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The Role of the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship Program in the Self and Social Development of Receiving Students (a Study at Riau University Campus)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the role of the Karya Salemba Empat (KSE) Scholarship in developing the personal and social development of its recipients. Not only that, this scholarship also encourages students to play an active role in the campus environment and society. Data for this study was obtained through a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection methods including observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship plays an important role in providing financial assistance to students, thereby increasing their motivation and academic achievement during their studies. In addition, the implementation of this programme can increase the interest and talent, confidence, experience, time management, and optimistic drive for success of scholarship recipients, especially at the University of Riau. Furthermore, the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship also aims to enable scholarship recipients to contribute to society through community development, which is in line with the third principle of the tri dharma of higher education, namely community service. Thus, the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship not only provides economic assistance but also serves as an important facilitator in the process of student self-development and social development.

1. Introduction

Education is an important aspect for humans, to shape quality human resources. Education is defined as a conscious effort to develop one's abilities. Both physical abilities, creativity, determination, or fighting spirit, so that the abilities it can be useful in their life (Hapudin, 2022). Education as life, education also means learning experiences undertaken throughout life to develop human growth. Humans go through many stages to obtain an education, one of which is higher education. (Redja Mudyahardjo, 2002). In (Undang-undang (UU) Nomor 12 Tahun 2012 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi, 2012) Article 1, Paragraph 1 defines education as

a conscious and planned effort to create a conducive learning atmosphere and learning process so that learners actively develop their potential to possess spiritual religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed for themselves, society, the nation, and the state. Education is one of the indicators determining an individual's success in the future, both for themselves, society, and the nation. With the improvement of education quality, it forms more productive, creative, and innovative human resources toward a more advanced and prosperous economic growth of society (Chairyani et al., 2022).

Many stages are undergone by humans to pursue education, one of which is higher education. Higher education is an important aspect to improve the quality of human resources, to prepare individuals who can be part of a reliable society. The presence of qualified human resources can determine the clearer direction of the nation in the future (Pendidikan Tinggi (DIKTI), n.d.). In the journal on the cost of education and the decision to choose an educational institution (Amri & Yahya, 2021), there is a problem in pursuing education in Indonesia, the main factor that becomes a barrier is the weak family economy. The lack of financial resources for daily needs is insufficient, let alone for educational expenses. Educational costs are a main component in the world of education; educational costs refer to all expenditures incurred by individuals, families, community groups, or educational institutions to support the learning process of individuals in formal or non-formal educational environments.

Thus, the need for solutions to these issues arises, one of which is providing scholarships. According to Surya in (Sibyan, 2020), a scholarship is financial assistance given to an individual, pupil or student for educational purposes. Scholarships are a form of reward for individuals to continue their education. Scholarships can come from the government, private entities, and educational institutions. Scholarships, as one of the support mechanisms or solutions in the education sector, can be described as funding that does not originate from personal or parental resources, but rather it is provided by the government, private companies, and educational institutions. This funding is given to individuals who are entitled to receive it, particularly based on classification, quality, and the competence of scholarship recipients (Apdian et al., 2024). The fundamental purpose of scholarships is to support the advancement of education, equalize learning opportunities for distinguished but economically disadvantaged generations, encourage and sustain students' learning spirit so they remain accomplished and have the drive to complete their education, and ultimately strive to achieve the highest academic achievements so that human resources with potential are not wasted (Astuti D. et al., 2019).

One of the scholarships available in Indonesia that aims to improve the quality of education in the country is the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship, or abbreviated as KSE. Since 1995, the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship has been present to assist students in continuing their higher education. The rapid development of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship helps students not only by providing financial assistance but also offers training and personal development with the vision of 'continuing KSE's mission to enlighten the nation's life.' This includes soft skill and

hard skill development, environmental awareness, community assistance, and more. The presence of these programs allows scholarship recipients to be accepted by society and understand how to pursue their dreams after completing their studies. Therefore, the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship aims to continue supporting many students; to date, it has assisted 35 state universities from Sabang to Merauke (Beasiswa Karya Salemba Empat, n.d.).

One of the state universities that has partnered with the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship foundation is the University of Riau. At the University of Riau, the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship foundation has been in existence since 2014. At that time, it only provided assistance to five scholarship recipients, a small number due to the lack of information available to students at the University of Riau. Over time, the number of at the University of Riau increased every year, due to the spread of information and the increasing number of applicants for the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship at the University of Riau each year. With the increase in the number of recipients, there was also an increase in the work programmes carried out by these scholarship recipients to develop their skills. Not only that, the recipients of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship at Riau University also create a Community development program as a form of social concern from the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipients at Riau University to the community.

This is in line with the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, namely Community Service, by providing positive contributions to the community through the application of science and technology in solving real problems. They hold community service activities such as training, workshops, counseling, and other beneficial programs for the community (Amalia, 2024). Based on the description, this study aims to examine how the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship can assist recipient students at the University of Riau by providing educational financial aid, as well as offering programs that can develop the personal and social skills of the recipients.

2. Methodology

This study uses descriptive qualitative research, which involves stages in analyzing research or describing a phenomenon in written form. This means that the data and facts obtained and collected are in the form of words or images, not numbers. In written presentation, qualitative research reports include quotations from data or facts revealed in the field to provide complete illustrations and support what is presented (Djam'an Satori, 2020). Through this approach, the collected data can comprehensively describe the role of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship in providing educational funds to recipients at the University of Riau to improve student achievement and motivation in pursuing higher education. Furthermore, there are findings that the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship provides programs or training to recipients to improve student self-development. The scholarship also provides programs for students to increase their awareness of the community through community service.

