

Understanding Achievement Motivation Among Scholarship Recipients in Higher Education

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Abstract: This study explores the dynamics of achievement motivation among scholarship recipients in a higher education context. Although scholarships are generally expected to enhance academic motivation and support students' needs, many recipients perceive that financial assistance alone does not directly strengthen their motivation to achieve. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with five scholarship beneficiaries. The data were analyzed using a systematic process of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that, in terms of choice, scholarships function not only as financial support but also as catalysts that strengthen students' motivation, sense of responsibility, and academic focus. Persistence is shaped by internal factors such as personal aspirations, family values, and responsibility, as well as external factors including financial stability, routine mentoring, and performance expectations. In the dimension of effort, scholarship recipients demonstrate structured learning strategies, consistent study habits, and increased engagement in academic improvement activities. Overall, the study highlights that scholarships play a multidimensional role extending beyond financial assistance by fostering responsibility, perseverance, and disciplined learning behavior. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of motivational mechanisms among students receiving financial aid and underline the importance of integrated academic and mentoring support within scholarship programs.

Keywords: *achievement motivation, scholarship recipients, student motivation*

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INTRODUCTION

Education has a very important role for the progress of a nation. Education is the most important thing in human life, this means that every Indonesian has the right to get it and is expected to always develop in it, education will never end, education in general means a life process in developing each individual to be able to live and continue life (Alpian et al., 2019).

The success of students in their education is greatly influenced by their achievement motivation. In undergoing education, students need to have the motivation to achieve in order to

prepare a strong foundation for a successful future. Achievement motivation is a driving force that drives someone to succeed and achieve their desired goals. Achievement motivation does have an important role in individual development and goal achievement. If someone has high achievement motivation, then they will tend to have an orientation towards achievement and make maximum efforts to achieve success (Haru, 2023).

Someone who has high achievement motivation tends to always try to achieve what they want even though they experience obstacles and difficulties in achieving it (Damanik, 2020). Students usually have strong determination, high resilience and the ability to continue to push themselves to achieve their goals despite facing various obstacles. So with good achievement motivation in learning will show good results too, therefore students who have high achievement motivation tend to try harder and focus on achieving academic achievements and can even participate in extracurricular activities that support their self-development.

The low level of education in Indonesia is partly influenced by the high cost of education. The high cost of education for some people has moved the government to provide educational assistance for those who need it (Wea et al., 2018). So the low level of education in Indonesia is still a big problem, partly because of the high cost. For the underprivileged, high costs are the main obstacle to getting a decent education. Although the government has provided assistance such as scholarships and subsidies, not everyone can get it. In addition, the cost of education is not only tuition fees, but also books, transportation, and other needs that are increasingly burdensome. Therefore, a fairer policy is needed so that all people can get quality education.

High education costs will burden the Indonesian people, especially those from the lower middle class. Therefore, everyone in every educational unit has the right to receive education costs for those whose parents are unable to finance their education, and are entitled to scholarships for those who excel (Marita & Prayogi, 2024). High education costs burden the community, especially lower middle class families. Many talented children have difficulty accessing education due to economic constraints. Therefore, those who are less fortunate have the right to receive assistance with education costs, and those who excel have the right to receive scholarships. Because this is important so that everyone can go to school without being hampered by financial problems. With the right policies, access to education can be more equitable, and the younger generation can develop without financial constraints.

The provision of scholarships to students aims to increase students' academic motivation, including their enthusiasm for learning and participating in lecture activities, and can measure the extent to which this scholarship contributes to improving students' academic achievement. If students have high achievement motivation, then students will tend to assume that achievement is something that must be achieved, fought for, and proud of and try their best to overcome all obstacles in learning, maintain high quality learning, and be competent to achieve achievement (Walidaini, 2022).

The results of initial observations of 15 scholarship recipients in the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP, Mulawarman University showed that 60% of students felt that their motivation to achieve did not increase after receiving the scholarship. In addition, 53.3% stated that the scholarship was not enough to help meet their needs, and 60% did not agree that scholarship recipients must achieve. However, 53.3% still agreed to be responsible for completing their studies on time.

Based on the problems above, the researcher will conduct a study entitled "Analysis of Achievement Motivation of Scholarship Recipient Students in the Economics Education Study Program".

METHOD

This type of research uses qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative descriptive research is one type of research that is included in the type of qualitative research. Descriptive research is a research strategy in which researchers investigate events, phenomena of the lives of individuals and ask someone or a group of individuals to tell their lives. This information is then retold by the researcher in a descriptive chronology. Through this descriptive research, researchers will explain what is actually happening regarding the current situation being studied (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019).

This study uses a non-probability sampling method that uses a purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique allows researchers to select informants or research samples specifically with certain characteristics so that they are suitable for use as samples (Abdussamad, 2021). Informants are considered suitable in this study if they are scholarship students in the Economic Education study program. Therefore, the researcher grouped the research subjects into 5 scholarship students in the Economic Education study program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research conducted in the field, the researcher presents the research results in the form of findings in the field according to the data obtained during the interview. The presentation of the findings is based on indicators of achievement motivation, namely choice, persistence and effort. The results of this study are described as follows.

