

Do Early Warning Systems and Student Engagement Activities Reduce Dropout? Findings from the Four-Country SDPP Evaluation

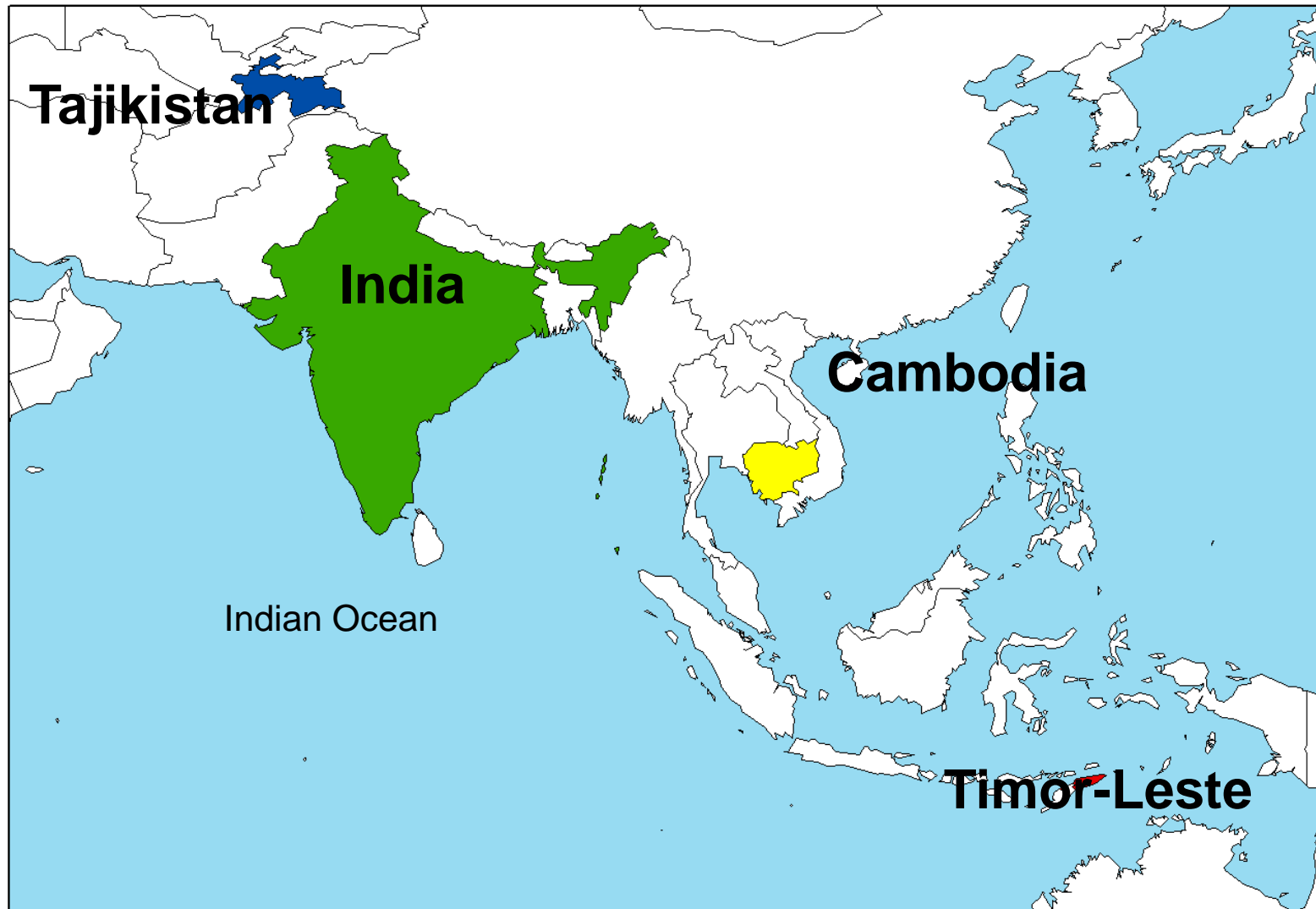
**School Dropout Prevention Summit 2015
Washington, DC
September 10, 2015**



School Dropout Prevention Pilot Program

- **Five-year, four-country project**
 - Funded by USAID
 - Implemented in Cambodia, India, Tajikistan and Timor Leste
 - Led by Creative Associates, implemented with Mathematica, School-to-School and local partners– KAPE, CARE and QUEST
- Aimed at providing **evidence-based solutions to mitigate dropout** from primary and secondary school
- **Three-step applied research process**
 - Assess global evidence on drop-out prevention
 - Understand dropout in target countries
 - Design, implement, and rigorously evaluate interventions to reduce dropout in target countries

SDPP Implements and Tests Programs in Four Asian Countries



Three Step Design Process

Step 1: Literature Review

- To avoid duplication of evaluated interventions and identify promising interventions
- Literature on proven dropout prevention intervention is scarce, particularly in developing countries
- Interventions focused on financial incentives to send and support child in school

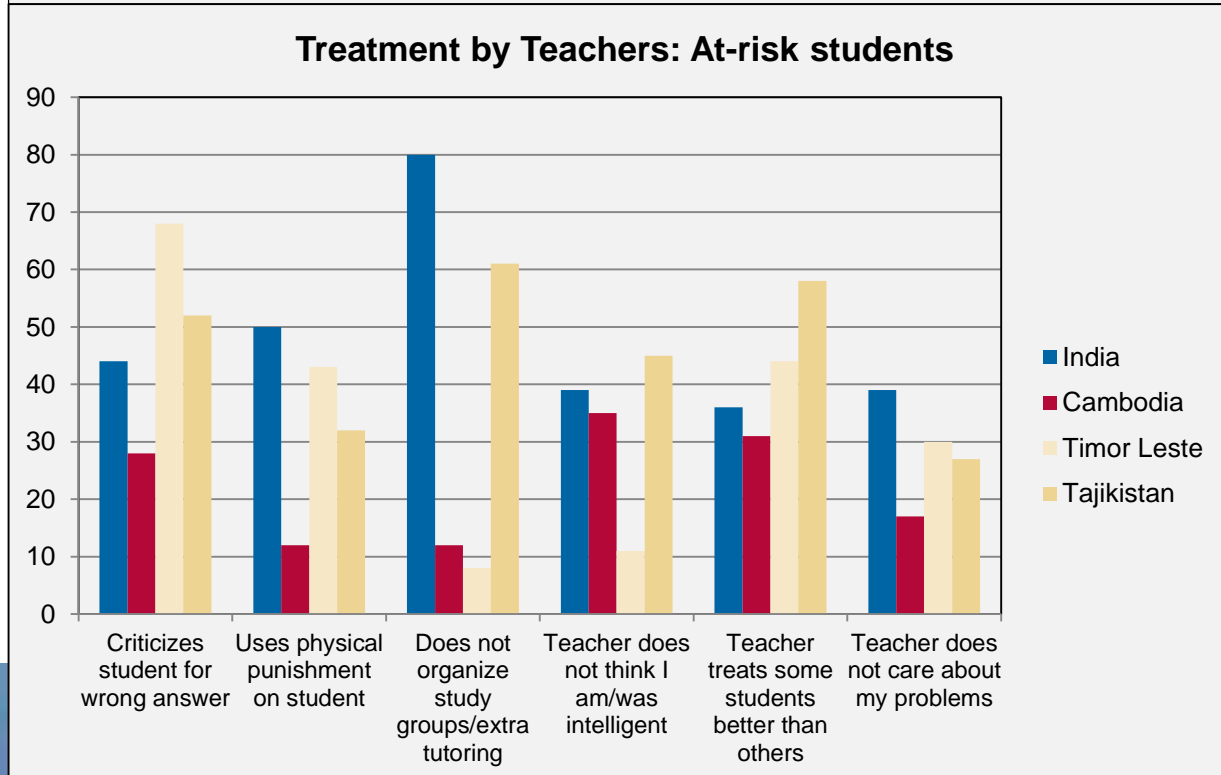
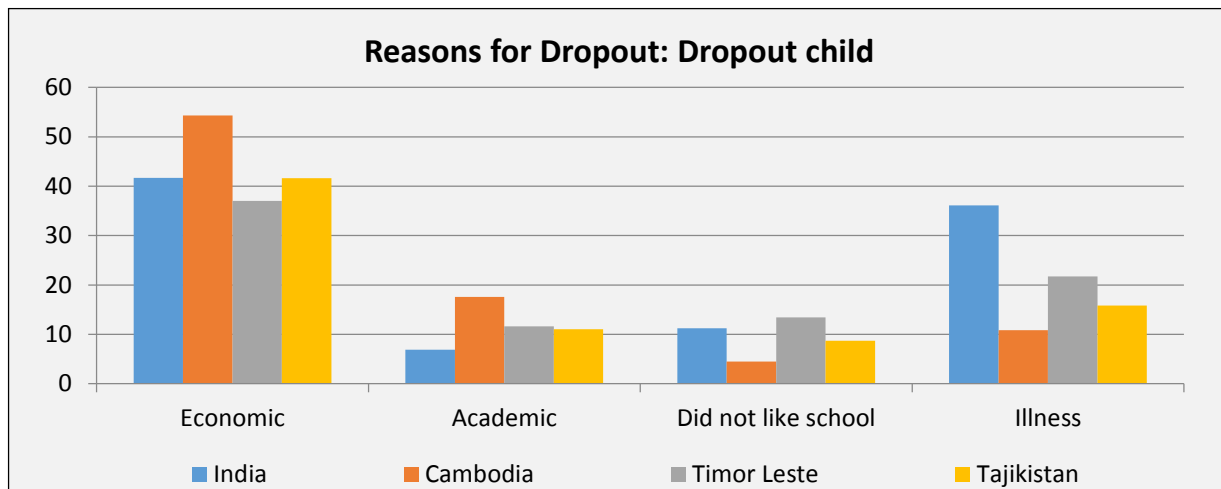
Step 2: Trend Analysis:

- To identify target areas and groups for intervention in each country
- Based on secondary national data

Three Step Design Process

Step 3: Situational Analysis: to understand factors and conditions affecting dropout

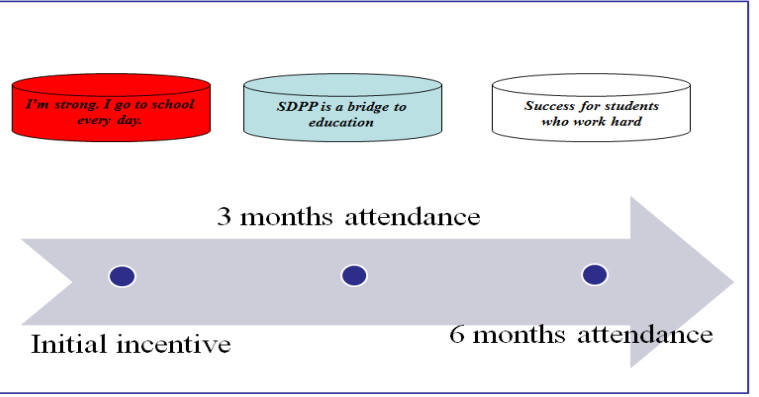
- “pull” factors (economic) predominated
- “push” factors (school experience) played a role



SDPP Interventions: Early Warning Systems

- **Early Warning Systems (EWS) implemented in all countries to:**
 - Identify at-risk students and monitor attendance, coursework and behavior
 - Enhance capacity of schools to address at-risk student needs
 - Create and strengthen partnerships between school, community and parents of at-risk student
- **Each EWS is unique to its country with:**
 - Customized predictors of dropout to identify students
 - Tailored activities for first response and community engagement
 - Four countries = four projects= four evaluations

Scoring Sheet		Attendance	Early Departure	Course Performance	Work Obligations	Parent's Literacy	Behaviour
School: _____		0 Attended 86% or more	0 Never leaves early	0 61% and above	0 Doesn't affect attendance	0 Both parents can read	0 No problems
Teacher: _____		1 Attended between 71-85%	1 Leaves early 1-3 times	1 51-60%	1 Intermittently affects attendance	1 One parent can read	1 Affects their own engagement in class
SDPP ID No. _____		2 Attended 70% or less days	2 Leaves early 4 times or more	2 50% or lower	2 Regularly affects attendance	2 Neither parent can read	2 Affect other's engagement in class
Student Name _____							



SDPP Interventions: Student Engagement

- **Student Engagement interventions to motivate attendance, improve engagement, build learning skills, and increase enjoyment and interest in schools**
 - Computer Labs and Computer Literacy: Cambodia
 - Structured Recreational/Enrichment programs: India and Timor Leste
 - After-school Tutoring program: Tajikistan



This presentation will...

- **Describe the impact evaluation design used to estimate the impact of SDPP in all four countries.**
- **Present final results from the quantitative impact evaluation.**
- **Present beneficiary perspectives on the results from qualitative research study**

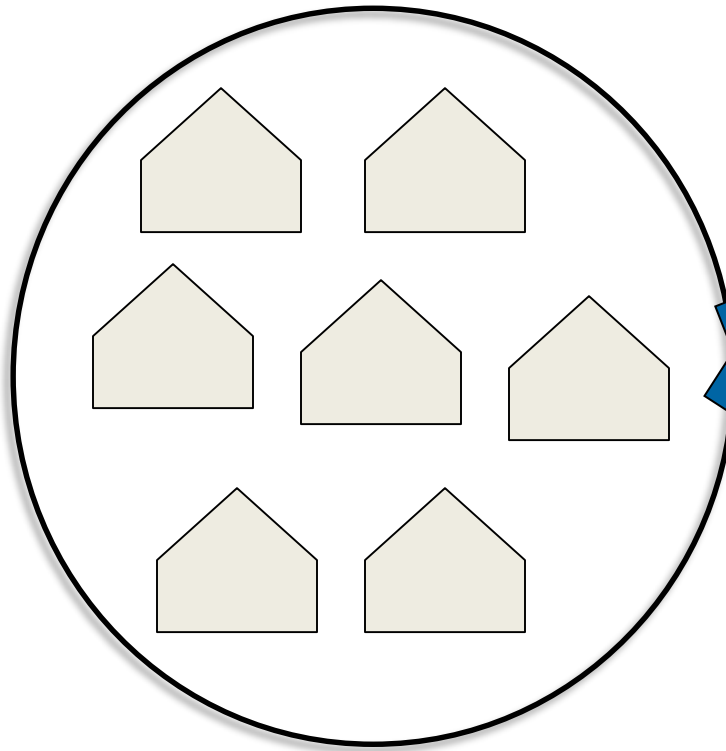
Research Questions

- **What are the impacts on outcomes the program was primarily intended to influence?**
 - **Teacher behavior and attitudes**
 - **Attitudes of at-risk students**
 - **Student engagement**
 - **School dropout**

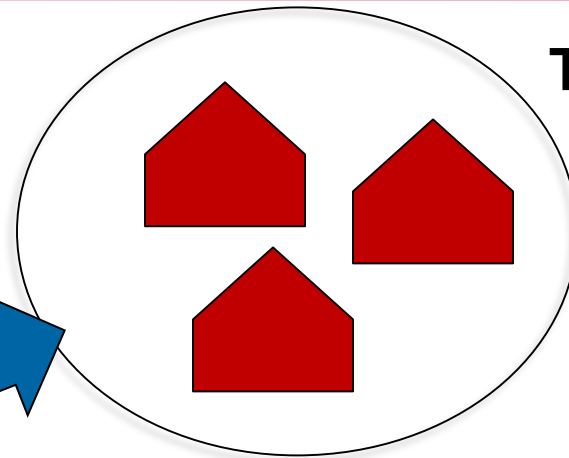
- **What are the impacts for students most at risk of dropping out of school?**

Randomized Controlled Trials Give Rigorous Answers to Research Questions

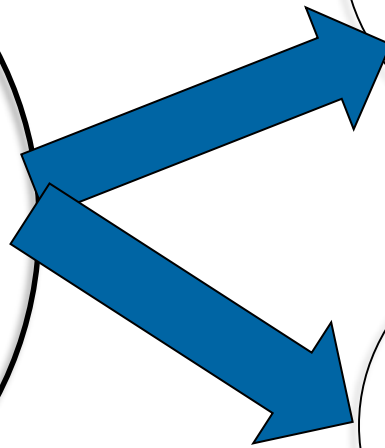
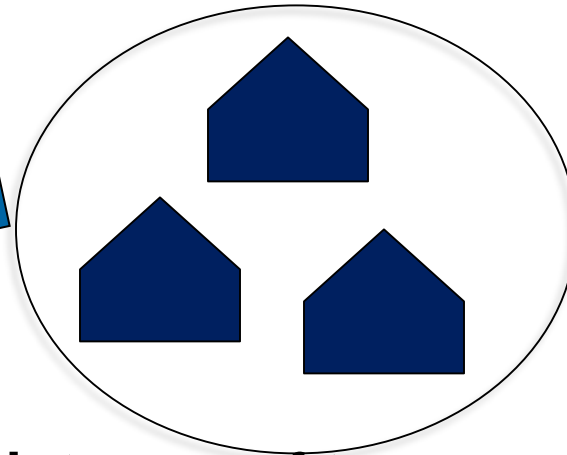
Eligible Schools



Treatment Group



Control Group

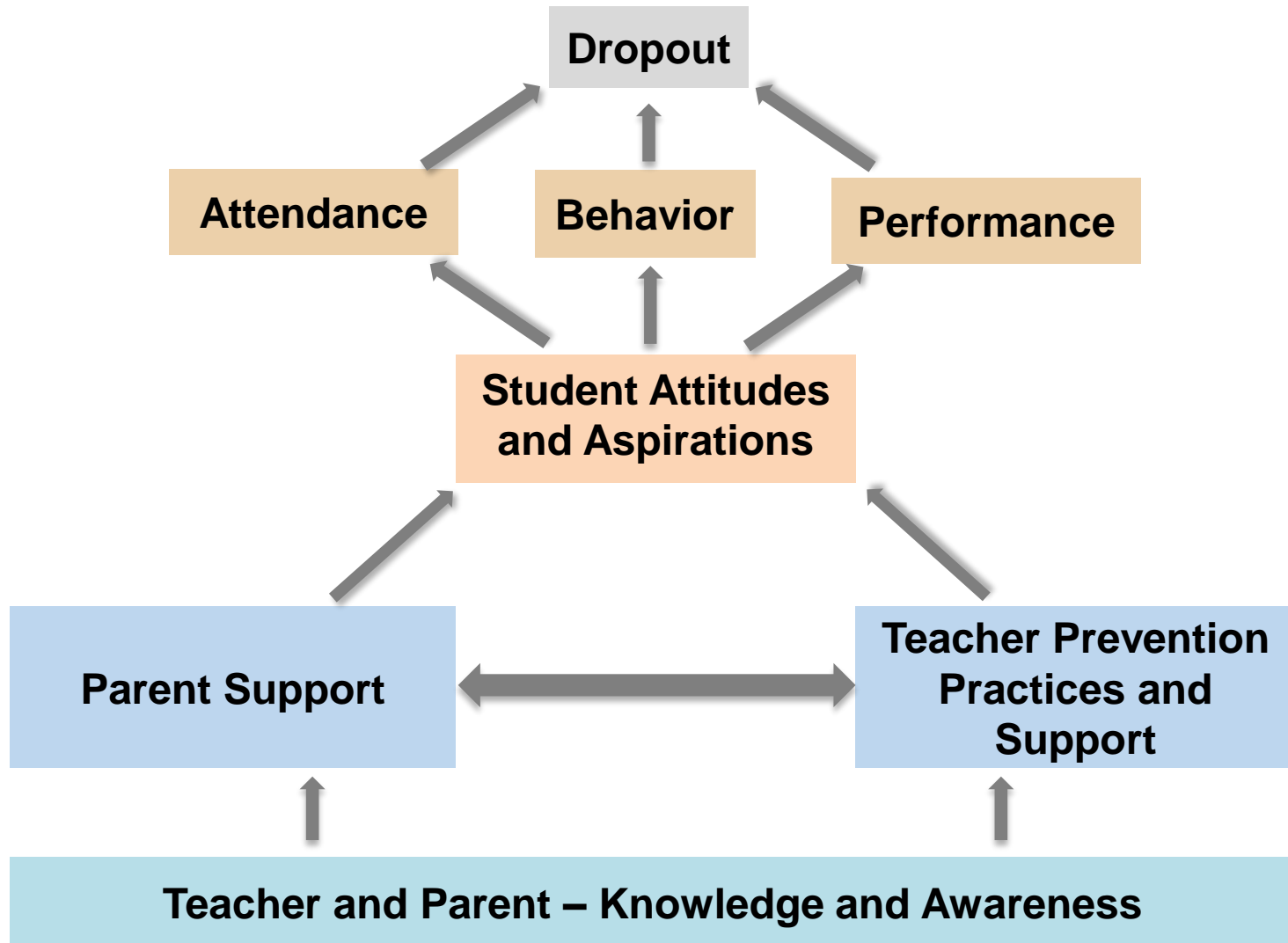


- Each school assigned **RANDOMLY** into one of two groups:
 - Treatment group (will receive the treatment)
 - Control group (will not receive the treatment)

Evaluation Sample

Country	Sample schools	Target grades	Student records	Surveyed at-risk students	Surveyed teachers
Cambodia	322	7–9	192,012	18,907	6,041
Tajikistan	165	9	16,653	4,673	1,841
India	220	5	40,254	9,932	1,182
Timor-Leste	190	4–6	37,861	7,387	1,444
TOTAL	897	4-9	286,780	40,899	10,508

SDPP Theory of Change



Assessment of Effectiveness Compares Groups For Outcomes in Several Domains

- **Teacher and administrator knowledge, attitudes, and practices**
- **Attitudes of at-risk students**
- **Engagement in school**
- **School dropout**

Statistical Significance

- Determine whether differences between SDPP and control groups are sufficiently large that it is unlikely that the difference is due to chance.
- Impact estimates are described as *statistically significant* if there is less than a 5 percent probability that it is due to chance (and not to SDPP).
- Impact estimates are described as marginally significant if the probability that it is due to chance (and not to the SDPP program) is between 5 and 10 percent.
 - In tables and figures, the statistically significant impacts at the 1 percent, 5 percent, and 10 percent levels are denoted with asterisks as ***, ** or *.

