

Teaching Across Borders: An Inquiry into the Motivations and Challenges of Filipino Science Teachers in Selected Schools in the Central Region of Thailand

Jocelyn D. Caluten^{1*}, Jayson O. Madayag¹

¹ College of Graduate Studies, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University, Mid La Union Campus, San Fernando City, La Union, Philippines

* calutenjocelyn1234@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the motivations and challenges of Filipino science teachers in selected schools in the Central Region of Thailand. It sought to understand the factors driving their decision to teach abroad and the obstacles encountered in their professional journey. Using Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method and MAXQDA24 for data analysis, interviews with eight participants revealed five key themes: (1) Personal Motivation and Commitment, including financial stability, professional growth, and cultural pride; (2) Teaching Environment and Support, emphasizing resources, training, and teacher-student relationships; (3) Cultural and Language Adaptation, focusing on linguistic barriers and cultural immersion; (4) Working Environment

and Support Systems, including recognition and collaboration; and (5) Teaching and Cultural Challenges, such as limited academic freedom and classroom management. Despite these challenges, participants showed resilience, using creative strategies to succeed in a foreign educational system. The findings highlight the importance of institutional support and cultural adaptation in cross-cultural teaching, providing insights for policymakers and administrators to enhance teacher retention and professional development. This study contributes to understanding the dynamics of international teaching and offers actionable recommendations to support Filipino science teachers in Thailand and similar contexts.

Keywords: *challenges, cross-cultural teaching, Filipino science teachers in Thailand, motivations, resilience*

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world, the movement of professionals across borders has increased significantly. Within the dynamic landscape of education, cross-border teaching has gained substantial prominence, with an increasing number of educators seeking opportunities beyond their native shores (Smith, 2018). Numerous countries actively offer and embrace cross-border teaching, creating a diverse and interconnected mix of learning experiences.

International migration of teachers has been taking place for many decades or more. It is not uncommon to find non-nationals serving as educators in schools across the globe. These educators aspire to broaden their personal and professional horizons. They actively pursue opportunities to travel abroad to achieve their academic ambitions, obtain personal independence, and gain intercultural understanding (Ospina et al., 2020). Teachers engaging in international experiences, living and teaching abroad, encounter

rewarding and challenging situations. Research like that by Yarosh et al. (2018) indicates that such experiences significantly and positively impact teachers' lives, fostering professional and personal growth.

These benefits encompass adapting to new lifestyles, deepening self-understanding, reaffirming educational values, raising cultural awareness, and cultivating flexibility, tolerance, and respect (Ospina et al., 2020). International teaching enhances skills for efficiency and effectiveness, encompassing improved teaching, communication, classroom management, language proficiency, and cultural insights.

In the context of Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) has played a significant role in facilitating labor mobility among member states, including the movement of skilled professionals such as teachers. Through mutual recognition agreements (MRAs), ASEAN encourages the exchange of knowledge and expertise across borders, providing Filipino teachers with opportunities to work in neighboring countries, such as Thailand (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). This regional integration aligns with the broader economic cooperation and professional development objectives within the ASEAN framework.

However, working in a foreign setting requires an individual to become adaptive in navigating an unfamiliar environment and diverse culture, to fit in with the host culture, and adjust to maintain a suitable relationship and achieve social interaction (Carpio, G.J., De Torres, A.L., et al. 2018). Teachers face various challenges when working abroad, such as culture shock and disagreements in both the classroom and workplace, experiences of racial discrimination, demanding working conditions, language barriers, and a sense of dissatisfaction and unhappiness that can lead to feeling isolated from others in the host school. According to Ospina and Medina (2020), some challenges are also related to interaction with native speakers, classroom management, lack of support from school administrators, and separation from family.

In the Philippines, a significant number of qualified teachers are unemployed due to the limited capacity of the education system to absorb more teachers. With over 900,000 teachers working for the Department of Education (DepEd), not enough positions are available to accommodate the increasing number of licensed educators. Consequently, many teachers, specifically science teachers, are compelled to seek employment abroad.

The Philippines is considered one of the major sources of labor supply worldwide (Lorenzo, 2021). As of October 2023, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) has reported that the number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) from April to September 2022 is estimated at 1.96 million. This figure represents a 7.6 percent increase from the 1.83 million OFWs recorded during the same period in 2021. Lack of job opportunities to increase their sources of income in their own home country is the primary reason why Filipinos work overseas, especially those aged 15 to 35 years old (Hasnan, 2019).

Filipino educators are highly esteemed worldwide, thanks to their outstanding academic proficiency, exceptional teaching abilities, and remarkable adaptability in various work settings. In 2022, Asia emerged as the primary destination for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), comprising 80.8 percent of the total (PSA, 2023). Numerous countries, including but not limited to China, Singapore, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, including Thailand, actively seek out Filipino teachers for teaching roles.

In this rapidly globalizing world, the pursuit of better job opportunities has fueled a significant influx of Filipino science teachers into the educational landscape of Thailand. Thailand has served as a destination of choice for numerous Filipino professionals in pursuit of teaching positions, with a notable increase in migration since 2009. Initially, over 14,000 Filipino migrant workers were reported in Thailand by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). In 2017, Filipinos took the top spot among the skilled workers in the Kingdom of Thailand, according to the Department of Employment. The influx of foreign teachers in public and private schools has continuously increased even now. The ASEAN integration framework, particularly since the 2015 AEC implementation, has amplified this trend, facilitating the movement of Filipino professionals within the region, including teachers. In 2019, more than 23,000 Filipino teachers were employed in different levels of Thai schools teaching varied subjects such as English, Math, Science, Social studies, Health education, and many others (Dumlao & Tepsuriwong, 2019). Research in 2020 indicated a 41 percent increase in the number of Filipinos in Thailand from 2015

to 2020. In 2021, the Filipino population in Thailand exceeded 31,000, according to the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok. Currently, there is no precise record of the number of Filipino teachers in Thailand due to their frequent movement in and out of the country. This mobility makes it difficult to gather accurate statistics on their population. Additionally, the absence of a formal labor migration agreement between Thailand and the Philippines further complicates the tracking of Filipino migrants. As a result, an estimated population of science teachers in Thailand cannot be determined at this time.

