreed, and only 5.97% registered disagreement. This affirms that many school settings are perceived as psychologically safe and inclusive. Finally, when asked whether the school administration truly supports teachers' needs, 68.98% responded affirmatively (25.72% strongly agree; 43.26% agree), and 20.83% somewhat agreed. However, 10.18% expressed varying levels of disagreement, indicating that while administrative support is generally acknowledged, there is room for improvement in responsiveness and teacher-centered policies. Overall, the mean score for the factor 'school environment' is 4.85 (rated 'agree').

School environment was deemed to be important in several studies on teacher motivation in Thailand. For instance, Syamananda (2017) found out that, along with other factors, a sense of belonging, good relationships with colleagues, students, and management were motivators. Furthermore, Jitpraneechai (2019) discovered that good working relationships are important for EFL teachers in tertiary education. In the same study, issues in institutional support were identified as demotivators, including “red tape, unclear rules and regulations, unfairness, and ineffective management” (p.76). These studies highlight the important role of school administrators, who establish a conducive work environment for educators and support their instructional success (Kamini, 2011, as cited in Pasathang et al., 2016).

Salary, Incentives, and Benefits. Salary, incentives and benefits are one of the contributing factors that influence teachers’ decision to stay in the profession. This factor centers on viewing teaching as a source of income, achieving financial security, and being well-compensated through benefits and incentives.

On average, teacher-respondents receive a monthly net income of USD 714. This amount is within the salary scales for licensed public teachers in Thailand (Amatavivat, 2023). Moreover, more than half (65.69%) are their family’s main financial providers, as shown in Figure 14. However, Figure 15 shows that 49.54% of the respondents do not have any dependents, while 32.10% have 1-2 dependents, and 17.44% have 3-5 dependents.

Figure 14

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents as the Main Financial Provider

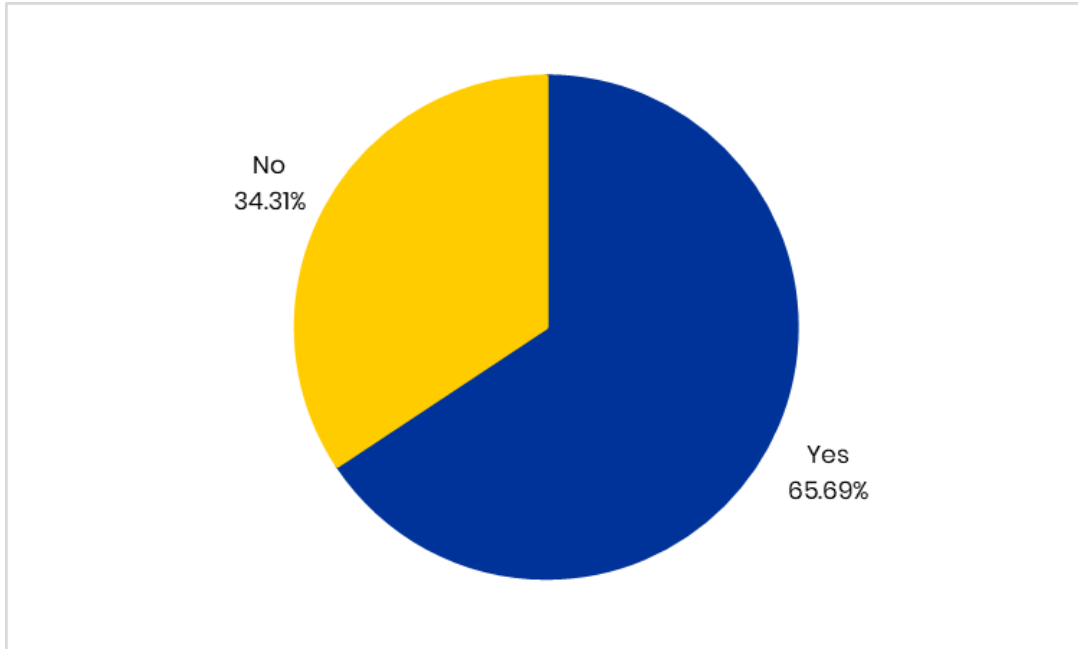


Figure 15

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to the Number of Their Dependents

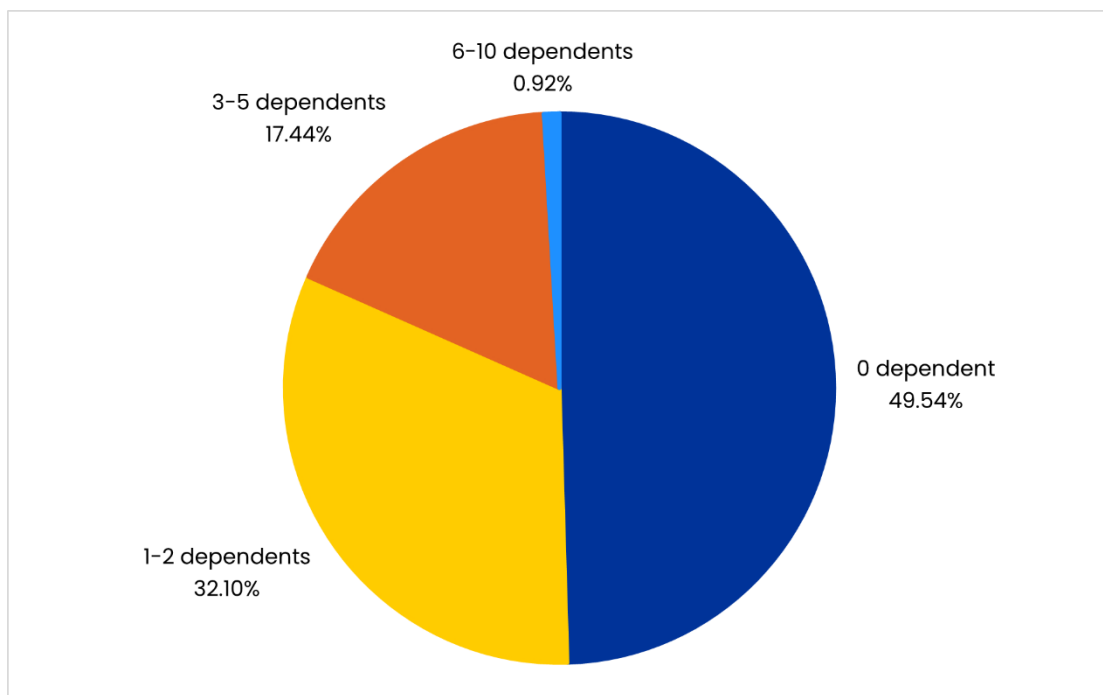
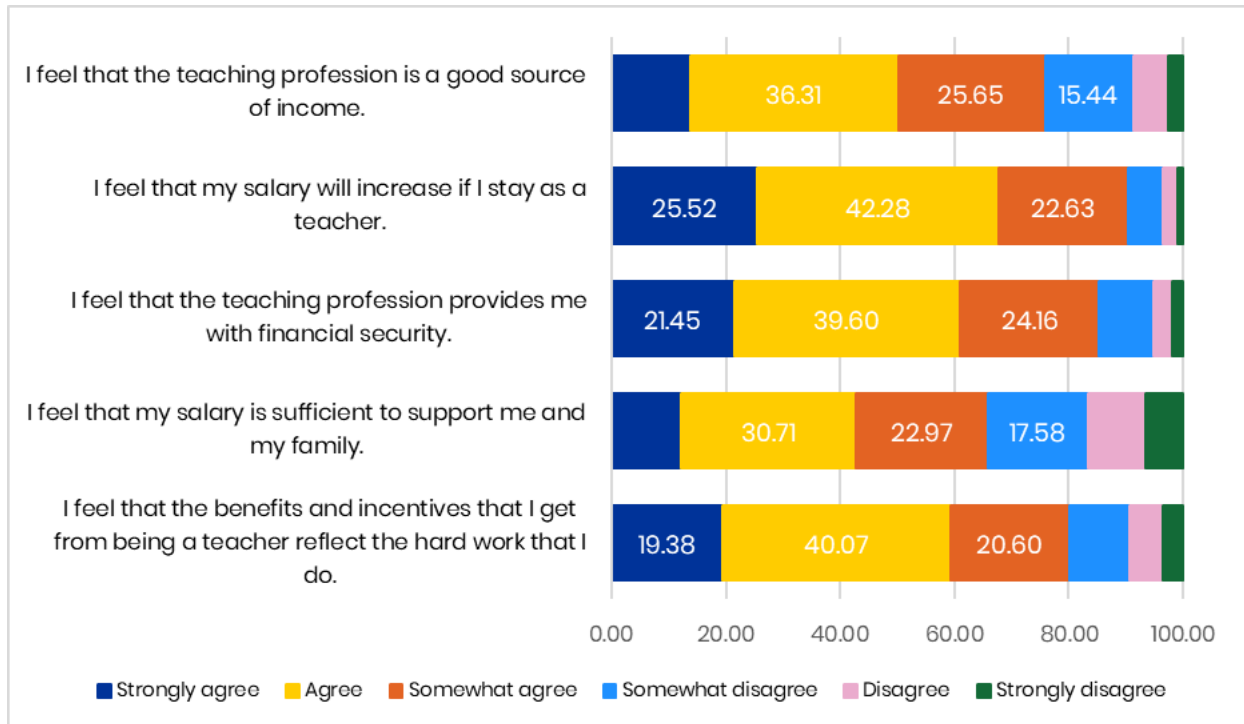


Figure 16

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Perception of Salary, Incentives, and Benefits



Teachers-respondents expressed mixed perceptions regarding the financial aspects of their profession, revealing both areas of satisfaction and concern. When asked whether the benefits and incentives they receive reflect the hard work they do, a majority (60.45%) responded positively, 19.38% strongly agreed, and 40.07% agreed. However, a significant portion of respondents (20.60%) only somewhat agreed, and nearly 20% expressed disagreement to varying degrees, suggesting that while many feel fairly compensated through benefits and incentives, others believe these do not fully match their efforts. Regarding salary sufficiency, only 42.86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their income is enough to support themselves and their families. Meanwhile, 22.97% somewhat agreed, and a notable 34.18% expressed disagreement, 17.58% somewhat disagreed, 9.98% disagreed, and 6.62% strongly disagreed. This indicates that financial strain is a

concern for a considerable number of teachers, potentially impacting their long-term satisfaction and stability in the profession.