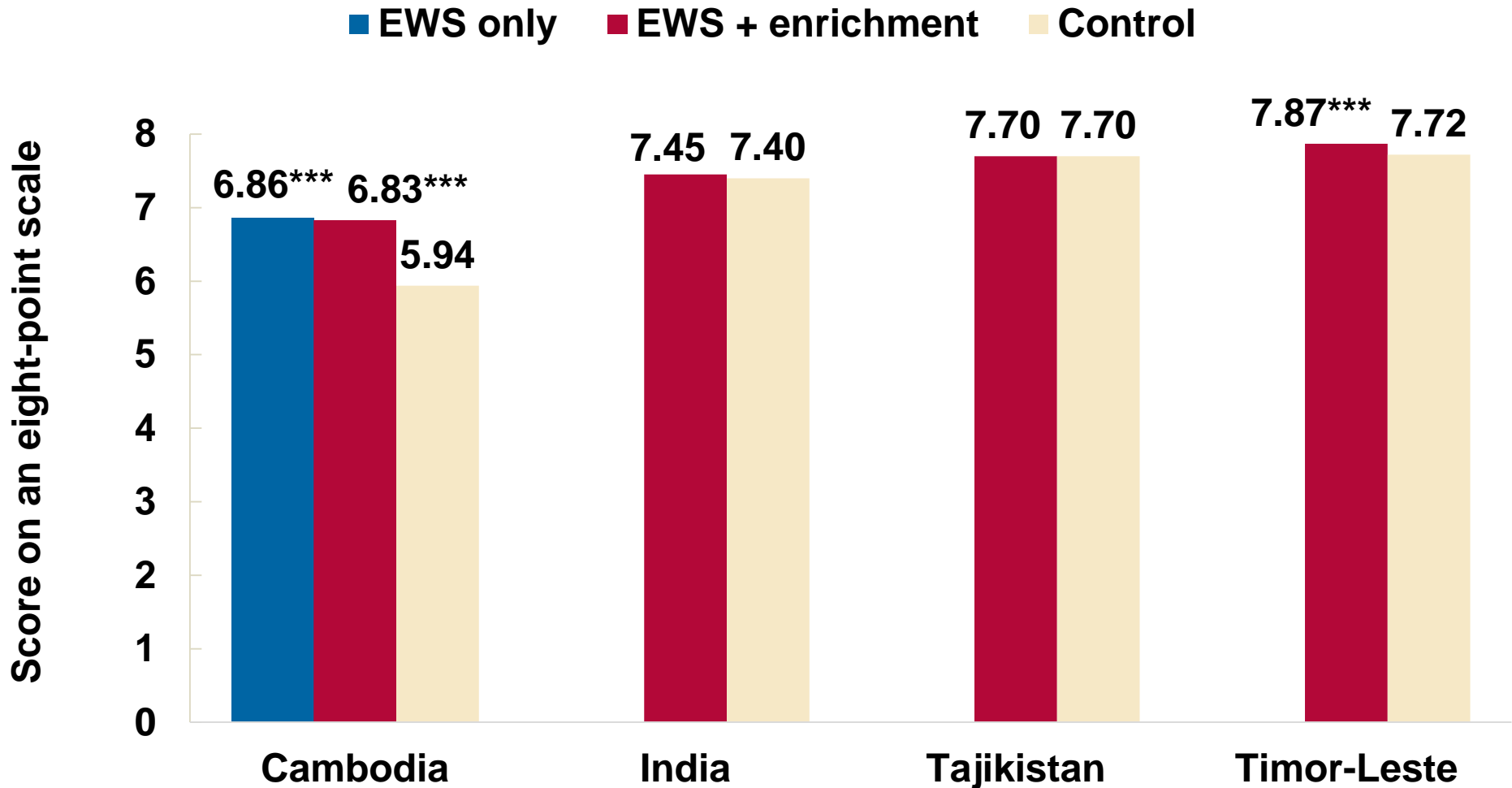
Impacts on Teacher and Administrator Practices and Attitudes



Teacher and Administrator Dropout Prevention Practices

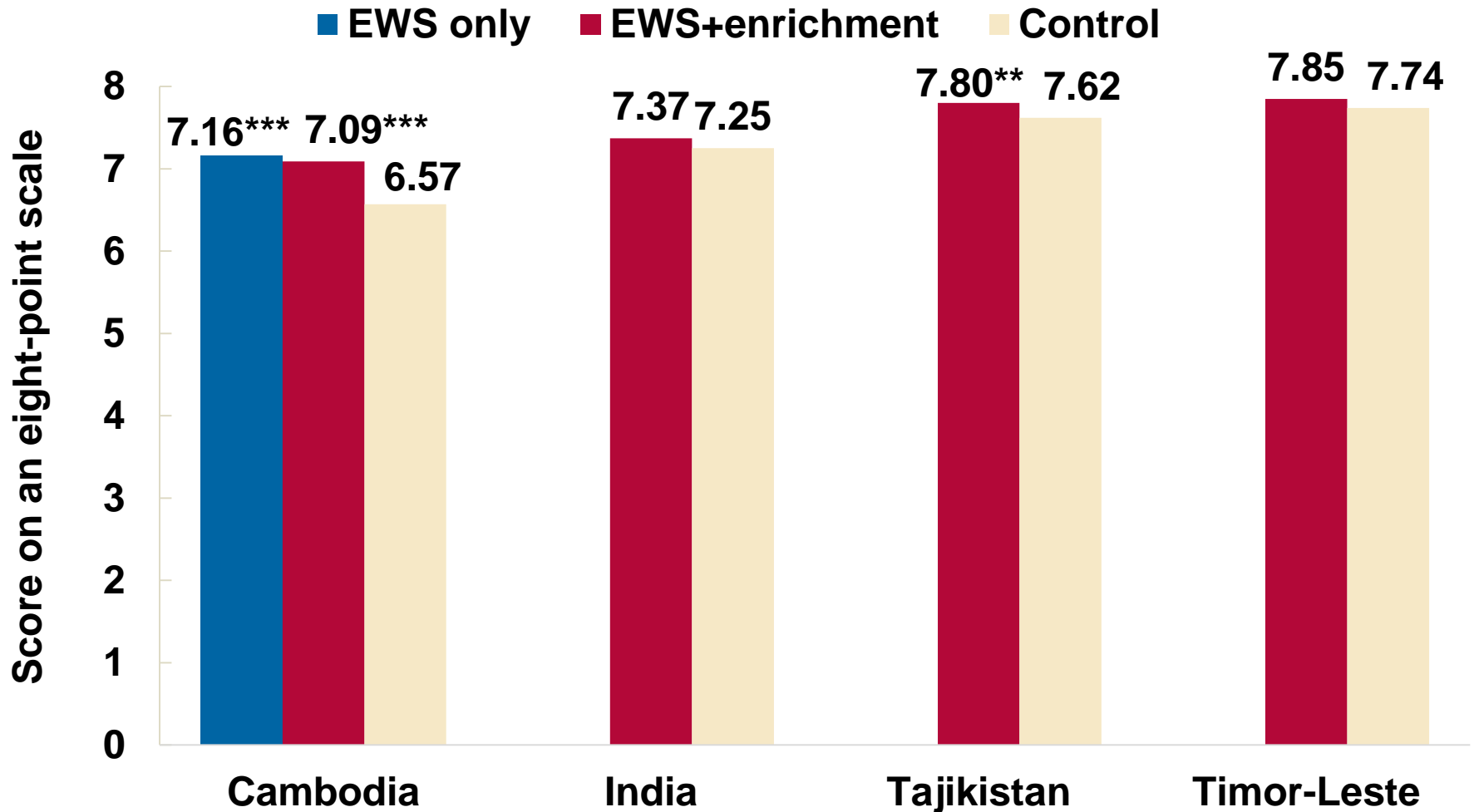
- We examine teacher/administrator practices aimed at preventing dropout.
- Teachers and administrators responded yes or no to each of 8 survey questions:
 - recording daily attendance
 - taking action when students are absent for more than 3 days
 - giving weak students individual feedback, having regular meetings to support weak students
 - having a plan to support weak students
 - communicating with parents of weak students about their child's schooling
 - having regular meetings with weak students
 - willing to come early or stay late to help weak students

SDPP Had a Positive Impact on Teacher Dropout Prevention Practices in Cambodia and Timor-Leste



***Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1% level.

SDPP Improved Administrator Dropout Prevention Practices in Cambodia and Tajikistan



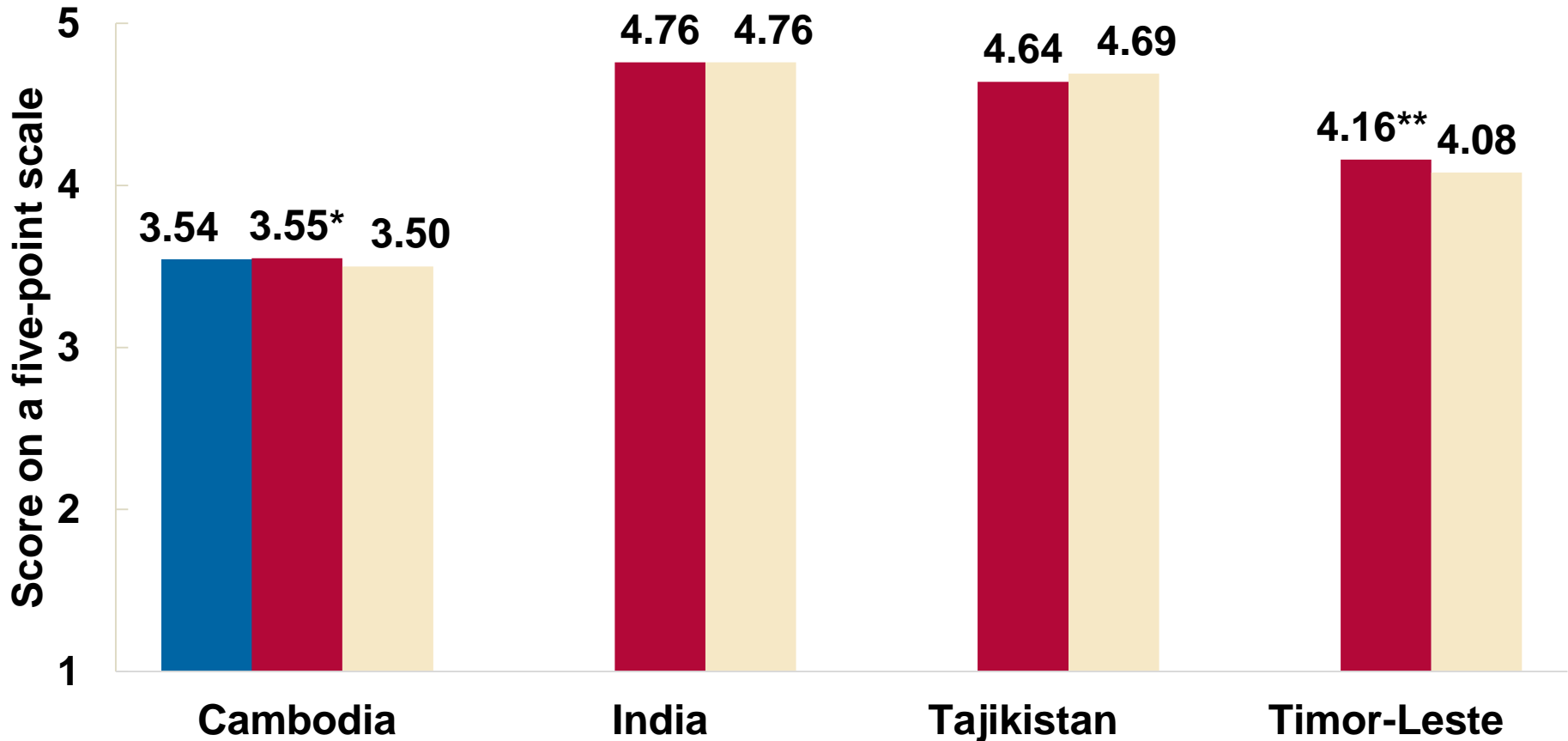
***/** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/5% level.

Teacher and Administrator Sense of Self-Efficacy

- **Teacher’s feeling that they have influence over the situation of at risk students.**
- **Teachers selected 1 of 5 answer choices on a scale from “Nothing” (no control) to “A Great Deal” (total control) for 12 survey questions.**
- **Examples:**
 - “How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?”
 - “How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?”
 - “How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?”.

SDPP Improved Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy in Cambodia and Timor-Leste

■ EWS only ■ EWS+Enrichment ■ Control

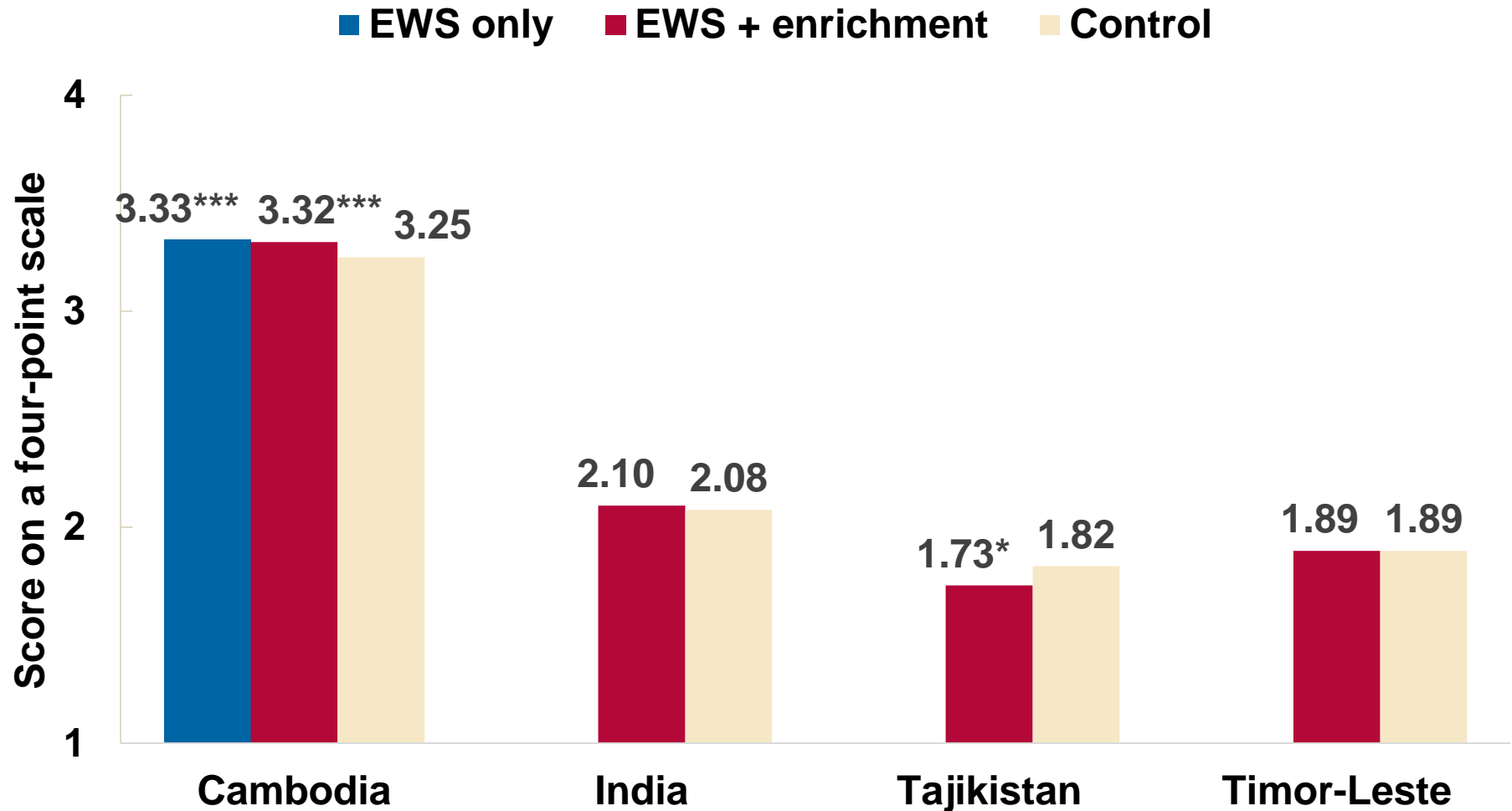


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Teacher and Administrator Sense of Responsibility

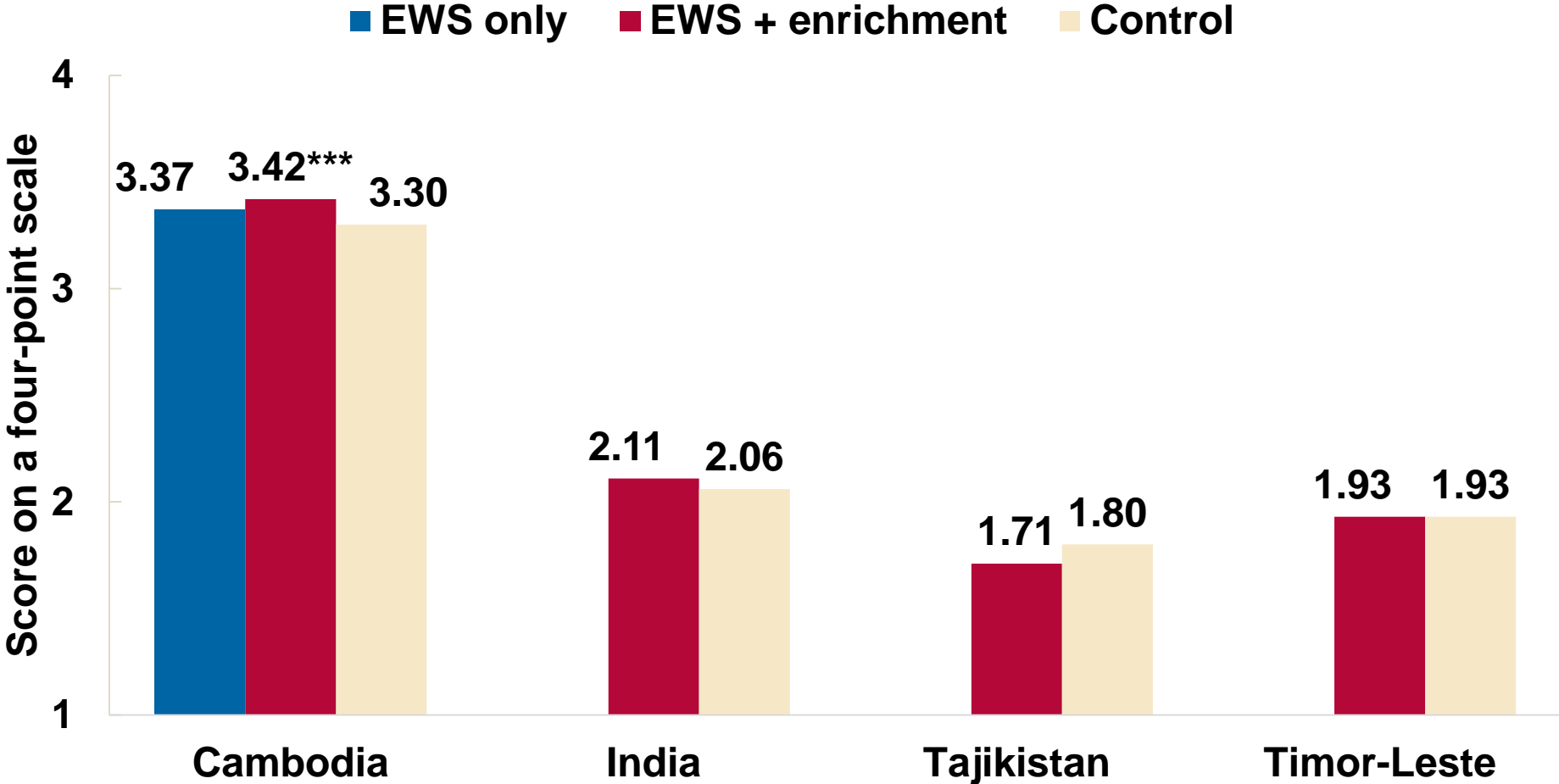
- **Teacher's feeling that they are part of the solution.**
- **Teachers selected 1 of 4 answer choices on a scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”.**
- **5 survey questions:**
 - “Students at risk of dropping out of school should work harder”
 - “At-risk students face too many challenges to succeed in school”
 - “Students at risk of dropping out need more help than teachers have time or resources to provide”
 - “If a student is at risk of dropping out, it is mainly the fault of the parent/guardian or family”
 - “There is little that can be done by the teacher or school to help students who are at-risk of dropping out of school.”

SDPP Had a Positive Impact on Teachers' Sense of Responsibility in Cambodia



***/*Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/10% level.

Positive Impact on Administrators' Sense of Responsibility in Cambodia EWS+C Schools



***Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1% level.

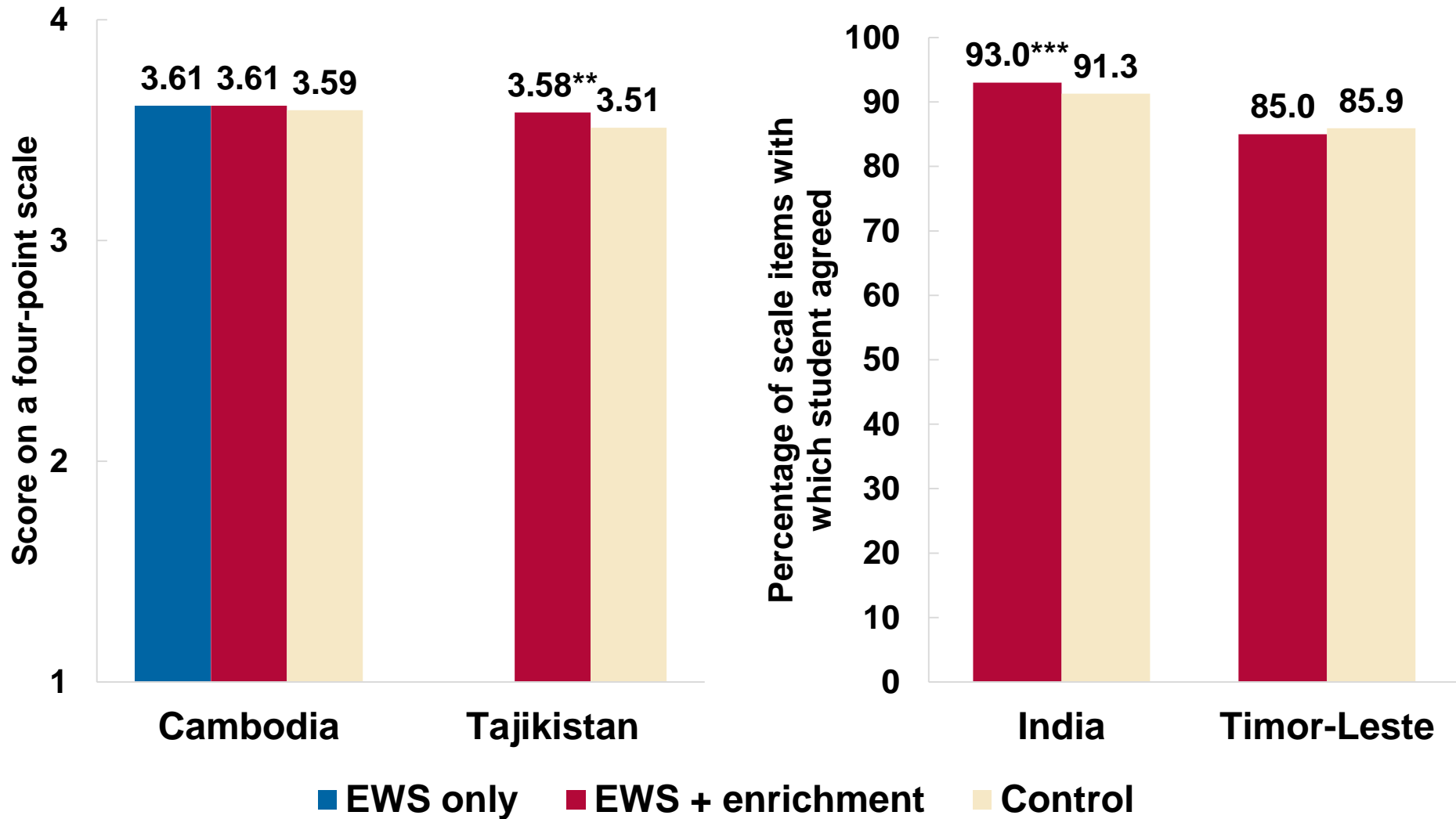
Impacts at Endline on At-Risk Students' Attitudes