The Department of Education (DepEd) has witnessed a significant exodus of teachers opting for overseas placements (Ramirez, 2020). Some specifically come to Thailand in search of improved job opportunities. Foremost among the concerns is the desire for financial stability, contrasted by their deep emotional connection to students and the local education system (Cahilog et al., 2023). Filipinos come to Thailand due to these factors: no permanent jobs, paying jobs, limited financial opportunities; stressful relationships, stressful work; desire to uplift the standard of living; looking for adventure; change of lifestyle; and encouragement from friends and relatives who are already in Thailand (Novio, 2018). Inherent Filipinos' emphasis on family responsibilities and obligations also amplifies the desire to seek better opportunities overseas (Torres; Gomez, 2019). Yet, the choice to move abroad comes with its set of difficulties. Previous research has underscored teachers' emotional, logistical, and professional hurdles when adapting to a new educational environment (Nguyen, 2019). According to the research done by Ulla (2019), some professional and personal issues like the perceived lack of teachers' professional development programs, cultural differences, language barriers, absence from family celebrations, and other important occasions are some of the challenges faced by teachers in Thailand. Various opinions of teachers are also mainly related to the lack of systematic criteria for assessing students' performance, large class sizes, salary issues, attitudinal and behavioral problems of Thai students, language problems, problems with teaching materials, and teaching pedagogies (Cabiladas, 2020).

The challenges faced by Filipino teachers in Thailand often lead many to choose to return to the Philippines after just a few years of teaching. Moreover, hundreds of teachers frequently switch to different schools before their one-year contract ends or immediately afterward. However, a notable group of teachers remains committed to working and teaching at the same school in Thailand for many consecutive years. Several studies claim that motivational factors such as career development, financial rewards, job characteristics, work-life balance, management, and recognition affect the retention of an employee in the workplace.

Filipino teachers in Thailand encounter distinct situations due to the varying policies set by schools for foreign educators. These policies encompass teaching workloads, non-teaching responsibilities, salary structures, incentives, and additional perks. Schools, whether public or private, hire foreign teachers primarily to instruct core subjects in English. Regarding English subjects, native English speakers are typically favored, while Filipinos are often preferred for teaching Science and Math subjects.

In the Thai educational system, schools can offer a specialized English program (EP) program. These programs feature smaller class sizes compared to the regular program. Under these specialized programs, students primarily receive instruction in English across various subjects. In contrast, in the regular program, English subjects are taught by foreign teachers, while the remaining subjects are taught in Thai. English program classes are equipped with air conditioners, smart board displays, and WIFI, making teaching and learning easier and more interactive. Teaching resources, such as printers, photocopier machines, books, printers, and papers, are available in the school. English teachers take on teaching responsibilities in both the English program (EP) and the regular program, whereas math and science teachers exclusively teach classes within the English program. This explains why some schools may employ numerous English teachers while having only one or two math or science teachers, posing a limitation for researchers focusing on these subjects. Consider this scenario: In the school where the researcher teaches, there are nine English teachers, one math teacher, and one science teacher employed in the foreign department. This pattern is common in many schools across Thailand that offer English programs.

Consequently, the researcher encounters challenges in exclusively recruiting participants from one province. Therefore, she expands the study's location to overcome this limitation.

The Central Region of Thailand, encompassing Bangkok and its surrounding provinces, plays a pivotal role in the nation's educational landscape. The region boasts a high completion rate for lower secondary education, reaching 91%, surpassing other regions in Thailand (UNICEF Data, 2022). A significant feature of the Central Region's education system is the prevalence of English Programs (EPs) in schools. These programs offer subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in English, aiming to enhance students' proficiency in the language.

In light of the reasons, challenges, and experiences highlighted concerning Filipino teachers in Thailand, it is evident that there is a notable research gap when it comes to understanding the motivations of science teachers in pursuing teaching positions in this country. Most existing studies have primarily focused on exploring the challenges, coping mechanisms, and lived experiences of English as a second language teacher in Thailand.

The researcher recognizes the significance of addressing this gap within the related literature to gain deeper insights into why science teachers from the Philippines leave their home country and pursue teaching across borders.

Furthermore, this study endeavors to stimulate the Department of Education towards a reevaluation of the factors that underpin the motivation of Filipino science teachers, potentially prompting a review of benefits, working conditions, and available teaching resources that play a crucial role in inspiring these educators to teach in Thailand and, importantly, remain in the country. Moreover, the personal experiences and narratives shared by the participants in this study hold the potential to offer valuable insights and serve as a source of inspiration for other Filipino teachers in Thailand who may encounter similar challenges and opportunities.

Lastly, the findings from this research may offer valuable lessons to schools in Thailand, aiding them in devising strategies to retain their foreign teaching staff, ultimately contributing to the continuity and enhancement of the students' educational experiences.

Framework of the Study

The following theories helped equip the researcher with essential insights required for the progression of the study.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, introduced in his 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" and later expanded in his book "Motivation and Personality," is a renowned psychological theory. Figure 1 shows that human motivation is structured in a hierarchy of five fundamental needs: physiological, safety, love, self-esteem, and self-actualization. According to Maslow, individuals are driven to fulfill these needs, with higher-level needs becoming motivating factors once lower-level needs are satisfied. This theory provides a framework for understanding human motivation and prioritizes essential well-being and personal development aspects. The first four levels called deficiency needs, which arise due to deprivation. Satisfying these lower-level needs is important to avoid unpleasant feelings or consequences. In Maslow's opinion, a higher need emerges once a need is satisfied, and the lack of met needs leads to unpredictable behavioral outcomes. A teacher's basic needs and psychological needs must be satisfied before their self-fulfillment can be attained. Thus, if a teacher's basic needs are fulfilled, they are more likely to retain their position than if these needs are missing.

Maslow's framework helps the researcher understand how the motivation of Filipino science teachers affects their decision to work abroad. From seeking fulfillment of basic needs, like better compensation and safety, to finding belongingness in the teaching community, teachers may gain self-esteem and professional growth until they achieve self-actualization. Thus, this theory provides valuable insights into the teachers' motivations.

The Two-Factor Theory also known as Motivation-Hygiene Theory by Herzberg argues that there are separate sets of mutually exclusive factors that either cause job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Influenced by Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Jones, 2011), Herzberg concluded that satisfaction and dissatisfaction could not be measured reliably on the same continuum and conducted a series of studies where he attempted to determine what factors in the work environment cause satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Nickerson, 2021). Herzberg considers two types of factors, as shown in Figure 2.

