



The rising trend of becoming a geography teacher as a catalyst for sustainable development goals implementation in schools

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study aims to investigate and analyze the level of student interest in pursuing a teaching career among those enrolled in the Geography Education Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Lampung. **Methods:** The study population includes all students within the program, with the sample consisting of 69 students from the 2020 cohort. Of these, 58 active students participated in the survey. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, which was subsequently tested for validity and reliability. This research adopts a single-variable approach encompassing three key indicators: cognitive, emotional (affective), and conative aspects. A descriptive quantitative method was employed, utilizing a purposive sampling technique. Data collection instruments included questionnaires and documentation, while data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical methods. **Findings:** The findings indicate that student interest in becoming teachers is generally low, with 81.03% of responses across all three dimensions reflecting limited interest. This finding suggests a potential gap in future environmental education delivery in schools, as geography teachers play a vital role in integrating sustainability and environmental issues into classroom learning. **Conclusion:** These results raise concerns about the future of education, particularly in relation to the promotion and integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including environmental education. **Novelty/originality of this article:** The declining interest in becoming geography teachers may hinder efforts to instill environmental awareness and the importance of nature conservation among younger generations through formal education.

KEYWORDS: geography teacher; SDG's implementation; specialization trend; environmental awareness.

1. Introduction

Education serves as a fundamental mechanism for enhancing knowledge and emancipating individuals from ignorance. As stipulated in Law Number 20 of 2003, education is a deliberate and structured effort to establish a conducive learning environment and process, enabling students to actively cultivate their potential in order to achieve spiritual strength, self-discipline, personal integrity, intelligence, moral character, and the competencies required for their personal development, as well as for societal, national, and state advancement. The overarching objective of national education is to elevate human quality by fostering piety, intellectual capacity, scientific proficiency, and technological competence. This is consistent with the provisions of Law Number 20 of 2003,

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which define the National Education System as a means to nurture capabilities, instill character, and reinforce national identity, as prescribed by Pancasila and the 1995 Constitution. Ultimately, the education system is designed to optimize individual potential and contribute to the overall improvement of the Indonesian people's quality of life (Sulisworo, 2016).

In an effort to enhance education, there is a pressing need to fulfill educational requirements through the implementation of the 12-Year Compulsory Education Program. This initiative is primarily designed to boost and improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Among the various government-led efforts to support and advance education, teachers or educators remain an indispensable component. Teachers serve as the frontline agents in improving the quality of education, particularly in Indonesia (Kawuryan et al., 2021). The ideal educators are those who possess pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. Teachers play a pivotal role in determining the success of educational programs, as they directly engage with students during the learning process. The reciprocal interaction between students, teachers, and other learning resources is a fundamental prerequisite for effective learning activities (Hidayat et al., 2024). Through dedicated and competent teachers, high-quality students can be nurtured students who excel academically, possess essential skills, and demonstrate emotional, moral, and spiritual maturity. To achieve such educational outcomes, it is crucial to first cultivate a strong interest in becoming a teacher.

Rahmat (2018) defines interest as a state in which an individual pays attention to something, accompanied by a desire to understand, acquire, learn, and validate it. Therefore, interest significantly determines an individual's attitude toward something, influencing their level of engagement in a particular task or situation. In other words, interest serves as a driving force or motivational factor for an individual (Abas et al., 2023). Indirectly, an interest in becoming a teacher affects the quality of prospective educators, which in turn influences the overall quality of education. According to Round & Su (2014), interest is a crucial element that enables individuals to perform activities effectively. As a psychological aspect, interest not only shapes an individual's behavior but also drives them to engage in specific activities, fostering dedication and commitment to a particular pursuit. In line with these perspectives, interest can be concluded as a "strong inclination, enthusiasm, or a profound desire toward something."

Similarly, for prospective teachers particularly students pursuing teacher education who will eventually earn a degree in education having a strong and profound interest in becoming a teacher is expected to contribute to their ability to educate students effectively. The intrinsic motivation derived from such interest plays a crucial role in ensuring that teachers actively fulfill their responsibilities as educators. The researcher selected this study's topic to examine the level of interest among Geography Education students in becoming teachers or educators. According to data from the 2021 Tracer Study of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Lampung, which surveyed 755 alumni from the 2019 graduating cohort, a significant proportion of graduates were employed in fields relevant to their area of study. However, a notable number of alumni pursued careers outside their specialized field. The classification of occupational sectors revealed that the majority this faculty alumni were employed in government administration, defense, and social security sectors (216 individuals) a field that appeared to be more attractive compared to the education sector (144 individuals). This was followed by alumni employed in various other sectors, totaling 118 individuals.