At-risk Student Attitudes

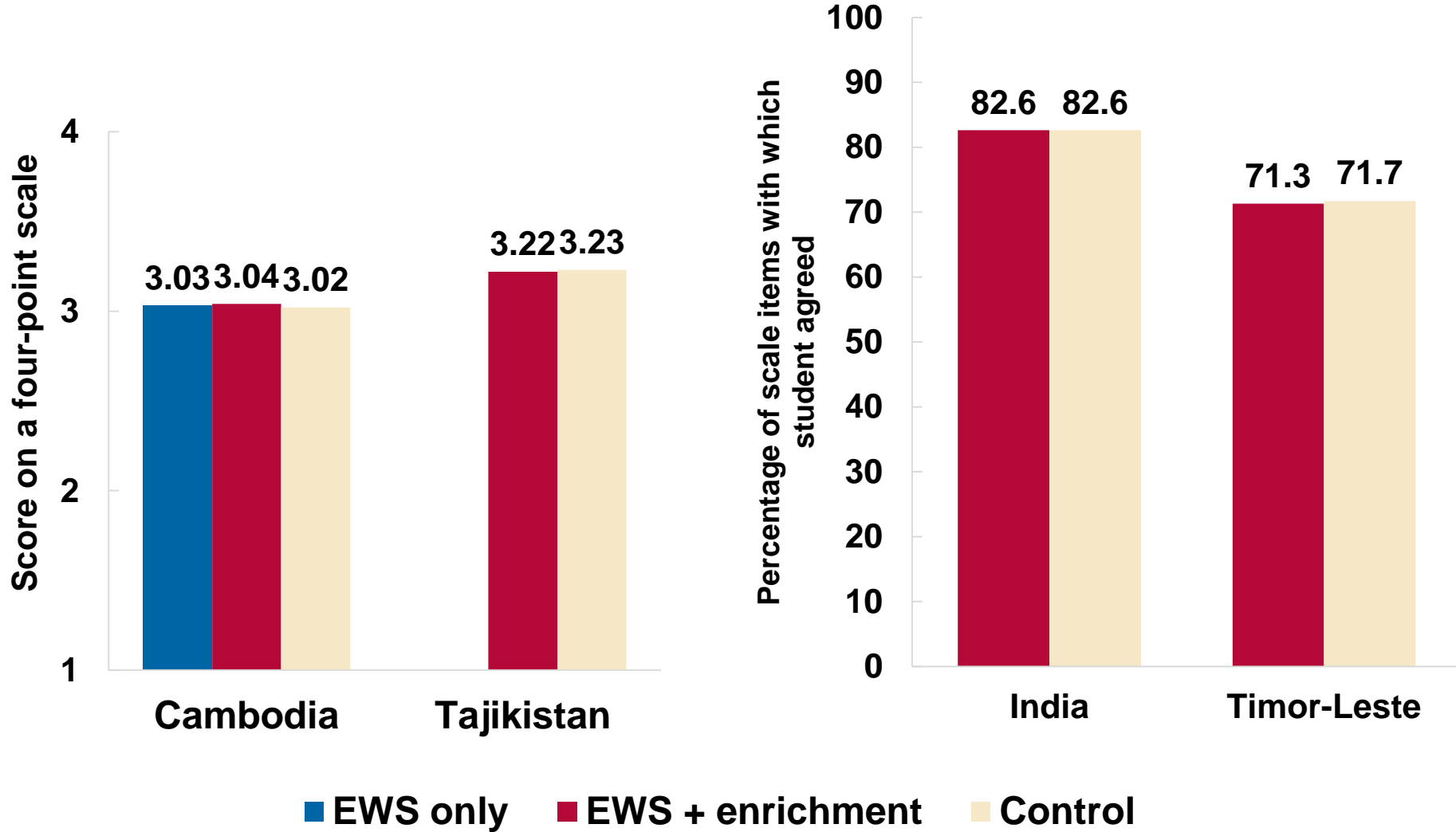
- **Students respond to questions measuring emotional, behavioral, and cognitive attitudes toward school, using 1 of 4 answer choices on a scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”.**
- **Emotional Attitudes Toward School: How does the student feel about school?**
 - **Based on responses to 6 questions, for example:**
 - “School is a fun place to be”
 - “There are teachers I can talk to”
- **Cognitive Attitudes Toward School : How does the student think about school?**
 - **Based on responses to 9 questions, for example:**
 - “Doing homework helps me do well in school”
 - “I check my school work for mistakes”
- **Behavioral Attitudes Toward School : How does the student act towards school?**
 - **Based on responses to 10 questions, for example:**
 - “I arrive on time”
 - “I follow school rules”

SDPP Improved At-Risk Students' Emotional Attitudes Toward School in Tajikistan and India



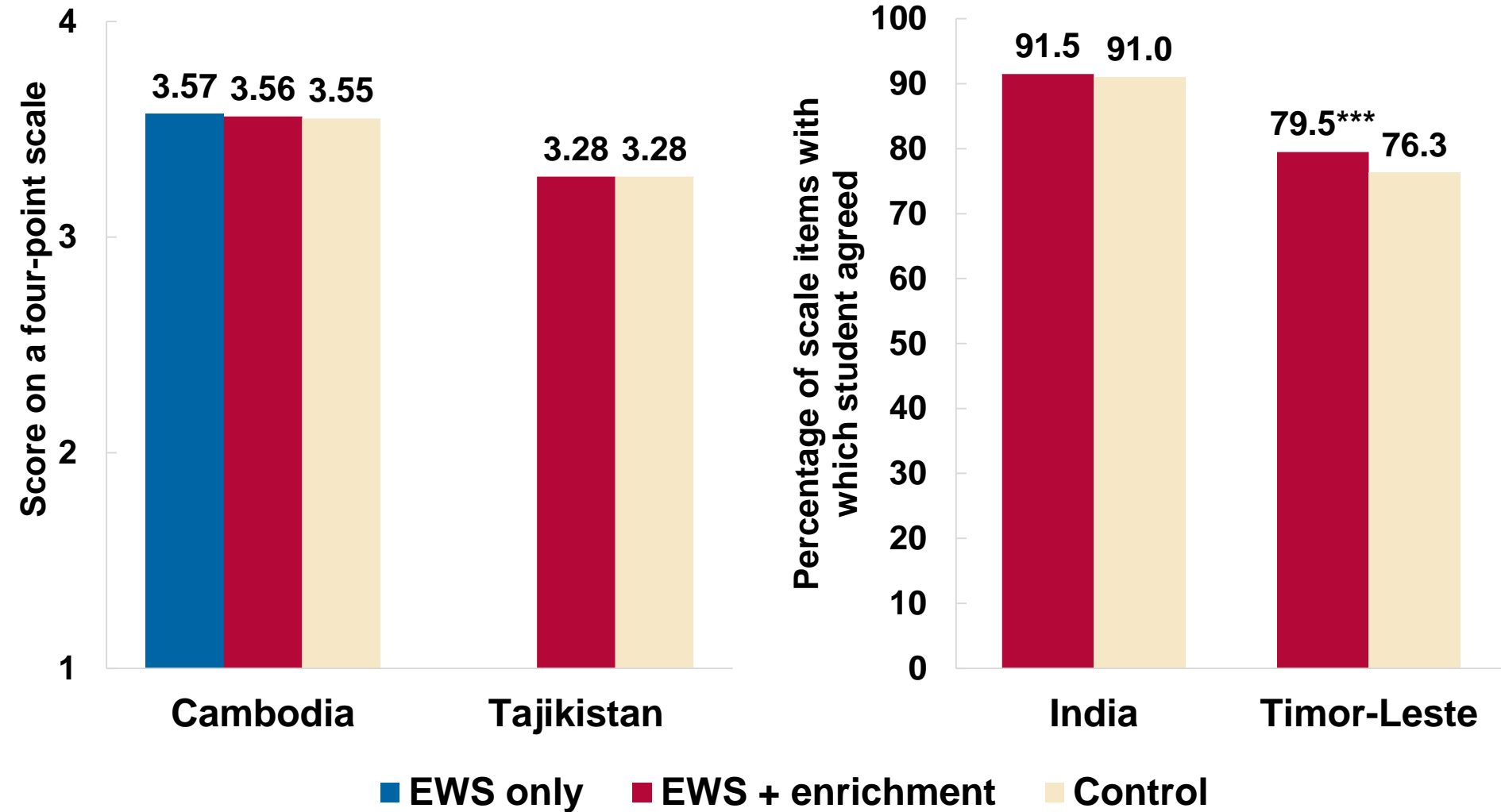
***/** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/5% level.

SDPP Did Not Affect At-Risk Students' Cognitive Attitudes Toward School



Differences between treatment and control group means are not statistically significant.

SDPP Improved At-Risk Students' Behavioral Attitudes Toward School in Timor-Leste

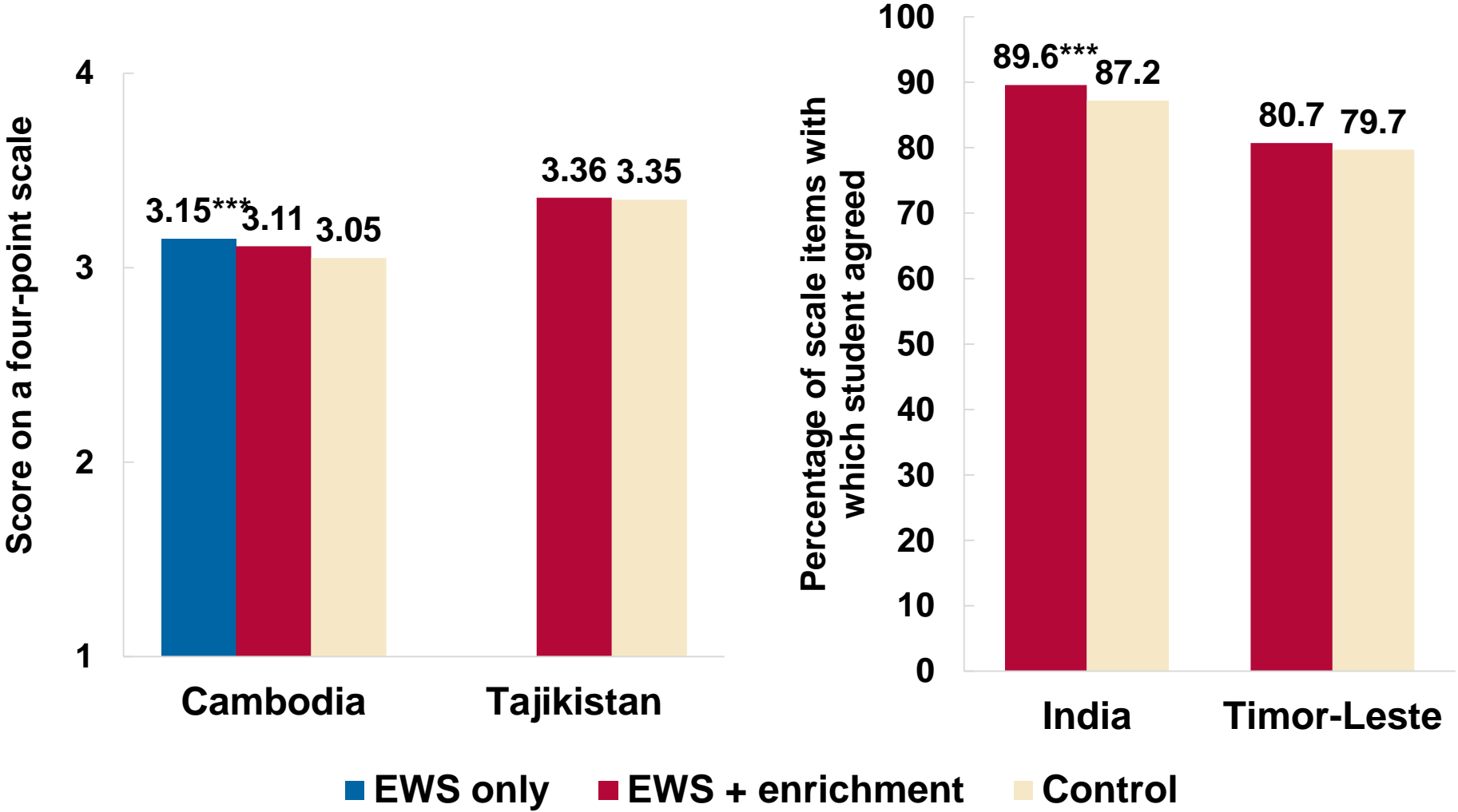


*** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1% level.

At-Risk Students' Perceptions of Teacher and Parent Support

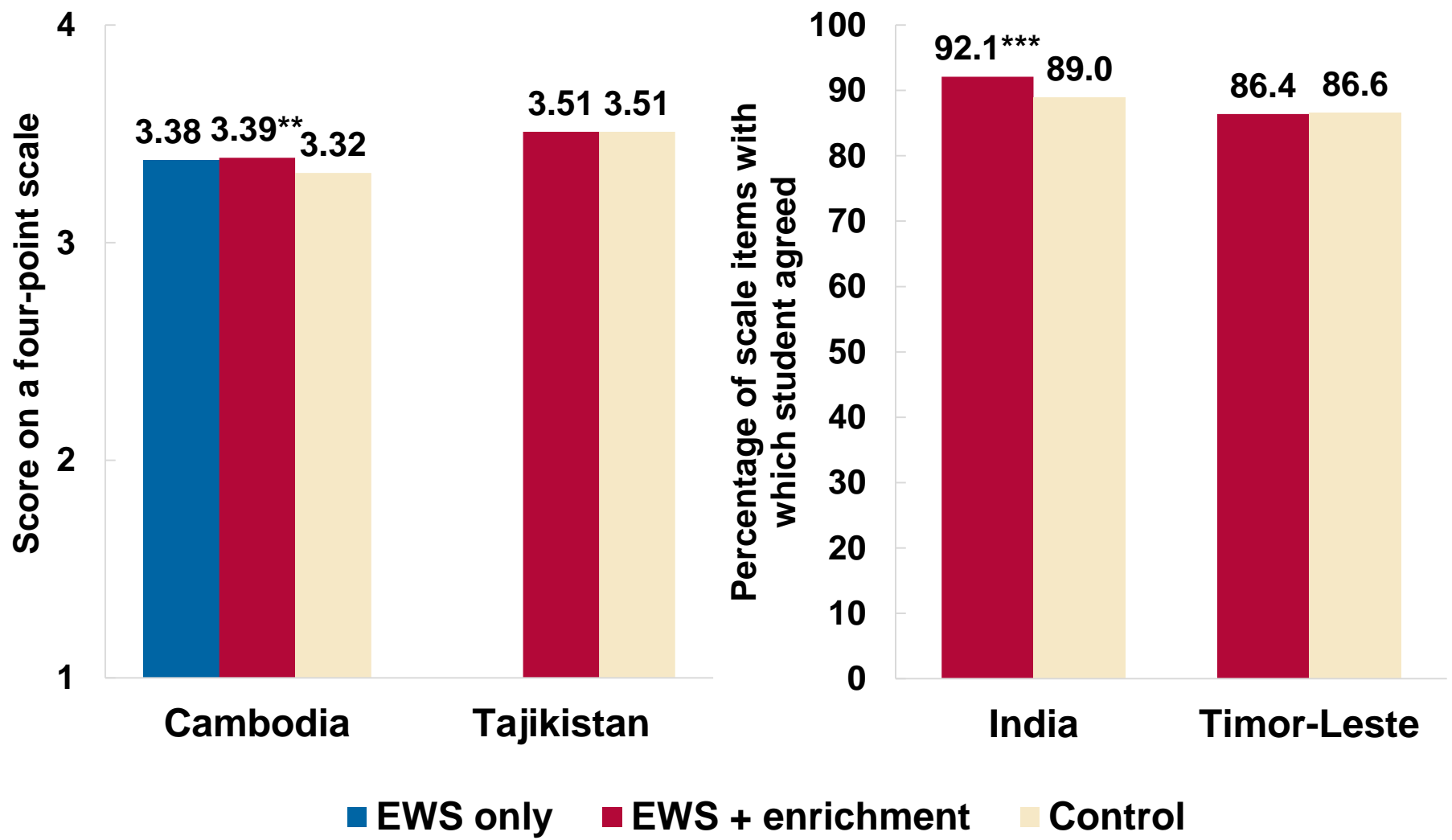
- **Students respond to questions measuring their perceptions of their teachers and parents, using 1 of 4 answer choices on a scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”.**
- **Perceptions of Teachers: What do students think of the support they receive from their teachers?**
 - **Based on responses to 11 questions, for example:**
 - “My teacher(s) care about how I am doing”
 - “My teacher(s) help me if I am having problems with a lesson”
 - “My teacher(s) talk(s) to me if I miss school or class”
- **Perceptions of Parents: What do students think of the support they receive from their parents?**
 - **Based on responses to 11 questions, for example:**
 - “My parents make sure I go to school every day”
 - “My parents attend school events”
 - “My parents try to support me with my studies”

SDPP Had a Positive Impact on At-Risk Students' Perceptions of Teacher Support In Cambodia and India



*** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1% level.

SDPP Had a Positive Impact on At-Risk Students' Perceptions of Parent Support in Cambodia and India

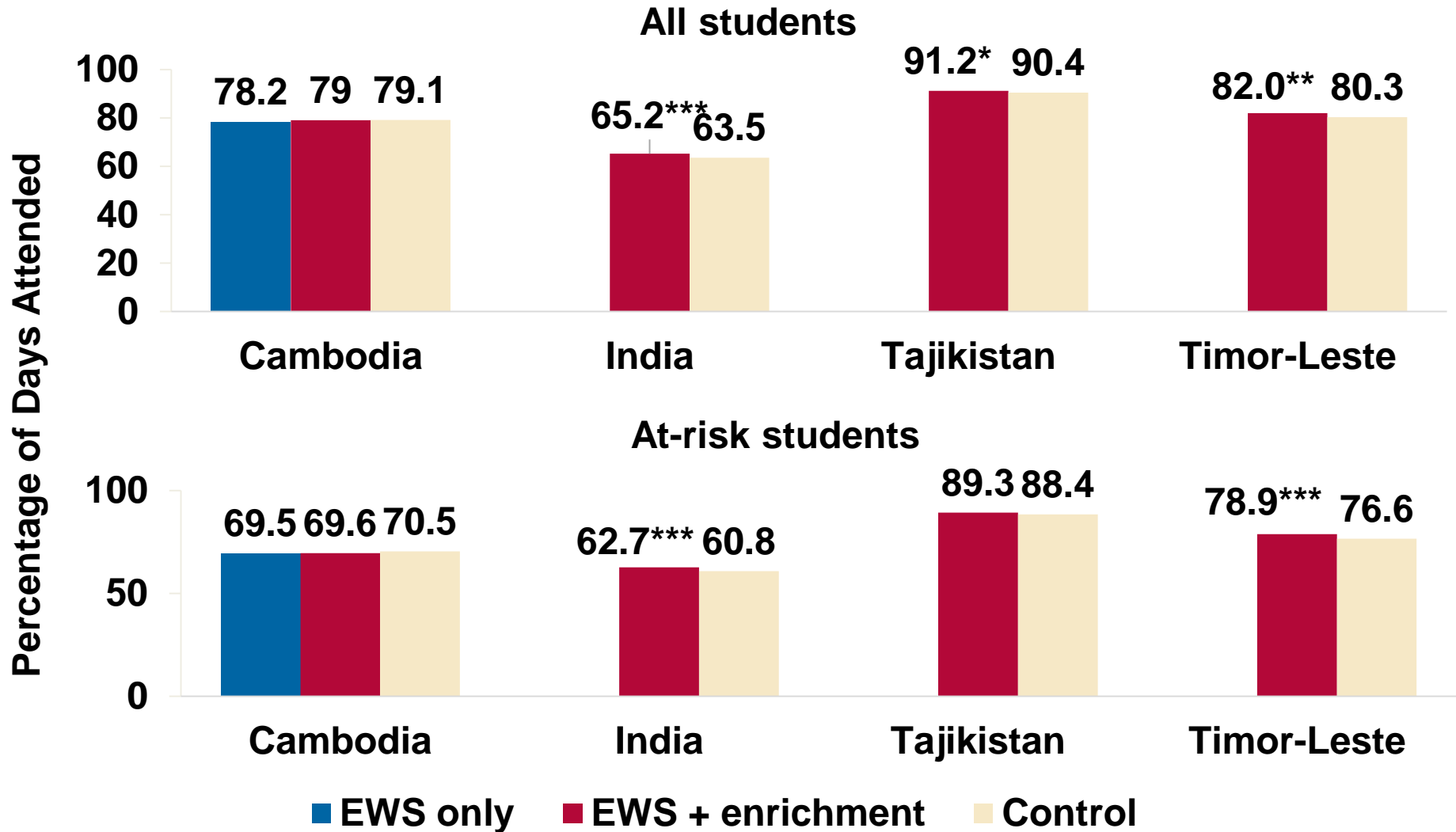


***/** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/5% level.

Impacts at Endline on Student Attendance and Academic Performance

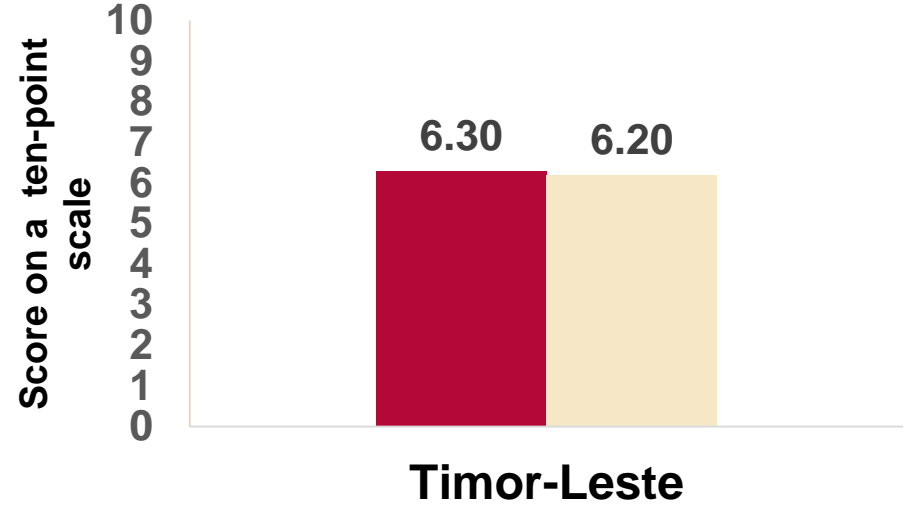
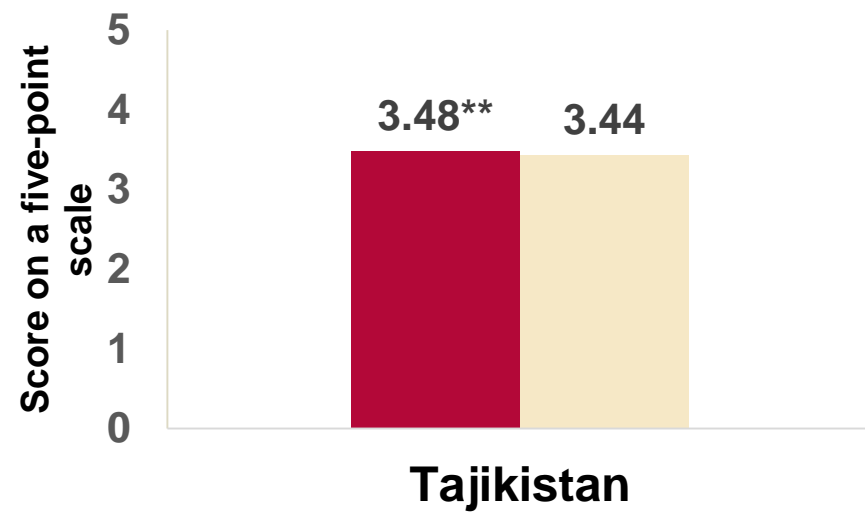
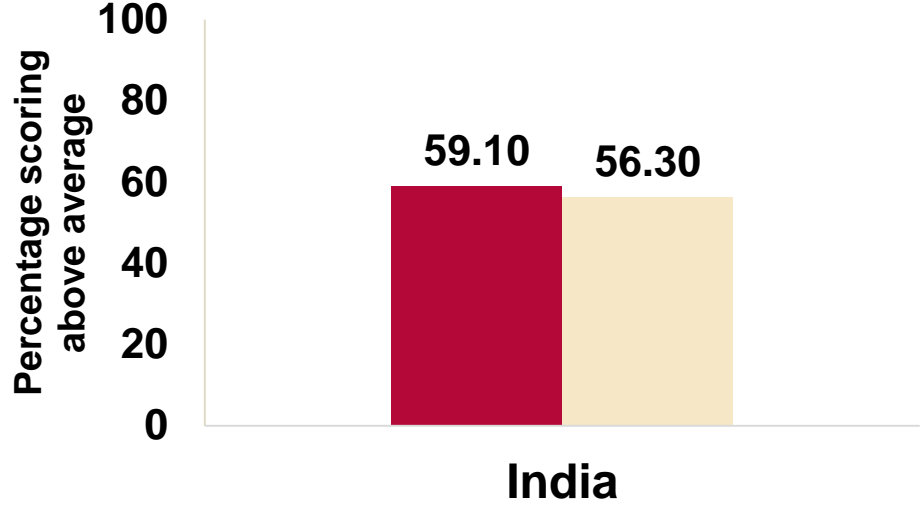
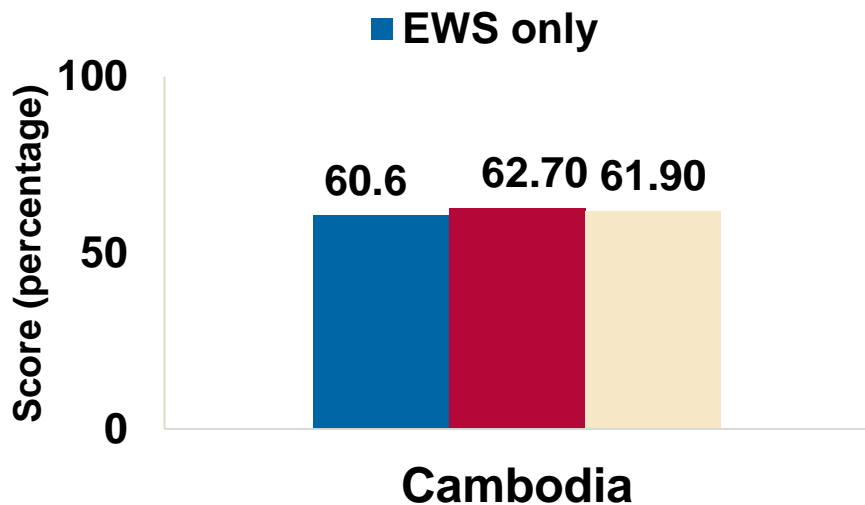


