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Teachers' motivation in developing quality learning in rural schools in Indonesia

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This study examines teachers' interests influenced by school culture and organizational and civic behavior through life satisfaction in developing quality learning. The researcher conducted this study in the province of West Java, Indonesia. The subjects of this study are 193 elementary school teachers. Data collection techniques used school culture instruments, organizational, civic behavior, life satisfaction, teacher interests, and data analysis techniques using structural equations (SEM). This research shows that school culture and organizational and civic behavior through life satisfaction play an essential role in fostering teachers' interest. Teachers' interest results from the school's cultural encouragement, organizational, civic behavior, and life satisfaction. This research implies that programs must develop teachers' interests by optimizing school culture, managerial and civic behavior, and meeting life needs as influential factors. The results of this study show a positive and significant relationship between the variables studied. These findings can serve as a basis for institution owners and policymakers to assess the effects of teachers' interests and develop strategies to improve the quality of learning.

KEYWORDS

life satisfaction, OCB, quality learning, school culture, teacher's interests

1 Introduction

The quality of learning is born from a well-planned and implemented learning process (Rosak-Szyrocka et al., 2022). Learning quality is a multidimensional concept that includes various aspects: School culture, teaching and learning process, and school reality (Garad et al., 2021). School culture is born from the interaction between teachers and students (Kravchuk et al., 2023) that gives birth to habits. The habit begins from the beginning of the student's entry into school and will continue until he completes his education a few years later (Nikolopoulou et al., 2021). Learning activities are collaborative efforts between teachers and students in processing information in the hope that the knowledge gained can be helpful, become the foundation of continuous learning, and produce positive changes reflected in individual behavior (Siddiqui and Shaukat, 2021). The learning process at school is organized in a fun way, keeping up with the times, creating innovation, and motivating students to find creativity tailored to their talents, interests, and psychological development (Hyland et al., 2022). The reality of school is the actual conditions that occur in schools as a forum for students to learn to interact, work together, and build social relationships with friends and teachers (Sudarmika et al., 2020). The reality of school is closely related to Organizational Civic Behavior (OCB) (Choroschun et al., 2024). Although the authors have a different view of the statement of the three quality variables (school culture, learning process, and school reality),

the other variable supports the quality of learning, namely teacher life satisfaction (Krämer et al., 2024).

So far, the quality of learning has been centered on the professionalism of teachers when teaching at school. Teachers are required to have the ability to plan learning, carry out the learning process, and evaluate learning (Stanciu et al., 2025). However, the fulfillment of their living needs is not paid attention to. In Indonesia, the problem that disrupts the quality of learning is the low wages of teachers (Shen et al., 2022), especially in rural areas (De Ree et al., 2019). The salary of permanent teachers in public schools refers to Indonesian Government Regulation Number 5 of 2024 concerning Civil Servant Salary. The wages of Group I civil servant teachers range from IDR 1,685,700 to IDR 2,901,400 per month.

Meanwhile, there are no standard rules for honorary teachers except for referring to the Minister of Finance Regulation (PMK) number 49 of 2024 for Rp. 200,000 to Rp. 300,000 for each teacher. Teachers who work in some schools until now do not have a standard salary (Fuchs et al., 2022). There's no denying that big salaries can influence their teaching career choices and serve their families more focused on learning (Olvido et al., 2024). Diagne (2024) found that low teacher salaries would have side effects that could affect the quality of teaching. With a small wage, Gutu will not be able to fulfill his life. The phenomenon of teacher problems above does not dampen a person's enthusiasm to become a teacher in the countryside as the needs of living and salaries increase and are far below average. It is important to direct attention to the teacher's interests. Interest is the feeling of liking or attraction to something. Interest can encourage a person to engage in a particular activity or activity (Havia et al., 2023). Interest is a constant tendency to pay attention to and enjoy a specific object or activity. Interest is often associated with positive emotions and curiosity, which can trigger intrinsic motivation (Sun et al., 2025). In other words, when someone is interested in something, they tend to feel motivated to learn it or do it without any external reward. In the context of teachers, interest plays a vital role in motivating a person to become a teacher to teach and achieve optimal learning outcomes.

