



Cultural Intelligence as a Moderator of Factors Affecting the Performance of Teachers in Remote Areas, Indonesia

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Abstract: Remote environments are far from urban areas, which have many essential services. The absence of important goods and services in remote areas is described as equivalent to the typically poor working and living conditions. Isolation implies that teachers have limited interaction with other teachers who can share resources and teaching practices to improve their performance. This research aims to fill the gap in understanding teachers' adaptability by exploring cultural intelligence as a moderator of the factors influencing their performance in remote areas. The research employed a quantitative approach using path analysis. Participants in the study are high school teachers in West Seram. Data were collected through observation, questionnaires, and interviews. There were indications of positive teacher responses, with an average score of 4.42. The results show that self-efficacy and work discipline positively affect cultural intelligence but do not significantly affect overall teacher performance. Cultural intelligence considerably impacts teachers' self-efficacy in remote areas, making it valuable to study and continue developing their abilities and integrating with the surrounding environment.

Keywords: cultural intelligence; remote areas; teacher performance

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INTRODUCTION

Most research in the context of education lacks a precise understanding of the concept of remote areas (Lingam, 2012). The limited research attention given to the educational environment in remote areas results in these areas not receiving the research focus they deserve. Outback issues are domesticated within a larger framework, with operations left to the individual institutions (Nakata, 2011). This impacts underdevelopment damaged by various factors (Hradsky, 2022; Maher, 2022) endemic, including institutions in Indonesia. Education serves as a benchmark for improving the living standards of communities, whether in urban or remote areas. Teachers play a central role in enhancing the nation's intelligence and are the key executors of the success of educational institutions. Teachers have multiple, limitless roles: they must teach, guide, encourage potential, develop alternatives, and mobilize students in learning. Given the complex tasks and responsibilities in achieving the goals of educational institutions, teachers are not only required to master the subjects they teach but also to possess the technical skills and mature personalities needed to be role models for students, wherever the teachers are placed.

Lack of cultural awareness among some teachers who are not from the interior (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2020; Reagan et al., 2019; Riley, 2019; Riley et al., 2022) and ongoing racism (Griffin & Trudget, 2018; Moodie et al., 2019; Meston et al., 2023) is believed still to be a polemic in several countries, including Indonesia. Riley et al. (2022) revealed that many teachers are poorly prepared, reluctant, and afraid to fulfill professional obligations in the classroom, which affects their compliance. The distribution of teachers in Indonesia is still not optimal and equitable across various provinces, especially in Indonesia's 3T areas (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged regions), which are spread across 183 regencies in 26 provinces. All the regencies in Maluku Province are listed in the 3T areas, including Southeast Maluku, Central Maluku, Buru Island, West Seram, East Seram, Aru Islands, Southwest Maluku, South Buru, Central Halmahera, West Halmahera, East Halmahera, and Morotai.

The reality of suboptimal teacher distribution, coupled with infrastructure conditions, learning facilities, internet access, and various other complex issues, hinders the equitable distribution of education in Maluku Province. The above explanation indicates that the low quality of education demands the significant and necessary role of competent teachers. Another challenge teachers face in remote areas of Maluku Province face is the traditional, sacred environment that remains a way of life for the local communities. This often poses adaptation challenges for teachers who are not from the same cultural background. Remote environments are

far from urban areas where many essential services are available. The absence of important goods and services in remote areas is described as equivalent to the typically poor working and living conditions. Due to their isolated location, remote areas are far from resources, facilities, and services associated with urban life (Kulkarni & Mitra, 2015). Thus, it presents challenges when teachers work in remote areas, especially with minimal experience in such conditions. Place-based human resource issues must be addressed, as these issues can negatively impact teaching and learning activities. Isolation implies that teachers have limited interaction with other teachers who can share resources and teaching practices to improve their performance. Remote environments are often impoverished and associated with a low quality of life. Teachers in North America and New Zealand face similar inequalities in Australia (Aitken & Radford, 2018; Fraser & O'Neil, 2021; Sabzalian et al., 2021). In Canada, despite significant progress in social justice through the National Truth and Reconciliation Act (Government of Canada, 2022), gaps also exist in education for native and rural students. Poor school performance, low literacy, and high dropout rates lag behind the academic achievement of student groups nationally (Milne, 2017; Riley et al., 2024).