SDPP Improved Attendance Among Students Overall and At-risk in Some Countries



***/**/*Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/5%/10% level.

SDPP Improved Math Performance in Tajikistan



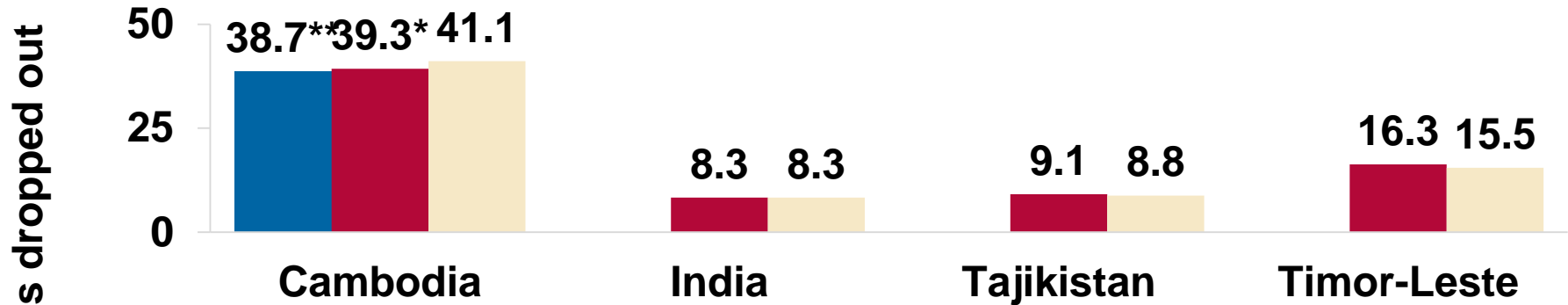
**Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 5% level.

Impacts at Endline on Student Dropout

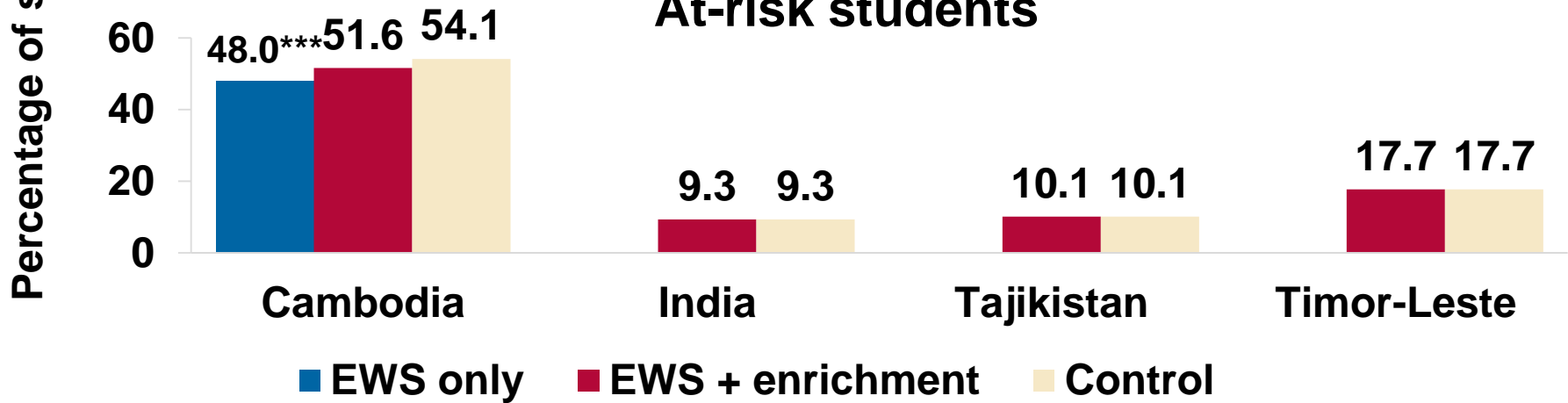


SDPP Reduced Dropout in Cambodia

All students



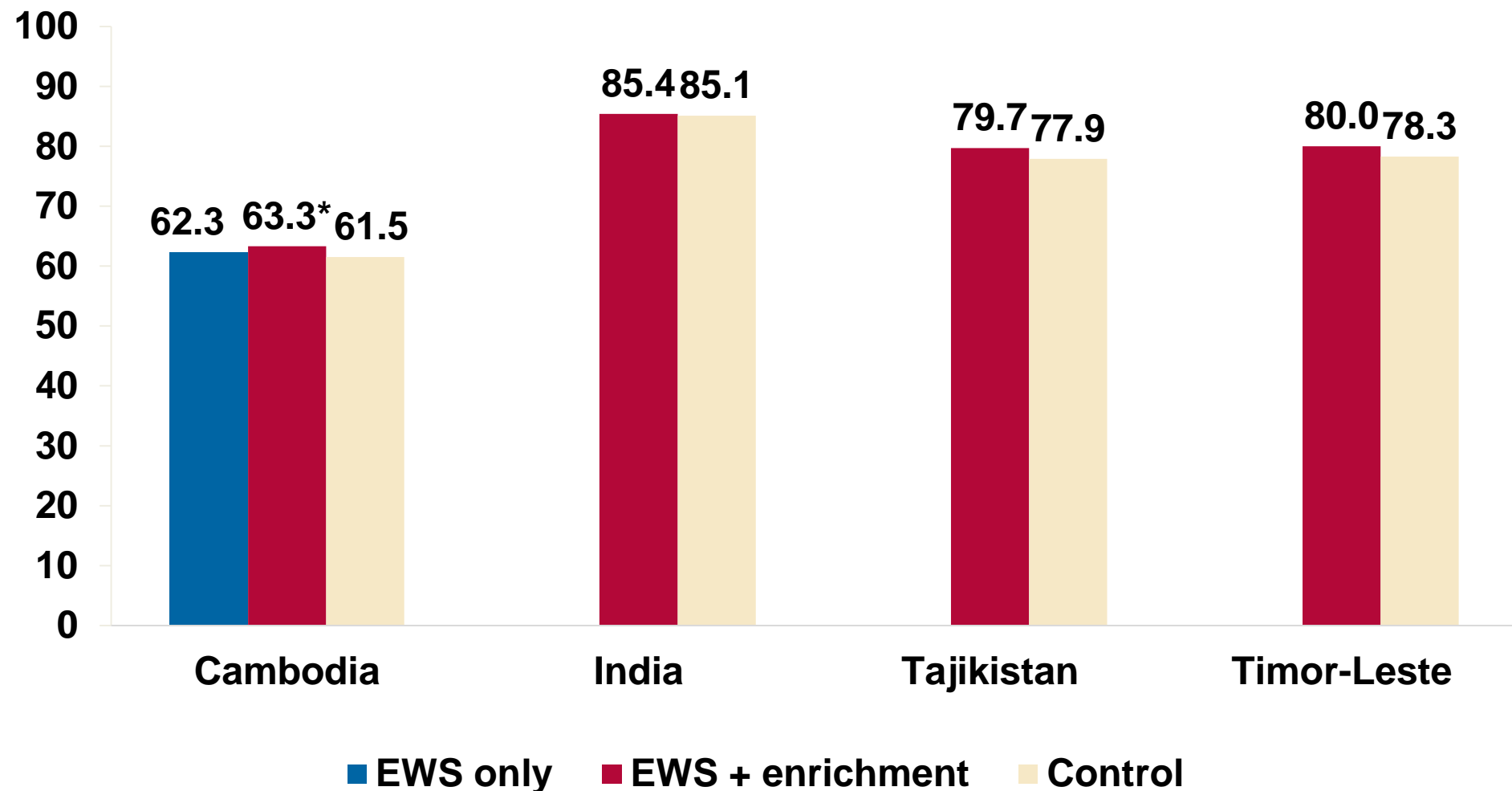
At-risk students



■ EWS only ■ EWS + enrichment ■ Control

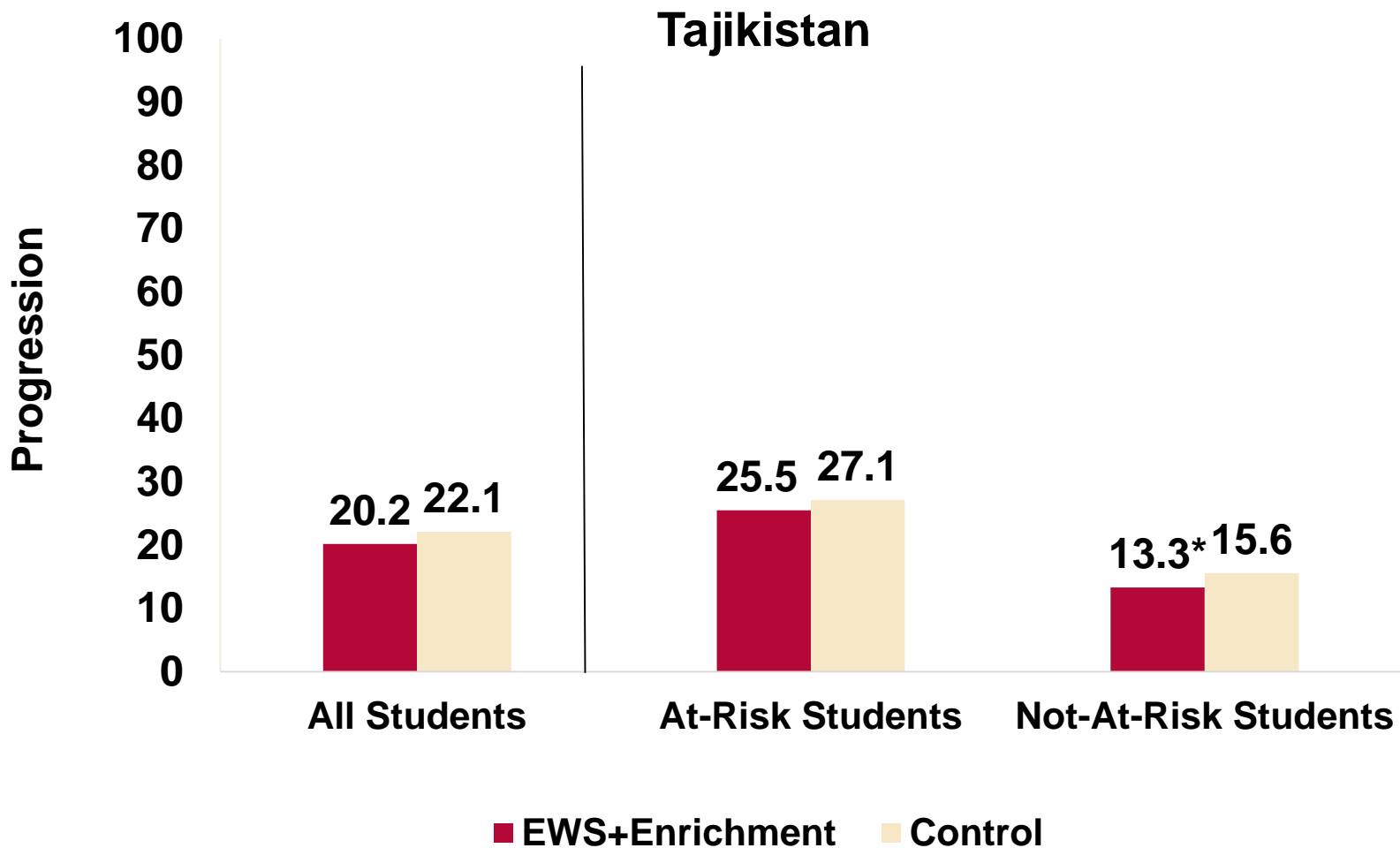
***/**/*Differences from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/5%/10% level.

SDPP Improved Grade Progression in the EWS+Computers Group in Cambodia



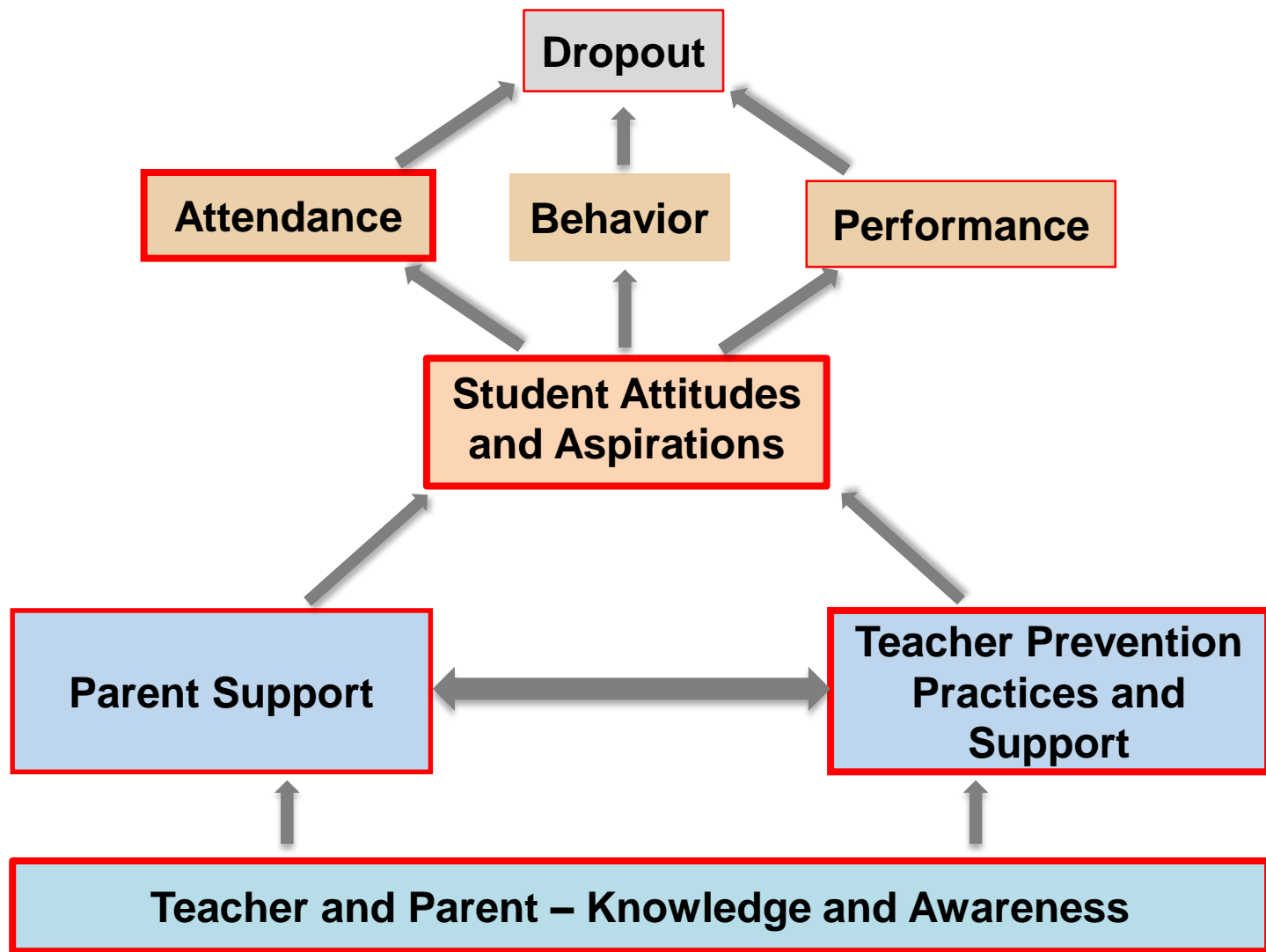
* Difference between treatment and control group means is significant at the 10% level.

SDPP Improved Between-Grade Dropout for Not-At-Risk Students in Tajikistan



* Difference between treatment and control group means is significant at the 10% level.

Summary of Findings



Impacts in Context

- **Duration of Exposure to SDPP:**
 - Only a year in India and Tajikistan; closer to two years in Timor Leste and Cambodia
- **Enforcement of Compulsory Education in India and Tajikistan:**
 - Concurrent reductions in dropout due in these two countries may have made it harder for SDPP to have impacts
- **Inconsistent Implementation of SDPP in Timor Leste:**
 - Especially for EWS communications with parents/follow-up actions
- **Complexity of Factors Related to Dropout:**
 - SDPP doesn't address all of them (particularly economic motivations)

SDPP Successfully Achieved Its Goal of Reducing Dropout and Dropout Related Behaviors

- **A high level of dropout and low levels of prevention practices provide the ideal context for impact**
 - SDPP reduced dropout and improved teacher dropout prevention practices in Cambodia, the country with the highest dropout rate and lowest teacher prevention practices.
- **The value-added of an ICT intervention is not apparent.**
 - Computer training combined with an EWS did not produce important impacts beyond those for EWS alone in Cambodia.
- **SDPP improved important intermediate outcomes such as student attitudes and attendance in Tajikistan, India and Timor-Leste, through the EWS combined with enrichment activities with recreational elements.**

Obrigadu, धन्यवाद , អរគុណ, Tashakur!



EXTRA SLIDES

Impacts on Dropout in Cambodia: What Does This Mean?

- **SDPP served about 45,000 students in each of the treatment groups in Cambodia**
 - In the absence of SDPP, about 18,500 students (41%) would have dropped out
 - SDPP kept about 2,655 (5.9%) of these students in school in EWS schools and about 1,980 (4.4%) of these students in school in EWS+Computer schools
- **SDPP served about 8,200 at-risk students in the EWS group**
 - In the absence of SDPP, about 4,400 (54%) of these at-risk students would have dropped out
 - SDPP kept about 500 (11%) of these students in school in the EWS group

Summary of Findings Related to Teacher and Administrator Practices

- **SDPP had a positive impact on dropout prevention practices for teachers and administrators in Cambodia, for teachers in Timor-Leste, and for administrators in Tajikistan.**
- **Teacher and administrator dropout prevention practices were high in India, Tajikistan, and Timor-Leste in SDPP and control schools.**
- **SDPP improved teachers' and administrators' sense of self-efficacy and responsibility in some countries.**

Summary of Findings Related to At-risk Student Attitudes

- **SDPP had a positive impact on at-risk students' emotional attitudes toward school in Tajikistan and India.**
- **SDPP had a positive impact on at-risk students' behavioral attitudes toward school in Timor-Leste.**
- **SDPP did not affect at-risk students' cognitive attitudes toward school in any country.**
- **SDPP improved at-risk students' perceptions of parent and teacher support in Cambodia and India.**

Summary of Findings Related to Student Attendance and Dropout

- **SDPP improved attendance in India, Tajikistan, and Timor-Leste.**
- **SDPP reduced dropout for students overall in Cambodia, in both the EWS+Computers group and the EWS group. The program also reduced dropout among at-risk students in the EWS group.**
- **There was a small improvement in grade progression in Cambodia in the EWS+Computers group.**

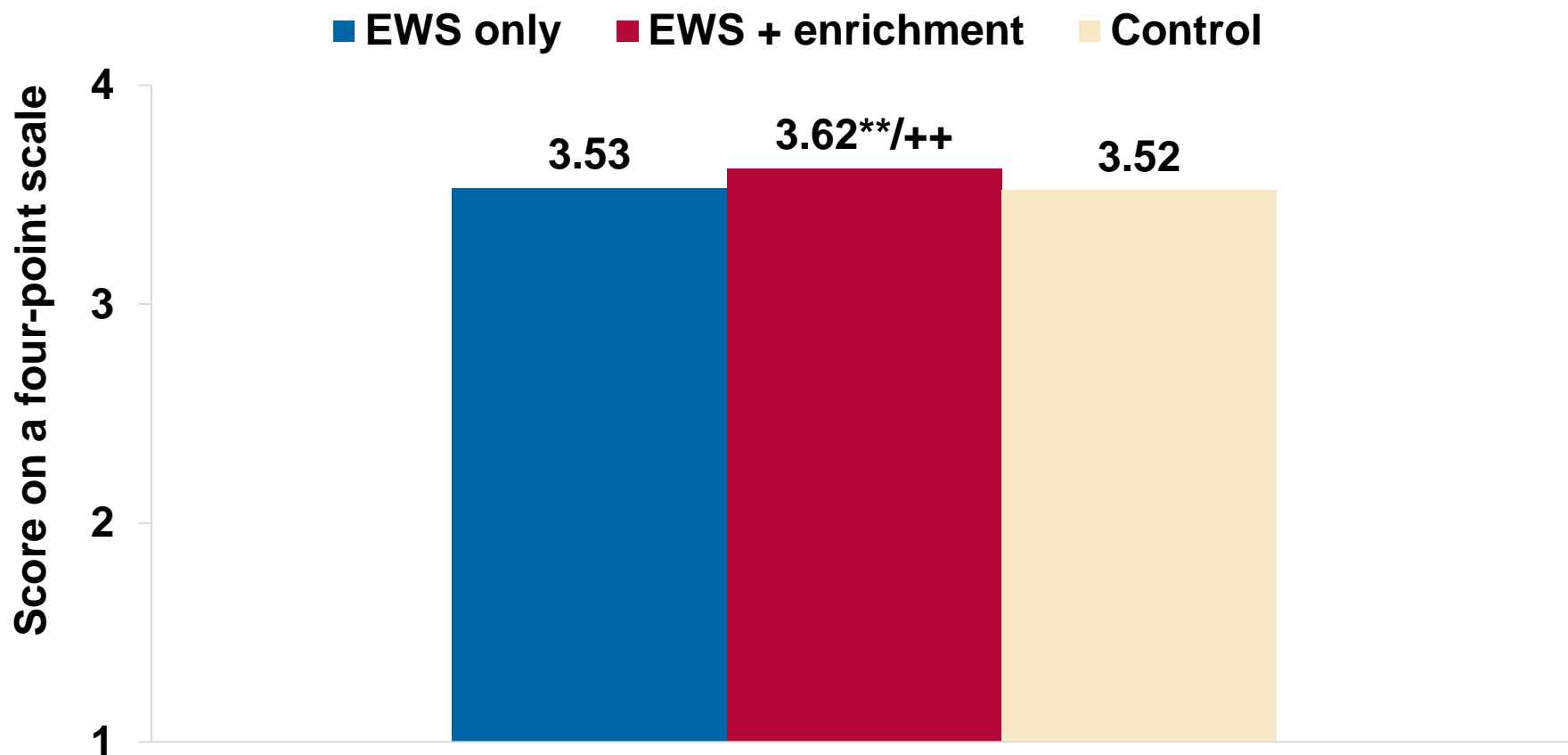
SDPP Program Rollout

	2012					2013					2014					2015																			
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M											
Cambodia				T	A				E					E	A								X												
India			T	E	A								E	A									E	A						X					
Tajikistan				T										E	A									X											
Timor-Leste					T				E	A			E	A										T	E					A					X