This theory provides an overview through which to understand how complex relationships exist between motivator and hygiene factors among Filipino science teachers working in Thailand. When the teachers are recognized for their skills, have personal and professional achievements, and have opportunities for increased responsibility or leadership, they can be motivated to perform well. Meanwhile, the presence of hygiene factors, such as adequate work conditions, competitive salary packages and incentives, and positive work relationships, prevent job satisfaction and can enhance their motivation to continue working abroad. Thus, the presence of motivators and hygiene factors contribute to the motivations of Filipino science teachers teaching in Thailand.

Thirdly, *Social Cognitive Career Theory* (SCCT) was conceptualized as a derivative of Bandura's (1986) general social cognitive theory (Lent et al. 1994). This theory emphasizes the role of learning experiences, self-efficacy, and outcome expectations in career development (Schaub, 2004). This theory was developed to explain how individuals form career interests, set vocational goals, persist in work environments, and attain job satisfaction (Kelly, 2009).

The SCCT can be highly useful in this study in understanding the motivations and influential factors and exploring the decision-making processes of the teachers who chose to work abroad. By examining factors such as self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and interests, the researcher can gain insights into the factors motivating them to pursue teaching positions abroad. As SCCT also focuses on cognitive processes, utilizing this theory would enable the researcher to explore how the teachers' beliefs about their capabilities, outcome expectations, and personal interests influence their decisions to work abroad.

This study also draws on Self-Determination Theory (SDT) theoretical frameworks, Ryan and Deci (2000). SDT argues that individuals become self-determined when their needs for competence, connection, and autonomy are satisfied. For instance, a Filipino science teacher in Thailand realized she had the autonomy to craft engaging science lessons tailored to her students' needs. This included integrating interactive experiments and collaborative projects, which proved challenging to implement in her home country. This newfound autonomy aligns with SDT, emphasizing that fulfilling personal choices and initiatives contributes to intrinsic motivation. Integrating SDT in this study provides a detailed and thorough exploration of individual motivations and the broader cultural and historical factors that shape their experiences.

As Filipino science teachers decide to relocate to Thailand for teaching positions, these theories will prove invaluable to the researcher in comprehending their motivations for leaving their home country, working abroad, the factors influencing their extended stay in Thailand, and how their experiences contribute to personal realizations.

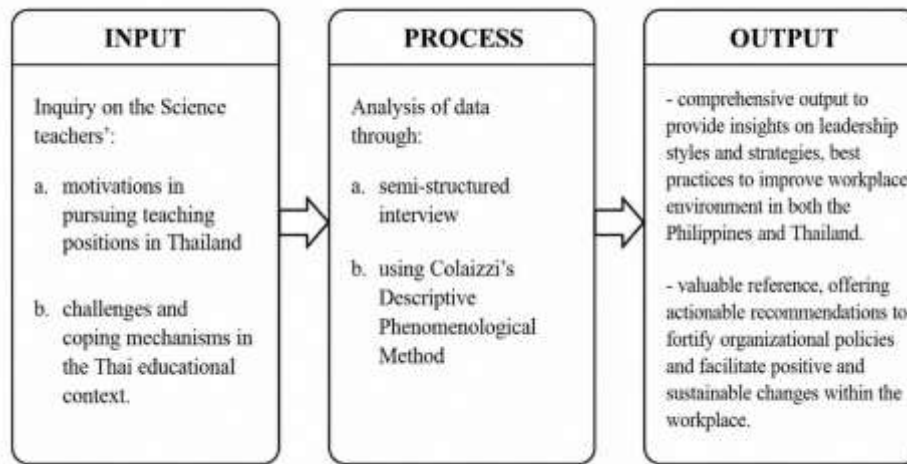


Figure 1. *Research Paradigm*

Figure 1 illustrates the research paradigm for the study on the motivations of Filipino science teachers in Thailand. The study aims to understand their motivations and challenges by exploring their life history, detailed experiences, and reflective insights. The research process involves conducting a 3-phase semi-structured interview and utilizing Colaizzi's Descriptive Phenomenological Method. The anticipated output consists of identified motivations and actionable implications for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) teachers, policymakers, and educational institutions in Thailand and the Philippines.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to understand and analyze the complex motivations that drive Filipino science teachers to pursue teaching positions in Thailand. It also examines the challenges they may face in the Thai educational context.

Specifically, it sought an answer to the question: Why do Filipino science teachers find teaching positions in Thailand appealing, and what challenges do they encounter in this professional journey?

METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological approach, chosen for its strength in uncovering the complex layers of personal experiences and revealing the motivations that drive individuals' actions. This approach aims to challenge assumptions and question conventional ideas by focusing on personal experiences, providing a unique perspective on the motivations of science teachers in Thailand. The qualitative phenomenological method is particularly powerful in its ability to explore the depth of personal experiences, allowing for a richer understanding of the various motivations that drive science teachers to pursue teaching positions in Thailand. MAXQDA24 software was employed to assist in analyzing the data, enabling the identification of patterns and themes within the participants' responses. This software enhances the study's ability to systematically manage and analyze qualitative data, thoroughly examining the diverse motivational factors influencing science teachers. This approach has been carefully selected as it aligns with the study's main goal, which is to understand the various factors motivating science teachers to seek teaching positions in Thailand.

Sources of Data

The research was conducted within selected Thai government schools in the Central region that were implementing an English program. It involves eight Filipino Science teachers teaching science subjects across grades 7 to 12. The eight participants provided an opportunity to analyze both the commonalities and distinctions in each individual's experiences.

The inclusion criteria are as follows:

1. Degree holders of Bachelor of Science Education majoring in any branch of science. This criterion ensures a consistent academic background among participants.
2. Participants must have prior teaching experience in the Philippines to enable comparisons with their teaching in Thailand.
3. Participants must have taught in Thailand for at least two years to ensure sufficient exposure to the Thai educational environment, providing substantial insights into their cross-cultural teaching experiences.

The exclusion criteria encompass the following:

1. Teaching science in Thailand but is not an Education degree holder.
2. Science teacher in Thailand for 2 or more years but no teaching experience in the Philippines.

The selection of participants was carried out through purposive sampling, which is deemed appropriate as it allows for the deliberate selection of individuals based on their potential to offer valuable insights into the research questions and the relevance of the research to them. Potential participants were identified through multiple channels, such as online platforms, referrals, snowball sampling, and personal networks. Individuals who met the criteria were invited to participate in the study.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

Both semi-structured interview questions and open-ended questions were employed to gather information. Based on the recommendation from Seidman (2013), the interview was conducted in three (3) phases:

Interview Phase 1: Understanding the life history of the participants

Interview Phase 2: Details of the experiences

Interview Phase 3: Reflections on the meaning of experiences

The implementation of these three interview phases was vital in the data collection process, as they provide an in-depth understanding of the motivations that drive the teachers. By structuring the interviews into distinct phases, it will be ensured that the study will delve into various aspects of their experiences and motivations.