Based on the above statement, the factors that cause teachers' interest must be known internally and externally (Ali et al., 2021). Although individuals have both internal and external support, in reality, some individuals are highly motivated (Wang et al., 2025), and others show low motivation. Fate theory becomes an intrinsic motivation for teachers closely related to their interest in becoming teachers. This theory emphasizes that inherent motivation arises from fulfilling basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and connectedness (Ahmadi et al., 2023). It is key to achieving optimal OCB and well-being. Teachers interested in their profession tend to have strong intrinsic motivation (Smeets et al., 2023). They feel joy and enthusiasm for teaching because they enjoy the process, feel challenged, and see meaning in their work. Self-determination theory explains that this intrinsic motivation thrives when teachers feel independent in making teaching-related decisions, competent in carrying out their duties, and connected with students and colleagues (Dong, 2025). Self-determination theory states that fulfilling basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and connectedness is essential for maintaining intrinsic motivation (Schmidt et al., 2025).

Prospective teachers who feel that the teaching profession can provide them with the opportunity to meet those needs tend to have a greater interest in becoming teachers. Intrinsically motivated teachers tend to create a more positive and engaging school environment, which can improve OCB. Aspiring teachers who are aware of the positive impact they can have on the school through their motivation tend to have a greater interest in becoming teachers. Thus, self-determination theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how intrinsic motivational factors can influence interest in becoming a teacher. The accusations that affect the internal externals are School Culture, OCB, and Life Satisfaction, according to Amtu et al. (2020), which states that school culture affects teachers' interests. School culture is a set of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors practiced in an educational environment. Lim et al. (2023) mentions that this school culture creates creative, innovative, and visionary challenges. Creativity in learning will impact improving pedagogy (Hrmo et al., 2024). A good school culture encourages the improvement of teaching competence in schools as motivation for teachers (Ismail et al., 2022) and the quality of learning in developing students' character (Furkan, 2014).

In addition to school culture, OCB is an external factor that has an interesting effect. OCB is the willingness of employees to do more work than has been set for them, support the success of well-being in the workplace, and be more active in volunteering (Alomar et al., 2021). However, the company's responsibility to ease the burden of its employees' costs is not optimal, especially in taxes and health insurance (Phuong and Dong, 2021). Jonbekova et al.'s (2023) findings show that sometimes, employees' behavior in their engagement develops a greater appreciation of their workplace and their role in its development. Many employees voluntarily comply with workplace rules and policies, carry out additional tasks assigned to the workplace, and assist colleagues well. However, in an uncertain and dynamic work environment, individuals may admit to engaging in destructive behavior to avoid being perceived as damaging to their interests (Jiang and Xie, 2024). So, their involvement in the ancillary work is limited to pretense. They assume that additional duties are work outside of obligations, even though they have been planned and scheduled. Sometimes, these extra tasks cause staff to have a lot of work and impact burnout (Liberati et al., 2021). In the context of teachers, OCB gives birth to a willingness to carry out tasks that are not proportional to the income obtained and gives rise to the spirit of doing administrative tasks outside of assigned teaching hours.

Life satisfaction is another external factor that is suspected to affect teachers' interests. Life satisfaction is a release from anxiety, depression, stress, a valuable environment, and a perfect work career (Grzegorzewska et al., 2025). According to Udayar et al. (2024), life satisfaction will encourage a person to commit to achieving a common goal, and other findings suggest that interest in life satisfaction is highly interconnected (Lawes et al., 2024). Therefore, exploring teachers' interests in rural areas is essential by involving predictors of school culture, OCB, and the fulfillment of life satisfaction. Another reason is that there has been an education gap between urban and rural areas in Indonesia (Hardhantyo and Chuang, 2021). Teacher motivation is a key factor in improving the quality of learning in rural schools, so this research can help reduce gaps and provide fairer opportunities for students in remote areas. Rural schools have unique challenges, such as limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and geographic isolation.

Understanding how these factors affect teacher motivation is essential to developing effective strategies for improving the quality of learning. Motivated teachers tend to be more innovative and dedicated

in their work. This research can identify the factors that motivate teachers in rural schools and provide recommendations for increasing their motivation through training, support, and professional development. The results of this research can provide valuable information for policymakers in designing more effective programs and policies to improve the quality of education in rural schools. Make policies in teacher recruitment, placement, training, and development. Thus, research on teacher motivation in developing quality learning in rural schools in Indonesia is essential to improve the quality of education, reduce disparities, and prepare students for future challenges. This research is also relevant to the government's efforts to improve the quality of Indonesia's human resources (Indrawati and Kuncoro, 2021).