The Geography Education Program is one of the flagship programs within the at the Universitas Lampung. This program is expected to produce highly qualified graduates who can become outstanding educators with strong personal and professional attributes. However, based on interviews conducted with a sample of 2020 cohort students from the Geography Education Program, it was found that a significant number of students were not interested in becoming teachers. Some students had already set career goals outside the teaching profession and did not consider teaching as their primary career choice. One of the

main influencing factors is salary expectations, as many students perceive that a teacher's income may not provide long-term financial security.

The level of interest in becoming a teacher among students is influenced by various factors. Based on pre-research survey from the 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 cohorts, revealed that several students did not choose the Geography Education major based on their personal interest or aspirations. Instead, their choice was driven by external factors, such as parental influence, peer pressure, or the perception of higher acceptance rates. If this trend persists until graduation, it could lead to difficulties in securing employment, as their chosen field may not align with their genuine interests. This phenomenon raises a critical question: Does the lack of interest in becoming teachers serve as a barrier to implementing Sustainable Development Goals in schools? This concern serves as the primary motivation for this study, aiming to explore and analyze the emerging trends among Geography Education students. The urgency of this research results in determining the direction of the course curriculum and can make up for the teaching limitations of the study program.

2. Methods

2.1 Research location and design

The research was conducted in 2023 at the Departement of Geography Education in Universitas Lampung, where data collection took place. This study employs a descriptive quantitative research method. Quantitative research is a research approach that presents data in numerical form as its primary outcome. Meanwhile, descriptive research is a method used to examine the status of a group, an object, a condition, a thought, or an event at a given time. The descriptive method is utilized to systematically, factually, and accurately illustrate the existing phenomenon. In this study, the descriptive nature aims to provide a comprehensive depiction of students' interest in becoming teachers within the this departement. As for, several procedures were carried out in this study (on the Figure 1).

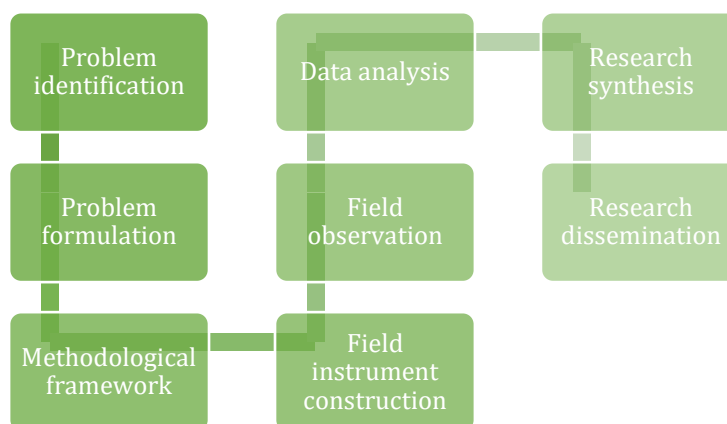


Fig. 1. Research procedure

2.2 Population and sample

The population in this study consists of all students from the Departement of Geography Education in Universitas Lampung, from the 2020 to 2023 cohorts, totaling 353 students. The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique, a probability sampling method in which participants are chosen based on specific criteria. The criteria for selecting the sample include: (1) Students who have completed a minimum of eight semesters of coursework; (2) Students who have completed PLP 1 and PLP 2 (Pre-Service Teacher Training Programs). Based on these criteria, the sample for this study consists of 58 active students from the 2020 cohort, out of the total 69 students still enrolled.

2.3 Respondent characteristics

The characteristics of respondents help describe their demographic and academic background, obtained from the personal data section in the questionnaire. To clarify these characteristics, the data is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents in the geography education program (2020 Cohort)

No.	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Male	26	45.00
2.	Female	32	55.00
Total		58	100.00

Based on the table, it can be observed that the respondents in this study are primarily female, with 32 female respondents (55%) compared to 26 male respondents (45%), making females the majority of the participants.

2.4 Data collection technique

The data sources used in this study are primary and secondary data. The primary data was obtained through the distribution and completion of questionnaires by students from the Department of Geography Education in Universitas Lampung. The secondary data was sourced from Siakadu (Academic Information System) of the Geography Education Program, which includes student records, books, journals, laws, government regulations, and other relevant documents.