The school year in Cambodia runs October to June, in India April to March, in Tajikistan it runs September to May, and in Timor-Leste January to November

T = teacher and school administrator training begins; E = EWS intervention rolled out to students; A = additional enrichment intervention rolled out to students; X = end of activities in schools

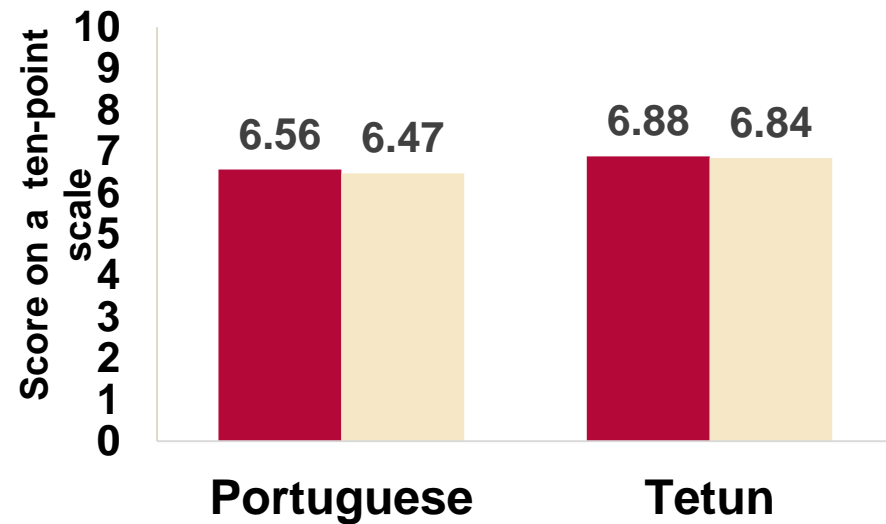
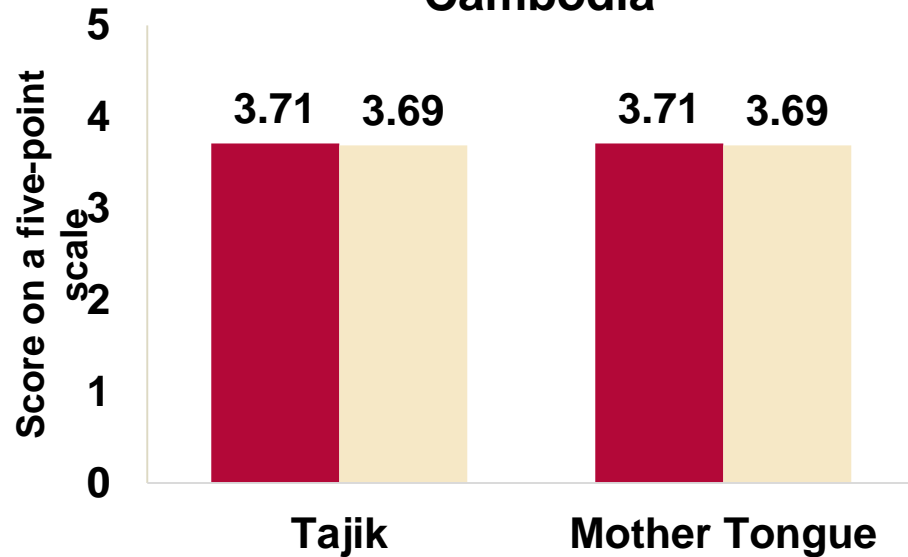
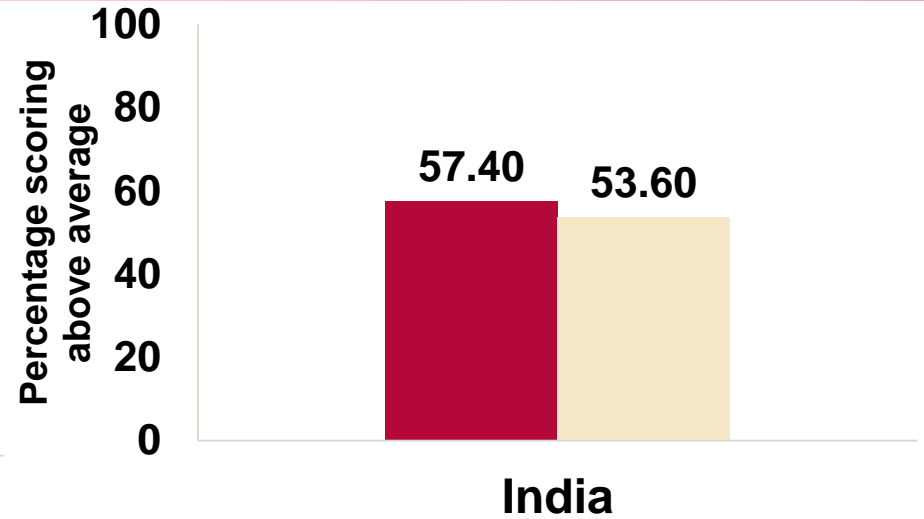
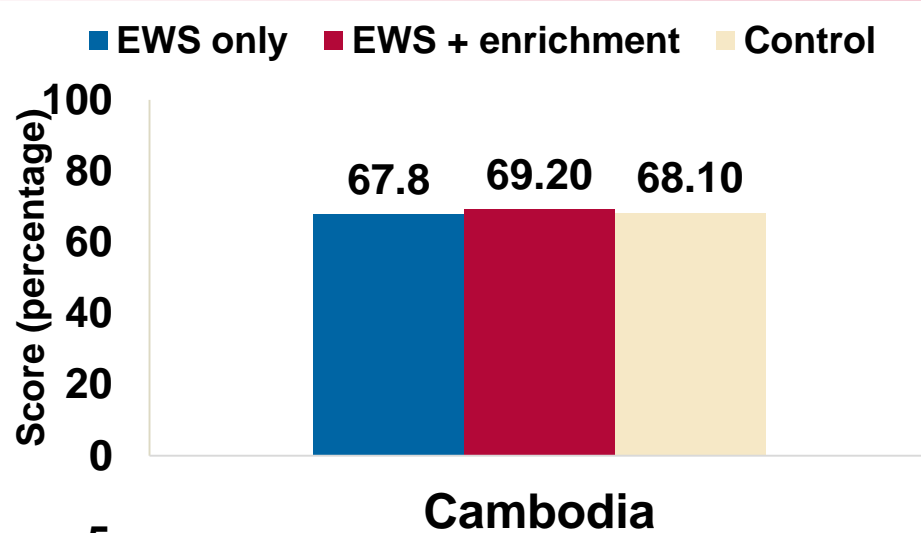
SDPP Improved At-Risk Students' Perceptions of Computer Training In Cambodia, for EWS+Computers Students



** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 5% level.

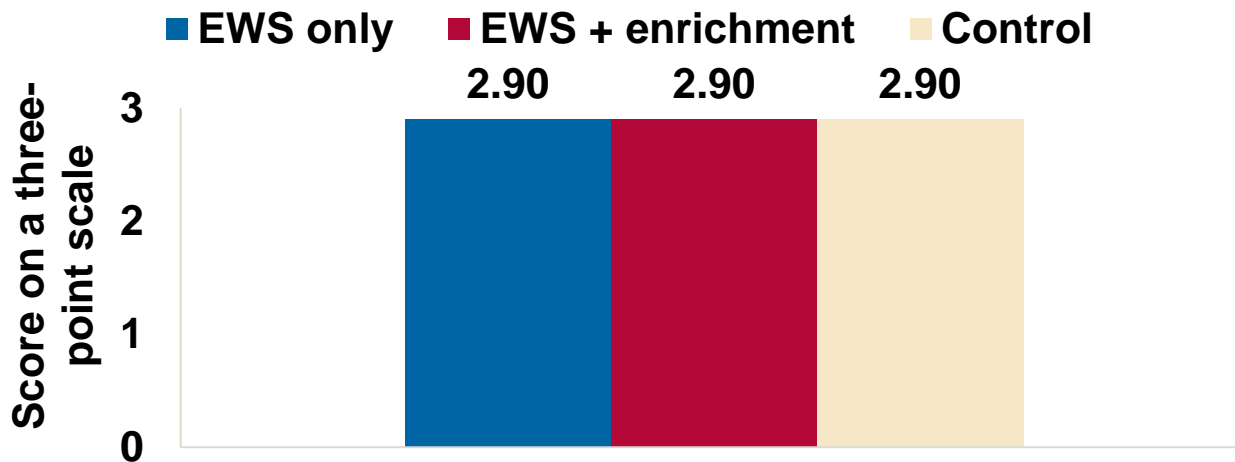
++Difference between the EWS-only and EWS + enrichment group means is statistically significant at the 5% level.

SDPP Did Not Affect Language Performance in Any Country

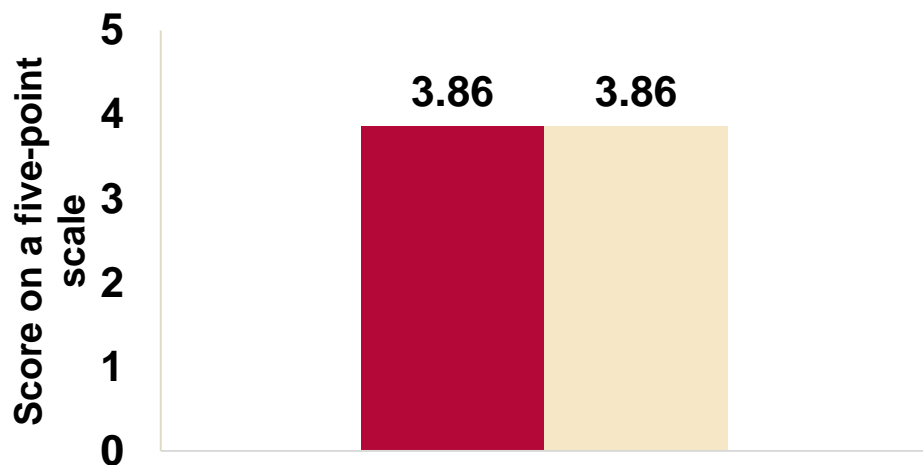


*Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 10% level.

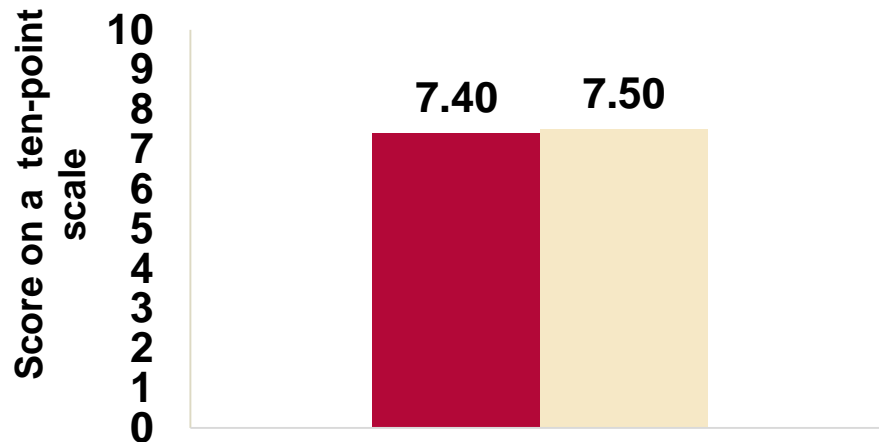
SDPP Did Not Affect Behavior in Any Country



Cambodia



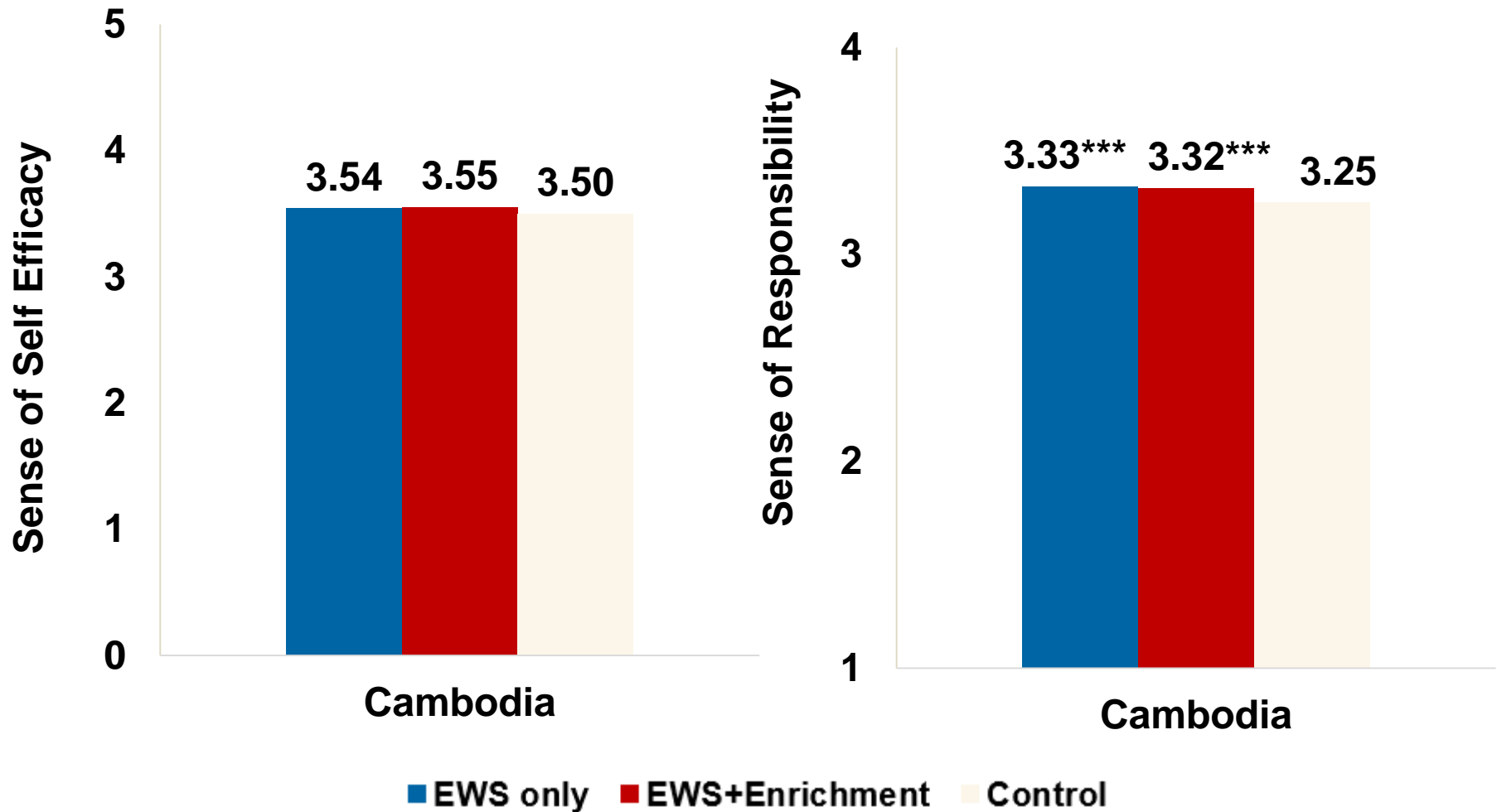
Tajikistan



Timor-Leste

*Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 10% level.

Teachers' Sense of Self Efficacy vs. Sense of Responsibility in Cambodia



***/*Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1%/10% level.

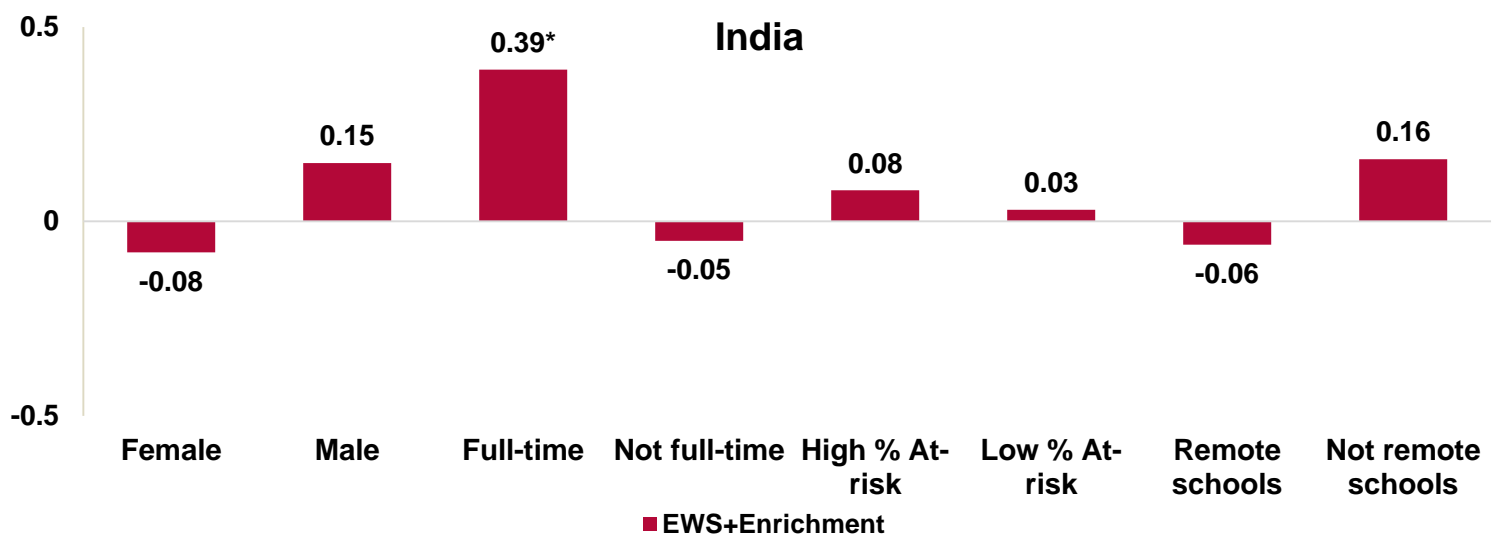
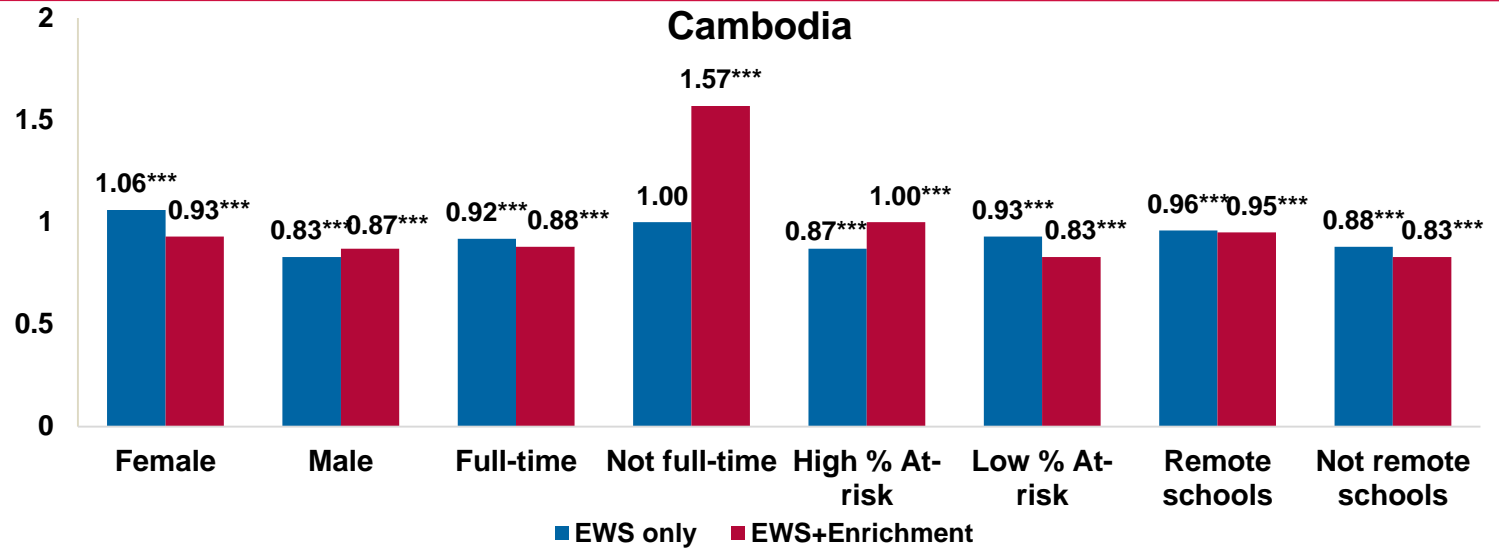
Impacts on Teacher Dropout Prevention Practices by Subgroup

		Cambodia		India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
		EWS only	EWS + Enrichment			
Teacher gender						
	Female	+++	+++	○	○	○
	Male	+++	+++	○	○	+++
Teacher full-time status						
	Full-time	+++	+++	+	○	+++
	Not full-time	○	+++	○	○	○
School percentage at-risk						
	High	+++	+++	○	○	○
	Low	+++	+++	○	○	+++
School location						
	Remote	+++	+++	○	○	++
	Not remote	+++	+++	○	○	+