When asked if the teaching profession provides financial security, 61.05% responded affirmatively, with 21.45% strongly agreeing and 39.60% agreeing. A further 24.16% somewhat agreed, while only a combined 14.79% expressed disagreement. These responses suggest that, while the base salary may be perceived as insufficient by some, the profession still offers a degree of financial stability in the long-term, possibly due to regular employment, benefits, or pension systems. Optimism about future salary growth was relatively high, with 25.52% of respondents strongly agreeing and 42.28% agreeing that their salary would increase if they remained in the profession. A further 22.63% somewhat agreed, while only 9.56% showed some level of disagreement. These findings indicate that most teachers see teaching as a career with incremental financial progress over time, which may positively influence retention. However, when assessing whether teaching is a good source of income, the responses were more cautious. Only 50.15% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, and 25.65% somewhat agreed. Meanwhile, over 24% of respondents disagreed to some extent, suggesting that despite the perceived stability and growth potential, the profession is not widely viewed as financially competitive, especially when compared with other career options requiring similar qualifications. Overall, the factor 'salary, incentives and benefits' received a mean score of 4.42 (rated 'agree').

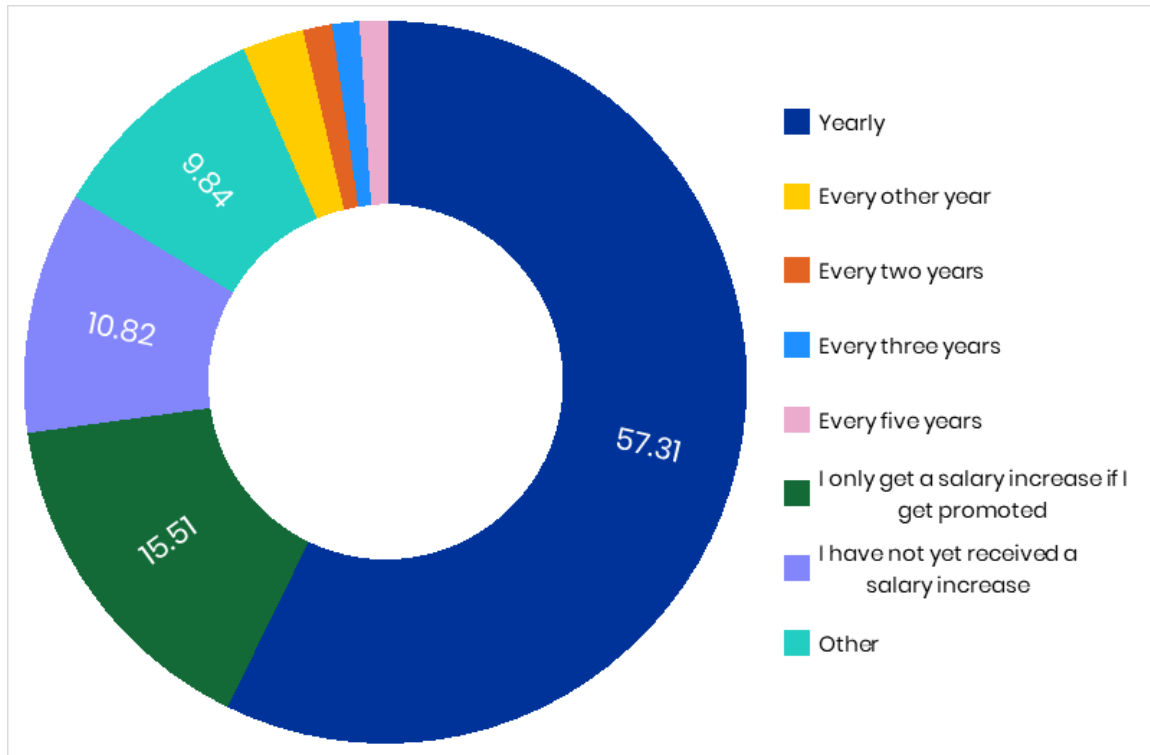
Government Laws and Policies. Six areas were examined in terms of the factor 'government laws and policies': benefits and incentives, salary, working conditions, career progression, professional development and teacher deployment.

The data reveals that over half of the teacher-respondents (57.31%) receive a salary increase on a yearly basis, indicating that annual salary adjustments are a common practice within the teaching profession in Thailand. However, a notable 15.51% reported that they only receive salary increases upon promotion, which may suggest limited opportunities for incremental raises based solely on tenure or performance. Additionally, 10.82% stated they have not yet received any salary increase, pointing to potential issues in compensation progression for early-career or contract-based teachers. Smaller percentages reported receiving salary increases at more extended intervals: 2.92% said every other year, 1.32% every two years, 1.19% every three years, and 1.09% every five years. Meanwhile, 9.84% chose "Other," indicating a range of irregular or context-dependent salary adjustment schedules. These variations highlight that while a majority of teachers benefit from annual salary adjustments, a significant segment experiences either delayed or conditional salary growth, which may affect their financial motivation and satisfaction.

The survey results are somewhat aligned with the current policies in Thailand for public school teachers. For instance, educators may receive salary increases based on the results of school-level appraisal processes. If they achieve a specified evaluation score, they may receive an increase in salary increments (Punyasavatsut, 2019).

Figure 17

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to the Frequency of Teacher Salary Increase



In contrast, when it comes to promotion frequency, the responses show greater irregularity. Only 20.26% of teachers reported being promoted every two years, and 6.12% indicated promotions occur every three years. Around 14.67% reported receiving a promotion every five years, reflecting a longer-term pathway for career advancement. The largest proportion of respondents (58.95%) selected "Other", suggesting that for many teachers, promotion schedules may be highly variable or influenced by non-standard criteria such as performance evaluations, availability of vacancies, school policies, or changes in administrative structure. This irregularity in promotion timelines may contribute to uncertainty regarding career progression and could impact long-term motivation if not supported by clear criteria or development pathways.

The survey responses are also somewhat consistent with promotion policies. Getting a higher professional level requires public school teachers in Thailand to reach certain requirements related to years of experience, highest educational attainment and work evaluation. Each level would require educators to continue serving for a different number of years. For instance, those with bachelor's degrees need to serve at least six years to be considered for level 2, while those with master's degrees only need four years, and those with doctorate degrees need two years of service. Once a teacher reaches level 2, they must complete another year to apply for level 3. Afterward, three years are needed to apply for level 4 and two additional years after, for level 4 (Punyasavatsut, 2019).

Figure 18

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Frequency of Promotion

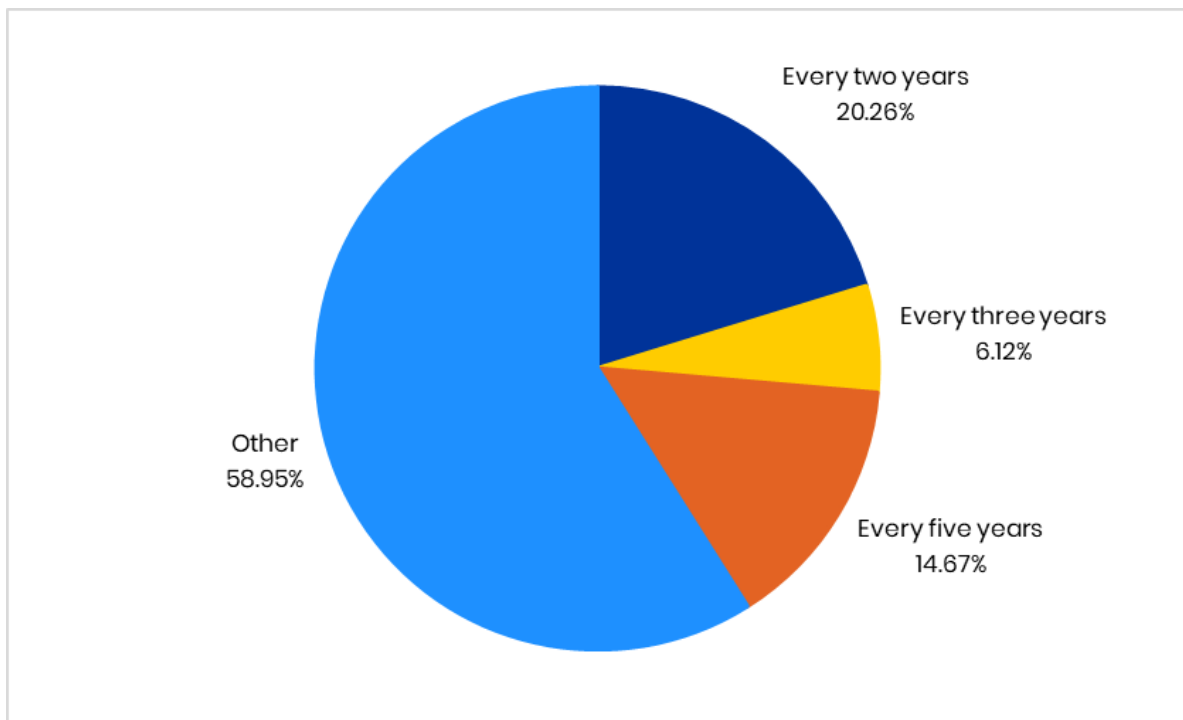
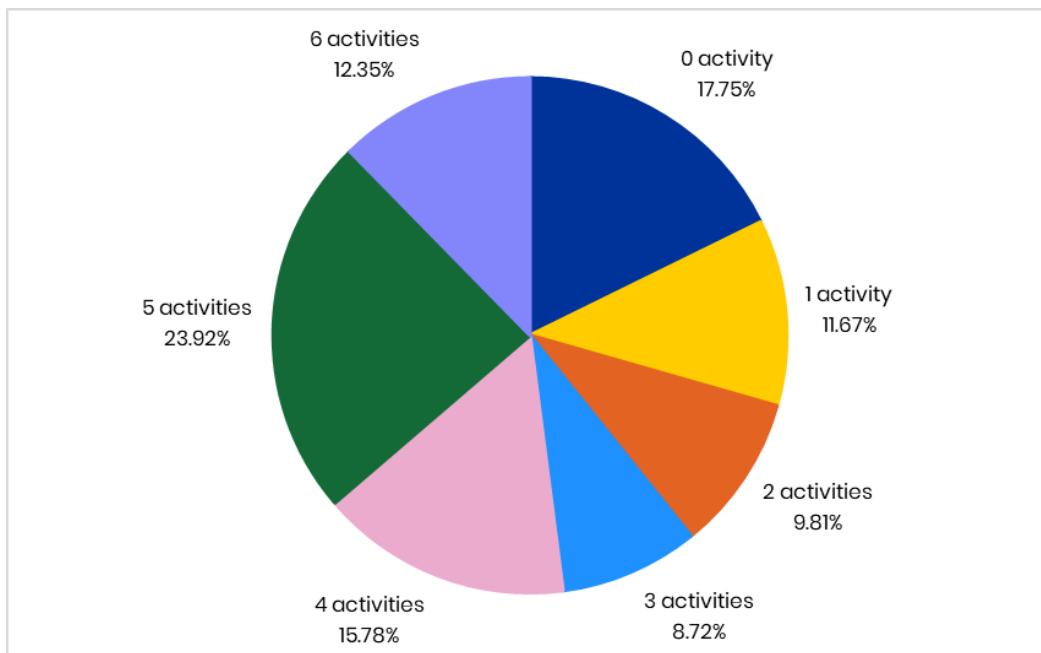