2.5 Data analysis technique

The variable in this study is interest in becoming a teacher, which is measured using three indicators: cognition, emotion, and conation. These indicators are assessed using a Likert-scale questionnaire, with classifications of not interested, less interested, and interested. The data collection techniques employed in this study are questionnaires and documentation. The instrument's validity and reliability were tested to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data. The questionnaire data, which is quantitative, will be analyzed using descriptive percentage analysis. The steps for data analysis include determining scores for each response, tabulating the scores from the questionnaire completed by the respondents, categorizing the scores into appropriate interest categories, and analyzing the percentages based on the categorized data.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Trends in interest in becoming a teacher in schools

To assess the interest in becoming a teacher among students in the Department of Geography Education in Universitas Lampung, a data analysis and calculation were conducted for each indicator used across all aspects. The data calculation was done using Microsoft Excel, applying percentage techniques. The results of the analysis and data calculations related to the interest in becoming a teacher among the Geography Education students at the University of Lampung can be seen in the table below:

Table 2. Interest in becoming a teacher among students of the Department of Geography Education in Universitas Lampung

Interest	Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
become teacher	Not interested	29 - 58	4	6.90
	Less interested	59 - 87	47	81.03
	Interested	88 - 116	7	12.07

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the students from the Geography Education Program, 2020 cohort, have an interest in becoming teachers categorized as less interested, with a percentage of 81.03%. In contrast, the interested category has a percentage of only 12.07%, while the not interested category shows the same percentage as the interested category, with 6.90%. Visually, the interest in becoming a teacher among students from the 2020 cohort of the Departement of Geography Education in Universitas Lampung can be depicted in the figure below:

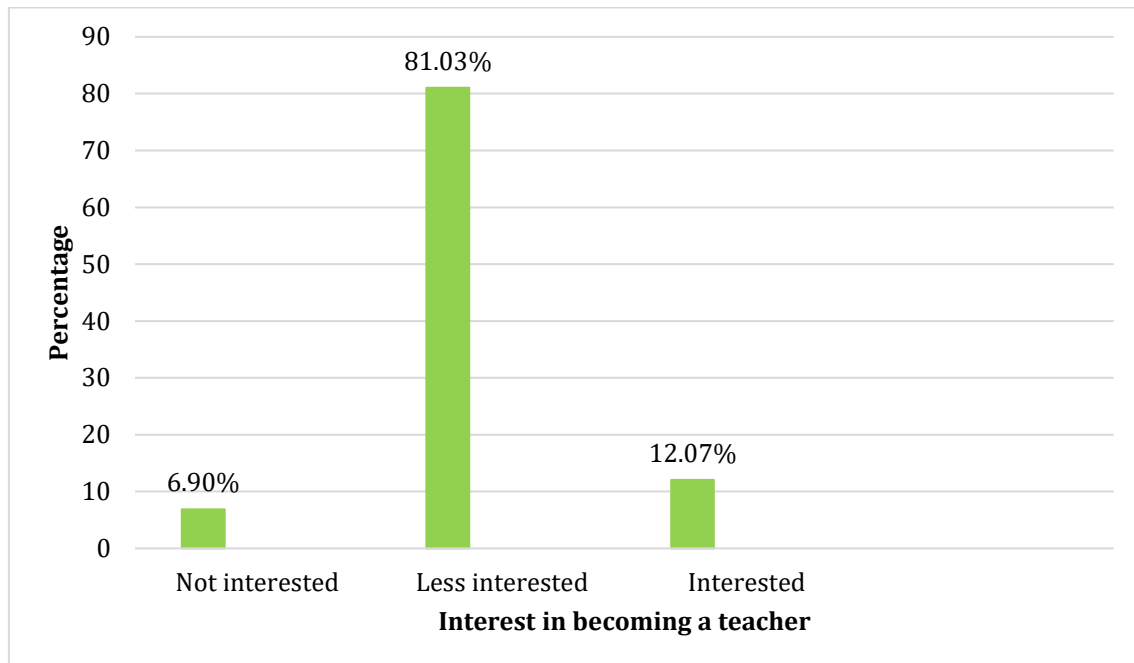


Fig. 2. Percentage of interest in becoming a teacher in geography education study program

The results of the data analysis regarding the interest in becoming a teacher among students of the Geography Education, 2020 cohort, based on each of the indicator variables, can be seen in the table below:

Table 3. Results of data analysis of interest in becoming a teacher of Geography Education Department students

Aspect	Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Cognition (knowledge / understanding)	Not interested	9 - 18	4	6.90%
	Less interested	19 - 27	47	81.03%
	Interested	28 - 36	7	12.07%
Emotions (feelings)	Not interested	9 - 18	3	5.17%
	Less interested	19 - 27	49	84.48%
	Interested	28 - 36	6	10.35%
Conation (action)	Not interested	11 - 22	15	25.86%
	Less interested	23 - 33	37	63.79%
	Interested	34 - 44	6	10.35%

Based on the table, it can be observed that the interest in becoming a teacher among students from the 2020 cohort of the Department of Geography Education is as follows: in the cognition (knowledge/understanding) aspect, 5.17% of respondents were not interested, 84.48% were less interested, and 12.07% were interested. In terms of emotion (feelings), 6.90% of respondents were not interested, 84.48% were less interested, and 10.35% were interested. For conation (action), 25.86% of respondents were not interested, 63.79% were less interested, and 10.35% were interested.

This data shows that the majority of students in the departement demonstrate low interest in becoming teachers, especially in the Cognition aspect, where 84.48% are categorized as less interested. The Emotion and Conation aspects also show a relatively high percentage of students categorized as less interested, suggesting that the overall interest in pursuing a teaching career is quite low.

Table 4. Occupations favored by geography education department students

Job type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Entrepreneur	20	34.48
Lecturer	12	20.69
Employee	11	19.00
Civil servant	6	10.35
Farmer	1	1.72
Self-employed	1	1.72
Photographer	1	1.72
Professional tour leader	1	1.72
Frelance	1	1.72
Contractor	1	1.72
Cartographer	1	1.72
Esport athlete	1	1.72
Governor	1	1.72

Based on the table above, it can be observed that students who are either not interested or less interested in becoming teachers have already developed an idea of their desired careers, such as becoming entrepreneurs, lecturers, and others. The table shows that the most common career choice among these students is to become an entrepreneur, with a percentage of 34.48%, followed by lecturer at 20.69%, employee at 19.00%, civil servant (PNS) at 10.35%, and other jobs at 15.48%.

The results of this study indicate that the interest in becoming a teacher among students in the departement, is categorized as less interested, with a percentage of 81.03%. This suggests that most students still have limited understanding of the teaching profession, both in terms of knowledge and exposure. The lack of enthusiasm towards the teaching profession is likely due to insufficient information and understanding about it, as many students reported confusion regarding the frequently changing regulations and policies, such as the PPG (Postgraduate Professional Teacher Education Program), which has become increasingly difficult to understand due to ongoing policy changes by the government.

The findings of this study, which show that students from the departement are less interested in pursuing a career as a teacher, align with data from Tracer Studies, which indicate that many graduates of the Bachelor of Education program are employed in fields unrelated to their area of study. Based on the data obtained, the three categories of not interested, less interested, and interested can be further broken down as follows:

3.1.1 Trend of student disinterest in becoming teachers in schools

In this category, "disinterest" refers to the lack of desire among students, to pursue a career as teachers upon graduation. According to student responses, the current salaries or fees for teachers are perceived as inadequate and disproportionate to the work being done. Additionally, the requirements to secure a fair salary—such as having to work as an honorarium staff member initially or participate in the Professional Teacher Education Program (PPG), with its constantly changing and overwhelming criteria—pose significant challenges and confusion for students.

Furthermore, the disinterest is attributed to the growing realization among students that education is not their passion. This is reflected in the analysis of data, which shows that 6.89% of respondents fall into the category of disinterest. This figure is based on the analysis of the student questionnaire data, where the lowest scores (ranging from 29-58)

are categorized as "disinterested." This indicates that students lack understanding or familiarity with all the indicators or aspects related to the interest in becoming a teacher (cognition, emotion, and conation), signifying a lack of proper formation and the proliferation of contradictory information about the teaching profession. This confusion discourages students from exploring, delving into, or conducting further research on the teaching profession.

3.1.1.1 Cognitive aspects (knowledge/understanding) investigation

According to the data analysis, the "disinterest" category for the cognitive aspect of teacher interest shows that 6.90% of students (4 students) fall within the lowest score range (9-18), indicating their lack of engagement with information about the teaching profession. These students are confused and unable to find clarity due to the numerous and fluctuating requirements set by current governmental policies for the teaching profession, which leads to confusion among newly graduated education students. Therefore, their understanding and knowledge of the teaching profession are extremely limited, thus placing them in the "disinterested" category for the cognitive indicator.