Meanwhile, research on rural education in Indonesia tends to focus more on infrastructure, accessibility, and student learning outcomes. Teacher motivation, as an essential factor in the quality of learning, often receives less attention. Empirical studies examining the factors influencing teacher motivation in rural schools are still limited. In-depth qualitative research (Werang et al., 2022), the experience and perspective of teachers in the field are also needed to understand the complexity of this issue. A comprehensive theoretical framework to explain teacher motivation in rural schools still needs to be developed. Existing motivational theories must be adapted and tested in Indonesia's rural education context. Educational research in Indonesia is often published in local journals or reports that are difficult to access internationally, making it difficult for researchers and practitioners to find and utilize relevant findings.

The main objective of your research is to examine teacher interests shaped by school culture and Organizational Citizenship Behavior through fulfilling life satisfaction. To achieve this primary goal, there are several sub-objectives to achieve: (1) examining the influence of school culture on teacher interest, (2) examining the influence of culture on life satisfaction, (3) examining the influence of OCB on teacher interest, (4) examining the influence of OCB on life satisfaction. We suspect a positive school culture will increase teachers' interest (hypothesis 1). Second, active teachers in OCB will increase their interest (hypothesis 2). Third, a positive school culture will increase life satisfaction (hypothesis 3). Fourth, teachers who are actively involved in Organizational Civic Behavior will show higher life satisfaction (hypothesis 4). Fifth, the teacher's perceived life satisfaction will mediate between the school culture, OCB, and the teacher's interest (hypothesis 5). These hypotheses form a model that explains how life satisfaction can affect teachers' interests through two main pathways: school culture and OCB. These hypotheses refer to several theoretical frameworks: (1) organizational culture theory: this theoretical framework describes how the values, norms, and assumptions shared in an organization (in this case, schools) affect the behavior and attitudes of the organization's members. A positive school culture can create an environment conducive to developing teachers' interests and OCB behaviors (Fu et al., 2022). (2) Self-motivation theory: this theory describes how individuals are motivated to do things based on their basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and connectedness (Schmidt et al., 2025). When teachers feel that their interests align with the school's cultural values and they have the autonomy to pursue them, they will feel more motivated and satisfied with their lives. (3) Social exchange theory: this theory explains how individuals engage in OCB behavior as a form of reciprocity toward the organization that has provided them with support and benefits. When teachers feel that the school provides support and appreciation for their contributions, they will be more motivated to engage in OCB behavior as a form of reciprocity. (4) Life satisfaction theory: this theory explains how individuals evaluate their overall quality of life based on work, social relationships, and health. When teachers feel satisfied with their work and have positive social relationships at school, they will feel more confident with their overall life. (5) Theory integration: We hypothesize how school culture and OCB can influence teachers' interests through life satisfaction by integrating these four theories. A positive school culture creates an environment conducive to developing teachers' interests and OCB behavior. When teachers feel that their interests align with the school's culture and engage in OCB behavior, they will feel more satisfied with their work and lives.

2 Materials and methods

2.1 Research design

This study used a quantitative approach and a survey research approach that examined the behavior of individuals or groups of Islamic education teachers who actively teach in rural primary schools.

2.2 Participant characteristics

Research participants recruited in the study must meet the predetermined criteria: (1) have a bachelor's education, (2) honorary teachers in public and private schools, (3) teaching for more than 1 year, (4) the mountain school provides education.