Based on interviews conducted by researchers with 5 scholarship recipients from Mulawarman University, the indicator of choice or student choice is to choose activities that support achievement and feel motivated to maintain the trust of the scholarship. Scholarships help ease the economic burden and increase focus on learning, so that academic achievement tends to be stable or increase. Indicator of persistence of scholarship recipients Scholarship recipients face academic challenges with high tenacity, thanks to financial support and motivation from the scholarship. This tenacity helps them survive and achieve good achievements during their studies. The indicator of effort or effort of scholarship recipients shows higher learning efforts with regular strategies and coaching support. Scholarships motivate them to maintain their achievements and study discipline.

Research Results

1. Choice

The choice indicator in this study refers to students' decisions in determining the academic path and activities they choose to support their achievement. Scholarship recipients tend to be more selective in choosing courses, organizations, and extracurricular activities that can benefit their academic and professional development. In addition, they are also more likely to set clear and specific goals in their studies, so that they can direct their efforts effectively. In line with research that scholarships can motivate students to improve their academic achievement and improve their learning performance (Asih et al., 2023).

In this study, the researcher asked about the choice of scholarship recipients in the Economics Education study program at Mulawarman University, based on the informant's answer that scholarship recipients are not only financial assistance, but also an important choice that influences the direction and enthusiasm of students' learning. After receiving a scholarship, students feel more confident and clear about their academic goals. This is in line

with research (Jubaidah, 2024) which shows that scholarships have a significant influence on students' learning motivation. As conveyed by the informant, they also feel happy, safe, and more confident in taking lectures. They are no longer worried about costs and can focus more on pursuing their dreams. This shows that scholarships are very helpful emotionally and make students calmer in studying.

Not only that, students also feel more motivated to continue to excel. They feel they have a responsibility to maintain the trust that has been given through scholarships. As conveyed by informants, scholarships make them want to study harder, both academically and non-academically. In addition to fulfilling their dreams, another reason students apply for scholarships is to ease the family's economic burden. Informants stated that they come from underprivileged families, but still want to be able to go to college. Scholarships are a solution so that they can continue their education without having to burden their parents. This is in line with research (Nasihah & Alfian, 2021) which emphasizes that the provision of scholarships aims to increase equity and learning opportunities for students who experience economic difficulties, as well as motivate them to improve their academic achievements.

By receiving a scholarship, students also feel the positive impact of the scholarship on academic achievement. Although there are some challenges in college, their academic grades tend to be stable, with a tendency to increase. This shows that the existence of a scholarship not only facilitates students' education but also encourages them to be more responsible in maintaining academic achievement. Students' motivation to achieve does not only come from financial factors, but also from the desire to develop, encouragement from family, and the standards set in the scholarship program. Routine evaluations carried out in this program are a motivator for students to continue to improve their achievements and not waste the opportunities that have been given. Studies show that scholarship recipients have high achievement motivation, which plays an important role in improving their academic achievement (Misro'i et al., 2022).

It can be concluded that scholarships not only help financially, but also increase students' motivation, sense of responsibility, and focus in learning. This makes them more selective in choosing activities that support achievement, more emotionally calm, and motivated to continue to improve academic results. So, scholarships play a very important role in shaping students' choices and enthusiasm for learning to achieve better achievements.

2. Persistence

Student resilience in facing academic challenges is an important factor in maintaining achievement motivation. Students with high academic self-efficacy tend to be better able to overcome academic difficulties, are more motivated, and achieve better things (Mayalianti et al., 2014). Scholarship recipients showed higher levels of resilience in the face of obstacles, such as difficulty in understanding lecture materials, high academic task demands, and limited resources. They tend to have good coping strategies, such as seeking help from lecturers, peers, or using additional learning resources to overcome the obstacles they face.

In this study, the researcher asked about the persistence of scholarship recipients in the Economics Education study program at Mulawarman University, based on the informant's answer that scholarship recipients at Mulawarman University said that their tenacity was tested from the beginning of their studies, especially when facing the adaptation process, academic pressure, and responsibilities as scholarship recipients. As conveyed by the informant, feelings of wanting to give up had arisen at the beginning of their studies because they had to adapt to a

new environment far from their families. However, with the scholarship that provides periodic financial assistance, students feel more helped and are finally able to adapt better. This feeling was also conveyed by the informant who stated that he was able to survive for eight semesters by remembering the goals and hopes for the future that he wanted to achieve.

Scholarships have a major influence in increasing students' motivation and academic achievement. In addition to providing financial assistance, scholarships also require them to continue to excel in order to meet the requirements set. A competitive and supportive scholarship environment further strengthens their enthusiasm to continue to develop and achieve the best results. This is in line with research by Wea et al., (2018) which shows that scholarships have a significant effect on students' learning motivation. With good strategies in managing time, facing academic challenges, and self-reflecting, scholarship recipients are able to maintain their achievements and complete their studies well. Strong motivation, support from the surrounding environment, and perseverance in learning are the main factors that help them achieve academic success. In line with research by Rohman et al., (2024), efforts to improve soft skills, such as time management and discipline, are also important in preparing students for their future.