The participant's demographic data was collected through Google Forms. This allows the researcher to verify if they meet the specified criteria. The study's purpose, procedures, and benefits were explained to the participants. They are allowed to make an informed decision and be assured that their participation will not affect their relationship, opportunities, or work. Their participation is entirely voluntary, and they have the right to withdraw. Upon confirmation, the schedule and mode of the interview were set.

Due to differences in location and availability, the semi-structured interview was conducted online through Google Meet, allowing flexibility in scheduling that best suits the respondents' convenience. Various factors are considered when forming the questions to enhance the likelihood of eliciting rich and relevant responses. The semi-structured interview format enables real-time dialogue between the researcher and the participant, offering ample room and flexibility for unanticipated and original issues that may emerge during the conversation. The duration of the interview is about an hour. Throughout these interview

sessions, all discussions and information about the research were meticulously recorded to produce a verbatim transcription for subsequent analysis.

In adherence to ethical principles, participants in this study were assigned pseudonyms to safeguard their identities, ensuring confidentiality. The informed consent process was comprehensive, detailing the study's purpose and procedures. Debriefing sessions follow after the interviews to address participant concerns. Privacy and confidentiality were emphasized. Cultural sensitivity and avoiding harm are prioritized, and a feedback mechanism is established. Maintaining professional boundaries and continuous ethical review throughout the research process underscore the commitment to participant well-being and research integrity. In addition, the researcher-built trust and rapport with the participants to encourage them to provide genuine responses.

The criteria used to select participants are clearly defined to minimize bias, avoid personal bias or preferences, and use multiple channels. The information provided by the participants was also validated and verified through additional sources to ensure that they genuinely meet the criteria.

Analysis of Data

The data was analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological method, which allows for identifying and understanding the essence of participants lived experiences. MAXQDA24 software was also employed to enhance the analysis by coding the interview data and identifying recurring themes and significant statements. This software assists in organizing the data, visualizing relationships between themes, and contributing a systematic approach to data analysis. Figure 5 illustrates the flowchart representing Colaizzi's process for phenomenological data analysis (Sanders, 2003), which guided the data analysis process. The use of MAXQDA24 supports the structured application of Colaizzi's method, ensuring the rigorous and efficient extraction of insights from the data.

In Colaizzi's method, the first step is carefully reading and rereading the transcript to understand its overall content. This thorough immersion allows the researcher to gain a deep sense of the participant's experience, setting the foundation for identifying significant statements in the subsequent steps. Secondly, important statements related to the studied topic should be identified and written down on a separate sheet, noting the page and line numbers. The third step involved formulating meanings from these significant statements and grouping the meanings into categories, clusters of themes, and primary themes. The fifth step is to integrate the study's findings to describe the topic thoroughly and then describe the phenomenon's fundamental structure. The last step is seeking validation from research participants by comparing the researcher's results with their experiences to allow them to verify the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Five main themes emerged from the data, offering valuable insights into why Filipino science teachers find teaching positions in Thailand appealing and the challenges they face. Each theme was assigned a specific meaning to encapsulate its essence, with brief descriptions provided for clarity. These themes were drawn directly from the participants' literal responses, reflecting their shared experiences and unique perspectives on the phenomenon.

Theme 1: Personal Motivation and Commitment

The first theme that occurred from the data is Personal Motivation and Commitment. This theme reflects the deep-rooted factors that influence Filipino science teachers to continue their teaching roles in Thailand, despite the challenges they face. The findings revealed that personal motivation, responsibility, and a sense of pride in their cultural representation play an important role in the teachers' commitment to stay in Thailand and maintain their teaching responsibilities. Figure 8 shows the factors linked to the personal motivation and commitment theme.

One of the most significant motivators identified in this theme was the responsibility to family and country. Teachers expressed a strong sense of duty towards their families, which often influenced their decision to continue working abroad. Teacher 2 shared that providing for their family was one of the primary reasons they chose to work in Thailand, stating, *"I was the breadwinner because my parents are both bedridden, so I have to work for my family, I pay for my sibling's education."* Teacher 4 also emphasized this, saying, *"to support and help my family."* Teacher 6 similarly noted his financial responsibility toward his family back home in the Philippines, stating, *"To provide financial support to my family in the Philippines."* This sense of responsibility was not limited to financial support but also included a desire to contribute to the well-being of their loved ones. The teachers often viewed their role as a professional obligation and a moral responsibility to help their families and improve their lives. They embody the Filipino value of providing for the family, often reflecting the principle of *sakripisyo* (sacrifice). This cultural value often drives Filipinos' decisions to work abroad (Crisostomo, 2014).

Another key factor driving teachers' motivation was intrinsic motivation, the internal satisfaction they gain from teaching and making a difference in students' lives. For many teachers, the personal fulfillment they derive from their work is more important than external rewards. Teacher 7 discussed how their internal drive kept them motivated, even in the face of challenges. *"Helping and teaching our students on how to make research is very important because it plays an important role in helping all students become proficient in science and making science education more equitable and inclusive,"* she remarked. Teacher 1 also shared that the sense of fulfillment he felt when students showed improvement was a major source of motivation. *"Help more my students in further exploring and learning science because it's a fulfillment for me as a teacher to impart knowledge to my students."* Moreover, Teacher 8 highlighted how the impact of her work on students' academic and personal development kept her engaged and inspired. *"Continuously improving my teaching practices and making a lasting difference in the educational experience of my students."* This intrinsic motivation is particularly important in the context of teaching abroad, where external factors such as pay or benefits might not always be the primary drivers. Instead, the teachers' personal satisfaction and the sense of accomplishment they derive from their role as educators keep them committed to their work.

The third significant motivating factor identified was the teachers' pride in their work and their desire to represent the Philippines positively. Many participants expressed a strong internal drive to uphold the reputation of Filipino teachers abroad. Teacher 2 emphasized that teaching abroad was not just a job but a responsibility to show the world the value and credibility of Filipino educators. He said, *"We have to do something to uplift our credibility as Filipinos."* Similarly, Teacher 1 shared his perspective, stating that teaching was a way to showcase the competency and values of the Philippines. He mentioned, *"We always give our best in everything we do"* and *"continue inspiring everyone, and let's strive so we can be proud as Filipinos."* This sense of cultural responsibility was a recurring theme throughout the responses, suggesting that the teachers' commitment to their work is strongly tied to a sense of cultural pride and the desire to be role models for their students and their host country.