The ongoing education gap is due to the large number of teachers not from the interior and students who do not study the history of the people in the interior (Riley et al., 2024). Cultural intelligence is a supporting factor in improving teacher performance in dealing with environmental issues in remote areas that can hinder the quality of life for teachers. Teachers must reflect on historical values, perspectives, and knowledge in the interior that can be underestimated or misinterpreted (Cochran-Smith et al., 2020) to face the challenges of geography and ethnicity-based education in similar interiors. In their findings, Crawford and Garrett (2017) revealed that many educators feel unprepared, ineffective, and undersupported in teaching every content of rural students, thus also reinforcing the impact on their performance. Many factors need attention to address underdevelopment and achieve equality in educational quality in remote areas, particularly in managing human resources, such as teacher performance. Teacher self-efficacy is a key predictor in improving effective well-being (Bardach et al., 2022; Sun & Yin, 2025). Self-efficacy includes the ability to perform expected actions. Self-efficacy teachers will be highly motivated to utilize their potential to achieve task success. The behavior and attitudes of remote area teachers reflect their self-efficacy regarding their primary duties despite their situations and limitations (Cherian & Jacob, 2013; Choiron, 2015; Sjamsuri & Muliyani, 2019; Santosa et al., 2021).

Another factor influencing teacher performance is cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence is the ability of teachers to adapt to new cultural environments, given the cultural differences between their own culture and the new environment (Katitats et al., 2024). Teachers with a high level of cultural intelligence will effectively respond to various aspects, such as decision-making, adaptation, and performance, as well as intercultural assessment (Huff et al., 2014; Katitats et al., 2024). Another factor affecting teacher performance is work discipline. Work discipline is an internal factor closely related to adherence to school regulations (Barnawi, 2012). In Simba's (2016) research, discipline was found to have a positive relationship with the academic performance of eighth-grade students in Kenyan primary schools. Simba (2016) also demonstrated that academic performance increases with higher levels of discipline. Working in remote areas, especially for those with minimal experience in such conditions, presents significant challenges. Living and working in remote areas have not been extensively researched, leading to inadequate fulfillment of educational needs, including teachers. This inadequacy deprives remote students of their well-being and prevents them from realizing their full potential (Arnold et al., 2005).

Digitalization significantly influences stakeholders in different countries to conceptualize learning and teaching, leading to fundamental changes in the overall education landscape (Chiu et al., 2021; Weisberger et al., 2021). This integration brings many new responsibilities for teachers in integrating their teaching practices (Sailer et al., 2021). So, every regulatory change will add new demands on teachers, which makes this profession even more challenging (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). The problem for teachers in the interior is that addressing and overcoming place-based human resource issues is essential, as these issues can negatively impact performance. Consequently, living in remote areas creates adverse living and working conditions, necessitating more extensive research to develop anticipatory measures to minimize the impact on the effectiveness of educational delivery. Based on the above discussion, there is a research gap in demonstrating the factors influencing teacher performance in remote areas with cultural intelligence as a moderating variable. Additionally, teacher self-efficacy and discipline need to be further researched, particularly their interaction with cultural intelligence as an intermediate factor in determining the performance of remote area teachers in this study.

METHODS

The research approach used in this study was quantitative descriptive research. Creswell (2018) reveals that quantitative research is a process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing research results, so quantitative research emphasizes quantifying research results that can contribute academically. Quantitative research presents data in the form of numbers as a result. Data collection techniques were carried out using

observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The population in this study is teachers in 5 State Senior High Schools / Islamic Senior High Schools located in the remote areas of Maluku Province, namely West Seram Regency. The sample calculation used the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. The population in this study consisted of 216 teachers from 5 high schools in West Seram. Then, after calculating using the Slovin formula, the sample used amounted to 131 teachers. In sample selection, the researcher used purposive sampling, where the researcher selects respondents to be included in the sample based on the researcher's assessment of the uniqueness of the respondents regarding the research phenomenon.