3.1.1.2 Emotional aspects (feelings) investigation

For the emotional aspect, 5.17% of students (3 students) fall into the "disinterested" category, with the lowest scores ranging between 9-18. This finding suggests that these students fail to find anything that sparks their interest in the teaching profession. Some students expressed that their passion lies outside the field of education. Furthermore, the low status and underappreciation of the teaching profession, particularly with regard to teacher salaries, contribute to this disinterest. The continued uncertainty about the sustainability and development of a teacher's life within society has led to a lack of interest in pursuing a career in teaching, as indicated in the emotional (feeling) indicator.

3.1.1.3 Conative aspects (action) investigation

Regarding the conative aspect, 25.86% of students (15 students) are categorized as "disinterested," with the lowest scores between 11-12. This indicates that these students lack the motivation or internal drive to pursue a teaching career in the future. The absence of interest in the cognitive and emotional aspects contributes to the lack of personal drive to engage in teaching-related activities or to pursue a career in education. Thus, these students fall into the "disinterested" category for the conative (action) indicator. In conclusion, the findings highlight that a significant number of students exhibit low interest in becoming teachers, largely due to a combination of factors related to cognitive understanding, emotional engagement, and a lack of intrinsic motivation to pursue the profession.

3.1.2 Trend of students with low interest in becoming teachers in schools

In this category, low interest can be interpreted as the insufficient desire of students, to pursue a teaching career after graduation. This can be attributed to the constant changes in government policies, which have led students to believe that becoming a teacher is increasingly difficult, while the salary received is very low or not commensurate with the numerous requirements to qualify for the position. Similar to the "no interest" category, students who express low interest in teaching feel that while there is significant potential in the profession, the job prospects may be limited, especially considering that the qualifications to become a teacher have been heightened by the government. Moreover, students who do not follow the prescribed path may not be able to become professional teachers. Additionally, job openings for teaching positions are infrequent, occurring perhaps only once a year. A primary issue contributing to the low interest is the perceived

low salary, which reinforces the notion that the teaching profession involves significant responsibilities yet offers insufficient compensation, causing students to be disinclined to delve deeper into the profession.

This is evident in the analysis, where the percentage of students in the "low interest" category is the highest among the three categories, at 81.03%. This figure was determined through the analysis of student survey data, with scores ranging from 59 to 87, which fall under the "low interest" category. The low interest category reflects that students have limited knowledge of and do not fully understand the various aspects or indicators related to interest in becoming a teacher, namely:

3.1.2.1 Cognitive aspect (knowledge or understanding)

The results from the analysis indicate that 47 students, with scores ranging from 19 to 27, fall under the "low interest" category for the cognitive aspect, representing 81.03% of the respondents. Similar to the "no interest" category, this indicator stems from confusion and lack of clarity due to the numerous requirements set by current government policies regarding the teaching profession, which leaves newly graduated students from teacher education programs feeling uncertain. Additionally, some students feel that they lack sufficient teaching knowledge and are not yet ready to become teachers. This suggests that 81.03% of students are either not interested in seeking information about the teaching profession or do not have a solid understanding of it, categorizing them as having low interest in the cognitive aspect.

3.1.2.2 Emotional aspect (feelings)

The data analysis shows that 49 students, with scores ranging from 19 to 27, fall under the "low interest" category for the emotional aspect, making up 84.48% of the respondents. This indicates that a significant portion of students have not found anything that sparks their interest in the teaching profession. Furthermore, students feel that their passion lies elsewhere, not in education. Given that the cognitive aspect is also categorized under low interest, the emotional drive to pursue teaching is likewise weak, reinforcing their low interest in the profession.

3.1.2.3 Conative aspect (actions)

The analysis also reveals that 37 students, with scores ranging from 23 to 33, fall under the "low interest" category for the conative aspect, representing 63.79% of the students. This suggests that a significant percentage of students lack the internal or external drive to pursue teaching. As the cognitive and emotional aspects remain in the low interest category, there is no motivation for students to seek, understand, or gather information about the teaching profession. Typically, individuals with a strong interest in teaching will actively research and seek information about the profession, taking action towards activities that signal their intent to pursue a career in education. However, in this case, the absence of such motivation indicates low interest in the profession.