Figure 19 indicates that many teacher-respondents invest their personal finances to support their professional development, particularly as the number of activities they participate in increases. While 17.75% of teacher respondents reported that they did not spend any personal money on professional development activities, the majority did so to some extent. 11.67% spent personal funds on one activity, 9.81% on two activities, and 8.72% on three activities. Notably, personal financial involvement appears to peak as engagement in more activities increases. 15.78% reported using their own money for four activities, while the highest percentage (23.92%) did so for five activities, suggesting a strong willingness among teachers to invest in multiple forms of development. Additionally, 12.35% used personal funds for six professional development activities, indicating that a substantial proportion of teachers are self-funding extensive and continuous upskilling efforts. This pattern suggests that while institutional support may be available to some extent, many teachers still shoulder the financial burden of professional growth independently.

Figure 19

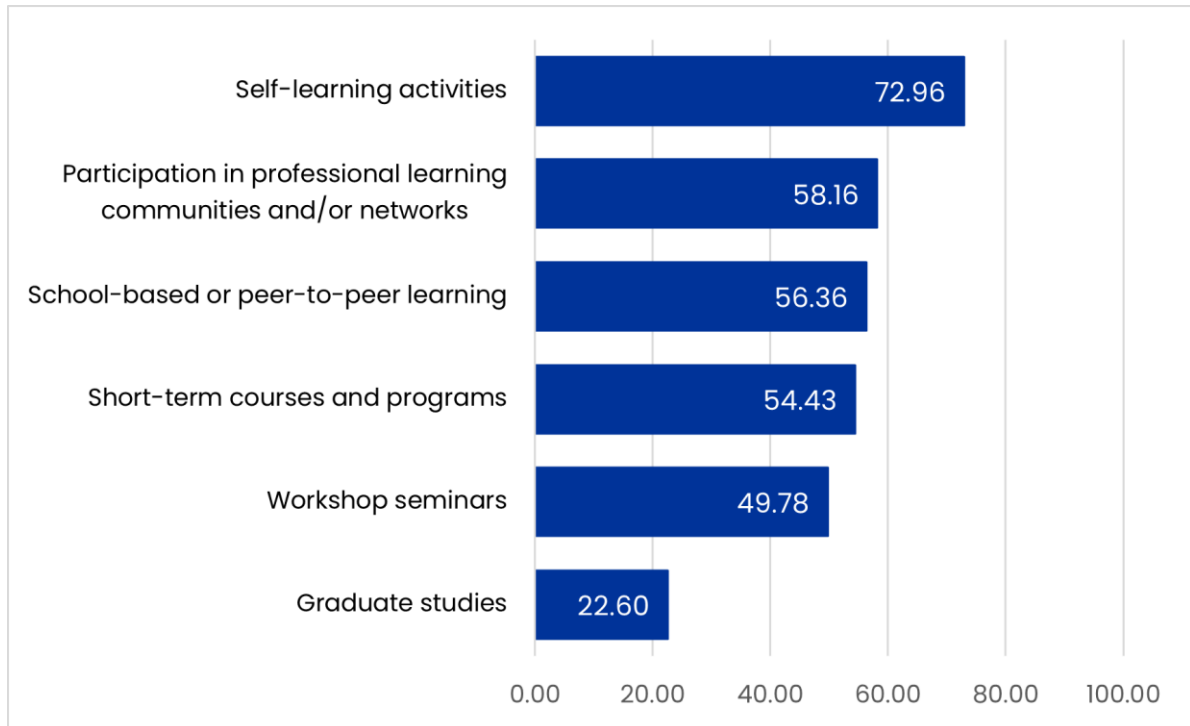
Percentage of Teachers Who Used Personal Money for Professional Development Activities



Further supporting this, Figure 20 shows that the highest percentage of personal spending was observed in self-learning activities, with 72.96% of teachers using their own money to access resources or opportunities for independent learning. This likely reflects the flexible and often individually initiated nature of self-learning. Significant personal expenditure was also reported for participation in professional learning communities and/or networks (58.16%) and school-based or peer-to-peer learning (56.36%), both of which may require teachers to cover incidental costs such as transportation, materials, or technology. Similarly, 54.43% reported using their own money for short-term courses and programs, and 49.78% did so for workshop seminars, activities that may not always be fully subsidized by schools or government agencies. Even for graduate studies, which are often associated with higher costs and longer-term investment, 22.60% of teachers reported using personal finances. This suggests a considerable commitment to advanced formal education, even when external funding or scholarships may be limited or unavailable. Overall, the findings underscore the financial dedication of Thai teachers toward their professional growth, often going beyond institutional support. This pattern may reflect both a passion for teaching and a systemic need for more accessible, funded development programs to support educators sustainably.

Figure 20

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents Who Used Personal Money According to Professional Development Activities



The survey results from teacher-respondents provide a nuanced view of their satisfaction with various government laws and policies affecting the education sector. While there is a notable level of general satisfaction, significant areas of concern remain, particularly in matters relating to compensation and working conditions. In terms of teacher deployment, most respondents expressed positive perceptions, with 42.08% indicating satisfaction and 9.64% reporting strong satisfaction. Additionally, 31.05% were somewhat satisfied, while a combined 17.24% expressed some level of dissatisfaction. These figures suggest that while deployment policies are generally acceptable, some teachers may still face challenges related to placement or geographic assignments.

Perceptions of government support for professional development were the most favorable among all categories. A total of 66% of teachers expressed satisfaction, 14.66% strongly satisfied and 51.34% satisfied, with only 10.02% indicating dissatisfaction to any degree. This reflects a relatively strong approval of government initiatives to promote continuous learning and capacity-building for educators. Regarding working conditions, 55.21% of respondents expressed satisfaction (11.44% strongly satisfied; 43.77% satisfied). However, 19.31% expressed dissatisfaction, and 25.48% were only somewhat satisfied. This suggests that while more than half of the teachers acknowledge improvements or adequacy in their working conditions, a sizable proportion still encounters issues such as infrastructure deficits, workload concerns, or insufficient classroom resources.

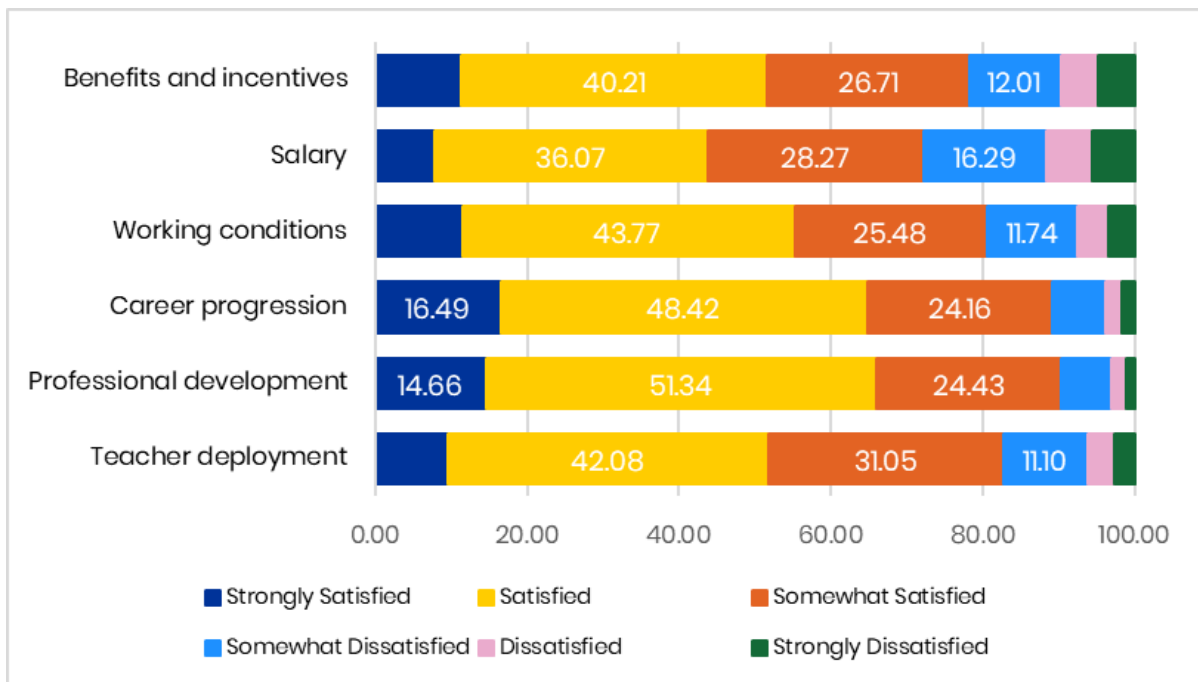
Views on salaries were more critical. Only 43.87% of teachers reported satisfaction (7.80% strongly satisfied and 36.07% satisfied), while 28.27% were somewhat satisfied. Notably, 27.86% expressed dissatisfaction to varying degrees, including 5.67% who were strongly dissatisfied. These figures underscore persistent concerns among educators about compensation levels and the adequacy of salary structures to meet personal and family needs. For instance, respondents reported receiving a monthly salary of USD 714. However, the average household expenditure in Thailand is USD 760 (Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, 2024). This might impact teachers' families as two-thirds of them are their family's main provider (see Figure 14).