In this study, the instrument was tested using descriptive statistical analysis. The raw data comprised questionnaire instruments subjected to validation tests, distributed in a total of 40 questionnaires, of which 34 validation questionnaires were returned. The raw validation data included eight items for the cultural intelligence variable, seven for work discipline, seven for self-efficacy, and eight for teacher performance. Subsequently, the data underwent validity and reliability tests. The reliability test used in this research employed the Cronbach's Alpha method with SPSS software. To measure validity and reliability, comparisons were made with the R Table at $DF=N-2$ and a probability of 0.05. The R-table at $DF=32$ with a probability of 0.05 is 0.349. The item is deemed valid if the Corrected Item – Total Correlation value > R Table; if the Cronbach's Alpha value > R Table, then the item is considered reliable. Conversely, the item is considered invalid if the Corrected Item – Total Correlation value < R Table. The data analysis utilized path analysis. Analysis using the SmartPLS application involves the following steps: Evaluation of the Outer Models: Outer evaluation includes convergent validity analysis, namely Assessed using the outer loading or loading factor. Researchers tested convergent validity, demonstrating that each indicator in the study has an indicator value > 0.7. Therefore, all indicators are deemed appropriate or valid for the research and can be used for further analysis. Next, discriminant validity is assessed using the cross-loading values. An indicator is considered to meet discriminant validity if its cross-loading value on its variable is the highest compared to other variables. The indicators used in this study demonstrated good discriminant validity when defining their respective variables. Then, the construct validity test includes a construct reliability test measured by composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha from the block of indicators measuring the construct. Composite reliability is used to test the reliability of the indicators on a variable. A variable meets composite reliability if its value is > 0.6. A variable is considered reliable or meets Cronbach's alpha if its value is > 0.7. From the SmartPLS output, all constructs exhibit good reliability. The following are the results of the validity test in the analysis of the variables of this study:

Table 1. Construct Validity Test

	Cronbach Alpha	Composite R
CI	0.927	0.943
SE	0.916	0.935
SE-CI-TP	1.000	1.000
TP	0.935	0.946
WD	0.934	0.948
WD-CI-TP	1.000	1.000

After conducting a validity analysis, the researcher conducted an analysis called Structural Model Testing. This stage includes the Path Analysis Test, the structural model in PLS that is evaluated using R^2 for the dependent variable, and the path coefficient values for the independent variables, which are then assessed for significance based on the t-statistic value of each path. The path coefficient evaluation is used to show the strength of the effect or influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R^2) measures how much other variables influence the endogenous variable. An (R^2) value of 0.67 or higher for endogenous latent variables in the structural model indicates that the influence of exogenous variables (the influencing variables) on endogenous variables (the influenced variables) falls into the good category. If the (R^2) value is between 0.33 and 0.67, it is considered moderate, and if the (R^2) value is between 0.19 and 0.33, it is considered weak (Chin, 2003). In this stage, testing is also carried out Goodness of Fit (GOF) is assessed using the Q-Square value. The Q-Square value has the same meaning as the coefficient of determination (R^2) in regression analysis, where the higher the Q-Square, the better or more fit the model is with the data. Based on the calculation results, a Q-Square value of 0.93 was obtained. This indicates that the model explains 93% of the variance in the research data, while factors outside the model explain the remaining 7%. Therefore, these results indicate that the research model has a good goodness of fit.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