The findings of this study highlight several key factors that form the personal motivation and commitment of Filipino science teachers in Thailand. Teachers' pride in their cultural representation, intrinsic motivation derived from personal fulfillment, and a strong sense of responsibility to their families and country are central to their decision to teach and remain in Thailand. These motivations align with previous studies that emphasize the importance of cultural pride and family obligations as strong factors influencing teachers' decisions to work abroad. When examined through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, these motivations span multiple levels of the hierarchy. At the physiological and safety levels, the teachers' decision to work abroad often stems from the need for financial stability to support their families and ensure a secure future. The significantly higher salaries and benefits offered in Thailand compared to the Philippines help fulfill these basic needs. Moving up the hierarchy, the teachers' pride in representing their culture and their desire to uplift the credibility of Filipinos align with esteem needs, reflecting their drive

for recognition and respect. Finally, the intrinsic motivation to grow as educators and contribute meaningfully to their students' lives fulfills their self-actualization needs, showcasing their pursuit of personal and professional growth.

These motivations are also consistent with self-determination theory, which suggests that individuals are motivated to engage in activities that align with their intrinsic goals and values (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Overall, the findings suggest that Filipino teachers are motivated not only by external factors such as compensation but also by personal and cultural reasons. These insights provide valuable lessons for schools in Thailand, particularly in terms of creating supportive environments that acknowledge the teachers' motivations and challenges, fostering their long-term commitment and retention.

Theme 2: Teaching Environment and Support

The second theme that occurred from the interviews was Teaching Environment and Support, which highlights the teachers' perspectives on the working conditions, institutional support, and the classroom environment in which they teach. Figure 9 shows the factors linked to the teaching environment and support theme. This theme reveals that while teachers face several challenges in their teaching roles abroad, the level of support they receive from the school and the community is important in enhancing their experience and affecting their motivation to continue teaching in Thailand.

A recurring factor in the responses was the importance of classroom facilities and resources. Teachers expressed the need for well-equipped classrooms and learning materials to help them effectively teach their students. Teacher 8 commented, *"Utilizing online platforms like Kahoot and Quizizz to enhance student engagement and make learning more interactive."* Teacher 5 echoed this: *"While resources are provided for teaching, there's also a sense of responsibility for educators to supplement them."* Teacher 4 also pointed out that the lack of appropriate teaching materials can hinder her ability to provide the best educational experience, stating, *"Teaching resources in science is actually very limited."* This concern emphasizes the importance of adequate instructional resources are important for effective teaching (Ekwevugbe & Atare, 2022). Teachers lacking the necessary resources may face difficulties in delivering quality education, leading to job dissatisfaction and burnout. The teachers' comments suggest that improving classroom facilities and resources is a key area that could enhance their teaching effectiveness and overall job satisfaction.

Another significant factor was the level of institutional support and training provided by the schools. Teachers reported varying degrees of support from their institutions, with some feeling well-supported and others expressing concerns over insufficient professional development opportunities. Teacher 5 shared, *"My school has been instrumental in enhancing my teaching skills through seminars and workshops."* Teacher 7 added, *"By attending seminars, I have widened my knowledge on how I'm going to strategize my lesson well so my students will be interested in it."* However, Teacher 3 highlighted the lack of support for career opportunities, stating, *"There is less opportunity for career development."* Teacher 6 also pointed out that continuous professional development was essential to keeping them motivated and effective as educators. *"Challenges or limitations faced early in one's career may inspire a search for new environments that offer professional development opportunities,"* he remarked. These responses suggest that teachers' professional growth is highly influenced by the support they receive from their schools, especially in terms of ongoing training and development programs.

The relationship between teachers and students is another important aspect of the teaching environment. Teachers emphasized the positive impact of strong teacher-student relationships on their motivation and the overall classroom dynamic. Teacher 4 shared, *"I was actually amazed with how students respect their teacher. I think it's one of the best things about being a teacher here. Students greet you well, and always try to start a conversation with you even if they can't speak in English that much."* He also mentioned, *"I also use positive reinforcements to motivate students."* Teacher 2 echoed this, stating, *"The respect of students for their teachers is one of the things that I really love."* Teacher 7 also noted the

importance of a supportive classroom environment for students and teachers. *"I had my cooperating teacher with me, to translate some of my lessons."* The classroom should be a safe space for teachers and students to grow. When there's mutual respect and understanding, the teaching process becomes much easier. The teachers' experiences show that nurturing a supportive classroom environment where open communication and mutual respect are prioritized is essential in enhancing teaching effectiveness and overall job satisfaction.

The findings from this study reveal that the teaching environment and the level of institutional support significantly influence teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. Teachers emphasized the importance of classroom facilities and resources, institutional support and training, and positive teacher-student interactions. These factors are critical in forming teachers' overall teaching experience and their decision to remain in Thailand. When viewed through Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, these findings can be categorized into hygiene factors and motivators, which together influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors, such as classroom facilities, teaching resources, and institutional support, address the baseline conditions of the teachers' work environment. While these factors may not inherently motivate teachers, their absence, such as inadequate resources or lack of professional development opportunities, can lead to dissatisfaction. For instance, the teachers' concerns about insufficient resources and training opportunities underscore the importance of maintaining adequate hygiene factors to prevent dissatisfaction.

On the other hand, motivators, which drive job satisfaction and motivation, are reflected in the teachers' positive comments about their relationships with students and the fulfillment they derive from their teaching roles. Positive teacher-student interactions contribute to a sense of purpose and accomplishment, enhancing intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. These motivators align with Herzberg's theory that factors such as recognition, responsibility, and meaningful work are key to fostering motivation.

The teachers' concerns about the lack of resources and professional development opportunities highlight the need for schools to invest in better classroom infrastructure and ongoing training programs. Research supports the idea that adequate teaching resources and continuous professional development are important for improving teachers' performance and satisfaction (OECD 2019). The teachers' positive comments about strong teacher-student relationships further underscore the importance of a supportive classroom environment in enhancing motivation and teaching effectiveness.

Findings indicate that improving both teacher satisfaction and retention in Thailand involves addressing hygiene factors and motivators. Investing in better classroom infrastructure and ongoing professional development can alleviate dissatisfaction while fostering a supportive classroom environment, and recognizing teachers' contributions can amplify motivation and engagement. These dual approaches ensure a holistic strategy for improving teachers' overall experiences and long-term commitment.