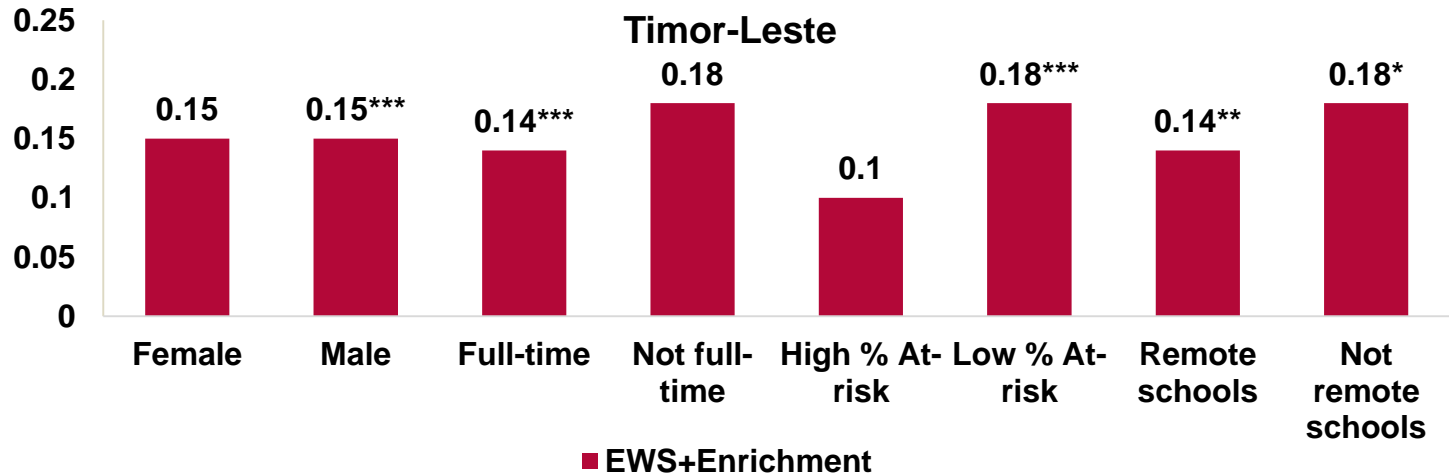
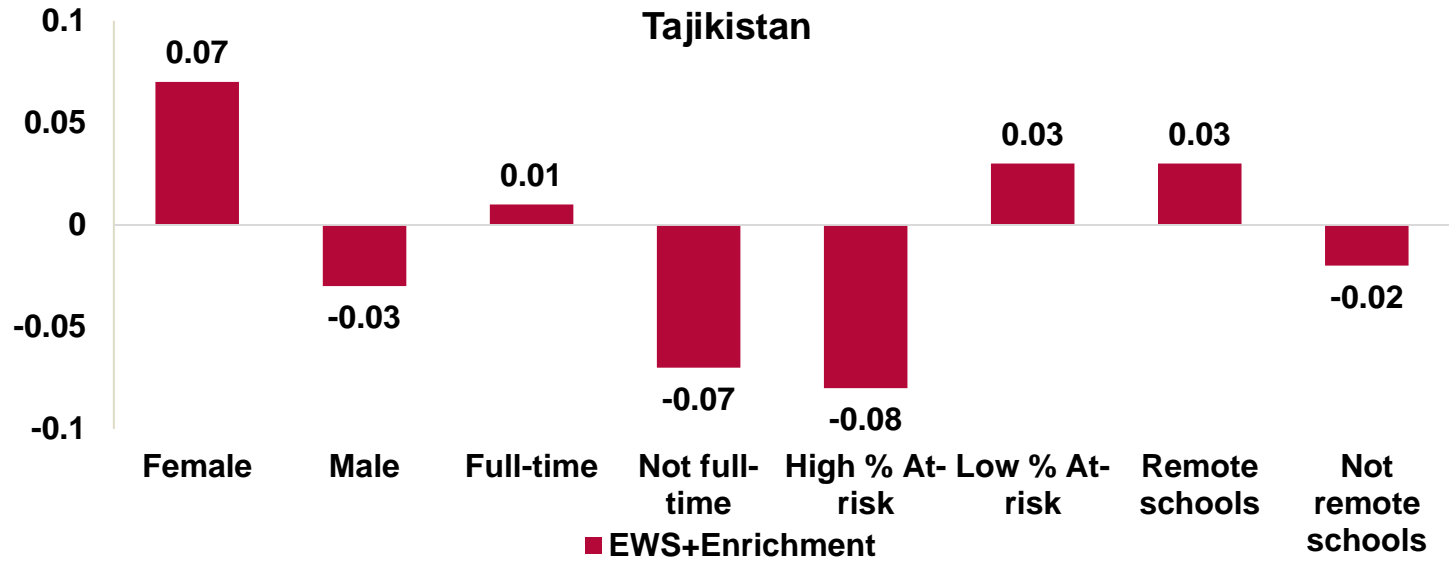
+ + +/+ +/+ Statistically significant positive impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

— — —/— —/— Statistically significant negative impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

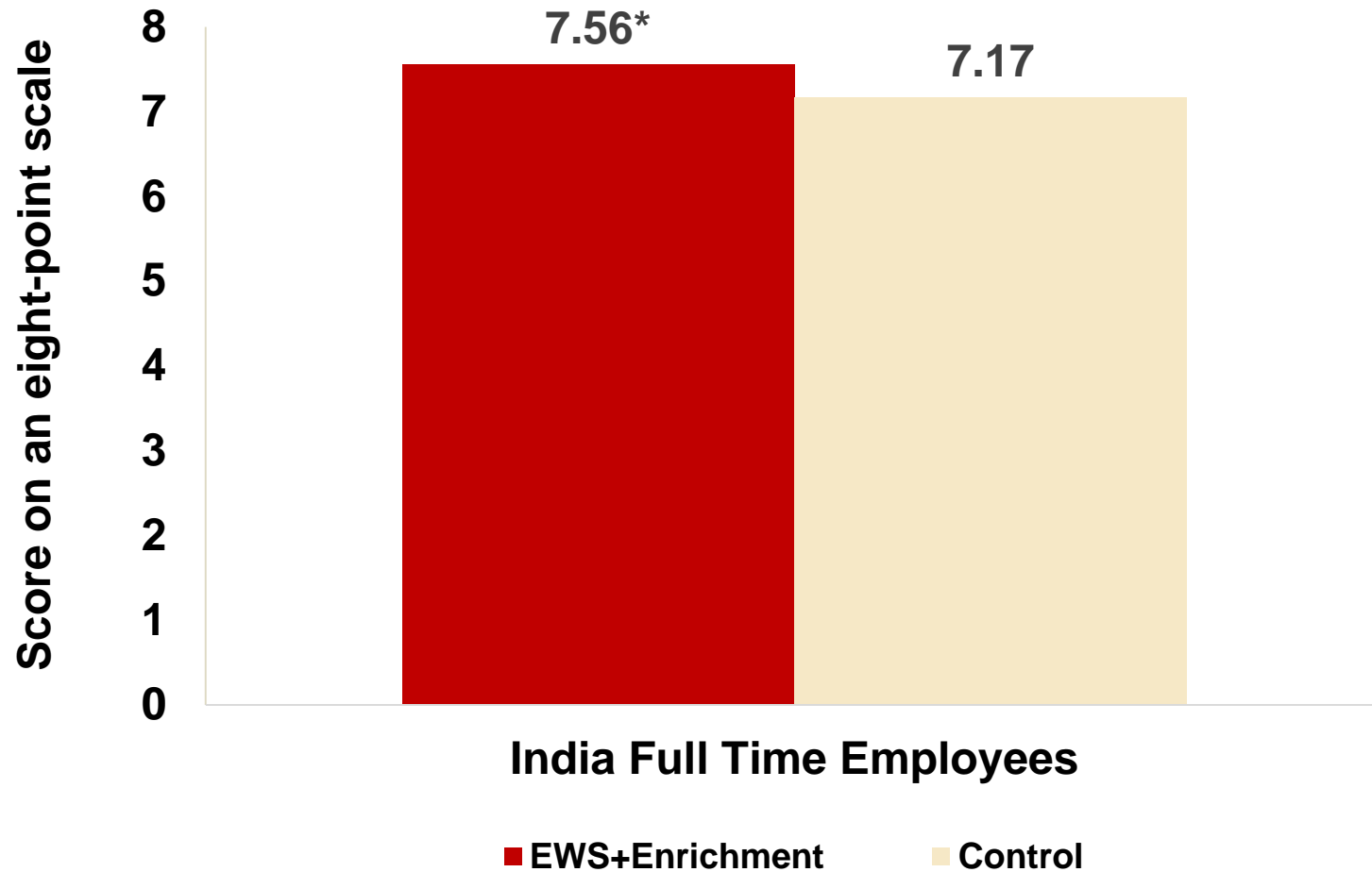
Subgroup Impacts on Teacher Dropout Prevention Practices



Subgroup Impacts on Teacher Dropout Prevention Practices



Impact on Teacher Dropout Prevention Practices in India for Full Time Employees



* Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 10% level.

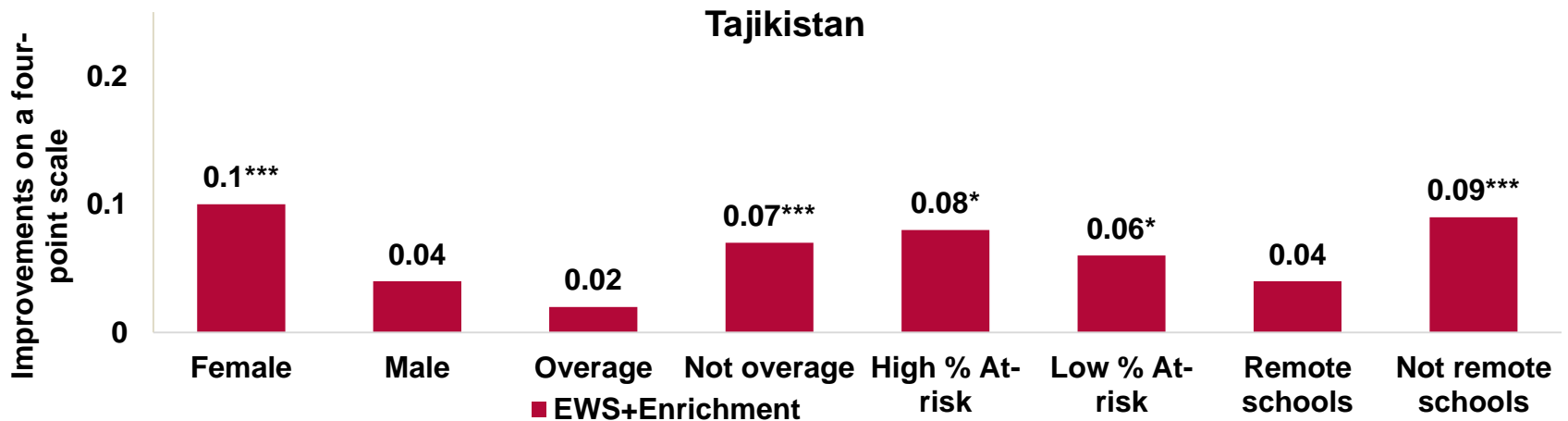
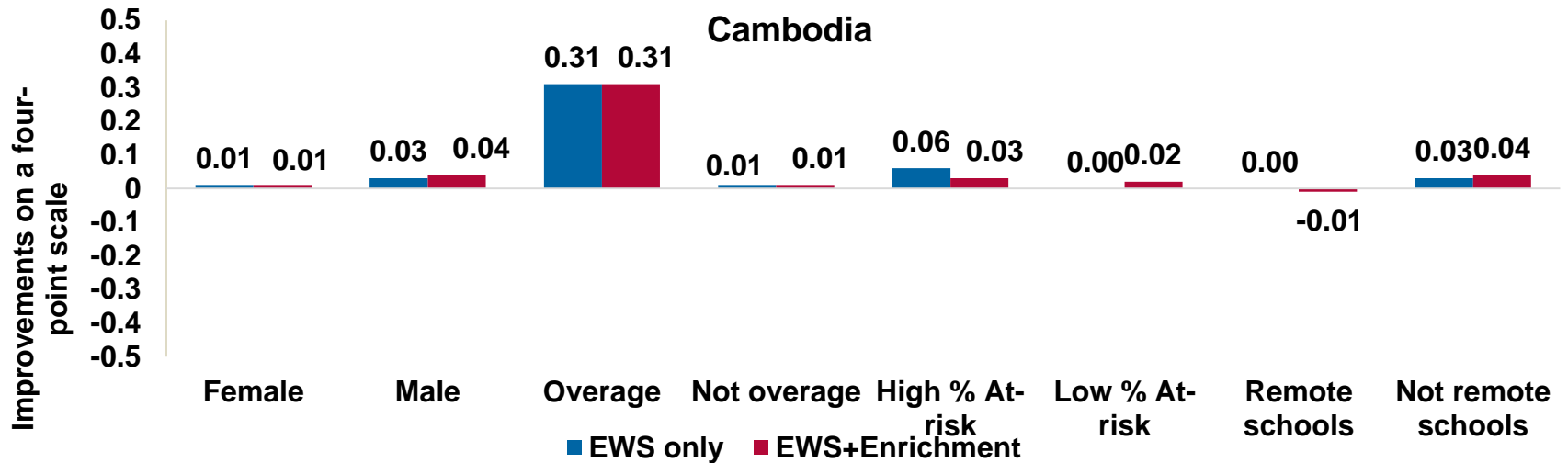
Impacts on Emotional Attitudes Toward School by Subgroup

	Cambodia		India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
	EWS only	EWS + Enrichment			
Student gender					
Females	○	○	+++	+++	○
Males	○	○	○	○	○
Student overage status					
Overage	○	○	○	○	○
Not overage	○	○	+++	+++	○
Student caste					
Low caste	N/A	N/A	○	N/A	N/A
Not low caste	N/A	N/A	+++	N/A	N/A
School percentage at-risk					
High percent at-risk	○	○	○	+	○
Low percent at-risk	○	○	+++	+	○
School location					
Remote	○	○	++	○	○
Not remote	○	○	++	+++	—

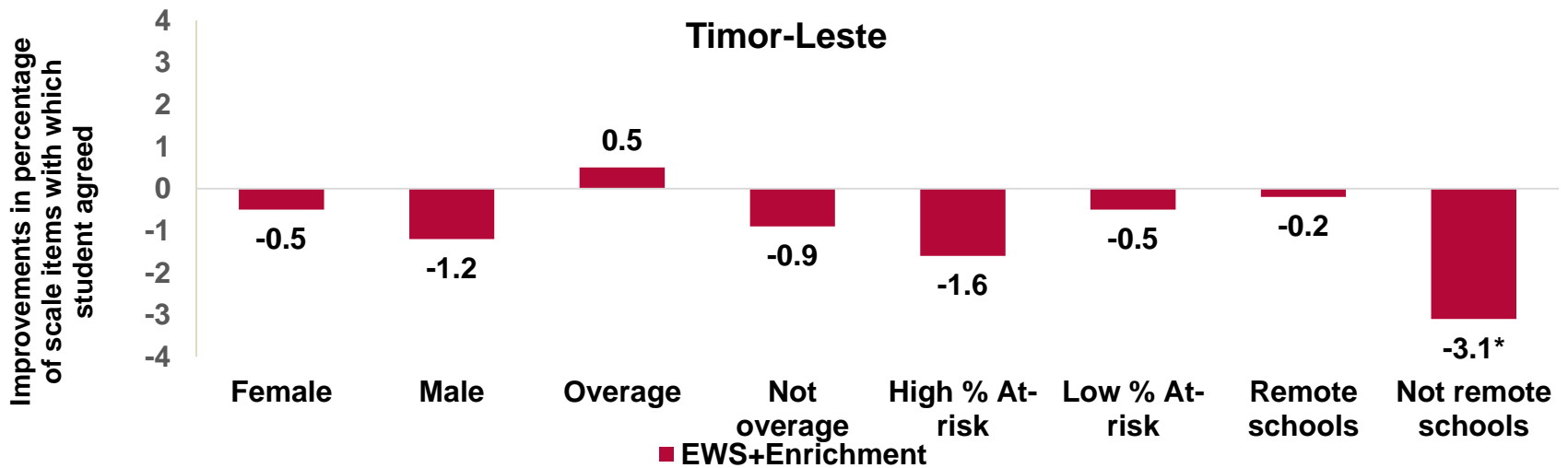
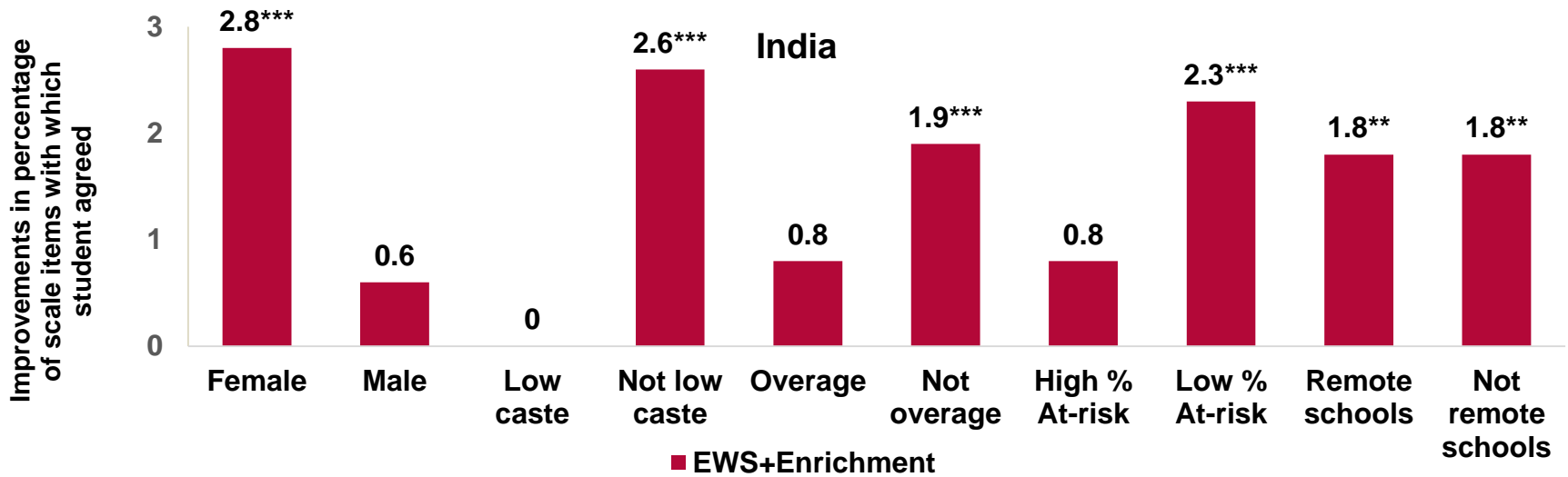
+ + +/+ +/+ Statistically significant positive impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

— — —/— —/— Statistically significant negative impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

Subgroup Impacts on Emotional Attitudes Toward School



Subgroup Impacts on Emotional Attitudes Toward School



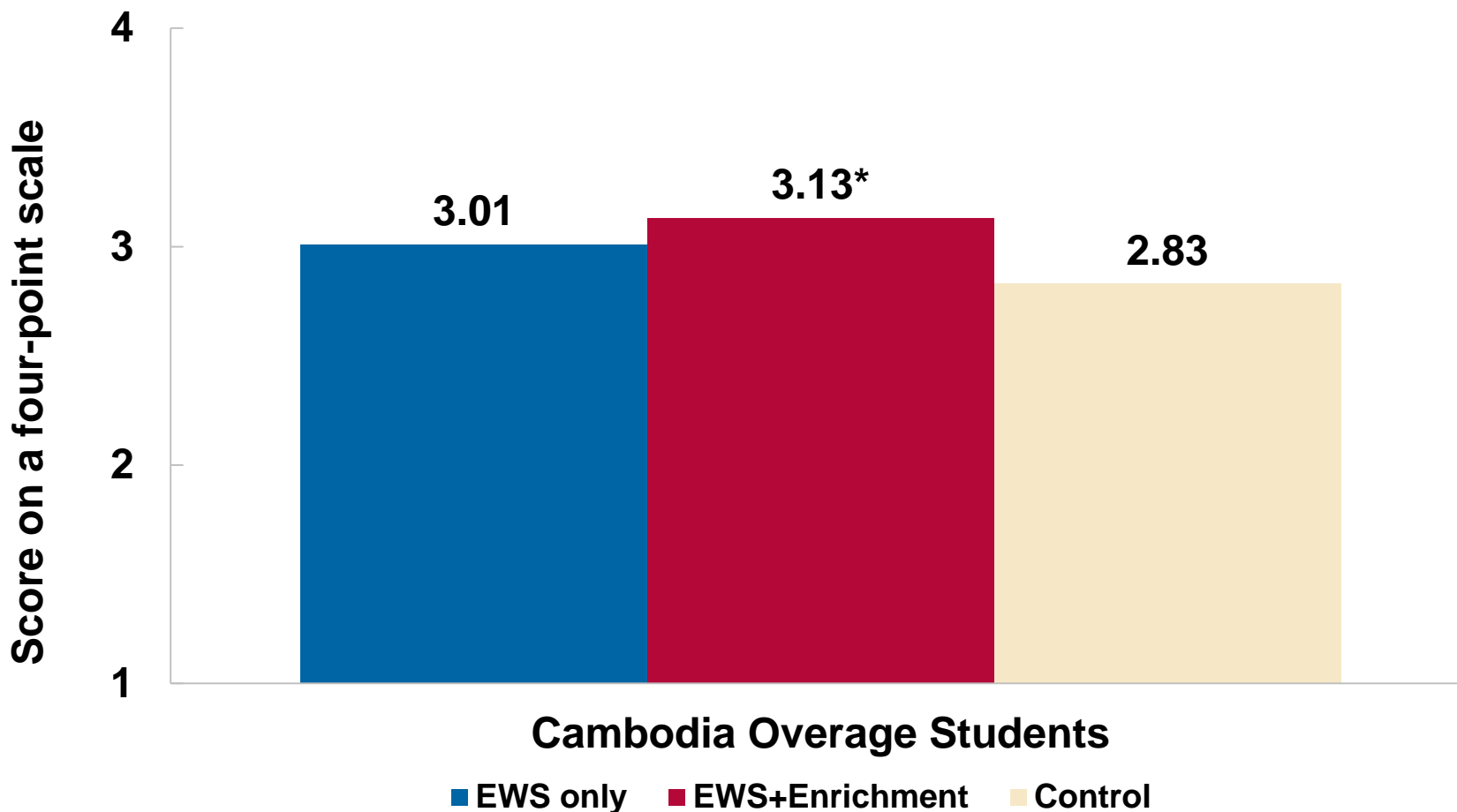
Impacts on Cognitive Attitudes Toward School by Subgroup

	Cambodia		India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
	EWS only	EWS + Enrichment			
Student gender					
Females	○	○	○	○	○
Males	○	○	○	○	○
Student overage status					
Overage	○	+	○	○	○
Not overage	○	○	○	○	○
Student caste					
Low caste	N/A	N/A	○	N/A	N/A
Not low caste	N/A	N/A	○	N/A	N/A
School percentage at-risk					
High percent at-risk	○	○	○	○	○
Low percent at-risk	○	○	○	○	○
School location					
Remote	○	○	○	○	○
Not remote	○	○	○	○	○

++ +/+ +/+ Statistically significant positive impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

— — —/— —/— Statistically significant negative impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

SDPP Improved At-Risk Students' Cognitive Attitudes Toward School for Overage Students in Cambodia



* Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 10% level.