Similarly, perceptions of benefits and incentives showed a mixed response. While 51.54% expressed satisfaction, 26.71% were only somewhat satisfied, and 21.75% indicated some level of dissatisfaction. The relatively high percentage of dissatisfaction, particularly the 4.85% who were strongly dissatisfied, suggests a call for more equitable and comprehensive benefits to support teachers' professional and personal well-being.

Overall, the mean score for the factor ‘Government Laws and Policies’ is 4.39 (rated ‘agree’).

Figure 21

Percentage of Teacher-Respondents According to Their Perception of Government Laws and Policies



Summary. Descriptive statistics reveal that Thai teacher-respondents perceive all motivational factors considered in this study as relevant and in a positive light. For instance, the respondents rated statements related to all core factors, namely, ‘sense of purpose and fulfillment’, ‘teaching as interest and passion’ and ‘sense of growth and development’, strongly agree. Statements connected to contributing factors, on the other hand, were all rated ‘agree’, including the factors ‘sense of being respected and valued’, ‘teacher well-being’, ‘school environment’, ‘salary, incentives and benefits’, and ‘government laws and policies’. These findings indicate their importance in sustaining the motivation of teachers in the country.

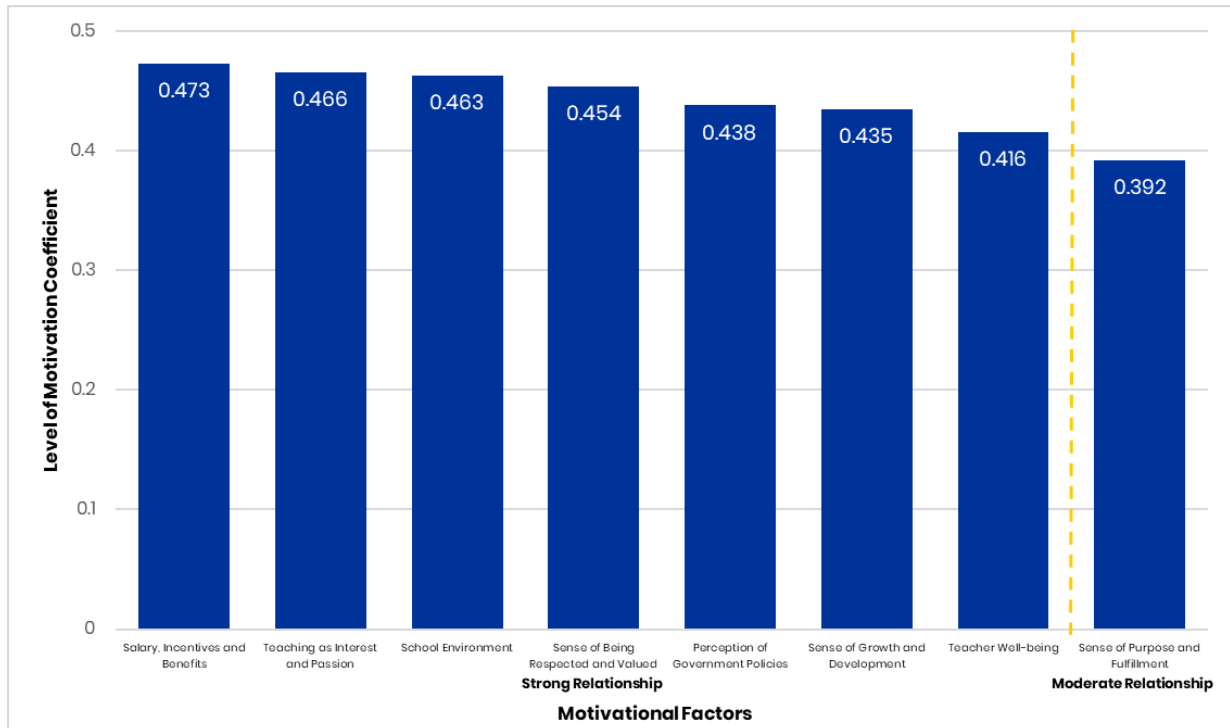
Relationship between Factors of Motivation and the Level of Motivation of Teachers

The inferential analysis using Spearman's rho correlation revealed statistically significant positive relationships between all motivational factors and the overall level of motivation among teacher-respondents in Thailand (see Figure 22 and Table 3 in the Appendix). This suggests that as perceptions of these motivational dimensions improve, the level of teacher motivation tends to increase as well. Among the variables examined, Salary, Incentives, and Benefits emerged as the factor most strongly correlated with teacher motivation ($\rho = 0.473$), indicating a strong relationship. This underscores the importance of financial stability and fair compensation in fostering high levels of motivation among educators. Closely following are Teaching as Interest and Passion ($\rho = 0.466$), School Environment ($\rho = 0.463$), and Sense of Being Respected and Valued ($\rho = 0.454$), all of which also demonstrated strong correlations. These results highlight the critical role of intrinsic motivation, collegial support, and recognition in sustaining teachers' engagement and commitment to the profession.

Other factors that showed strong relationships include Perception of Government Policies ($\rho = 0.438$), Sense of Growth and Development ($\rho = 0.435$), and Teacher Well-being ($\rho = 0.416$). These findings suggest that when teachers perceive government policies as supportive, they feel they are growing professionally, and experience work-life balance, their motivation significantly benefits. Lastly, the Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment was found to have a moderate but significant correlation with motivation ($\rho = 0.392$). While slightly lower than the other factors, this still indicates that teachers who find meaning in their role are more likely to remain motivated.

Figure 22

Relationship between Factors of Motivation and Level of Motivation of Teacher-Respondents



Relationships between Other Indicators and Level of Motivation of Teachers

To determine the relationships among the factors affecting teacher motivation in staying in the profession, Spearman’s rho correlation analysis was conducted, as well as the Mann-Whitney U test and ANOVA to assess whether there are significant differences across the factors. For this portion, attention was given to factors that have potential implications for policy recommendations, and findings with only significant results are reported. Table 2 shows the list of indicators examined.

Table 2
Indicators Covered in Inferential Statistical Analysis

Salary	Working conditions	Professional development	Career progression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of salary increase* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of teaching* • Total grade levels taught • Hours spent teaching • Having nonteaching-related tasks • Hours spent traveling to school • Adequacy of teaching and learning resources* • Adequacy of facilities in school* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of personal money for professional development • Highest education attainment* • Currently taking graduate studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of promotion* • Frequency of promotion*

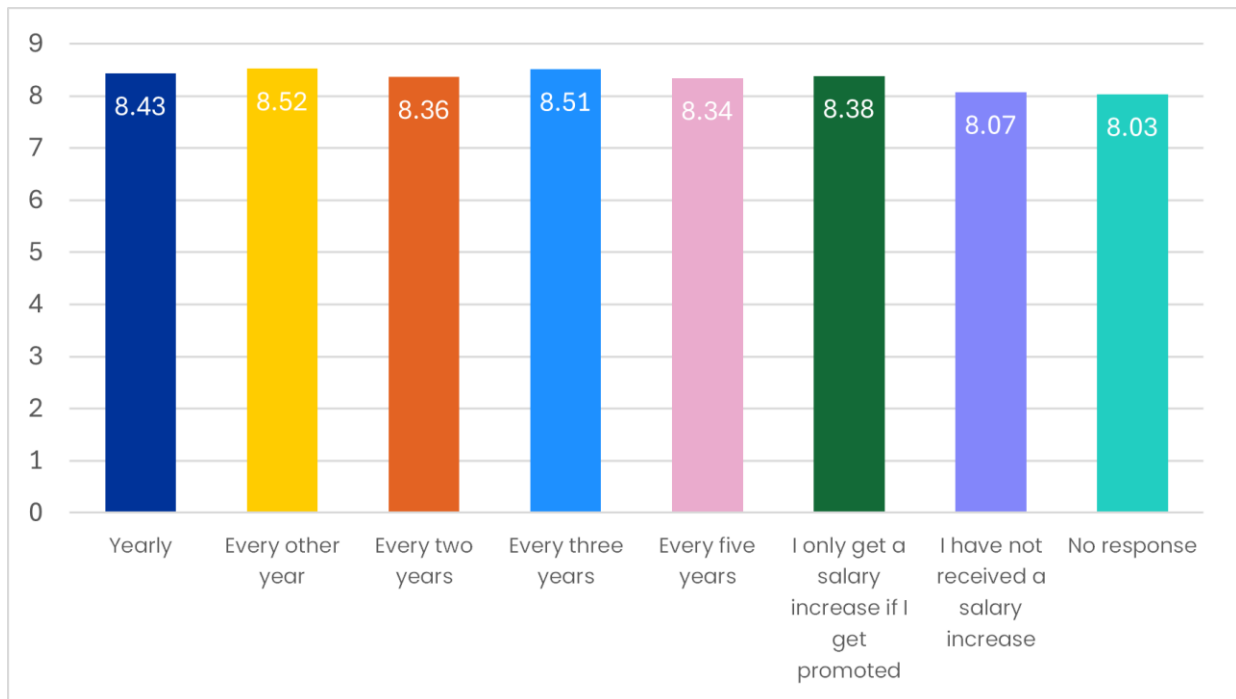
* indicators with significant results

Indicators Related to Salary. One indicator, the frequency of salary increases, was examined and results showed that it has a significant effect on teachers' level of motivation.

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Frequency of Salary Increase. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in motivation scores across the different groups ($p < .001$), although the effect size was small ($\eta^2p = 0.01$), suggesting that while frequency of salary increase is a factor, it explains only a small proportion of the variability in teacher motivation (also see Table 4 in the Appendix). Among all groups, teachers who reported receiving yearly salary increases ($N = 1,689$) had a mean motivation score of 8.43 ($SD = 1.49$), which was relatively high compared to those in less frequent salary increase categories. Interestingly, teachers who received salary increases every other year, every three years, or every two years also reported slightly higher motivation scores (means ranging from 8.36 to 8.52), though the differences among these groups were not statistically significant. In contrast, those who indicated they have not yet received a salary increase ($M = 8.07$, $SD = 1.65$) or did not provide a response ($M = 8.03$, $SD = 1.72$) reported the lowest levels of motivation among all groups. This suggests a potential link between lack of financial progression and reduced motivational levels.