Theme 3: Cultural and Language Adaptation

The third theme identified in the analysis was Cultural and Language Adaptation. This theme explores how Filipino teachers adapt to the cultural and language differences they encounter while teaching in Thailand. It highlights the challenges and strategies teachers use to manage the new environment, as well as the impact of these adaptations on their teaching and job satisfaction. Teachers expressed varying levels of success in adapting to Thai culture and language, and the degree of success was closely linked to their overall satisfaction and effectiveness in the classroom. Figure 10 shows the factors linked to the theme of cultural and language adaptation.

A key factor that appeared from the interviews was the perceived benefits of the cultural experience. Several teachers reflected on how teaching in Thailand has broadened their perspectives and enriched their professional and personal lives. Teacher 6 shared, *"The way of life is better, the cost of living is cheaper, and there is better compensation and not too much paperwork."* Teacher 5 echoed this sentiment, saying,

“Cultural competence in Thai culture enhances cultural competence, fostering a better understanding of diverse perspectives and teaching approaches.” This reflects how cultural exchange is a challenge and an opportunity for personal and professional growth. Teachers who embrace cultural differences find that their experiences in Thailand enhance their teaching approach and help them develop valuable cross-cultural communication skills.

Another factor under this theme was the language barrier and its impact on communication in the classroom. Many teachers mentioned struggling with the Thai language, which hindered their ability to communicate effectively with students and colleagues. Teacher 1 shared, *“It’s quite difficult to adjust, in terms of the culture and the student, actually the worst thing is the language barrier.”* He added, *“It’s hard for them to follow instructions if they don’t understand the language.”* Teacher 2 also mentioned similar challenges: *“There are limitations because of the language barrier.”* Despite the challenges, several teachers discussed how they adapted by making their lessons simpler by adjusting the teaching approach. Teacher 5 highlighted, *“Making your lesson understandable putting your words into actions being a passionate and approachable teacher.”* Teacher 8 added, *“I frequently utilize visual aids, hands-on experiments, and simplified explanations to bridge the communication gap”,* and *“Additionally, I adjust my teaching approach by incorporating more group work and interactive activities to enhance engagement, particularly for students with limited English proficiency.”* This suggests that while language was an initial barrier, teachers employed different communication strategies to work around it. The language barrier, though challenging, appears to be something that many teachers successfully overcome by adopting flexible teaching methods. Adapting to a different language environment reflects the teachers' resilience and adaptability in overcoming challenges, positively impacting their teaching experience.

The third significant factor in this theme was cultural differences in teaching and learning styles. Teachers noted that the approach to teaching and learning in Thailand differed from what they were accustomed to in the Philippines, which posed initial challenges. Teacher 2 shared about academic freedom, *“Our will to provide what our students need or want, we cannot do that because we have to stick to what the Thai teachers want.”* He further added *“The respect of students to their teachers is one of the things that I really love about Thai culture. Students in the Philippines have a feeling of entitlement. They talk about students’ rights and others.”* Teacher 1 supported this by saying *“In terms of culture they are impressive.”* In response, teachers discussed the strategies they employed to adapt their teaching approaches to better suit the cultural expectations of Thai students. Teacher 8 said, *“I had to adjust by being more patient and understanding. I also incorporated more visual aids and activities that cater to different learning styles.”* This suggests that while cultural differences presented initial challenges, teachers were able to adjust their teaching methods to better fit the local cultural context. The teachers’ ability to adapt and modify their teaching styles shows their cultural flexibility and commitment to providing a high-quality educational experience, which contributes to their overall effectiveness and job satisfaction.

The final key factor from the interviews was the teachers’ experiences of cultural integration, another factor discussed in the interviews. While some teachers expressed the challenges of adjusting to Thai culture, others highlighted the support they received from the school and community in helping them integrate into Thai society. Teacher 4 mentioned the assistance from colleagues: *“My Thai colleagues have been very supportive. They help me understand the culture and provide guidance when needed.”* In contrast, Teacher 2 noted that while the school did not offer much direct support, they still found ways to integrate by actively participating in local activities. *“I try to join local events and festivals to understand the culture better. It’s a way of connecting with the community,”* they said. These responses indicate that while formal support for cultural integration varies, teachers who make an effort to immerse themselves in Thai culture and engage with the local community tend to have more successful cultural adaptation experiences. This factor shows that support for cultural integration, whether through formal programs or informal community engagement, plays a key role in easing the adaptation process and contributing to teachers' sense of belonging and job satisfaction.

The findings from the interviews underscore that cultural and language adaptation is a significant factor influencing the teachers' experiences and motivation to stay in Thailand. The teachers' responses indicate that the language barrier and differences in teaching styles were initial challenges. However, they successfully navigated these challenges through flexibility, patience, and adaptation and found ways to effectively communicate and teach in the local context. Language barriers were particularly challenging for teachers, but their strategies, such as learning basic phrases and using non-verbal cues, show their resilience and adaptability. These findings are consistent with research that language proficiency contributes to teaching effectiveness (Sadeghi, Richards, & Ghaderi, 2020), but it is also possible to overcome language barriers with the right strategies. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides a valuable perspective for interpreting these findings. According to SDT, individuals are motivated when their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The teachers' efforts to adapt their teaching methods and overcome language barriers reflect their pursuit of competence and the drive to master challenges and improve their skills. As they adjusted to the Thai educational system and cultural context, they demonstrated a growing sense of efficacy in managing their classrooms and delivering effective lessons, fulfilling their need for competence. Additionally, the teachers' positive interactions with Thai students and their appreciation for the cultural exchange align with the SDT concept of relatedness, which involves feeling connected to others and fostering meaningful relationships. By building rapport with their students and integrating into the local community, the teachers enhanced their teaching effectiveness and deepened their connection to their new cultural environment.

The differences in teaching and learning styles between the Philippines and Thailand were also significant, but teachers were able to adjust by adopting more interactive teaching methods and engaging students through hands-on activities. This aligns with the literature on cross-cultural teaching strategies, which emphasizes the importance of adapting teaching methods to fit students' cultural context for effective learning (Jukes et al., 2021).

Moreover, the perceived benefits of cultural experience highlighted how teaching in Thailand can be an enriching experience. The teachers expressed that their time in Thailand has broadened their professional skills and enriched their personal lives. This reflects the positive aspects of intercultural professional development for educators that can enhance their ability to foster student intercultural learning (Namaste et al., 2024).