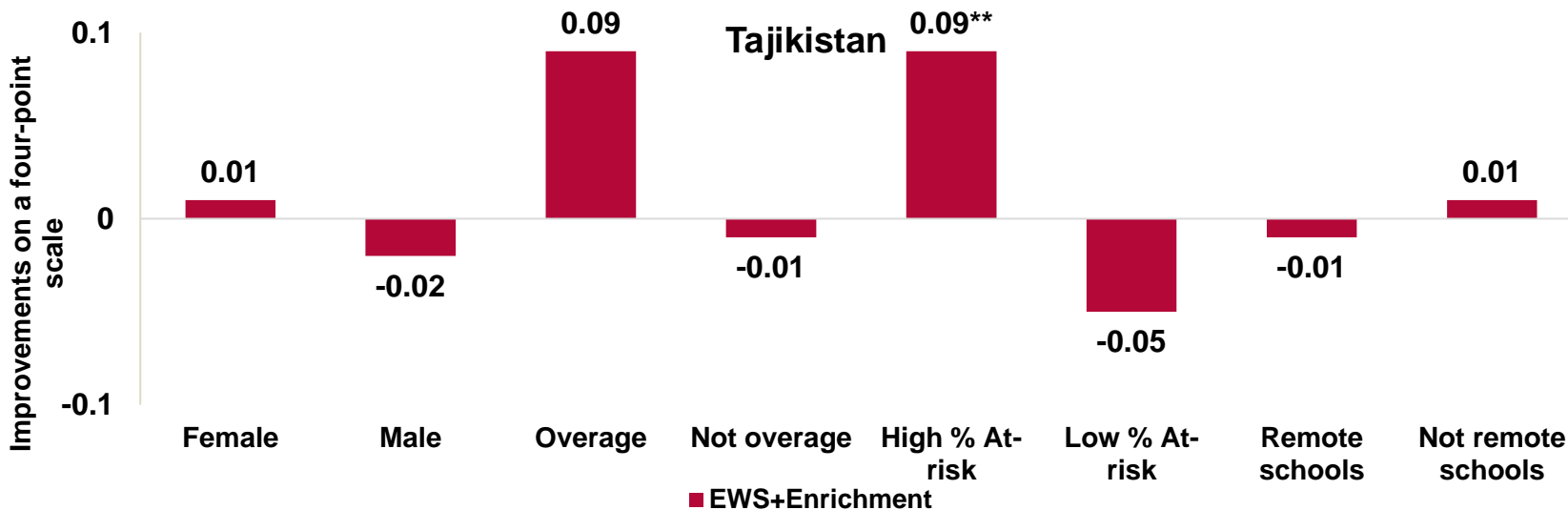
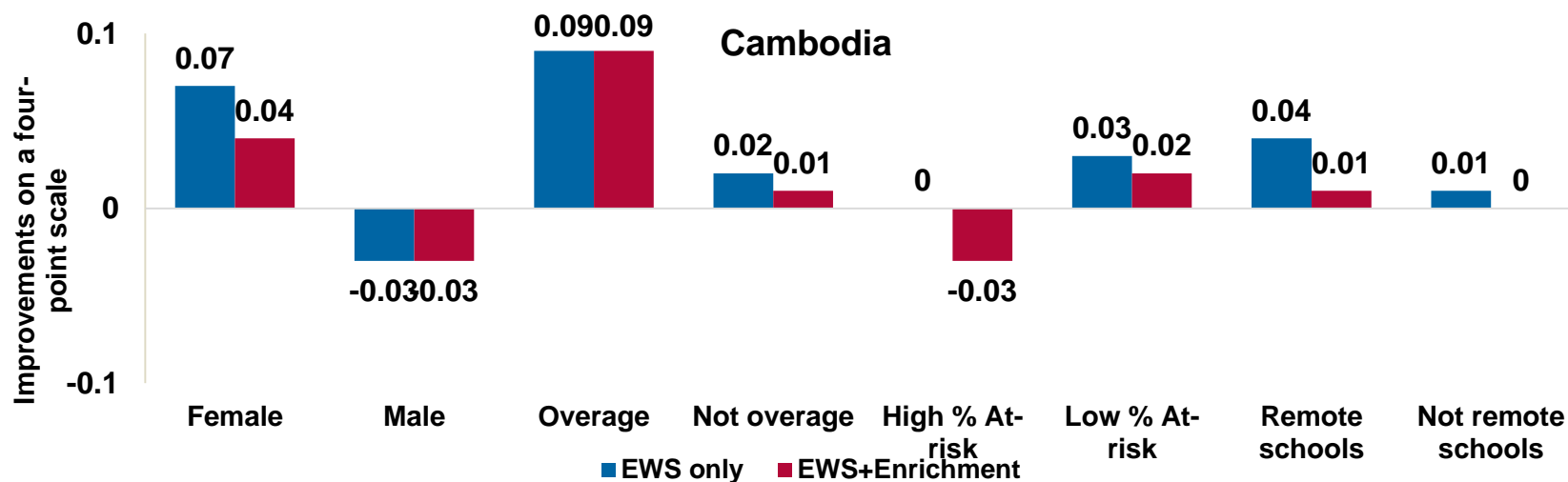
Impacts on Behavioral Attitudes Toward School by Subgroup

		Cambodia		India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
		EWS only	EWS + Enrichment			
Student gender						
	Females	○	○	○	○	+++
	Males	○	○	○	○	+++
Student overage status						
	Overage	○	○	○	○	+++
	Not overage	○	○	○	○	+++
Student caste						
	Low caste	N/A	N/A	○	N/A	N/A
	Not low caste	N/A	N/A	○	N/A	N/A
School percentage at-risk						
	High percent at-risk	○	○	○	++	+++
	Low percent at-risk	○	○	○	○	○
School location						
	Remote	○	○	○	○	+++
	Not remote	○	○	○	○	+

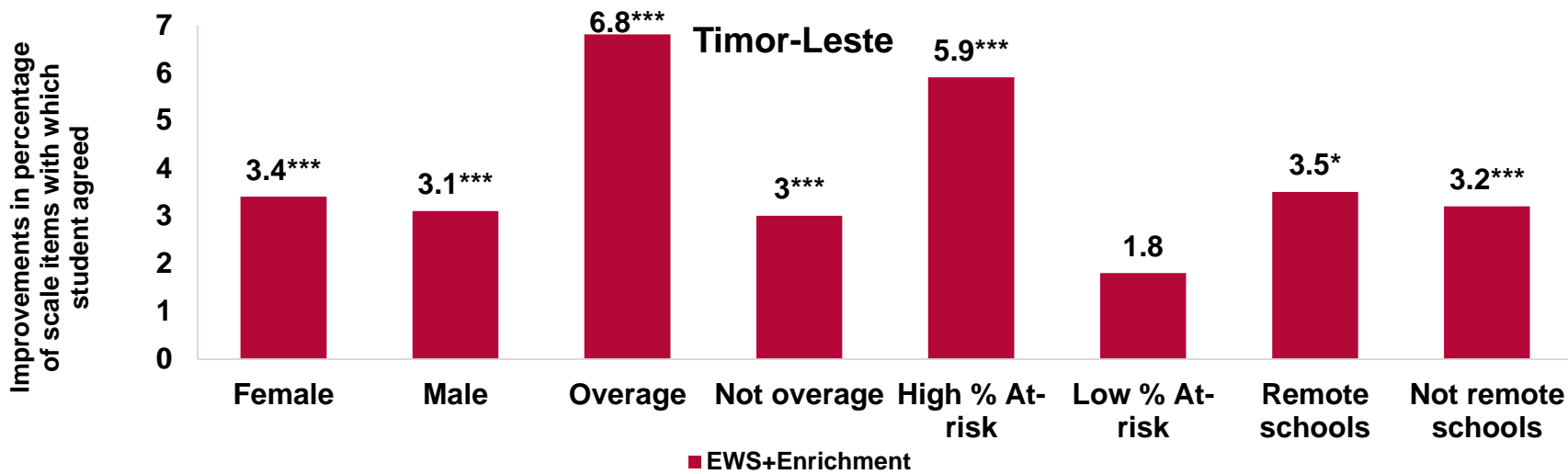
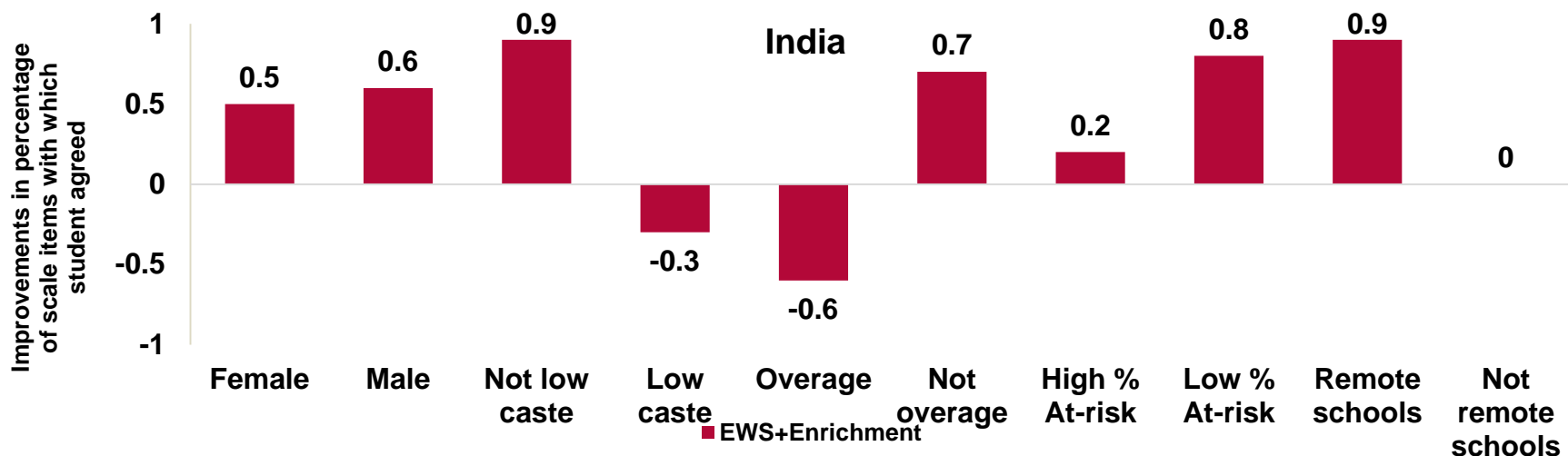
+ + +/+ +/+ Statistically significant positive impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

— — —/— —/— Statistically significant negative impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

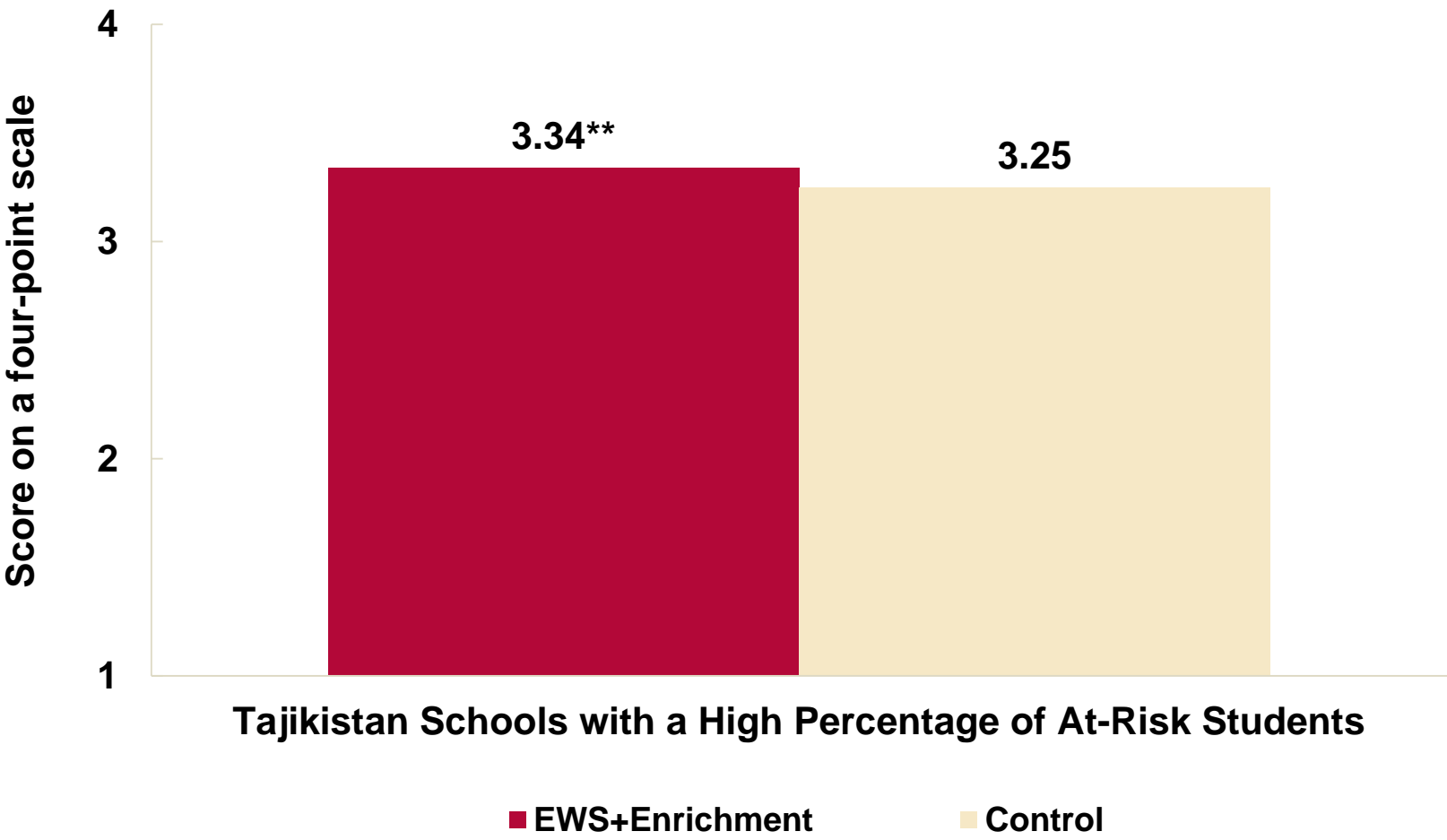
Subgroup Impacts on Behavioral Attitudes Toward School



Subgroup Impacts on Behavioral Attitudes Toward School



SDPP Improved Behavioral Attitudes Toward School for Students in Schools with a High Percentage of At-Risk Students in Tajikistan



** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 5% level.

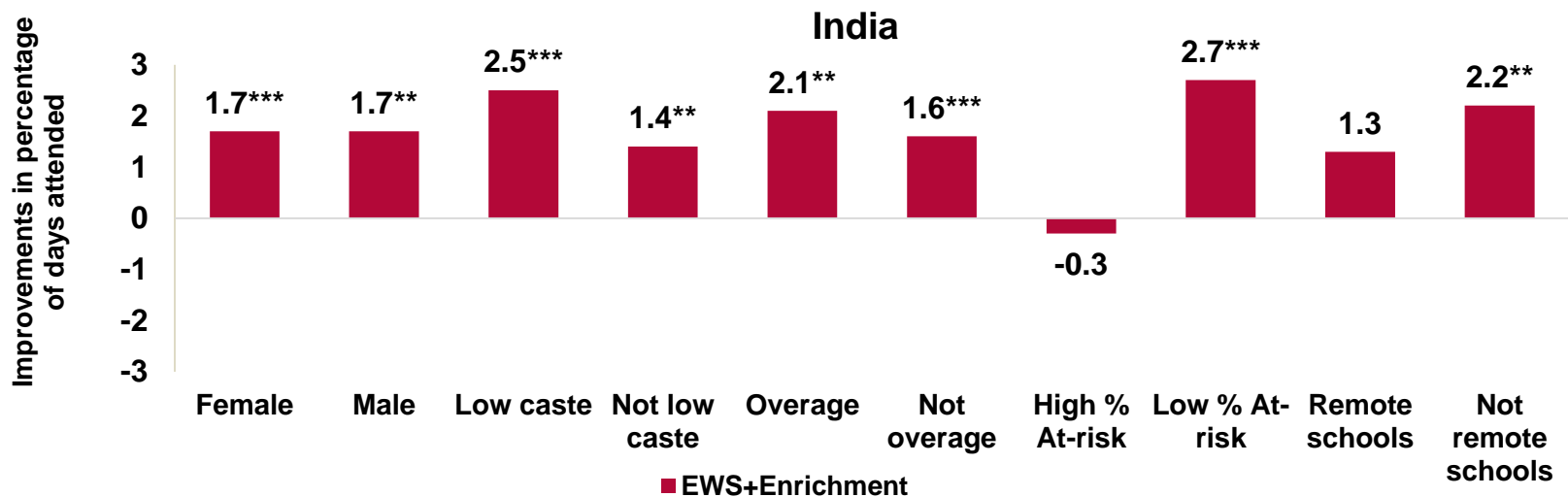
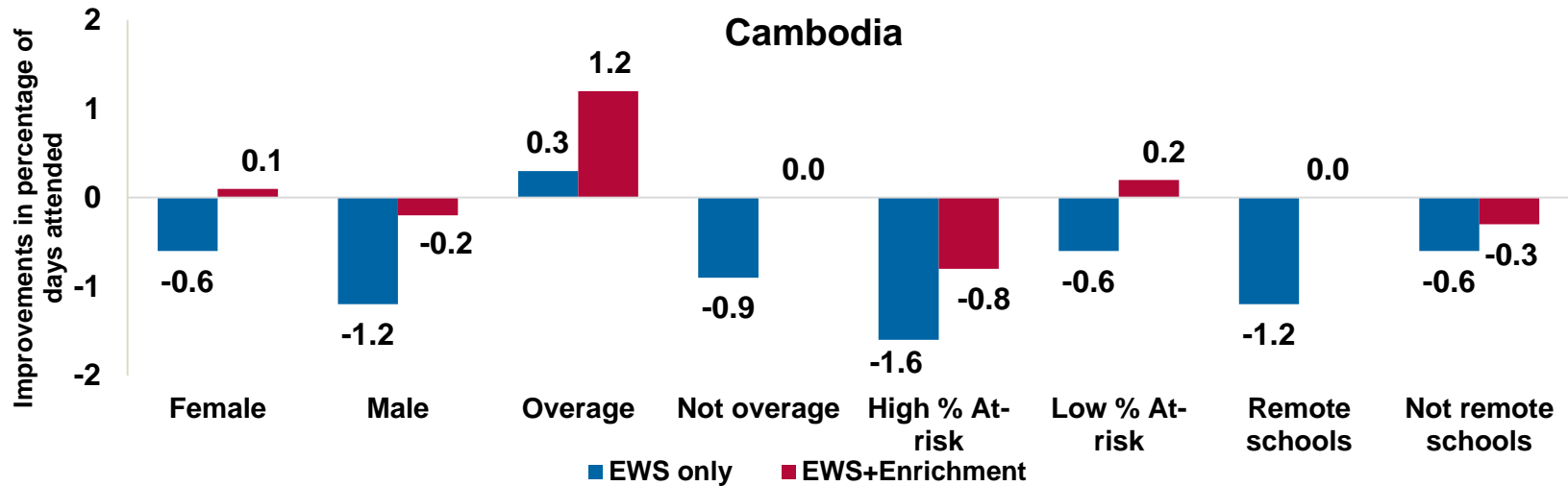
Impacts on Attendance by Subgroup

		Cambodia		India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
		EWS only	EWS + Enrichment			
Student gender						
	Females	○	○	+++	++	++
	Males	○	○	++	○	++
Student overage status						
	Overage	○	○	++	○	++
	Not overage	○	○	+++	+	++
Student caste						
	Low caste	N/A	N/A	++	N/A	N/A
	Not low caste	N/A	N/A	++	N/A	N/A
School percentage at-risk						
	High percent at-risk	○	○	○	○	○
	Low percent at-risk	○	○	+++	++	++
School location						
	Remote	○	○	○	○	+
	Not remote	○	○	++	+	○

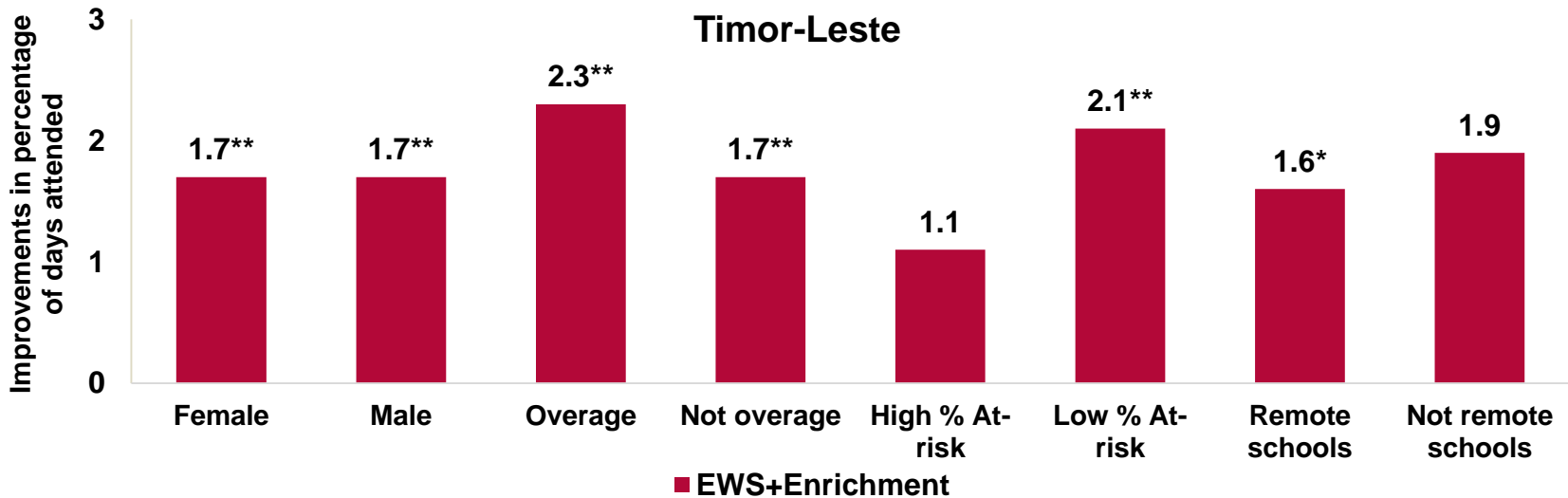
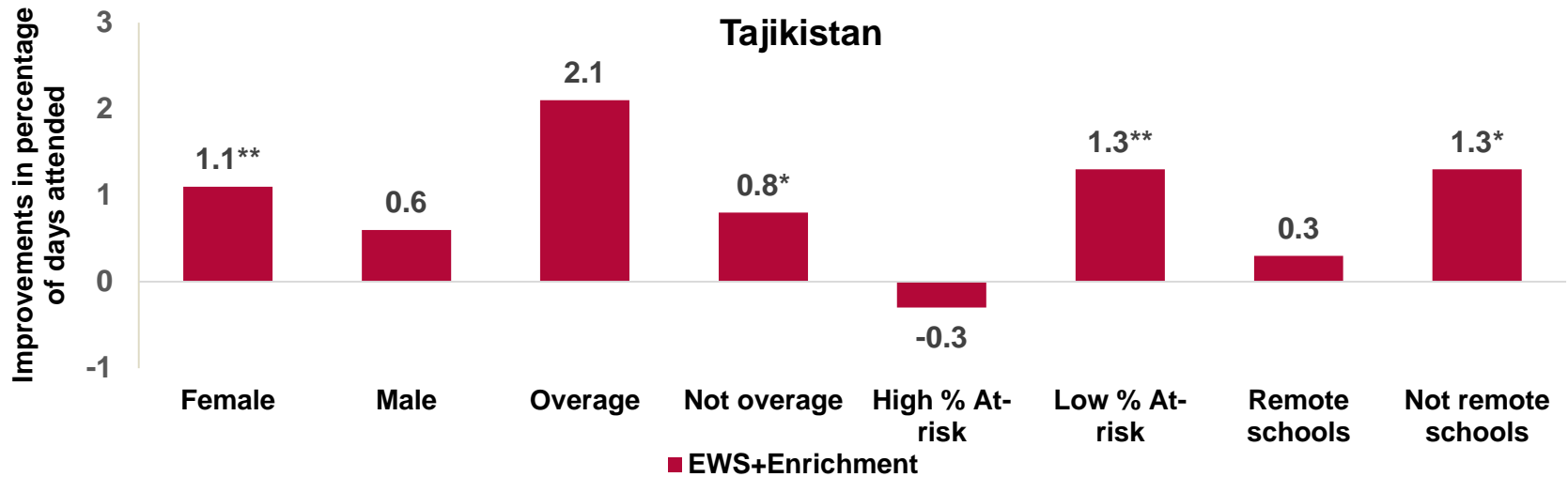
++ +/+ +/+ Statistically significant positive impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