It can be concluded that the persistence or tenacity of scholarship recipients is greatly influenced by internal factors such as personal goals, family values, and sense of responsibility, as well as external factors such as financial support, routine coaching, and achievement demands. Scholarships not only provide cost relief, but also trigger motivation and tenacity in undergoing education. This tenacity is an important capital to complete higher education well and achieve goals.

3. Effort

The efforts made by students in achieving academic achievement are important indicators of the level of student motivation. Scholarship recipients tend to show high dedication by allocating more time to study, participating in academic coaching programs, and being active in discussions and research. Students also have good discipline and time management to ensure that every academic task can be completed optimally.

In this study, the researcher asked about the efforts of scholarship recipients of the Economics Education study program at Mulawarman University, based on the informant's answer that the motivation to study increased significantly after receiving the scholarship. The informant said that the scholarship provided a great encouragement to study harder, because there was a concern that grades would drop and the scholarship was threatened with being revoked. This view shows the existence of extrinsic motivation, namely encouragement from outside the individual to excel because there are certain awards or consequences. The same thing was conveyed by the informant, who emphasized that the responsibility as scholarship recipients encouraged them to make greater efforts than non-scholarship recipients. This means that scholarships are not only financial support facilities, but also function as regulators of academic behavior. This is in line with research (Meiriza et al., 2023) which revealed that scholarships have a positive impact on the learning motivation of students at the Faculty of Economics, State University of Medan, both in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic aspects.

In addition, support in the form of routine coaching, training, and studies also contribute to increasing their motivation and insight. With routine coaching and training, students' motivation to learn can be increased. Efforts made by students to improve academic achievement include various strategies, such as being more active in asking lecturers, doing

assignments optimally, and implementing good time management. They also seek additional insight through reading such as books or journals and take advantage of opportunities to participate in competitions, seminars, and organizations related to academics and scholarships. By participating in organizational activities, students not only gain additional skills that support academic achievement, but also form characters that are ready to face challenges in the world of work and social life (Harefa & Waruru, 2025). Participation in organizations and academic activities not only helps in developing skills, but also expands relationships and improves communication skills. With these efforts, scholarship recipients are able to maintain and improve their academic achievement consistently (Sholikhah, 2018).

Students' efforts are also seen through changes in learning behavior that are more structured and strategic. The informant said that he now studies before class starts and actively reads books. Likewise, other informants implement a study schedule, take classes seriously, and maintain academic focus. In line with research (Mastur et al., 2023) found that providing scholarships significantly increases students' learning motivation. This has an impact on changes in learning behavior that are more disciplined and systematic. With scholarships, students feel more responsible and motivated to achieve better academic results through effective time management and appropriate learning strategies.

It can be concluded that the effort made by students is a direct reflection of their motivation to achieve. Scholarships function as external stimuli that can form more consistent and strategic learning habits, as well as increase students' sense of academic responsibility. Factors such as grade standards, routine coaching, and pressure to maintain scholarships are driving forces in improving the quality of students' learning efforts.

Discussion

Based on the description of the research results, scholarship recipients in the Economics Education study program at Mulawarman University from the choice indicator that scholarships not only help financially, but also increase motivation, sense of responsibility, and focus on learning. This makes them more selective in choosing activities that support achievement, more emotionally calm, and motivated to continue to improve academic results. So, scholarships play a very important role in shaping students' choices and enthusiasm for learning to achieve better achievements. The persistence indicator of scholarship recipients is greatly influenced by internal factors such as personal goals, family values, and sense of responsibility, as well as external factors such as financial support, routine coaching, and achievement demands. Scholarships not only provide cost relief, but also trigger motivation and tenacity in undergoing education. This tenacity is an important capital to complete higher education well and achieve goals. The effort indicator or efforts made by students is a direct reflection of their motivation to achieve. Scholarships function as external stimuli that can form more consistent and strategic learning habits, and increase students' sense of academic responsibility. Factors such as value standards, routine coaching, and pressure to maintain scholarships are driving forces in improving the quality of students' learning efforts.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that scholarships serve not only as financial assistance but also as an important catalyst that enhances students' focus, responsibility, and learning motivation. Students are encouraged to make optimal use of this opportunity by engaging in activities that support both academic and personal development,

while maintaining persistence in overcoming challenges to achieve higher academic performance.

Furthermore, study programs play a strategic role in strengthening the academic success of scholarship recipients by providing academic support such as tutoring, study skills training, and regular progress evaluations. These efforts should be complemented by self-development initiatives including seminars, workshops, and alumni mentoring. Future research is recommended to examine additional factors influencing the motivation and academic achievement of scholarship recipients—such as psychological dimensions, social environment, and effective coaching methods—and to conduct comparative studies between recipients and non-recipients to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of academic success determinants.

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