Figure 23

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Frequency of Salary Increase



Tukey's post-hoc analysis revealed a significant difference in motivation levels when comparing teachers who received yearly salary increases with those who have not yet received a salary increase ($p = 0.004$) and those who did not respond to the question ($p = 0.001$). All other pairwise comparisons were not statistically significant ($p > 0.999$), including comparisons between yearly increases and those who receive increases every other year, every two to five years, or only when promoted. These findings suggest that receiving no salary increase at all is meaningfully associated with lower motivation, while the frequency of increases beyond that may not be as critical as simply having a consistent, predictable raise, such as those who benefit from annual adjustments.

Indicators Related to Working Conditions. Seven indicators were examined to determine the relationships between work conditions indicators and teachers' level of motivation; however, only three out of seven indicators yielded significant

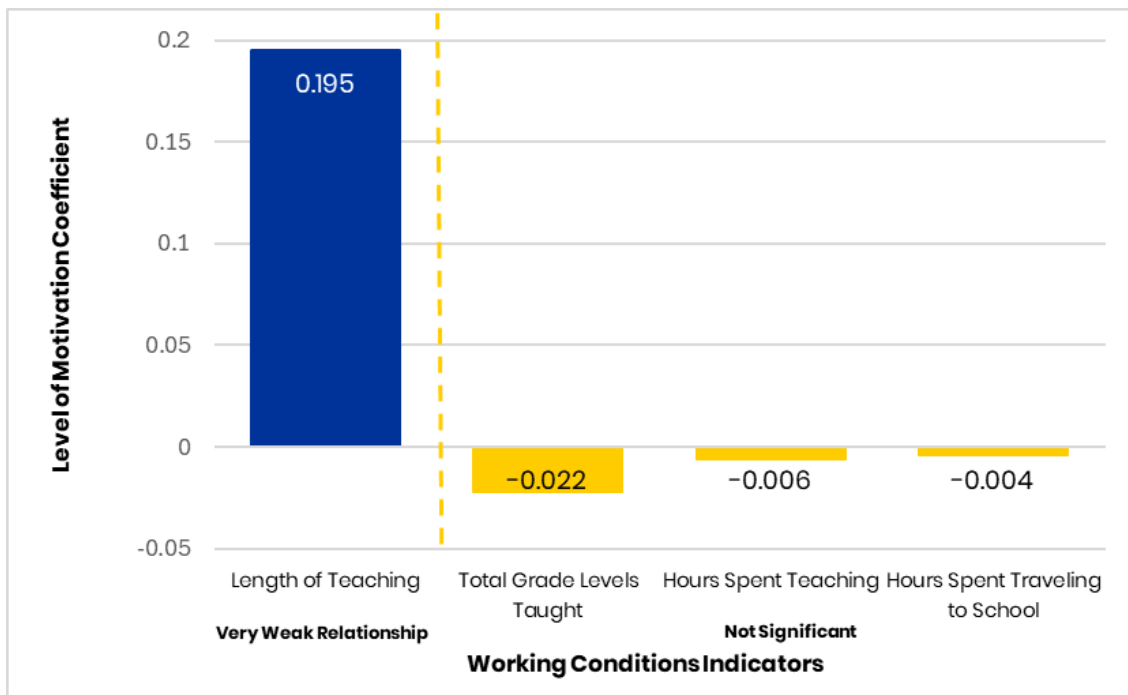
findings namely, length of teaching, adequacy of teaching and learning resources, and adequacy of facilities in school.

Relationship between Working Conditions and Teacher Respondents' Level of Motivation. The results revealed that only one working condition variable, Length of Teaching, was significantly correlated with the level of motivation, albeit with a very weak strength of association ($\rho = 0.195, p < .001$). This suggests that while teachers with longer tenure may report slightly higher levels of motivation, the association is weak and may not have substantial practical significance. This result aligns with existing research that unveiled educators are more likely to stay the longer they are in the profession studies (Anghelache, 2014, 2015; Day et al., 2006).

In contrast, the number of Grade Levels Taught showed a very weak and non-significant negative correlation with motivation ($\rho = -0.022, p = 0.243$), indicating no meaningful relationship between the breadth of teaching responsibilities across grade levels and how motivated teachers feel. This implies that teaching multiple grade levels does not necessarily enhance or diminish motivation among Thai educators. Similarly, the variable Hours Spent Teaching per week was found to have no significant relationship with motivation ($\rho = -0.006, p = 0.762$), suggesting that the volume of instructional time does not directly influence how motivated teachers feel in their roles. This could reflect that motivation may be more affected by qualitative factors, such as support systems, work environment, or intrinsic passion, than by quantitative workload alone. Lastly, Hours Spent Traveling to School also showed no significant association with motivation ($\rho = -0.004, p = 0.819$). This result implies that commute time does not have a measurable impact on overall teacher motivation, though it may affect other factors, such as well-being or work-life balance, not captured in this specific analysis.

Figure 24

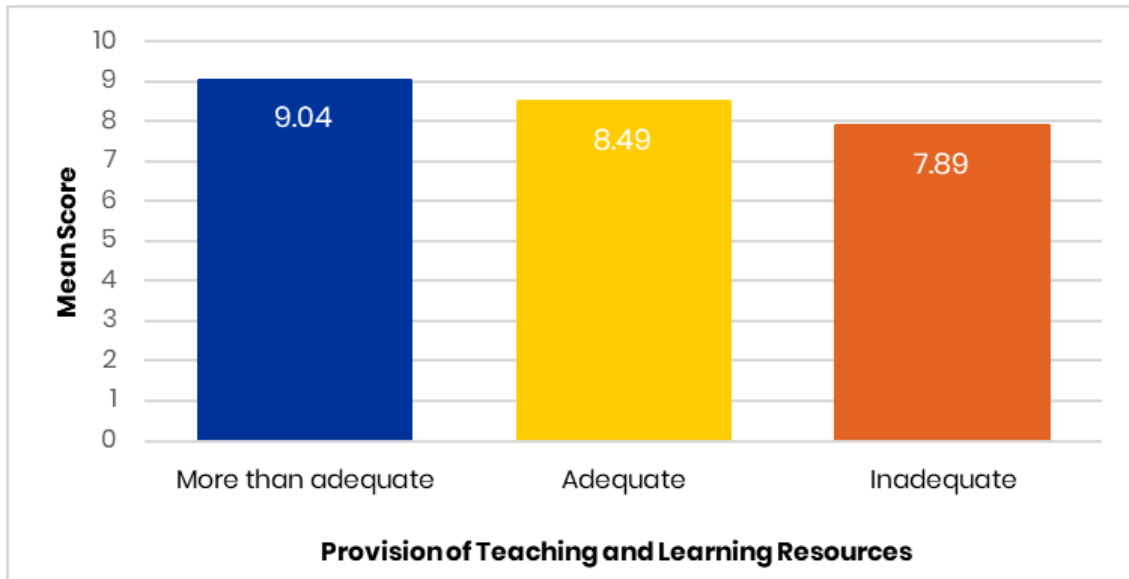
Relationship between Working Conditions and Teacher Respondents' Level of Motivation



Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on the Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources. The results showed a statistically significant difference in motivation scores across the three groups based on perceived adequacy ($p < .001$), with a small to moderate effect size ($\eta^2p = 0.05$) (also see Table 6 in the Appendix). This indicates that the perceived sufficiency of instructional materials and classroom resources plays a meaningful role in influencing teacher motivation. Teachers rated the provision of resources as "more than adequate" and reported at the highest level of motivation with a mean score of 9.04 (SD = 1.18). Those who indicated that resources were merely "adequate" reported a moderate level of motivation (M = 8.49, SD = 1.40), while respondents who described resources as "inadequate" reported the lowest motivation scores (M = 7.89, SD = 1.78).

Figure 25

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources

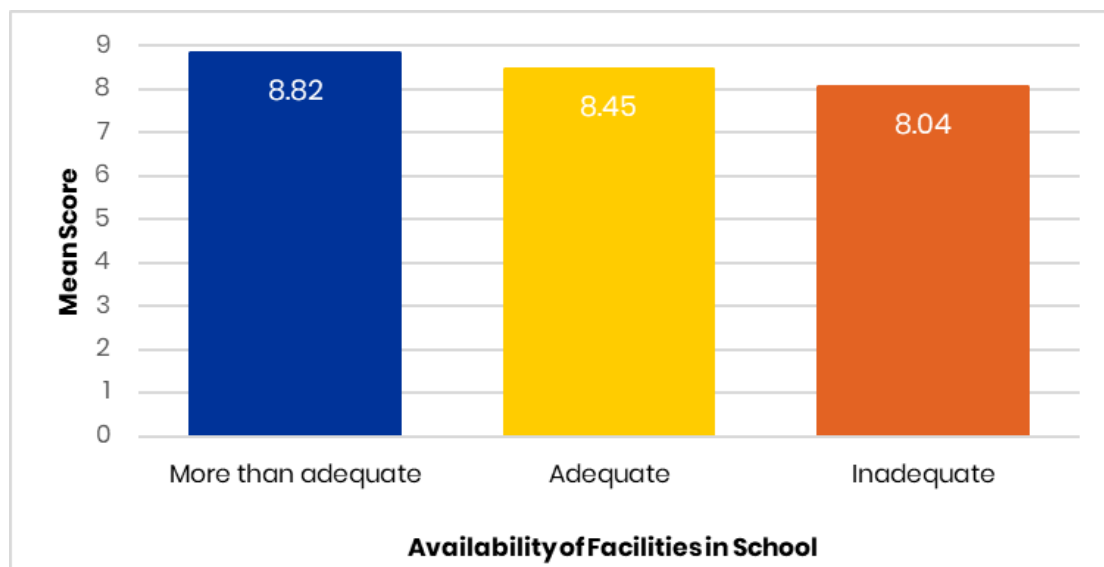


The Tukey post-hoc test confirmed that all pairwise group differences in motivation levels were statistically significant ($p < .001$). Teachers who reported that resources were "more than adequate" had significantly higher motivation than those who considered them "adequate". The difference was even more pronounced between the "more than adequate" and "inadequate" groups, indicating a strong positive association between rich resource availability and heightened motivation. Similarly, motivation levels were significantly higher among those who found resources "adequate" compared to those who found them "inadequate".