3.1.3 Trend of students interested in becoming teachers in schools

In this category, interest refers to the desire of students, to pursue a teaching career after graduation. However, in this category, only 12% of students expressed interest in becoming teachers. This figure was derived from the data analysis of student questionnaires, with scores ranging from 88 to 116, which fall under the "interested" category. The "interested" category indicates that these students are familiar with and have a good understanding of the indicators or aspects related to their interest in becoming teachers. This interest is also driven by personal motivation and conviction to become a teacher, which has remained steadfast from the time they entered university until

graduation. There has been no wavering in their commitment to teacher education, and they remember the original goal of pursuing a career in teaching.

Nevertheless, this result also reveals that only 12.07% of students are interested in becoming teachers, highlighting that the majority of students, are either indifferent or not interested in pursuing a teaching career. This is particularly significant since the program itself is designed to prepare students for a teaching career after graduation. The following is an explanation of the three aspects:

3.1.3.1 Cognitive investigation (knowledge or understanding)

The data analysis reveals that 4 students, with scores ranging from 28 to 36, fall under the "interested" category for the cognitive aspect, accounting for 12.07%. This suggests that these students have accessed information about the teaching profession and have a solid understanding of what the profession entails. Their knowledge and the expectations of what they will gain from becoming teachers are clearly outlined, indicating that they are well-prepared for the teaching profession. Therefore, their understanding and preparedness for the profession of teaching are considered to be good, placing them in the "interested" category for the cognitive aspect (knowledge or understanding).

3.1.3.2 Emotional investigation (feelings)

The analysis also indicates that 6 students, with scores ranging from 28 to 36, are classified under the "interested" category for the emotional aspect, representing 10.35%. This suggests that these students have found something that sparks their interest in the teaching profession. They have developed a genuine enthusiasm for becoming teachers, which qualifies them as having a significant level of emotional interest in pursuing the profession.

3.1.3.3 Conative investigation (actions)

The study further reveals that 6 students, with scores ranging from 34 to 44, fall under the "interested" category for the conative aspect, representing 10.35%. This indicates that these students have internal and external motivation and are already determined to become teachers in the future. Their actions demonstrate a desire to pursue teaching as a career, placing them in the "interested" category for the conative aspect (actions).

Based on the data presented above, we conclude that students, still demonstrate a limited interest in dedicating themselves to becoming and working as teachers. This conclusion is supported by the data showing that many students rarely seek information about the teaching profession (cognition), have a lack of emotional interest and enjoyment in exploring the teaching profession (emotion), and thus, have insufficient conative drive to actively pursue the profession. The lack of interest and motivation to engage with the profession indicates that without the emotional and cognitive drive, students are less likely to take action towards becoming teachers (Whiteford et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2023). Conversely, when students are interested and passionate about something, it drives them to gather information and take action, as seen in the relatively small number of students in this category (Roberts et al., 2022).

3.2 Could the trend of student disinterest in becoming teachers obstruct the implementation of SDGs in schools?

The growing disinterest in pursuing a career as a geography teacher could potentially hinder the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in schools (Yli-Panula et al., 2020). Geography teachers play a strategic role in imparting concepts (Dewi et al., 2020) related to sustainable development, as the subject covers environmental, social, and economic aspects that are central to the SDGs (Fadil et al., 2023).

A deep understanding of the interaction between humans and the environment enables geography teachers to instill awareness of the importance of maintaining ecosystem balance, encouraging students to actively participate in environmental conservation efforts (Rustamova, 2023). However, the trend of declining interest in becoming geography teachers also presents significant challenges. One of the main issues is the readiness and competence of teachers to integrate SDGs into the curriculum (Eliyawati et al., 2025; Firdaus et al., 2023). Research indicates that although curricula have incorporated elements of global sustainability and citizenship, their implementation in classrooms remains limited. This is due to the lack of teacher understanding and skills in applying effective learning approaches related to SDGs (Said & Shaari, 2021a).

