

## GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Accepted</b> Accepted Accepted in the form of revisions Accepted in the form of revisions	<b>Background:</b> Education is a crucial medium for organizing human resources and serves as an important investment. Research indicates that both secondary and tertiary education significantly increase an individual's income, especially after accounting for the costs associated with education. Becker (1993) emphasizes that education and training are vital investments in human capital, with more educated individuals generally earning above-average incomes, particularly in less-developed countries. <b>Objective:</b> This study aims to explore the impact of education investment on individual capabilities, job opportunities, and earnings in the context of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste. <b>Method:</b> The research analyzes the educational policies and budgetary allocations of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, specifically focusing on the 2022 State Budget and its provisions for educational incentives and scholarships. <b>Results:</b> The 2022 State Budget, amended by Law No. 6 of 2022, aims to support outstanding students, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Achievement scholarships were distributed to 13,517 students in primary, junior, and senior secondary schools based on Government Regulation No. 35 of 2022. <b>Conclusion:</b> The findings suggest that the government's investment in education not only enhances individual capabilities and job prospects but also promotes sustainable economic growth in Timor Leste. The commitment to universal access to education reflects the state's dedication to improving citizens' quality of life.
<b>Keywords:</b> Government Policy and Scholarships	

## INTRODUCTION

Education plays a very important role in ensuring the survival of the state and nation. This is because education is a vehicle to improve and develop the quality of human resources. The identity of the nation is determined by the quality of its human resources. For this reason, the best cadres of the nation are needed who have high intelligence,

excellent attitudes and mentality, high fighting power and competitiveness, reliable abilities and true nationalism. The government's hope by providing scholarships to students at the primary and secondary school levels who excel is that students can follow their studies smoothly which is expected to be able to improve their achievements which in turn can take part in continuing the nation's struggle towards the development of a prosperous East Timor based on the *Decree of the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, based on no. 43/22, October 19. 43/22, October 19 "Outubru "Regula os procedimentos da atribuição de bolsas de mérito aos estabelecimentos do Ensino básico, Ensino secundário geral e Ensino secundário técnico vocacional" and Decreto Lei 35/22, May 19) "Medidas de apoio aos estabelecimentos da educação Básica e Ensino secundário público e particular atribuição de uma bolsa aos melhores alunos".*

A scholarship is a government funded education program aimed at students who are economically disadvantaged. The assistance is in the form of learning support facilities and is used for continuity in the education process. The existence of this scholarship is not only for educational support but also as an encouragement to students or students to produce good achievements. So that the role of allocating scholarships from this government is very important seen from the mass of students or students who want to continue their education aka but are still hindered by economic factors. It will ease the burden on the parents of students or students in terms of financing so that students or students will be able to continue their education and can also encourage them to create an achievement that can make this country proud (Noviyanti & Dermawan, 2022).

Investment in the quality of education for the millennial generation for the future of Timor Leste is very important starting from now, it is known that the use of digital technology in the era of globalization is a very golden opportunity for the progress of a nation, this statement is based on the Constitution of Timor Leste, Article 59 paragraph (1) which states that the government recognizes all activities and the existence of educational institutions in Timor Leste and refers to the 2030 agenda on the objective development of sustainability (SDS) regarding the sustainability of educational development that has been determined inclusively and equitably, as well as based on the National Strategic Plan of Education (NESP) 2011-2023. Likewise, on February 26-29, 2024, Timor-Leste officially became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), with the aim of forming more open trade between countries, prospering the global community and solving international economic problems, especially the economic growth of Timor-Leste through the economic transformation sector and economic technology science.

Learning achievement can be expressed as the result of learning activities expressed in the form of sentences that can be reflected in the results of efforts that have been achieved by children in a certain period, Investment in human resources emphasizes the quality of education in primary and secondary schools, but the government in this case the 8th Government Cabinet, through the ministry of primary and secondary education, has priorities and programs of excellence through the learning achievement scholarship program for primary and secondary school students with a total of 13.517 recipients,

in primary and secondary schools, it is realized that the allocation of government aid funds for the education sector is still very limited for the purposes of improving human resources, infrastructure, learning facilities and the need for investment in information technology which is still low so that it greatly affects the quality of education and learning.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In the process of analyzing qualitative data, the data that emerges is in the form of words and not a series of numbers. Data are collected in a variety of ways (observations, interviews, document digests, tape recordings), which are usually processed before use, but qualitative analysis still uses words which are usually arranged in expanded text. Analysis in this view includes three lines of activity, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (B. Milles and Huberman, 2014). So the author concludes that the data information presented in the article in the form of data **on the** results of the implementation of **policies regarding the** Decree of the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, no. 43/22, October 19, in the form of documentation, information and observations as a whole, especially among the academic community and the general public, then analyzed and discussed in depth

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation is more specifically the implementation of controlling policy actions within a certain period of time (*Dunn, 2003: 132*). Implementation is an action to achieve the objectives outlined in the policy decision. These actions are carried out either by individuals, government officials or the private sector. Regarding the factors that influence the implementation of a program policy, *Subarsono* in his book entitled *Public Policy Analysis (Concepts, Theories and Applications)*, *quoting the opinion of G. Shabbir Cheema and Dennis A. Rondinelli* argues that there are several factors that influence the implementation of decentralized government program policies. These factors include: (1). Environmental conditions The environment greatly influences policy implementation, which includes the socio-cultural environment and the involvement of program recipients, (2). Inter-organizational relations In many programs, the implementation of a program needs support and coordination with other agencies. For this reason, coordination and cooperation between agencies are needed for the success of a program. (3). Organizational resources for program implementation Policy implementation needs to be supported by both human resources and non-human resources. (4). Characteristics and capabilities of implementing agents The characteristics and capabilities of implementing agents include bureaucratic structures, norms, and patterns of relationships that occur in the bureaucracy, all of which will affect the implementation of a program. (*Subarsono, 2005: 101*).