Theme 4: Work Environment and Support Systems

The fourth theme identified in the analysis was Work Environment and Support Systems. This theme focuses on the aspects of the work environment in Thailand that impact teachers' motivation and job satisfaction, including available resources, school culture, and support from colleagues and administration. Teachers discussed both the positive and challenging aspects of their work environment, particularly how institutional support and the school atmosphere influenced their teaching effectiveness and overall experience in Thailand. Figure 11 shows the factors linked to the theme of the work environment and support systems.

One important aspect of the work environment discussed by teachers was the recognition of their work and the opportunities for career development. Teacher 4 mentioned, *"Working in a foreign country as a science teacher, I observe that there is a lack of recognition of our work or accomplishment. For them, it's enough that we have done our job. Sometimes, they don't give us the credits due for us."* He further added, *"I know that as a teacher, we also seek appreciation and recognition for our work, but since I don't really get it here, I just remind myself that what's important is I did my work and I was responsible enough."* Teacher 2 added, *"And at the end of the day, we are not recognized. It's worthless. That's also one of our struggles... recognition. After all, we are just foreign teachers. It's something that disappoints us foreign teachers, you are not given the credit that you are worth of."* This lack of formal recognition affects teachers' motivation, as they feel their efforts are not fully appreciated. While the lack of formal recognition

may be a drawback, the opportunity for personal and professional growth seems to be a key motivator for teachers who want to continue improving their teaching practices.

The second aspect is the support from colleagues and school administration was also a significant factor in teachers' experiences in Thailand. Several teachers spoke positively about the assistance and collaboration they receive from their Thai colleagues, which helps them adapt and succeed in their roles. Teacher 4 mentioned, *"The Thai teachers are very supportive. They guide me when I need help and are always willing to share their knowledge about the culture and school rules."* Teacher 3 emphasized, *"I am lucky that I have my assistant teachers. After the class or if we have time, I ask her for some advice on what strategies she is using... so there will be like symbiotic relationship between me and my partner teachers... to ask for some effective strategies on how to cope with their traditions and learning styles of the students."* This underscores the importance of collaborative relationships between foreign and local teachers, which enhances teaching effectiveness and helps teachers feel supported. However, some teachers, like Teacher 2, indicated that there were challenges in working with colleagues, particularly when there were differences in teaching methods. Teacher 2 said, *"They expect me to be always present in class, they take pictures of my PowerPoint, they see and check almost everything, and... so on. So there are tensions sometimes. I've even experienced being stopped during my class, she said 'you're not supposed to teach that.'" This suggests that while the overall support system in the schools is generally positive, some challenges remain related to academic autonomy and teaching methods. These challenges highlight the importance of establishing clear communication and mutual respect between foreign and local teachers to foster a positive working environment.*

Another key factor under this theme was the institutional support and availability of resources for teaching. Teachers noted that schools in Thailand provide resources such as laboratory equipment, textbooks, and teaching materials, contributing to their effective teaching ability. Teacher 8 commented, *"The school provides necessary items such as paper, printer ink, and other essential supplies."* She further added, *"I also appreciate that my current school provides accommodation for teachers, conveniently located near the campus, making it easier to commute."* Teacher 7 shared *"I had my cooperating teacher with me, to translate some of my lessons."* This highlights that the availability of resources is a positive aspect of the work environment in Thailand.

Lastly, many teachers expressed satisfaction with the work environment in Thailand, highlighting the supportive atmosphere and collegial relationships they experience. Teachers noted that the work environment in Thailand is generally less stressful compared to their previous experiences in the Philippines. Teacher 1 shared, *"I like Thailand as my workplace because we have longer vacations and the work environment is much less stressful compared to schools I've worked in before."* Teacher 4 echoed this sentiment, stating, *"The workload is lighter, and there are more holidays. I'm able to travel and rest without thinking about work during weekends."* This shows that the less stressful work environment and longer vacation periods are significant factors that contribute to teachers' overall satisfaction and motivation to remain in Thailand. The ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance appears to be an important element in sustaining a long-term commitment to teaching abroad. It suggests that work-life balance is critical to the teachers' overall satisfaction and longevity in their roles.

The findings from this theme demonstrate that Thailand's work environment and support systems significantly influence Filipino teachers' experiences and motivation to remain in the country. The positive aspects of the work environment, such as the less stressful atmosphere, longer vacation periods, and availability of resources, contribute to teachers' overall job satisfaction. These factors are consistent with existing research that highlights the importance of working conditions, including access to resources and support (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). It also aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which differentiates between hygiene factors and motivators (Ibrahim et al., 2023). Hygiene factors, such as working conditions, salary, and job security, prevent dissatisfaction and create a stable work environment.

In this study, the less stressful atmosphere and adequate resources serve as critical hygiene factors, enabling teachers to focus on their teaching responsibilities without undue stress.

Motivators, on the other hand, relate to intrinsic elements that drive job satisfaction and personal fulfillment. The collaboration with Thai teachers and the support from colleagues highlight the importance of meaningful interpersonal relationships, which contribute to a sense of achievement and belonging. This aligns with the motivators described in Herzberg's theory, such as recognition, responsibility, and growth opportunities.

Support from colleagues and collaboration with Thai teachers are other significant factors that facilitate adaptation to the local teaching environment. This underscores the importance of fostering a collaborative culture for increasing school effectiveness and teacher capacity (Kasmawati, 2019). While some teachers reported challenges related to differences in teaching methods, effective communication and mutual respect between foreign and local teachers are crucial to creating a positive and productive working environment. Finally, the lack of formal recognition and limited opportunities for career advancement highlights the need for schools in Thailand to develop strategies that recognize and value the contributions of foreign teachers. Recognizing the importance of teacher recognition is critical to enhancing job satisfaction and retention (Asad Juma, 2024).

Theme 5: Teaching and Cultural Challenges

The fifth theme identified in the analysis was Teaching and Cultural Challenges, which revolves around the difficulties teachers face due to differences in teaching methods, cultural norms, and language barriers in Thailand's teaching context. Filipino science teachers in Thailand discussed various aspects of cultural adaptation, including how cultural differences influence classroom dynamics, teaching strategies, and student behavior. This theme also highlights the impact of language barriers and how teachers cope with these challenges to continue providing effective instruction. Figure 12 shows the factors linked to the theme of teaching and cultural challenges.