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Availability of Facilities in School. The results revealed a statistically significant difference among the groups ($p < .001$), with a small effect size ($\eta^2p = 0.024$), indicating that the adequacy of physical infrastructure and school facilities is meaningfully associated with how motivated teachers feel in their profession (also see Table 7 in Appendix). Teachers who rated their school facilities as "more than adequate" reported the highest motivation levels, with a mean score of 8.82 (SD = 1.34). Those who perceived facilities as simply "adequate" had a slightly lower mean motivation score of 8.45 (SD = 1.43). Meanwhile, teachers who found the facilities to be "inadequate" recorded the lowest motivation at 8.04 (SD = 1.73).

Figure 26

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Availability of Facilities in School



The Tukey post-hoc test revealed statistically significant differences in teacher motivation levels across the different categories of perceived facility adequacy. Teachers who reported that school facilities were "more than adequate" had significantly higher motivation scores compared to those who perceived the facilities as merely "adequate" ($p = 0.001$). Moreover, there was a more pronounced

and statistically significant difference between teachers in “more than adequate” and “inadequate” facility conditions ($p < .001$). Additionally, a significant difference was observed between those who rated facilities as “adequate” and those who rated them as “inadequate”, ($p < .001$). These results indicate that teachers in schools with better facility conditions tend to exhibit higher motivation levels, reinforcing the importance of well-maintained and sufficiently equipped learning environments in fostering professional enthusiasm and commitment.

These findings reinforce the results of existing studies, which have shown that a well-equipped school can enhance teachers’ motivation (Hülya & Kanatlar, 2018). This may be because the provision of educational resources, such as sufficient classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, among others, supports teachers in fulfilling their roles as facilitators of learning (Matoke et al., 2015).

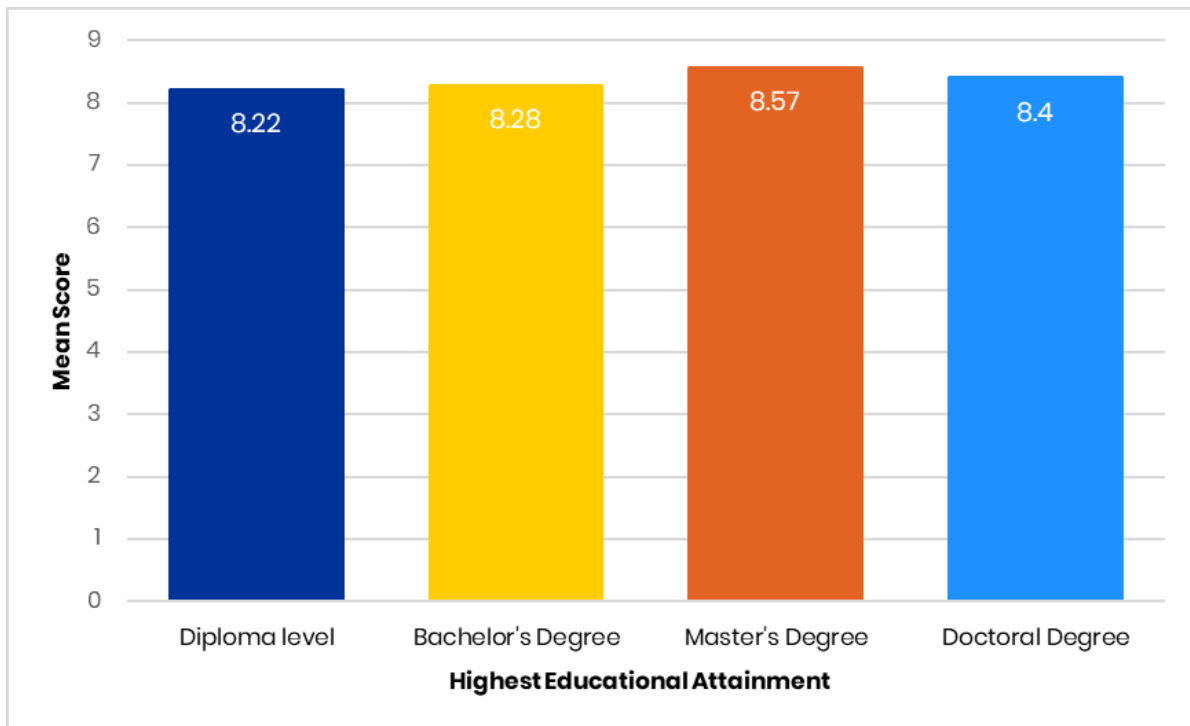
Indicators Related to Professional Development. Three indicators, use of personal money for professional development, highest education attainment, and currently taking graduate studies, were examined to determine the difference between professional development-related indicators and teacher-respondents’ level of motivation; however, only highest education attainment ($p = < .001$) yielded significant result.

Differences in Teachers’ Motivation based on Highest Education Attainment. The analysis yielded a statistically significant result ($p < .001$) with a small effect size ($\eta^2p = 0.006$), suggesting that educational attainment plays a modest yet meaningful role in influencing motivation (also see Table 8 in the Appendix). Among the groups, teachers with a Master’s degree reported the highest average motivation score ($M = 8.57, SD = 1.49$), followed by those with a Doctoral degree ($M = 8.40, SD = 1.30$), Bachelor’s degree holders ($M = 8.28, SD = 1.57$), and finally those with Diploma-level qualifications ($M = 8.22, SD = 1.45$). These

averages suggest a trend where higher educational attainment is generally associated with slightly greater levels of professional motivation.

Figure 27

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Highest Education Attainment



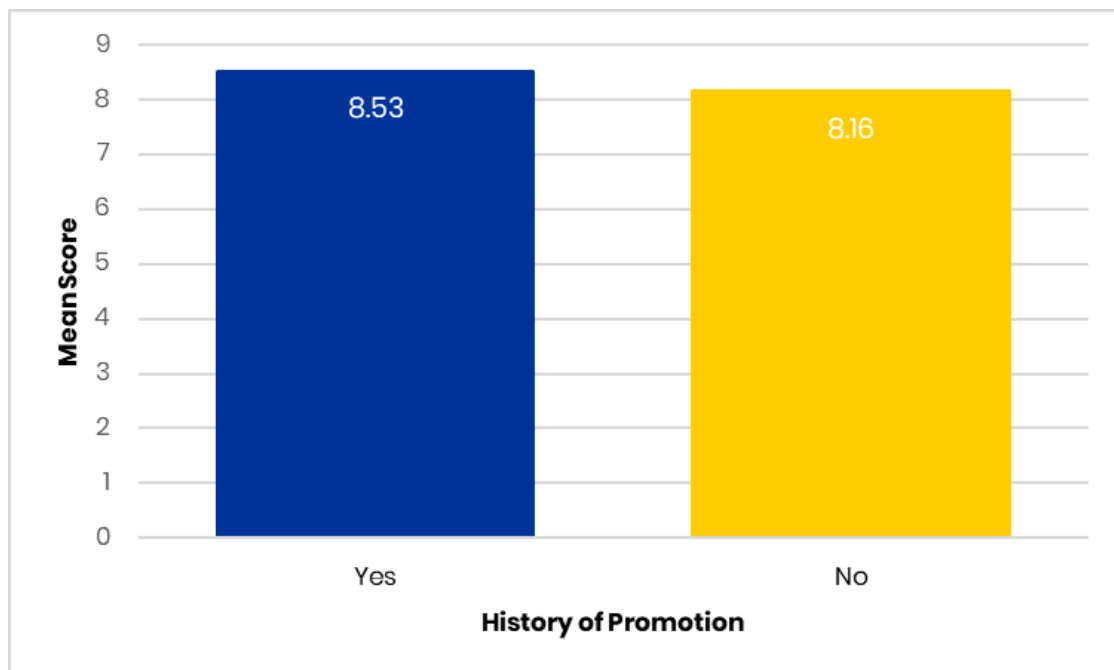
Tukey post-hoc test provided further insight into these group differences. The only statistically significant comparison was between teachers with a Bachelor's degree and those with a Master's degree, with the latter group reporting significantly higher motivation ($p < .001$). All other pairwise comparisons, including those involving Diploma-level, Doctoral, and Bachelor's degree holders, did not yield statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$), indicating that motivation levels among these other groups are relatively similar. Specifically, while teachers with Master's degrees stood out for their higher motivation, the differences in motivation between Diploma vs. Bachelor's, Diploma vs. Master's, Bachelor's vs. Doctoral, and Master's vs. Doctoral were not statistically meaningful.

Indicators Related to Career Progression. Two indicators, history and frequency of promotion, were examined to determine the difference between career progression-related indicators and teacher-respondents' level of motivation; both of the said indicators yielded significant results.

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on History of Promotion. Results revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p < .001$), with an effect size of 0.146, indicating a small to moderate effect (also see Table 9 in the Appendix). Teachers who reported having a history of promotion ($N = 1,517$) had a higher mean motivation score of 8.53 ($SD = 1.49$), compared to those who had not been promoted ($N = 1,430$), who reported a mean motivation score of 8.16 ($SD = 1.58$). This suggests that promotion within the profession is positively associated with teacher motivation.