2.3 Sampling procedures

The study takes samples utilizing a saturated sampling technique (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). This technique allows us to generalize the sample's findings to the entire population with a minimal error rate. The respondents in this study were all elementary school honorary teachers. The researcher considered the characteristics of the population, and the honorary teacher was considered the most representative or relevant to the research objectives. The number of honorary teachers in elementary schools was 193 (60% female, 40% male), all selected as samples in this study. This research focuses on Kabandungan District, West Java. It is far from urban areas with a large population of Elementary Schools. Permission from the principal with number 421.1/037-SD. CCD/VI/2024. Researchers use questionnaires for data collection. The questionnaire was given physically directly to individuals and given time to fill out manually for 2 days. After the specified time, the researcher collected the results of the respondents' answers for data analysis. The researcher explained the objectives and benefits of the study to the respondents as an introduction to their consent request. The respondents gave verbal consent voluntarily, and there was no coercion or undue influence on the respondents' participation in this study. After the respondents have given it, the researcher explains how to complete the questionnaire to ensure they understand the study. Ethical

approval from Indonesian Muslim universities with number 115/A.1/KEP-UMI/BI/2024.

2.4 Instruments

2.4.1 School culture

Researchers developed the school's cultural instruments in five aspects: rules obeyed, norms agreed upon, adaptation of rules, encouraging innovation, and relationships with colleagues. Based on the dimension of teacher professionalism in the Organizational Climate Index (Hoy et al., 2002). The five aspects gave birth to 15 statements. The statement measurement uses a modified form of the Likert scale. Respondents were given four options to provide answers to the statements submitted, with answers ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), such as: "every school citizen came before the lesson started"; "polite language used in everyday conversations in the school environment"; "Every member of the school dresses according to the rules"; "teachers are always innovating in learning";" teachers always help other teachers in completing their duties." The value of the composite reliability coefficient is 0.82. The highest HTMT discriminant validity value was 0.64.

2.4.2 Organization citizenship behavior (OCB)

The Organizational Citizenship Behavior Instrument (OCB) in this study refers to the which measures the aspects of altruism, Consistency, Sportsmanship, Manners, and Civic Virtues. The researcher developed these five aspects into 15 statements. The measurement of this statement uses a modified Likert scale. Each statement was given a score of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Researchers asked study participants to respond to the answer choice statement, such as: "I enjoy helping other teachers who need help without expecting anything in return"; "I always arrive before the class schedule starts"; "so that the school environment is harmonious I never make problems with my friends"; "I have never complained about school assignments and policies"; "I always consider the best things for the school's progress." The value of the reliability coefficient is 0.83. The highest HTMT discriminant validity value was 0.72.

2.4.3 Life satisfaction

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLTS) in this study refers to The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLTS) from Diener et al. (1985), which measures five dimensions, namely the desire to change life, satisfaction with the current life, satisfaction with the past life, satisfaction with the life in the future, and the individual's assessment of their life. The results of the development of life satisfaction instruments are 15 statements. The measurement of this statement uses a modified Likert scale. Respondents were given four options with four sections to respond to the statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). We asked study participants to respond to the answer choice statement, such as: "My life is close to ideal," "I have felt the perfection of my current life"; "I feel satisfied with my life"; "I've got the important things I want in my life"; "I want to go back to my old life." I would hardly change anything." The value of the reliability coefficient is 0.85. The highest HTMT discriminant validity value was 0.64.

2.4.4 Teacher's interests

The teacher's interest in this study refers to the trilogy of models of mind from Leibniz and Kant in Hilgard (1980), which measures three aspects of interest in becoming a teacher: cognition, affection, and conquest. The researcher developed the research instrument with 15 items. Researchers performed the measurement using a modified Likert scale. Four scoring options are assigned to each item, with statements ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The research participants gave answers to the statements submitted, such as: "I try to find information about the teaching profession in various media"; "I love being a teacher because teaching is a noble profession"; "I will dig deeper into the competence of teachers because I want to be a professional teacher." The value of the reliability coefficient is 0.71. The highest HTMT discriminant validity value was 0. 67.

2.5 Data analysis

Amos software version 21.0 is used in structural equation model (SEM) as a data analysis technique in this study in the following seven main steps: (1) Developing a theoretical model; (2) Build a path diagram; (3) Convert the path diagram into structural and measurement mode; (4) Define the type of data input matrix and estimate the structural model; (5) Verify the structural model; (6) Evaluate the adjustment criteria for the model; (7) Interpreting and modifying models (Salazar-Aramayo et al., 2013).