Teachers shared various strategies and coping mechanisms to address these challenges. A common approach was to focus on engagement strategies such as hands-on activities and group work to make the learning process more interactive and accessible. Teacher 8 emphasized, *"To address the language barrier, I frequently utilize visual aids, hands-on experiments, and simplified explanations to bridge the communication gap. Additionally, I adjust my teaching approach by incorporating more group work and interactive activities to enhance engagement, particularly for students with limited English proficiency."* Teachers also utilized visual aids, simplified language, and group discussions to facilitate understanding. Teacher 2 discussed how being solution-oriented helped her address the challenges she faced: *"You don't see a problem as the nature of it.... 'The challenges of it.... How do I solve it? Okay, translate it'. You will have a hard time but at least, there's a solution to your problems. So, the answer is to be a solution-driven person/teacher."*

Several teachers expressed frustration with the lack of academic freedom in Thailand. They noted that they were often restricted in terms of the content they could teach, particularly in areas where the Thai curriculum did not align with their own expertise or preferred teaching methods. Teacher 2 said, *"We don't have academic freedom as we have to stick with what we have to teach."* He also added, *"Here in Thailand, we cannot do that. We cannot go beyond what we need to teach."* Teacher 4 had a similar concern: *"On the content of the lesson, I don't mind it so much. I just follow what my Thai partners say. At the end of the day, that is what they want their students to learn and I really cannot do anything about it."* Despite these limitations, teachers did their best to adapt their teaching methods to meet their students' needs within the curriculum's confines. Teacher 8 said, *"Utilizing online platforms to enhance student engagement and make learning more interactive."*

Classroom management was another aspect impacted by cultural differences. Teachers noted that students in Thailand generally show more respect towards teachers than students in the Philippines, but the

lack of competition and students' relaxed attitude toward academic performance posed challenges for maintaining motivation and discipline. Teacher 4 commented, *"I was actually amazed with how students respect their teacher. I think it's one of the best things about being a teacher here. Students greet you well, and always try to start conversation with you even if they can't speak in English that much."* Teacher 2 added, *"In the Philippines, we have more emphasis on achieving academic success and recognition, but here in Thailand, students seem content with simply passing, and this makes classroom management a bit more challenging."* Despite these challenges, teachers employed various strategies to manage classrooms effectively. Teacher 1 mentioned, *"I make sure to establish clear rules and routines in my classroom. I also use project-based activities to keep the students engaged and motivate them to talk more in class."* Teacher 4 also highlighted the importance of structure: *"I use positive reinforcement to motivate students and maintain discipline, especially since the students are not as academically competitive."*

Cultural adaptation was another major challenge highlighted by the teachers. Teachers had to adjust their teaching methods and expectations to align with local cultural norms and values. Teacher 1 shared, *"Actually, it's quite difficult to adjust."* The most difficult part of adjusting was understanding the cultural differences, especially the way students and teachers interact. He further added, *"The students in the Philippines are more competitive compared to here. Students here are very low-key, you can see very few are competitive unlike in the Philippines."* Teacher 3 echoed this sentiment: *"When I came here in Thailand, of course, there were challenges adjusting to the Thai culture, the Thai environment, the students, and especially with the language barrier."* This cultural shift required teachers to adopt a more flexible teaching style that considered students' local cultural expectations. For instance, Teacher 4 mentioned, *"Teaching in a multicultural environment, I learned to adapt, be flexible and communicate well. These skills have helped me to overcome some challenges that I encounter along this journey. I also learned to be more independent and more patient."* Teacher 7 echoed the same notion: *"As a teacher you need to squeeze out all of the strategies you have in your head for your students to understand your lesson. As a science teacher in Thailand in the country assigned to a public school you need to be versatile for your student's sake."* Adapting teaching strategies to fit the students' cultural context became a key factor in managing this challenge.

Teaching and Cultural Challenges reveal how language barriers, cultural adaptation, and classroom management influence the experiences of Filipino science teachers in Thailand. The language barrier was the most significant challenge, affecting communication and teaching effectiveness. Teachers employed various strategies such as visual aids, hands-on activities, and simplified explanations to overcome this challenge, aligning with the best language acquisition and teaching practices. The cultural differences between Filipino and Thai students also posed challenges for teachers, especially in terms of student motivation and classroom dynamics. Teachers had to adapt their teaching methods to fit the less competitive nature of Thai students and adjust their expectations accordingly. This aligns with previous research suggesting that effective teachers in cross-cultural settings must be flexible and adaptable (Triggs, 2021).

The challenges and coping mechanisms highlighted by the teachers also align with Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals in influencing career-related challenges (Ye, Jun (2021)). The teachers' ability to adapt their teaching methods and manage classroom dynamics reflects their self-efficacy or belief in their ability to succeed despite the obstacles presented by language barriers and cultural differences. Their use of strategies like visual aids and group work demonstrates a proactive approach driven by their expectation that these efforts will lead to positive teaching outcomes and student engagement.

The lack of academic freedom and constraints imposed by the Thai curriculum highlights a tension between personal teaching goals and systemic limitations. According to SCCT, such external factors can influence career satisfaction and persistence. However, the teachers' reliance on collaboration and peer support to overcome these challenges demonstrates the importance of social influences in maintaining motivation and achieving career goals. The ability to find alternative pathways to success, even within

constrained environments, reflects the dynamic interaction between individual agency and environmental factors posited by SCCT.

Overall, the findings emphasize the need for foreign teachers to develop adaptability, cultural awareness, and flexible teaching strategies to succeed in diverse educational environments. Additionally, the importance of support from colleagues and a collaborative work environment was evident in how teachers coped with the challenges.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that Filipino science teachers find teaching positions in Thailand appealing because of financial benefits, opportunities for personal and professional growth, and the opportunity to represent their Filipino identity. However, they encounter challenges such as language barriers, cultural differences, limited academic freedom, and differences in teaching practices. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrate adaptability and resilience through innovative teaching strategies, cultural adjustment, and peer collaboration. Supportive work environments and adequate resources contribute to their satisfaction, although limited formal recognition and career development opportunities remain areas for improvement.

Recommendations

It is recommended that aspiring Filipino science teachers prepare for cultural and language differences, familiarize themselves with the Thai education system, and strengthen their teaching and classroom-management skills. The Philippine Department of Education may strengthen pre-departure training and review policies related to teachers' compensation, working conditions, and professional development. Thai schools may enhance recognition and career development opportunities, provide language and cultural integration programs, and strengthen instructional resources and professional development. Future researchers may conduct longitudinal and comparative studies to further examine the evolving motivations, challenges, and coping strategies of Filipino and other foreign teachers in Thailand.

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