West Seram Regency is part of the Maluku province, with an area of 84,181 square kilometers. Administratively, it is bordered to the north by North Seram, to the south by Southwest Maluku Regency, to the

east by Central Maluku Regency, and the west by Buru Regency. Topographically, the region of West Seram Regency is characterized by hilly and mountainous terrain. This regency is divided into 11 districts, namely Huamual, Huamual Rear, Kairatu, West Seram, Taniwel, Amalatu, Manipa Islands, Inamosol, West Kairatu, East Taniwel, and Elpaputih. This research was conducted with a total distance of 320.8 km, with the route from Ambon City to Piru (66 km) heading to SMA N 3 Piru, Piru to Waesala District (36.6 km) heading to SMA N 7 Waesala, Waesala District to Taniwel District (92.1 km) heading to SMA N 4 Taniwel, Taniwel District to Kairatu District (86.9 km) heading to SMA N 1 Kairatu and SMA N 2 West Seram. Characteristics of respondents in this study are intended to provide a general overview of the data distribution in the field. A total of 131 respondents were the subjects of the study, but only 100 respondents were involved in this research. The data consisted of questionnaire results filled out by respondents through a Google Form link. In this study, 70.6% of respondents were male, while 29.4% were female. Regarding educational background, respondents with a bachelor's degree dominated at 91.2%, those with a master's degree comprised 5.9%, and respondents with a high school diploma or equivalent were 2.9%. The researcher divided the respondents into several sub-ethnic groups, including those from the Seram, Ambon, Buton, Kei, Bugis, Javanese, and other ethnicities; 44.1% of respondents were from the Seram ethnic group, 26.5% were from the Ambon ethnic group, 20.6% were from the Buton ethnic group, 2.9% were from the Kei ethnic group, and 5.9% were from other ethnic groups. The questionnaire distribution and score recapitulation result indicates the average score answered by high school teacher respondents in West Seram.

Table 2. Recapitulation of the average scores for each variable

Variable	Score	Criteria
Teacher Performance	4.72	Positive
Cultural Intelligence	3.99	Positive
Self-Efficacy	4.51	Positive
Work Discipline	4.44	Positive
Total Average	4.42	

Table 2 summarizes the average scores from 100 high school teacher respondents. The data shows the highest overall score of 4.72, indicating high teacher performance even in remote areas. This score reflects a positive attitude and recognition that teachers maintain positive performance despite being in remote regions. Demographically, 44.1% of the teacher respondents are from the Seram ethnic group, which means they are not disturbed by the new environment and can blend well with their surroundings. Similarly, 26.5% of the teachers are from the Ambon ethnic group. Both groups originate from the oldest Seram tribe, Nusa Ina, which later migrated and spread throughout Ambon City, Seram Island, and Lease Island in the Maluku province.

Additionally, 20.6% of the teacher respondents are from the Buton ethnic group from Southeast Sulawesi province, who migrated to the Seram and Lease islands. Their ability to adapt and experience acculturation does not hinder their school performance. Teacher self-efficacy holds the second-highest average score of 4.51, demonstrating positive self-efficacy regarding their self-concept, such as the ability to face situations, confidence, perseverance in completing tasks, strong self-commitment, focus on tasks, and having strategies. Teacher discipline shows the third-highest positive score of 4.44, indicating positive work discipline due to compensation, role models, strict rules, the courage of leaders to take firm actions, attention to employees, and habitual disciplined behavior. Cultural intelligence received the smallest positive response among the three other variables, with an average score of 3.99. However, overall, teachers agreed with their ability to handle the local culture, participate in learning, avoid cultural discrimination, respect cultural differences among teachers and students, act as mediators in cultural conflicts both in and out of the classroom, and build cross-cultural communication. Interviews were also conducted with a representative principal from each respondent school. The results of these interviews revealed a shared perception regarding the role of cultural intelligence in moderating factors that affect teacher performance. Here is an excerpt from an interview with one of the high school principals:

Table 3. Shared Perception with A Representative Principal

Researcher (R)	Principal (P)
Thank you for taking the time to discuss the role of cultural intelligence in moderating factors that affect teachers' performance in remote areas. Do you think cultural intelligence is important for both local and migrant teachers working in the traditional inland regions of Seram?	You are welcome. I am honored that you have traveled far to this remote part of Seram. I agree that teachers need to have cultural intelligence to serve in remote schools. It helps maintain peace, preserve our ancestral traditions, and produce a generation that values tolerance. Our province of Maluku has experienced the tragic religious and ethnic war from 1999 to 2003

Could you explain how teachers with cultural intelligence can act as a bridge to enhance their performance in remote schools?