Figure 28

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on History of Promotion

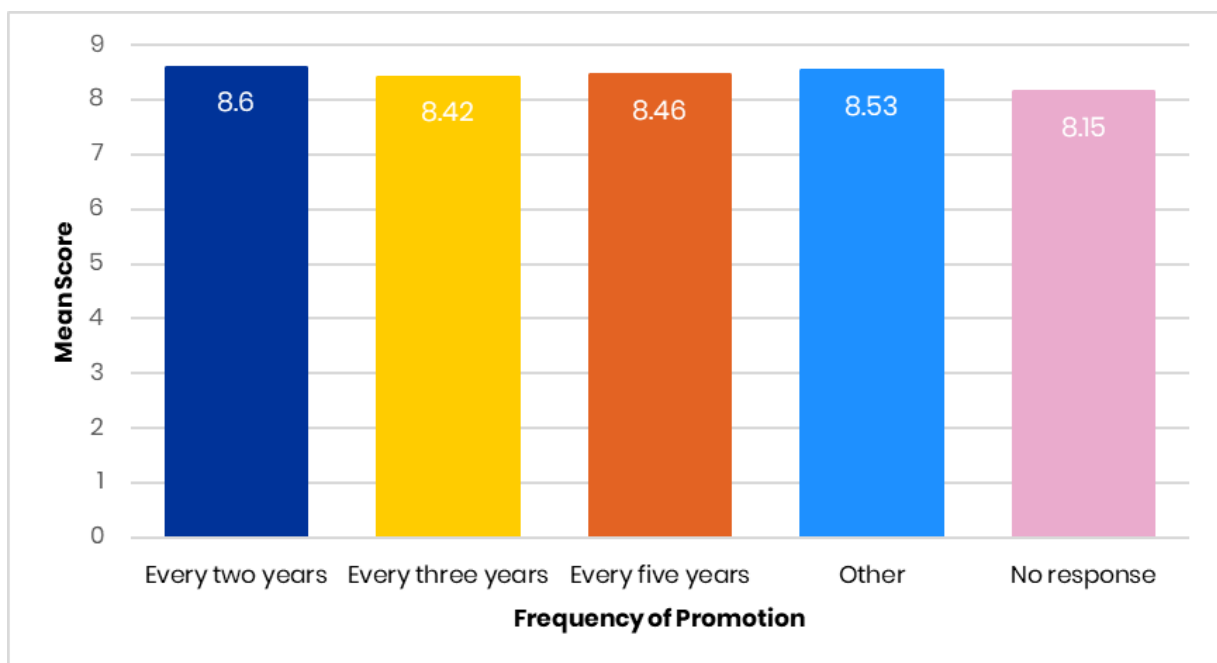


Differences in Teachers’ Motivation based on Frequency of Promotion.

Results showed a statistically significant difference among the groups ($p < .001$), with a small effect size ($\eta^2p = 0.015$) (also see Table 10 in the Appendix). This suggests that how often teachers are promoted may have a modest impact on their motivation levels. Among the groups, teachers who reported being promoted every two years had the highest average motivation score ($M = 8.60, SD = 1.38$), followed by those in the “other” category ($M = 8.53, SD = 1.51$), and those promoted every five years ($M = 8.46, SD = 1.57$). Those who indicated promotion every three years followed closely ($M = 8.42, SD = 1.42$). Meanwhile, the group that did not respond to the promotion frequency item reported the lowest mean motivation score ($M = 8.15, SD = 1.58$), which may suggest limited or unclear promotional experience.

Figure 29

Differences in Teachers’ Motivation based on Frequency of Promotion



Post-hoc analysis revealed that significant difference in motivation levels was observed between teachers who are promoted every two years and those who did not respond regarding their promotion frequency ($p < .001$). Similarly, teachers in the “every five years” group also reported significantly higher motivation than those in the no response group ($p = 0.044$), as did those in the “other” category compared to the no response group ($p < .001$). All other comparisons between teachers who receive promotions every two, three, or five years, and those in the “other” category were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). This suggests that while specific frequencies (e.g., every two vs. every three or five years) do not meaningfully differ from each other in terms of motivation, there is a notable motivational gap between those who reported any form of promotion and those who gave no response, which may reflect a lack of promotion or awareness of advancement processes.

These findings show the importance of career progression opportunities among teachers. According to Pennington (1995, as cited in Jitpraneechai, 2019), individuals who have a clear vision of their career are more likely to experience job satisfaction, while those lacking such perspective often face dissatisfaction. Establishing a lifelong career trajectory can foster a drive for achievement, enabling teachers to secure greater external rewards and strengthen their internal motivation, as it allows them to more fully align with and identify themselves within their profession (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, as cited in Jitpraneechai, 2019).

Summary. The correlation analyses showed that all core and contributing motivational factors were positively associated with teacher-respondents’ level of motivation; most correlations were strong, whereas one (sense of purpose and fulfillment) was moderate. These findings indicate that as Thai teacher-respondents’ perceptions of the factors strengthen, so does their motivation to

stay. Similarly, when their perception of the factors declines, their motivation tends to decrease as well.

Another set of correlation analyses also yielded a positive, albeit very weak, association between length of teaching and teacher-respondents' motivation levels. The finding suggests that the longer teachers remain in the profession, the greater the likelihood that they will continue serving.

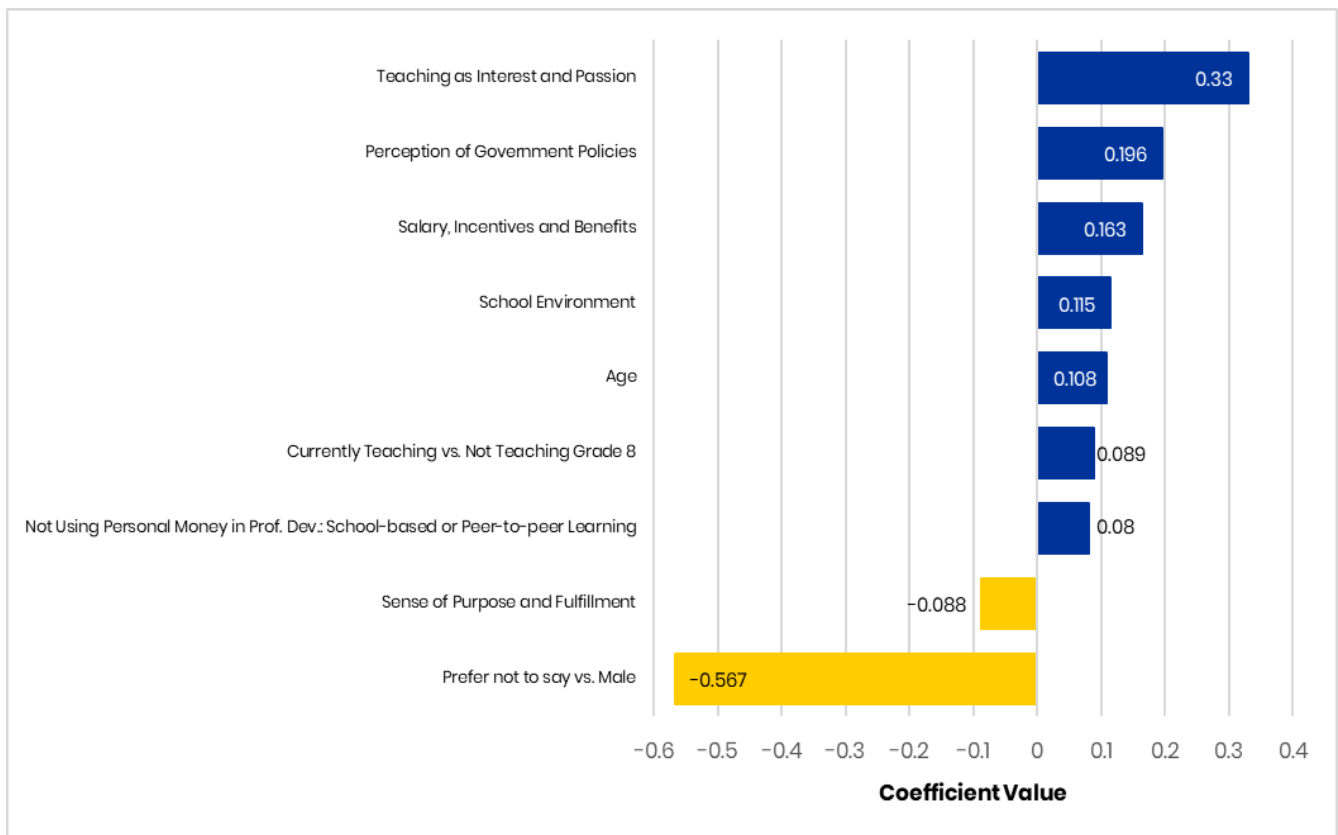
On the other hand, tests of difference of means revealed that motivation levels of teacher-respondents are statistically different according to frequency of salary increase, their perception of adequacy of teaching and learning resources, adequacy of school facilities, highest education attainment, promotion history and frequency. Teachers with regular salary increases were deemed to be more motivated to stay in the profession than those without. In addition, educators serving in schools with more than adequate teaching and learning resources and school facilities are more motivated than their counterparts. Teacher-respondents with higher degrees also reported statistically higher motivation levels. Likewise, those who have been promoted report higher motivation, whereas those who receive regular promotions are more motivated than those who did not indicate their responses.

Predictive Model of Teacher Motivation in Staying in the Profession in Thailand

Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to determine which combination of factors significantly predicts the motivation of teachers to remain in the teaching profession. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(11, 2935) = 158, p < 0.001$, and accounted for approximately 37.1% of the variance in teachers' motivation ($R^2 = 0.371$), indicating a moderately strong explanatory power (also see Table 11 in the Appendix).

Figure 30

Combination of Factors and Indicators that Predicts Teachers' Motivation to Stay in the Profession



Among the predictors, the variable with the strongest positive influence on motivation was “Teaching as Interest and Passion” ($\beta = 0.33, p < .001$), highlighting that intrinsic enthusiasm for teaching and the emotional connection to the profession are key drivers of teacher retention. This was followed by Perception of Government Policies ($\beta = 0.196, p < .001$) and Salary, Incentives, and Benefits ($\beta = 0.163, p < .001$), both of which demonstrate the importance of systemic and financial support in sustaining teacher commitment. The School Environment also contributed positively to motivation ($\beta = 0.115, p < .001$), suggesting that a supportive and collaborative atmosphere enhances teachers’ desire to continue teaching. Age was a small but significant predictor ($\beta = 0.108, p < .001$), indicating that older teachers tend to report slightly higher motivation levels in staying. Interestingly, Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment showed a negative association with motivation in the model ($\beta = -0.088, p = 0.002$), despite being positively correlated in bivariate analyses. This counterintuitive finding suggests potential multicollinearity or shared variance with other predictors (e.g., passion and policies), warranting further qualitative investigation.