2.6 Research procedure

The researcher carried out research steps to be well directed: (1) determining the problem is our priority because it is related to the purpose of our research. (2) Identifying and formulating problems that are important to us, (3) making and presenting hypothesis designs, (4) determining the number of samples is no less important because it relates to the research location, (5) determining the research variables with certainty, (6) making musical instruments is an integral part of this research, with the principle of stirring on certain instrument items that are made and disseminated, (7) we collect and analyze the data we receive, (8) deducing the data we obtain carefully, (9) we make the report as the final part of what we do (Salazar-Aramayo et al., 2013).

3 Results

3.1 Analysis awal

Descriptive analysis is a statistical technique used to see an overview of participants and a variable-level classification. The teaching period of the respondents is described descriptively in Table 1, where most participants have taught for between 1 and 10 years, with a percentage of 39 percent, a summary of the descriptive analysis in Table 2.

3.2 Structural model

Before conducting the analysis using the structural equation model (SEM), several things were tested, including: (1) the number of

TABLE 1 The general characteristics of study participants.

Characteristics	Subyek data (years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Length of teaching	1–10	75	39
	11–20	58	30
	21–30	60	31
		193	100

TABLE 2 The descriptive analysis of each construct.

Construct	Level	Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
School culture	Low	39–45	25	13
	Keep	46–55	124	64
	Tall	56–60	44	23
Organizational citizenship behavior	Low	37–43	25	13
	Keep	44–53	32	17
	Tall	54–60	136	70
Life satisfaction	Low	38–42	19	10
	Keep	43–53	141	73
	Tall	54–60	33	17
Teacher's interests	Low	41–45	17	9
	Keep	46–53	138	72
	Tall	54–60	38	20

TABLE 3 Direct and indirect influence.

Path	Estimates	Std. dev	T stat.	*p*-value
Budaya → Kepuasan	0.274	0.099	2.765	0.000
Budaya → Minat	0.250	0.128	1.952	0.015
OCB → Kepuasan	0.551	0.083	6.675	0.000
OCB → Minat	0.197	0.147	1.335	0.151
Budaya and OCB → Kepuasan → Minat	0.441	0.129	3.426	0.000

samples in the test with SEM consisting of a minimum of five constructions was 150. One hundred ninety-three (193) respondents were involved in this study. Exceeding the minimum set limit, (2) SEM analysis requires reliability assessment with Cronbach alpha and composite reliability (rhoC) > 0.7. The results of the four variables showed a number between 0.71 and 0.85 so that all variables met Cronbach's alpha reliability criteria; (3) Furthermore, validity measurement is carried out by assessing the validity of HTMT discrimination not exceeding 0.9. The results of the calculations ranged from 0.54–0.72, thus declaring it valid and confirming the validity of the discrimination (Table 3).

The structural model equation below helps to show the correlation between the variables studied. This equation expresses the causal correlation between constructs. In this section, the similarities between the variables of school culture, OCB, life satisfaction, and interest in becoming a teacher.

The calculation results from the analysis of Structural Equation Modeling can be seen in Figure 1.

There are four direct influence coefficients and one indirect influence coefficient. The direct influence produced was (1) the influence of school culture with interest in becoming a teacher with a coefficient of 0.250 and a significant *p*-value (<0.05) (h1); (2) the influence of OCB on interest in becoming a teacher with a coefficient of 0.197 and a *p*-value of (>0.05) is not significant (h2); (3) the influence of school culture on life satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.274 and a significant *p*-value (<0.05) (h3), (4) the effect of OCB on life satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.551 and a significant *p*-value (<0.05) (h4). The resulting indirect effect was the influence of school culture and OCB through life satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.441 and a significant *p*-value (<0.05) (h5).

4 Discussion

4.1 Direct influence

Referring to the results of the data analysis, school culture contributes directly and significantly to life satisfaction. Although the school's culture only contributes to life satisfaction, a strong school culture will influence the daily behavior of its members so that each