Yes, I think that teachers, especially those from the native Seram and Ambon ethnic groups, do not face complex challenges. They share cultural similarities with the students and do not have to travel far to the school since they live nearby. Their collective cultural awareness, which becomes a mindset to develop their region, is crucial for maintaining discipline and productivity. The challenge arises when teachers are not from the native ethnic groups, as they must adapt to the cultural environment and cope with the distance from urban areas.

In your opinion, how can cultural intelligence foster higher teacher performance?

Cultural intelligence can potentially revolutionize how the government addresses teacher performance issues in remote areas. Teachers who can communicate across cultures will not struggle with local students' diverse and inclusive characteristics. The strategies and approaches differ from those used with urban students. It is important to integrate teachers into the local cultural community, involve schools in the community, and create a symbiotic relationship. Teachers gradually learn to understand the culture, even if they initially do not. Not all teachers from native ethnic groups possess this capability.

Thank you for sharing your insights with us today. This knowledge is invaluable for providing a perspective on the roles that need to be taken by the government, prospective teachers, and other schools in the future.

Yes, you are welcome!

The insights provided by the resource person reinforce the perspective that cultural intelligence can serve as a moderator for factors influencing teachers' performance in remote areas. The inclusive nature and characteristics of the indigenous cultures in these remote regions, which are far from urban centers, require the integration of cultural intelligence as a supporting component to maintain teacher performance. This viewpoint emphasizes that cultural intelligence is a different factor from social intelligence, which has traditionally been an indicator for measuring teacher competence in Indonesia. There needs to be a remarkable approach and different treatment, such as mastering cultural intelligence, especially for teachers in inclusive areas like indigenous tribes in remote regions. This aligns with the scholarly literature highlighting the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in diverse communities (Anhalt et al., 2018). The ability of cultural intelligence to moderate the factors influencing teacher performance is particularly promising for culturally inclusive learning environments. This is highlighted, especially in terms of the importance of embracing diverse cultures in education (Gutiérrez, 2017), which underscores the challenges associated with integrating cultural aspects into the development of learning in more advanced schools (Freire & McCray, 2020). Additionally, teachers with cultural intelligence are believed to be able to promote more authentic learning experiences and facilitate stronger connections between theoretical knowledge and practical applications (Rosa & Orey, 2015). This ultimately leads to developing new strategies for teachers within a more inclusive and dynamic educational landscape. The structural model in SmartPLS analysis is evaluated using (R²) for the dependent variables and path coefficient values for the independent variables. The following are the results of the inner model scheme presented:

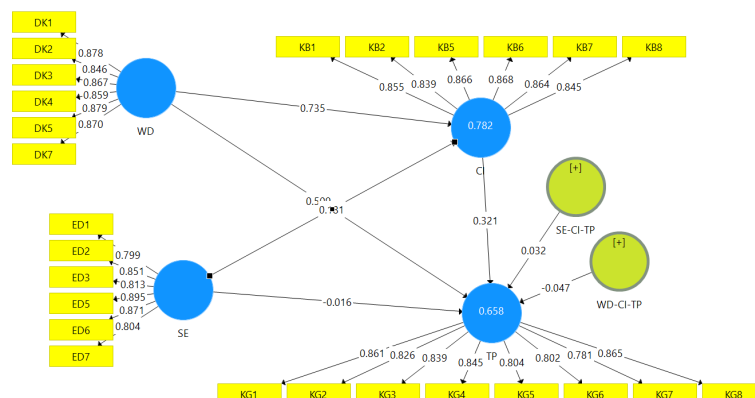


Figure 2. Inner Model Structural

Based on the inner model scheme shown in Figure 2 above, it can be explained that the largest path coefficient value is indicated by the influence of work discipline on cultural intelligence at 0.735. The second largest influence is the effect of work discipline on teacher performance at 0.500, followed by the influence of cultural intelligence on teacher performance at 0.321, and the weakest influence is that of self-efficacy on cultural intelligence at 0.181. These results show that two variables have positive path coefficient values in this model. This indicates that the larger the path coefficient value of an independent variable on a dependent variable, the stronger the influence between these variables, and vice versa. Based on the data processing performed using the SmartPLS program, the R-Square value for cultural intelligence is 0.782. This value indicates that 78.2% of the variance in cultural intelligence can be explained by work discipline and self-efficacy. Cultural intelligence refers to the ability to function effectively in diverse cultural contexts. This ability refers to an individual's capacity to understand, think, and behave effectively in cultural differences (Ang et al., 2014). Cultural intelligence encompasses the ability to understand, manage, and deal with the emotions of others in cross-cultural contexts. The R-squared value for the variable teacher performance is 0.658, indicating that 65.8% of the variance in teacher performance can be explained by work discipline, self-efficacy, and cultural intelligence. In line with that, Performance is the result or level of success of an individual in their field of work according to specific criteria, both in terms of quality and quantity, in carrying out their tasks and responsibilities (Basrowi, 2010). Various literature shows that performance is used interchangeably with terms such as work results, work achievements, and performance. In the context of teacher performance, it refers to the manifestation of a teacher's work exhibited in the activities of the teaching-learning process, including planning, implementation, and evaluation of overall learning activities. However, located in an inland coastal school, they can maintain their performance. In his study, Simba (2016) found that discipline positively correlates with academic performance. Ehiane's research (2014) found that 70% of respondents believe that school discipline affects academic achievement and compliance with time management influences student academics.

The results of the structural model testing in this study show the following: Self-efficacy significantly influences cultural intelligence with a path coefficient of 0.181 and a significance of 0.006 ($p < 0.05$). Work discipline significantly influences cultural intelligence, with a path coefficient of 0.735 and a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Work discipline significantly influences teacher performance with a path coefficient of 0.509 and a significance of 0.012 ($p < 0.05$). Cultural intelligence positively influences teacher performance with a path coefficient of 0.321, but this influence is not significant ($p = 0.106 > 0.05$). Self-efficacy negatively influences teacher performance with a path coefficient of -0.016, which is not significant ($p = 0.879 > 0.05$). Overall, Cultural intelligence moderates the relationship between self-efficacy and teacher performance with a positive influence of 0.032, but this influence is not significant ($p = 0.765 > 0.05$). Conversely, when cultural intelligence moderates the relationship between work discipline and teacher performance, it shows a negative influence of -0.047, which is also not significant ($p = 0.608 > 0.05$). Self-efficacy plays a significant role in individuals harnessing their potential optimally. Several studies have shown that self-efficacy affects self-performance. This is also shown in the research findings of Sun and Yin (2025), who found that teachers in China show significant heterogeneity in their perception of self-efficacy. Teaching experience and school level are significant factors that influence the self-efficacy profile. Self-efficacy can be the main predictor of the outcome of teachers' affective skills (Bardach et al., 2022; Zee & Koomen, 2016), especially in areas in the interior. Teachers who are vulnerable to face job demands such as burnout, despair, especially in rural areas, and other fragility among teachers in rural areas will contribute to the high rate of resignation in this teaching profession (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Therefore, understanding the affective welfare of teachers in rural areas and the various factors that affect them is a critical area of study.