In terms of demographic and behavioral indicators, gender identity had a notable effect: teachers who preferred not to disclose their gender reported significantly lower motivation compared to male respondents ($\beta = -0.567, p = 0.002$). Meanwhile, currently teaching Grade 8 was positively associated with motivation ($\beta = 0.089, p = 0.027$), which could reflect unique experiences or role satisfaction in that grade level. Additionally, those who used personal funds for school-based or peer-to-peer learning showed slightly higher motivation ($\beta = 0.08, p = 0.007$), possibly indicating a greater personal investment in professional development.

Summary. The hierarchical regression analysis showed a combination of motivational factors and demographic characteristics that influence teacher-respondents' motivation to remain in the teaching profession. Four motivational factors, namely 'teaching as interest and passion', 'government laws and policies', 'salary, incentives and benefits', and 'school environment' have a positive influence over motivation levels. On the other hand, the factor 'sense of purpose and fulfillment' is negatively associated. Demographic aspects such as gender, teaching a particular grade level, and use of personal funds for a type of professional development also affected motivation levels.

III. Conclusion

The results of this study, encompassing 2,947 Thai teacher respondents, indicate that 90.6% report high or very high motivation to stay in the profession. Motivational drivers include intrinsic factors such as passion for teaching, sense of purpose, and supportive working environments, along with extrinsic anchors like salary, benefits, and government policies. Regression analysis revealed that Teaching as Interest and Passion was the strongest predictor of staying motivated ($\beta = 0.33$), with Salary, Incentives & Benefits, Perception of Government Policies, and School Environment also contributing significantly. While these factors collectively explained 37% of variance in motivation, untapped areas like infrastructure and career progression offer further potential for improvement. Although the findings of the study are only applicable to its sample due to the use of convenience sampling, the results present potential levers to influence motivation. Individual and systemic measures may then be considered by the Ministry of Education to strengthen teachers' resolve to continue serving in the education sector.

Based on the results of the study, the following policy recommendations might be considered:

- **SALARY**

Implement an equitable and transparent salary review process to ensure all teachers receive at least annual cost-of-living adjustments. A strong positive correlation was observed between salary and teacher motivation ($\rho = 0.473$), underscoring the importance of fair compensation. Alarming, one in ten teachers has never received a salary increase, and only 57% benefit from annual raises. Moreover, a significant portion of teachers, over 34%, view their current salaries as insufficient. ANOVA results confirmed that teachers who never received a raise reported significantly lower motivation than those with annual increases.

- **WORKING CONDITIONS**

Invest in school infrastructure (classrooms, laboratories, and ICT facilities), particularly in under-resourced rural schools. Teachers in schools with adequate facilities reported markedly higher motivation ($M = 8.82$) than those in schools with inadequate resources ($M = 8.04$). The availability of teaching materials and infrastructure significantly influenced teachers' sense of support. Although commute time, teaching hours, and grade load were not significant predictors, school environment remained a powerful booster ($\rho = 0.463$).

- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Expand government-funded professional development grants covering workshops, peer-learning, and short courses to reduce personal financial burdens. Thai teachers are highly engaged in professional learning, with 95% participating in self-learning, 94% in peer learning, and over 77% in short-term courses. However, many personally fund their development, nearly 73% for self-learning and over 50% for workshops and short programs. This suggests systemic gaps in institutional funding despite strong demand for professional growth.

- **CAREER PROGRESSION**

Institute a structured and transparent promotion pathway with clear criteria and periodic reviews (e.g., every 2–3 years). Teachers with promotion history report higher motivation (8.53 vs. 8.16). However, promotion frequency is inconsistent: only 20% are promoted every two years, while nearly 60% fall into an ambiguous “other” category. ANOVA showed significantly lower motivation among those with no promotional clarity.

- **PERCEPTION OF GOVERNMENT LAWS AND POLICIES**

Enhance policy transparency and responsiveness by annually publishing policy impact reports and forming teacher advisory councils at local and national levels. Teachers expressed mixed satisfaction with government policies: 66% were satisfied with professional development policies, but satisfaction waned for deployment (52%), working conditions (55%), benefits (52%), and particularly salary policies (44%). Perception of government policies emerged as a strong motivational factor ($\rho = 0.438$), highlighting policy influence on morale.

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Appendix

Statistical Results of the Study

Table 3

Relationship between Factors of Motivation and Level of Motivation of Teachers

Factors of Motivation	Level of Motivation		Interpretation
	ρ	p	
Salary, Incentives and Benefits	0.473	< .001	Strong Relationship
Teaching as Interest and Passion	0.466	< .001	
School Environment	0.463	< .001	
Sense of Being Respected and Valued	0.454	< .001	
Perception of Government Policies	0.438	< .001	
Sense of Growth and Development	0.435	< .001	
Teacher Well-being	0.416	< .001	
Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment	0.392	< .001	Moderate Relationship

p < .001

The interpretation of Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was adapted from Dancey and Reidy (2004):

- $\rho \geq 0.70$ indicates very strong relationship
- 0.40 – 0.69 indicates strong relationship
- 0.30 – 0.39 indicates moderate relationship
- 0.20 – 0.29 indicates weak relationship
- 0.01 – 0.19 indicates no or negligible relationship

Table 4

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Frequency of Salary Increase

	Frequency of Salary Increase	M	df	F	P	η^2p	Effect size interpretation
Level of Motivation	Yearly	8.43	7	4.144	< .001	0.01	Small
	Every other year	8.523					
	Every two years	8.359					
	Every three years	8.514					
	Every five years	8.344					
	I only get a salary increase if I get promoted	8.383					
	I have not yet received a salary increase	8.072					
	No response	8.031					

$p < .05$

Interpretation is based on National University's (2025) interpretation of ANOVA's partial eta-squared:

- $\eta^2p = 0.01$ indicates a small effect

- $\eta^2p = 0.06$ indicates a medium effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.14$ indicates a large effect

Source: <https://resources.nu.edu/statsresources/eta>

Table 5

Relationship between Working Conditions and Level of Motivation of Teachers

Factors of Motivation	Level of Motivation		Interpretation
	ρ	p	
Length of Teaching	0.195	< .001	Negligible Relationship
Total Grade Levels Taught	-0.022	0.243	Not Significant
Hours Spent Teaching	-0.006	0.762	
Hours Spent Traveling to School	-0.004	0.819	

$p < .001$

The interpretation of Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was adapted from Dancey and Reidy (2004):

- $\rho \geq 0.70$ indicates very strong relationship
- 0.40 – 0.69 indicates strong relationship
- 0.30 – 0.39 indicates moderate relationship
- 0.20 – 0.29 indicates weak relationship

- 0.01 – 0.19 indicates no or negligible relationship

Table 6

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources

	Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources	M	df	F	P	η^2p	Effect size interpretation
Level of Motivation	More than adequate	9.043	2	69.71	< .001	0.05	Small
	Adequate	8.495					
	Inadequate	7.887					

$p < .05$

Interpretation is based on National University's (2025) interpretation of ANOVA's partial eta-squared:

- $\eta^2p = 0.01$ indicates a small effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.06$ indicates a medium effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.14$ indicates a large effect

Source: <https://resources.nu.edu/statsresources/eta>

Table 7*Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Availability of Facilities in School*

	Availability of Facilities in School	M	df	F	P	η^2p	Effect size interpretation
		Level of Motivation	More than adequate	8.82	2	35.937	
	Adequate	8.453					
	Inadequate	8.042					

$p < .05$

Interpretation is based on National University's (2025) interpretation of ANOVA's partial eta-squared:

- $\eta^2p = 0.01$ indicates a small effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.06$ indicates a medium effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.14$ indicates a large effect

Source: <https://resources.nu.edu/statsresources/eta>

Table 8
Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Highest Education Attainment

	Highest Education Attainment	M	df	F	P	η^2p	Effect size interpretation
		Level of Motivation	Diploma level	8.22	3	5.848	
	Bachelor's Degree	8.284					
	Master's Degree	8.57					
	Doctoral Degree	8.4					

$p < .05$

Interpretation is based on National University's (2025) interpretation of ANOVA's partial eta-squared:

- $\eta^2p = 0.01$ indicates a small effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.06$ indicates a medium effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.14$ indicates a large effect

Source: <https://resources.nu.edu/statsresources/eta>

Table 9

Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on History of Promotion

	with History of Promotion	without History of Promotion			Rank- Biserial Correlation	Effect Size Interpretation
	M	M	U	p		
Level of Motivation	8.527	8.156	1.243	< .001	0.146	Small

$p < .01$

Interpretation is based on DATATab's (2025) interpretation of Mann-Whitney U test effect size:

- effect size less than 0.3 indicates a small effect
- effect size between 0.3 and 0.5 indicates a medium effect
- effect size greater than 0.5 indicates a large effect

Source: <https://datatab.net/tutorial/mann-whitney-u-test>

Table 10*Differences in Teachers' Motivation based on Frequency of Promotion*

	Frequency of Promotion						Effect size interpretation
		M	df	F	P	η^2p	
Level of Motivation	Every two years	8.601	4	11.241	< .001	0.015	Small
	Every three years	8.419					
	Every five years	8.462					
	Other	8.53					
	No response	8.154					

$p < .05$

Interpretation is based on National University's (2025) interpretation of ANOVA's partial eta-squared:

- $\eta^2p = 0.01$ indicates a small effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.06$ indicates a medium effect
- $\eta^2p = 0.14$ indicates a large effect

Source: <https://resources.nu.edu/statsresources/eta>

Table 11

Regression Estimates of Factors Affecting the Teachers' Level of Motivation in Thailand

Predictor	p	Stand. Estimate
Sense of Purpose and Fulfillment	0.002	-0.088
Teaching as Interest and Passion	< .001	0.33
School Environment	< .001	0.115
Salary, Incentives and Benefits	< .001	0.163
Perception of Government Policies	< .001	0.196
Age	< .001	0.108
Gender: Prefer not to say vs. Male	0.002	-0.567
Currently teaching Grade 8: Yes vs. No	0.027	0.089
Use personal money on School-based or peer-to-peer learning: No vs. Yes	0.007	0.08

Model: $F(11, 2935) = 158, p < 0.001, R^2 = 0.371$



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