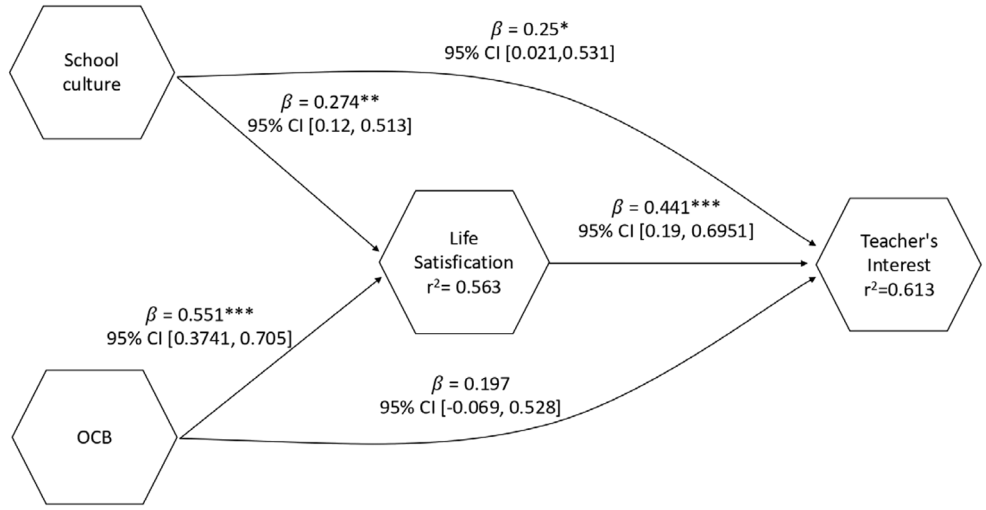

FIGURE 1
Diagram model.

member will perform the work according to their duties and responsibilities. School culture is built from the behavior of all school residents to create a system of interaction between residents. A positive school culture will significantly affect teacher performance, encourage teachers to conduct learning more efficiently and effectively, and achieve optimal teacher performance (Grgić and Jutzi, 2024). Teachers will feel free to develop their thoughts and ideas without feeling hindered and degraded. Teachers' innovations and creations supported by school culture will create a comfortable and safe learning atmosphere. A positive school culture will encourage students' creativity in improving skills and optimizing the performance of teachers, principals, employees, and students, thus guiding school members to act following the capacity and role of each element (Rasdiana et al., 2024). The culture developed in the school will foster discipline, work ethic, and responsibility of the school community (Goh et al., 2023) in carrying out work in their respective fields for better school progress toward higher quality (Christensen and Jerrim, 2025) and recognized by the wider community, it will be a pride and happiness for teachers.

A positive school culture will encourage its members to be safe, comfortable, and happy to achieve life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is not solely felt by the abundance of wealth but by the rewards received in every completeness of doing work. These findings reinforce the idea that school culture influences teacher performance, which aligns with Park and Sohn (2024) conclusions, which mention that the environment significantly affects a person's satisfaction. Thus supporting the first hypothesis.

In addition, school culture also affects teachers' interests, as a second hypothesis. School culture contributes directly to controlling teachers' interests. The findings of this study show that the environment is a factor and has an essential role in developing teachers' interests. A good culture will create a safe and comfortable environment, and Teachers will feel calm and harmonious. According to Rasool et al. (2021), various external factors impact an individual's interests, and a collaborative work environment will create cohesion and fun for all work. The interactions that occur between members will create employability. In cultural education, schools will establish a mandatory system for students, teachers, and staff (Taylor and Ricciardelli, 2024). Obedience in the system will create a balanced rhythm in achieving learning success in school. Every school citizen will be at the forefront of maintaining and preserving a culture that encourages building a positive and collaborative culture (Brauckmann et al., 2023). This study's findings align with Morris et al.'s (2022) statement that school culture is an extrinsic motivation that influences interest in becoming a teacher. In line with that, the principal's leadership style shapes school culture, impacting performance. A collaborative principal will encourage teachers to work professionally at and outside school (Chen et al., 2022).

The study's subsequent finding was that Organizational Civic Behavior (OCB) affects life satisfaction, which supports the third hypothesis. OCB has a significant impact on life satisfaction. According to Alenezi et al. (2024), OCB correlates with higher life satisfaction, as individuals feel they contribute to a positive and cohesive work environment. When employees help colleagues, are willing to go the extra mile, and participate in school activities, they tend to have greater self-esteem and self-efficacy. When employees feel part of the work community and have a good relationship with their coworkers, they tend to feel happier and more satisfied with their lives (Mura et al., 2021). Lautner et al.'s (2021) findings OCB can increase a sense of connectedness and social support in the workplace. When employees feel part of the work community and have a good relationship with coworkers, they tend to feel happier and more satisfied with their lives. In the education dimension, teachers who display OCB behavior tend to get recognition and appreciation from their superiors and colleagues. This recognition can increase motivation and job satisfaction, increasing life satisfaction (Naruetharadhol and Hengboriboon, 2024).