According to the OECD, teacher welfare includes four main dimensions: cognitive, subjective, physical and mental, and social (Viac & Fraser, 2020). In this dimension, affective well-being is defined as a specific feeling or emotional state essential to subjective well-being. Teachers in the interior need good emotional regulation to face the demands and realities of the situation. These findings align with Perera et al. (2019) and Feng et al. (2019), who revealed that a teacher's self-efficacy would vary in various dimensions and require an individual-focused approach and further study. For example, Perera et al. (2019) revealed that student-engagement-eficacious teachers have lower scores in general self-efficacy, self-efficacy for classroom management, and self-efficacy for teaching strategies. However, they have higher student engagement self-efficacy than teachers in other groups. Each of these findings requires a different approach to teacher management. Feng et al. (2019) found three classes of teachers' self-efficacy: high, medium, and low. Scores in each dimension in each class are generally consistent. For example, teachers in high self-efficacy classes tend to report a strong sense of efficacy across all domains. Together, these studies show that teachers' self-efficacy is a complex and multifaceted construct, thus highlighting the need for further investigation of their individual characteristics. Self-efficacy involves self-assessment, whether one can perform actions well or poorly, correctly or incorrectly, biased or unbiased, according to the requirements. Individuals with high self-efficacy believe they can effectively handle a situation, persevere in completing tasks, are confident, view difficulties as challenges,

have strong self-commitment, focus on tasks, devise strategies, and face threats.

Wray et al. (2024) identified that six demographic variables are relevant in tracking teacher performance that require more support than having a positive attitude toward a good understanding of the concept of educational inclusivity (Woodcock et al. 2022). Such as the condition of the country and the context of the system/culture, teaching settings, teachers' teaching experience, age, and gender. Pov et al. (2024) found that teachers in elementary schools in Cambodia have the highest self-efficacy in managing student behavior and the lowest in terms of collaboration. Further investigation of these items shows that teachers have the lowest self-efficacy in dealing with noisy student behavior, designing assignments tailored to students' unique needs, and low parental involvement in school activities. The teacher's performance obtained satisfactory response results in this finding. Policy changes also affect the work status of teachers (Sun & Yin, 2025). The independent curriculum policy gave birth to a driving teacher program in Indonesia. Teachers, as facilitators who work in urban and rural places, have the primary responsibility of teaching in the classroom and communicating and collaborating with their peers. Even though teachers are in the interior, teachers are asked to play an active role in improving skills and national programs. A similar thing was also found in the study of Xue & Li (2023), which revealed the implementation of the Double Reduction Policy / Shuang Jian. The policy in 2021 in China is an abbreviation of the policy document Opinions on Further Reducing the Homework Burden and Off-Campus Training Burden of Students in Compulsory Education (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2021), which aims to reduce the burden on students, improve public welfare issues in the field of education and provide equitable resources. However, although this policy reduces the burden on students, it increases teachers' workload and worsens their professional burnout rate (Teng et al., 2024). In contrast to Chen (2020), this policy system in China is considered a form of professional learning community influenced by collectivist values (Yin & Zheng, 2018). The implications of this study are believed to increase the effectiveness of teacher performance in rural areas through cultural intelligence, self-discipline, and self-efficacy. It is recommended that learning and teaching strategies based on local wisdom be provided to build harmonious individual competencies that align with educational institutions, local community life, and individual job satisfaction. It is important to redefine teacher performance and the role of school institutions in remote areas, emphasizing teacher job satisfaction as a key component while considering cultural intelligence competencies as essential for the sustainability of local indigenous wisdom. The limitations of this research still require further exploration of the condition of teachers' carrying capacity in improving their performance even though they are in remote areas.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the contribution of cultural intelligence as a moderating variable that positively influences the enhancement of self-efficacy on teacher performance and negatively impacts the reduction of work discipline on teacher performance, though both findings are not significant. Cultural intelligence directly and significantly impacts the increase of self-efficacy and work discipline. This indicates that aspects of cultural intelligence such as behavior, motivation, cognitive mastery, and metacognition contribute significantly and cannot be ignored when investigating teachers in remote areas. The substantial contribution of the direct effect on teacher work discipline underscores the importance of cultural intelligence in fostering positive outcomes and enhancing self-efficacy to integrate into the local remote environment. To improve the effectiveness of cultural intelligence in boosting self-efficacy and discipline, which ultimately impacts teacher performance, it is recommended to provide learning and teaching strategies based on local wisdom to build harmonious individual competencies that align with educational institutions, local community life, and individual job satisfaction.

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