Scholarship is the provision of financial assistance given to individuals, students or students who are used for the continuity of the education pursued (<http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/scholarships>). According to Murniasih (2009), scholarships

are defined as a form of appreciation given to individuals in order to continue their education to a higher level. The award can be in the form of certain access to an institution or an award in the form of financial assistance. Basically, scholarships are income for those who receive them. This is in accordance with the provisions of article 4 paragraph (1) of the 2000 Income Tax Law. it is stated that the definition of income is additional economic capacity by name and in any form received or obtained from Indonesian or foreign sources that can be used for consumption or increase the wealth of the taxpayer. Because the scholarship can be interpreted as increasing the economic ability of the recipient, it means that the scholarship is income. *Murniasih (2009)* defined scholarships as a form of appreciation given to individuals in order to continue their education to a higher level. The award can be in the form of certain access to an institution or an award in the form of financial assistance.

One of the factors that affect student achievement is motivation. With motivation, students will study harder, be resilient, persevere and have and have full concentration in the learning process. Motivation in learning is one of the things that needs to be raised in learning efforts at school. The achievements that can be obtained by students are very diverse ranging from class champions, parallel school champions, debate champions, national science champions to other champions.

The 8th cabinet government through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Ministeriu Edukasaun Juventude no Desportu), through the Ministerial Decree, no 43/22, October 19, on the implementation of the learning achievement scholarship program for primary and secondary school students in Timor Leste, with the intention of motivating students to learn, especially students who have good test scores at the 4th, 6th, 9th and 12th grade levels in 2022. The implementation of this program is based :

- 1) Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste (RDTL), articles 19 and 59
- 2) Education law (decree lei 35/22, May 19) "Medidas de apoio aos estabelecimentos da educacao basico e ensino secundario publico e particular atribuição de uma bolsa aos melhores alunos"
- 3) Ministerial Decree (despacho ministerial), no. 43/22, October 19 "Regula os procedimentos da atribuição de bolsas de merito aos estabelecimentos do Ensino basico, Ensino secundario geral e Ensino secundario tecnico vocational"

In implementation, policies are based on the above points, which are stipulated in articles (4) and (5) of the Education Act (Decree-Law 35/22, 19 May) and Minister of Education Decree No. 4 and Chapter II paragraphs (5), (6) and (7), with the intention that the realization of this program can provide great benefits for students' learning motivation. On the other hand, based on these regulations, the distribution of scholarships for students is governed by regulations/criteria as well as the responsibilities of each line of work, namely the national, regional and school levels.

Based on the author's observations of the implementation of the learning achievement scholarship program for students at the primary and secondary school levels, there are still some shortcomings and obstacles, even though we see that the

implementation of the program is very useful and really helps students independently continue to increase learning motivation in achieving quality learning outcomes:

- 1) The distribution of the scholarship program has not been fully equitable, especially to affiliated primary and secondary schools.
- 2) Most students do not have complete documents, making it difficult for the Ministry of Education to allocate funds/assistance to their respective accounts.
- 3) With the scholarship program for students, there are also things that are not effective and transparent in evaluating student learning outcomes.
- 4) The bureaucracy of distributing aid / scholarships to students often faces obstacles due to ineffective work and communication systems that are not in accordance with the schedule.
- 5) Consistency in the implementation of policies that have been determined still experiences criticism from parents, schools and the general public.

Based on the discussion above, the author also outlines several important things, related to the management system in the implementation of the learning achievement scholarship program for students, including, the division of tasks and responsibilities at each level has been arranged in accordance with the Term of Reference and Operational Standards respectively, the government in this case the Ministry of Education has a good working relationship with the Bank BNCTL Timor Leste and related institutions. However, the implementation of the learning achievement scholarship program for students which was realized for the first time by the 8th cabinet government in 2022 lasted only (1) year while the 9th cabinet government did not continue as a priority, for this reason the author hopes that this program is very beneficial and motivates students so that it would be better for the government to continue to be able to help and motivate students whose learning results are good to be more enthusiastic about learning in order to achieve good and quality goals and hopes for contributing to the quality of education in Timor-Leste.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the background and discussion above, the author concludes several important things related to the title of this paper, namely: 1). The total number of public and private primary and secondary school students who took part in the program was 13,517. 2). The total budget allocated under this program is USD \$7,537,499. 3). The implementation of the learning achievement scholarship program for students (Bolsa Merito) has had a positive impact on students who excel in continuing their education. 4). The implementation of the learning achievement scholarship program for students has been carried out in accordance with legal regulations and government policies, so it needs to be improved and continued.

Human resources (HR) are individuals who are productive and work as drivers of the organization, whether it is an organization within an agency or company and are resources that cannot be replaced and become important assets. Education has an important role in efforts to improve human resources in a better direction. Education is

expected to be able to form students who can develop their attitudes, skills and intellectual intelligence in order to become skilled, intelligent, and noble human beings.

Based on the discussion and conclusions above, the author emphasizes that the progress of a nation and state is highly dependent on qualified and professional human resources, in order to have the ability to compete nationally and internationally in the world of work. In addition, it is hoped that the government will have sustainable consistency in government programs that are considered to be very beneficial for children and the nation, especially in the world of education. Whoever leads the ministry of youth education and sports, it is still strived for consistency in implementing government programs on an ongoing basis so that during the leadership period from year to year it can have a positive impact on the nation's children in order to improve the quality of human resources that are reliable and competent in the market world.

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