Moreover, curriculum flexibility plays a crucial role in supporting the integration of SDGs (Sipayung & Hsu, 2023). A rigid curriculum can limit teachers' innovation and creativity in teaching SDG-relevant material (Garba, 2024). Therefore, an adaptive curriculum is needed, one that allows teachers to tailor lessons based on local contexts and current global issues. This approach enables students to engage in SDG efforts through contextual and meaningful learning (Fadil et al., 2023). Additionally, collaboration among teachers and other stakeholders is essential for implementing SDGs in schools. By working together, teachers can share experiences and effective teaching strategies, as well as create a learning environment that fosters the achievement of SDGs (Makinde et al., 2024). Involvement from the community and parents in the educational process can further strengthen the school's efforts in embedding sustainable development values into students (Jannati et al., 2023a).

In the Indonesian context, the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka presents an opportunity for geography teachers to more freely integrate SDGs into their lessons (Said & Shaari, 2021b). This curriculum emphasizes teacher autonomy and creativity in designing lessons that cater to students' needs and local contexts (Jannati et al., 2023b). However, the success of this curriculum depends heavily on the teachers' readiness and competence in understanding and applying SDG concepts in their teaching (Sucipto et al., 2024). Increasing teachers' professional competence through continuous training and development is key to supporting the implementation of SDGs in schools. Training focused on innovative teaching methods, the use of technology, and a deep understanding of SDGs will assist geography teachers in delivering relevant and engaging content. This will help students better understand their roles in achieving sustainable development goals (Wahyudi & Jatun, 2024). Furthermore, regular evaluation and reflection on teaching practices are necessary. This allows teachers to assess the effectiveness of the methods used and make improvements as needed. With a reflective approach, teachers can continuously improve the quality of teaching and ensure the effective integration of SDGs into the curriculum (Pertiwi et al., 2023).

The results of this study, indicating a generally low interest among students in pursuing a career as geography teachers, raise critical concerns for the future of environmental education in schools. Geography, as a discipline, plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding of ecological systems, climate change, and the sustainable management of natural resources (Kartika & Wibowo, 2023; Hamidi, 2022; Meadows, 2020). The declining number of prospective geography educators may result in gaps in the transmission of essential environmental knowledge to students. In turn, this could lead to reduced awareness, concern, and action among the younger generation regarding environmental preservation. Such a trend directly undermines the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 13: Climate Action, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 15: Life on Land, SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, which rely heavily on education as a vehicle for change.

Moreover, geography teachers have the potential to serve as key agents of change by embedding sustainability values within formal education (Rushton, 2021; Mulyani & Hidayat, 2021). When equipped with appropriate training and motivation, these educators can deliver contextual, inquiry-based lessons that connect global environmental challenges

to students' local realities. This pedagogical approach fosters environmental literacy and empowers students to become active participants in sustainability efforts. However, if interest in the teaching profession—particularly in geography—continues to decline, the integration of environmental education into the national curriculum may become fragmented and inconsistent. To address this issue, higher education institutions and policymakers must collaborate to revitalize the teaching profession by emphasizing its pivotal role in achieving environmental and sustainability goals.

In conclusion, the declining interest in becoming geography teachers poses a significant challenge to the effective implementation of SDGs in schools. However, with the right focus on teacher readiness, curriculum flexibility, the use of technology, collaboration among stakeholders, and supportive education policies, geography teachers can be effective change agents in achieving sustainable development goals through education. Therefore, fostering greater interest in teaching as a profession is essential for realizing the full potential of SDGs in schools.

4. Conclusions

The trend of Geography Education students' declining interest in becoming teachers is increasingly problematic. According to our findings, 81.03% of students express little interest in pursuing teaching as a career. This raises the question: why is this a problem for the future? The presence of competent and dedicated teachers is crucial for the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 13: Climate Action, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 15: Life on Land, SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. Teachers, particularly those in geography education, play a pivotal role in educating students on issues related to sustainability, environmental preservation, and the responsible management of natural resources, all of which are central to these SDGs.

We hypothesize that one significant factor contributing to this trend is the perceived lack of beneficial job opportunities in teaching. Unfortunately, this study does not specify the other underlying factors contributing to this issue. Therefore, we strongly recommend that future research further investigate the various causes behind this decline in interest and explore potential solutions. Such studies are crucial in understanding the barriers to pursuing a teaching career and can inform policies aimed at revitalizing the profession, especially within the context of achieving the SDGs. Although on the other hand, we realize that this research has limitations that affect its role in a big impact but small points need to be considered not necessarily big but starting small is better done to get a better research impact in the future.

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Author Contribution

Both authors contributed equally to the conception, design, data collection, analysis, and writing of this article, ensuring the accuracy, integrity, and relevance of the research findings.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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