Based on the results of data analysis, OCB has a very low-interest influence. Contrary to the researchers' assumption, OCB significantly affects teachers' interests (Luan Wong et al., 2023). Teachers with a high interest in the school and students may be more motivated to engage in OCB behaviors, such as helping colleagues, participating in school activities, and providing additional support to students. In this case, teachers demonstrate OCB as an expression of their interest

rather than an interest arising from OCB. Involvement in OCB can strengthen teachers' sense of identification with the school. When teachers feel part of the school community and contribute to its success, their interest in the school and work can increase. The influence of OCB on teachers' interests depends on the school context and the organization's culture. In schools with a supportive and collaborative culture, involvement in OCB can increase teachers' interest. However, OCB may not significantly influence teachers' interests in schools with less healthy cultures. A slight influence may seem insignificant, but it can substantially impact if repeated and accumulated, thus supporting the fourth hypothesis.

4.2 Indirect influence

Life satisfaction can mediate school culture and OCB to teacher interest, the fifth hypothesis. Life satisfaction is the right self-construction in mediating school culture and OCB with interest in becoming a teacher. Theoretically, interest plays an essential role in everything (Lee et al., 2022). Because, with interest, a person will be more enthusiastic about doing something without feeling compulsion. Interest will always be related to the issue of needs and wants (Lazarides and Schiefele, 2021). The teacher's interest is closely related to several factors inside and outside the teacher. Interest is a complex part of human psychology and behavior that drives individuals to spend a lot of time completing tasks, spending energy analyzing, and using the mind to contemplate things. Each type of interest influences and functions in meeting the needs of life; the stronger the needs of life are, the greater the interest. With interest, teachers can develop activities, innovate, and direct themselves to perseverance in teaching activities (Banegas et al., 2022).

The practical implication of these findings is that there needs to be an awareness campaign about happiness in life through the formation of school culture and OCB in finding teachers' interests. According to Hammad and Abumariam (2024), Principals need to provide support and be a real example for teachers and students to implement a good school culture, high loyalty, and seriousness of work. Based on these findings, evaluators should base teacher evaluations on the teacher's demonstrated interests and strengths. So far, teacher performance assessment (Lertsakulbunlue and Kantiwong, 2025) has not paid attention to the background of the teachers' interests, which are the basis for carrying out their duties and obligations.

5 Conclusion

School culture greatly influences the quality of teachers, and OCB, with the mediation of life satisfaction, school culture as an external factor shows that the school situation has an essential role in fostering teacher interest. Implementing a positive culture in schools can encourage teachers to develop innovations in learning. In addition, OCB is a source of motivation in improving the quality of education, and high life satisfaction also plays a role in fostering teachers' interest. Teachers have life satisfaction when they get security appreciation and can actualize themselves in the school environment. This research implies a need for a program to develop teachers' interests in remote villages by optimizing school culture and OCB and meeting the needs of life as an influencing factor. The results of this research can be the basis for decision-making in various fields, such as teacher recruitment, improving teacher welfare, and paving the way for further research. This study was limited to a sample of honorary teachers in rural areas. Additional research is needed in the future in wider rural areas or comparing rural and urban contexts.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/Supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding authors.

Ethics statement

Ethical review and approval was not required for the study on human participants in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. Written informed consent from the participants was not required to participate in this study in accordance with the national legislation and the institutional requirements.

Author contributions

MD: Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. Samsuri: Validation, Writing – original draft, Visualization. EM: Project administration, Writing – original draft. BM: Writing – original draft, Data curation, Formal analysis. AA: Methodology, Conceptualization, Writing – original draft. AB: Writing – original draft, Funding acquisition. Madali: Supervision, Writing – original draft, Resources.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Generative AI statement

The authors declare that no Gen AI was used in the creation of this manuscript.

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Supplementary material

The Supplementary material for this article can be found online at: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2025.1597989/full#supplementary-material

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