— — —/— —/— Statistically significant negative impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

Subgroup Impacts on Attendance



Subgroup Impacts on Attendance



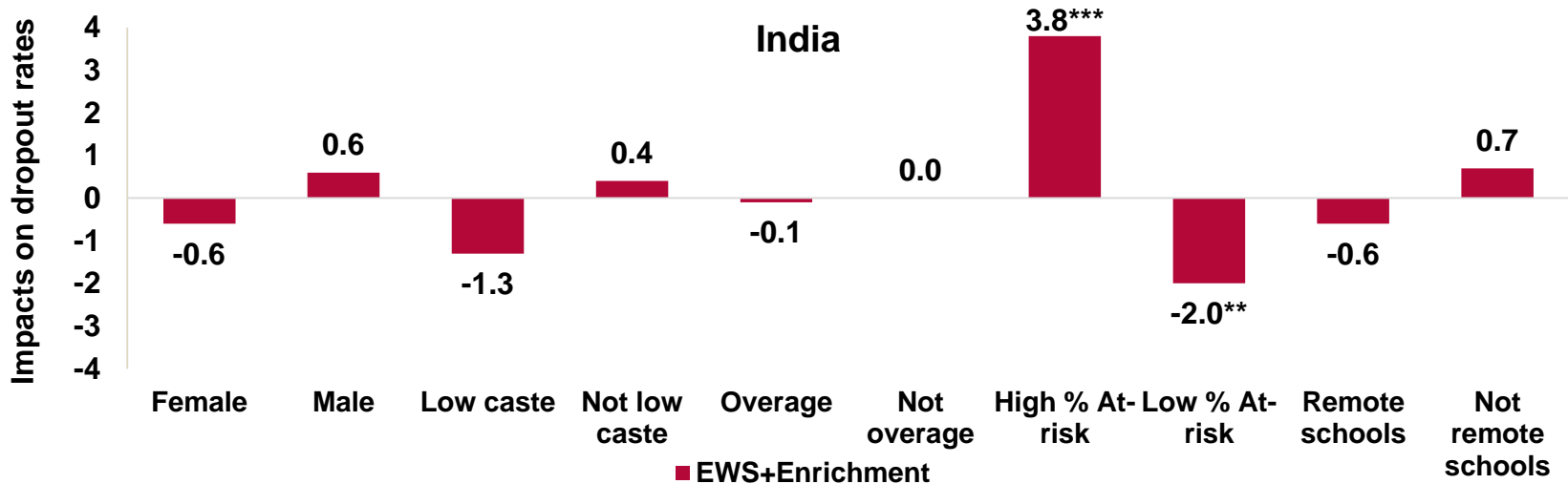
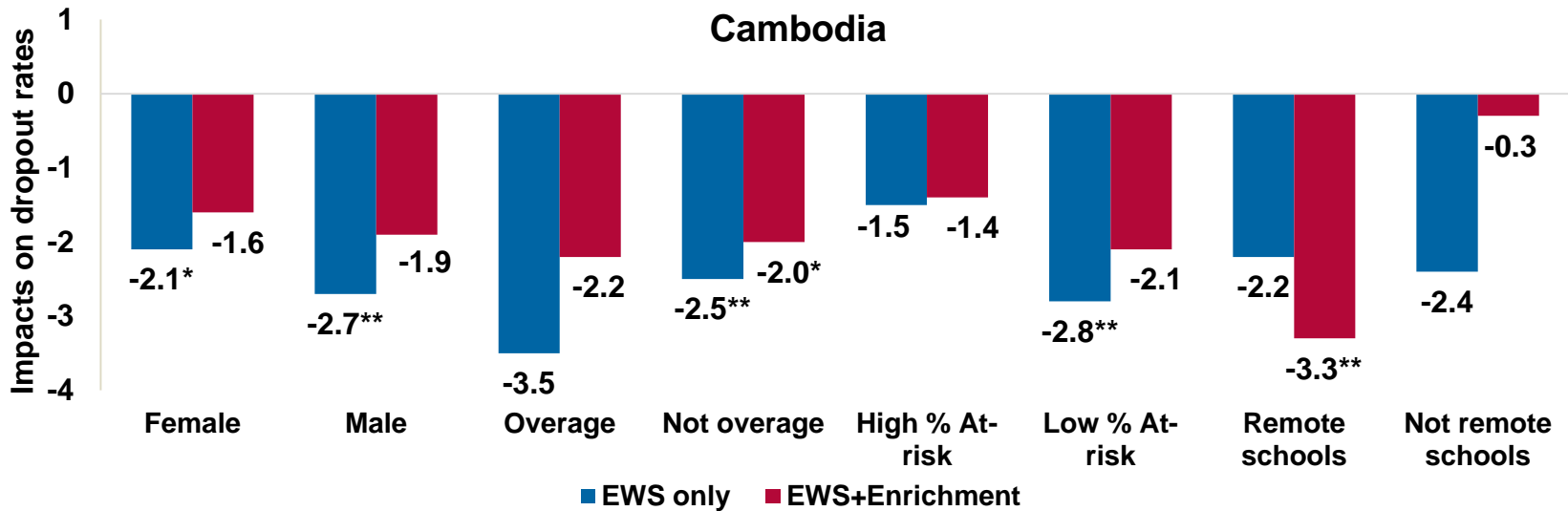
Impacts on Dropout by Subgroup

	Cambodia		India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
	EWS only		EWS + Enrichment		
Student gender					
Females	—		○	○	○
Males	— —		○	○	○
Student overage status					
Overage	○		○	○	○
Not overage	— —		—	○	○
Student caste					
Low caste	N/A		N/A	○	N/A
Not low caste	N/A		N/A	○	N/A
School percentage at-risk					
High percent at-risk	○		○	+++	○
Low percent at-risk	— —		○	— —	○
School location					
Remote ^d	○		— —	○	○
Not remote ^d	○		○	○	○

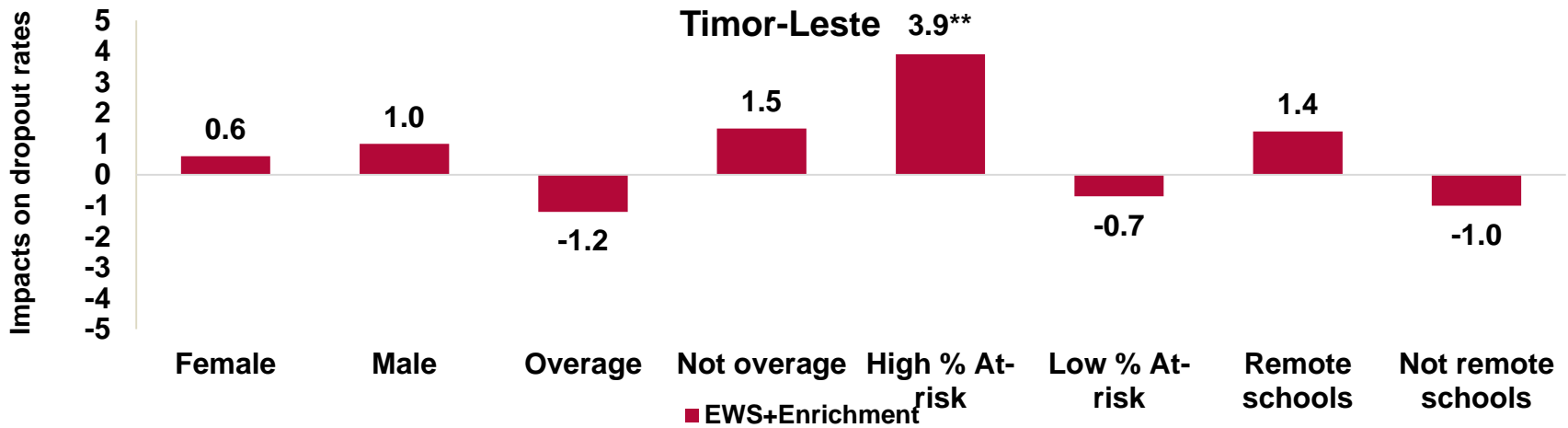
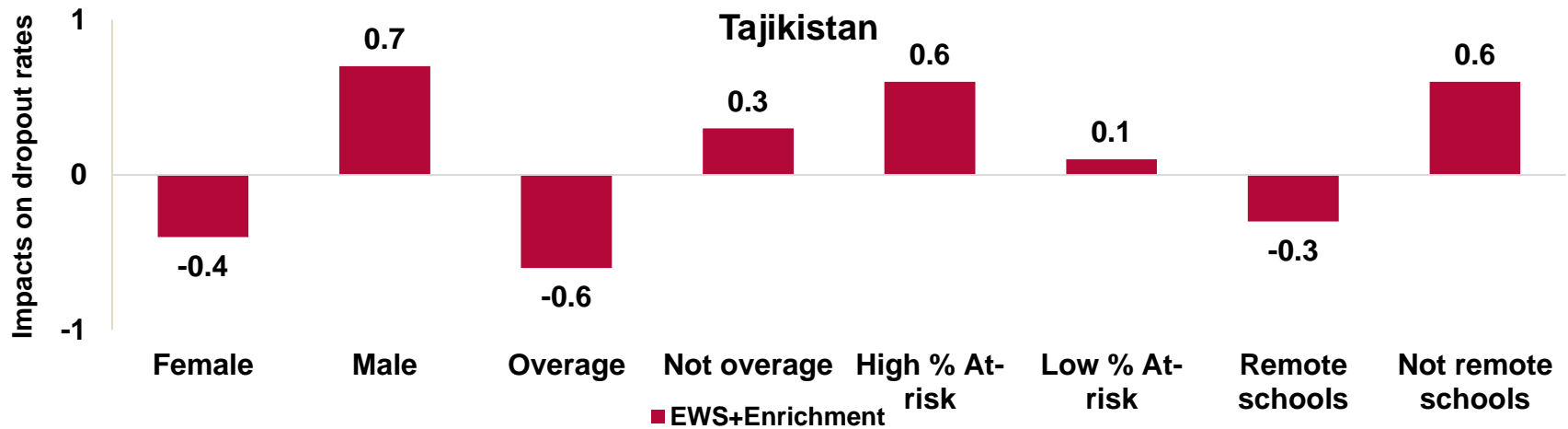
+ + +/+ +/+ Statistically significant positive impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

— — —/— —/— Statistically significant negative impact at the .01/.05/.10 level.

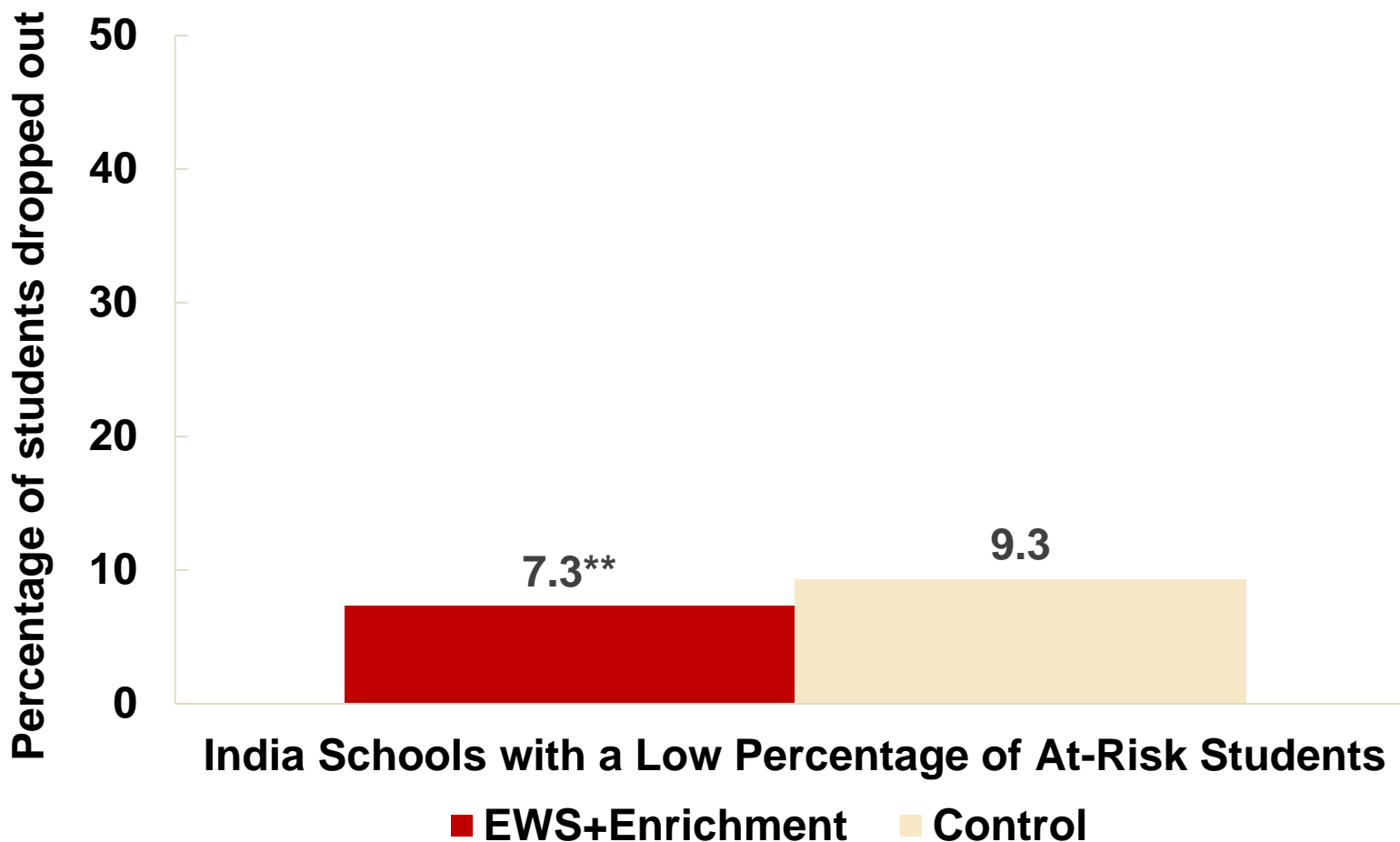
Subgroup Impacts on Dropout



Subgroup Impacts on Dropout



SDPP Reduced Dropout for Students in Schools with a Low Percentage of At-Risk Students in India



*** Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 1% level.

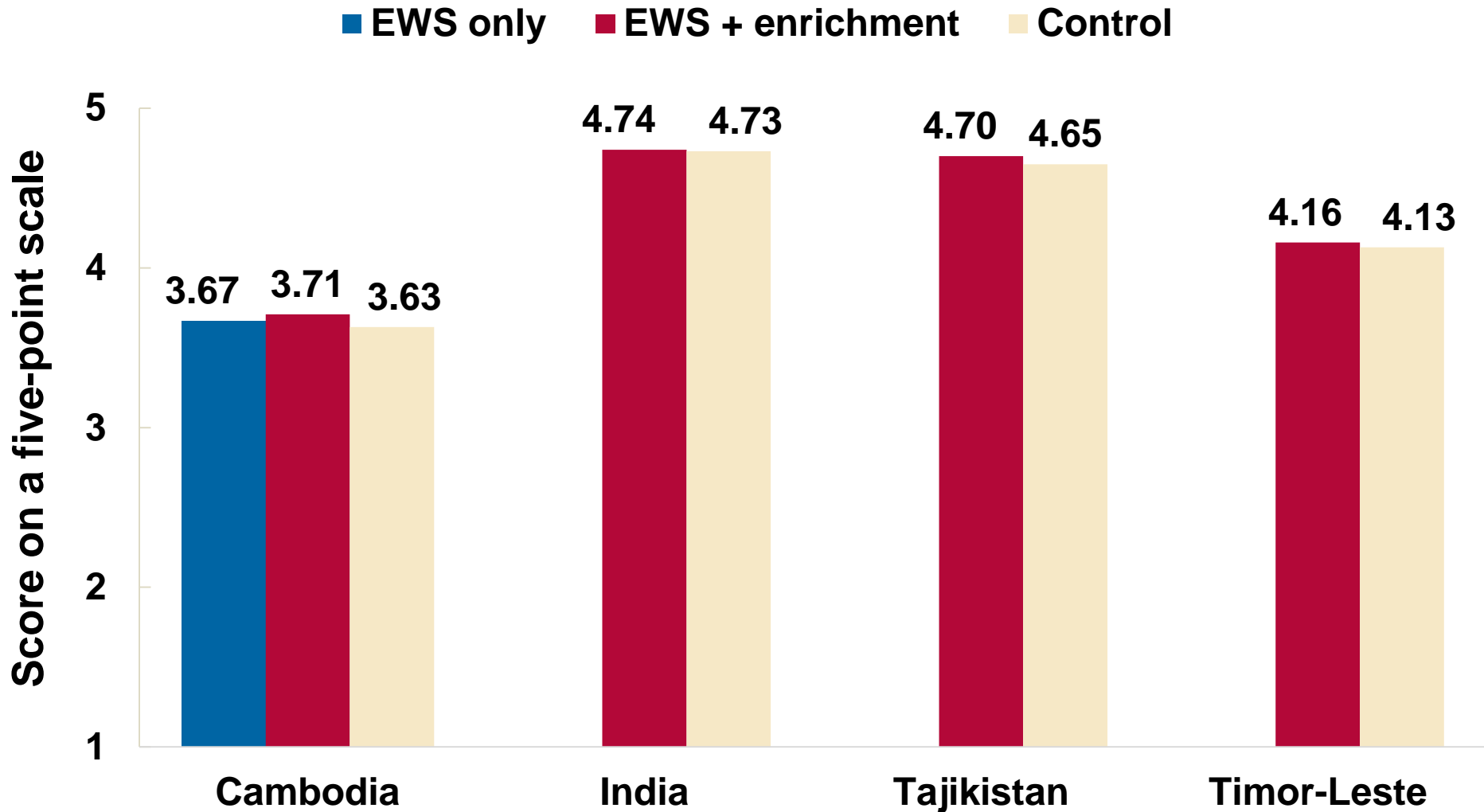
Impacts on Daily Attendance: What does this mean?

	India	Tajikistan	Timor-Leste
Number of Days School is Open in a School Year	225	198	240
Number of Days Absent for a Typical Student	82	19	47
Number of Days Absent for an At-Risk Student	88	23	56
Total Additional School Days Attended Per Student			
All students	4	2	4
At-risk students	4	No impact	6
Total Additional School Days Attended			
All students	76,000	15,000	77,000
At-risk students	65,000	No impact	32,000

Impacts on Dropout in Cambodia: What Does This Mean?

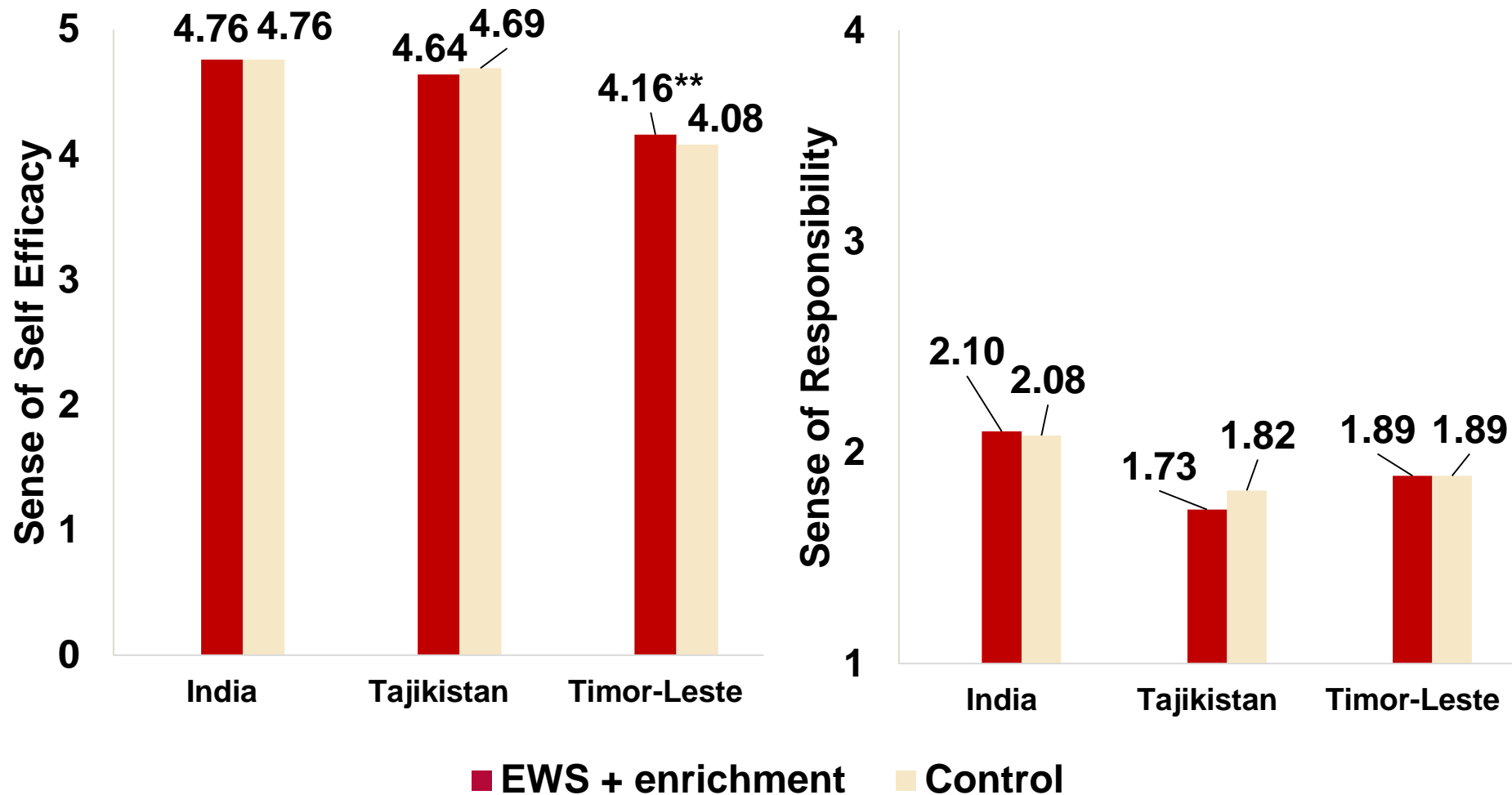
	Number (%) of Students
Students overall	
Number of Students in SDPP Schools	45,000
% Dropping Out in Absence of SDPP	41%
Number of Students Dropping Out in Absence of SDPP	18,500
Number of Students that SDPP Kept in School	4635
At risk students	
Number of At-Risk Students in SDPP Schools	24,600
% At-Risk Students Dropping Out in Absence of SDPP	54%
Number of At-Risk Students Dropping Out in Absence of SDPP	13,200
Number of At-Risk Students that SDPP Kept in School	2,700

SDPP Did Not Affect Administrators' Sense of Self-Efficacy



Differences between treatment and control group means are not statistically significant.

Teachers' Sense of Self Efficacy vs. Sense of Responsibility in India, Tajikistan and Timor-Leste



**Difference from control group mean is statistically significant at the 5% level.