This research was conducted at the University of Riau, the Secretariat of the KSE UNRI Association, the Karya Salemba Empat Association Community Development Partner at the University of Riau, from February to September 2025. The location was chosen because the University of Riau is one of the partners of the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship Foundation in Riau. Research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, which was used because it was most relevant to the research, so that the information obtained was more focused and in-depth and appropriate to the context. The number of informants in this study was 14 people, consisting of University of Riau students, Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipients at the University of Riau, and community members involved in programs implemented by Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipients at the University of Riau.

The data collection techniques in this study were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation (Creswell, 2014) (1) Observation: The researcher conducted participatory observation to research the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship program at the University of Riau, including the self-development program and student community service. (2) Interview: The researcher conducted in-depth interviews, obtained information that was not obtained through observation to ask questions directly to informants. (3) Documentation: Documentation such as the vision and mission of the Karya Salemba Empat Association at the University of Riau, reports on student income and expenses after receiving the scholarship, implementation of the scholarship program, reports on activities and student community service. As well as other supporting data containing data or information needed by the researcher (Dewi Kurniasih et al., 2021)

In this study, the research instrument is the researcher herself, whose task is to validate how far qualitative researchers can penetrate the field. The researcher's function is to determine the focus of the research and draw conclusions from her findings (Abdussamad, 2021). In qualitative research, data validity is tested in various ways, including credibility, transferability, defendability, and confirmability to ensure that the data findings can be used as scientific research (Susanto et al., 2023). Data are tested through discussions, triangulation, and member-checking. Discussions with informants related to the research are ongoing throughout the fieldwork and writing.

Thus, these discussions function as triangulation. Triangulation is used to check the accuracy of data, data credibility, and to enrich the data. The types of triangulation are: (a) source triangulation, which means testing data credibility by examining data obtained from several sources. (b) technical triangulation, which means testing data credibility by examining data from the same source using different techniques or methods. (c) time triangulation, with time affecting data credibility (Susanto et al., 2023). Member-checking aims to determine whether the data obtained by the researcher is correct or not in accordance with what was provided by the data provider. The research procedure discusses the steps taken in the research, which consist of: (1) Preparation stage. (2) Data collection stage, (3) Data analysis techniques, (4) Research report writing stage.

3. Results and Discussion

The Karya Salemba Empat scholarship program has several types of programs, including: The Core Program is the main program provided by KSE to scholarship recipients. The core program itself consists of regular scholarships, achievement scholarships, technology for Indonesia, and social entrepreneurship. This core program is independently developed by the Salemba Empat Foundation and is implemented annually. In addition to providing financial assistance, the KSE scholarship also offers additional programs for scholarship recipients, including developing their potential and skills. These additional programs are a collaboration with donors. Mentoring programs can include training and development activities. These additional programs are regularly conducted with the aim of helping scholarship recipients develop their personal qualities, not only for their own benefit but also to encourage students to contribute to society through community organizations.

In the context of scholarship administration as an educational support fee, scholarships play a crucial and fundamental role as the primary instrument and provide tangible support in sustaining students' studies. Functionally, educational support fees are defined not only as financial assistance but also as a form of long-term investment in the development of quality human resources. These educational fees include payment of the Single Tuition Fee (UKT), purchase of books, access to technology and internet devices, and daily living expenses that support optimal learning. Furthermore, educational support fees can have a positive impact, where students with lower levels of financial anxiety will be more focused on developing their academic and non-academic potential.

As the cost of higher education increases year after year and student needs grow, educational funding programs have gradually increased. This increase reflects the scholarship providers' adaptive response to socioeconomic dynamics and their commitment to ensuring that all scholarship recipients receive proportional and equitable support to maximize their studies. Therefore, in line with the Karya Salemba Empat Foundation's vision to educate the nation, scholarships represent a contribution to society in the form of educational assistance. The presence of the Karya Salemba Scholarship at the University of Riau has been a factor in improving student achievement and motivation in pursuing their studies.

To gather in-depth information, interviews were conducted with student staff at Riau University, alumni of the Karya Salemba Empat Association at Riau University, active recipients of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship at Riau University, and members of the community directly involved in the implementation of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship program at Riau University. Interview questions were designed to obtain information about the scholarship's educational assistance, its support for student development, and community service. These questions aimed to capture the impact of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship on student recipients at Riau University and its impact on the community. By organizing interviews based on specific themes, the data collected provided a comprehensive understanding of the role of the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship

at Riau University in student personal and social development. Table 1 below presents the main interviews used in the study.

Table 1. Interview Questions

No	Interview Question	Focus Area
1.	How is the continuation of the collaborative relationship between the University of Riau and the Karya Salemba Empat Foundation?	Scholarship
2.	What is the role of KSE educational funding assistance in supporting academic needs?	Financial impact
3.	How do you manage the scholarship funds you receive?	Financial impact
4.	How has the KSE program contributed to your personal development?	Self-development
5.	Have there been any changes in your attitude, self-confidence, or responsibility since receiving the scholarship?	Self-development
6.	What long-term impact will the KSE scholarship have on you after graduating from college?	Self-development
7.	Does your experience at KSE help you in today's working world?	Self-development
8.	What is the role of the KSE network after you become an alumni?	Self-development
9.	What is your view on the existence of KSE scholarship recipients from Riau University in the community?	Social impact
10.	What is the role of Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipients in carrying out community service?	Social impact

The program implemented by the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship at Riau University

Scholarships play a vital role in helping students meet their financial needs during their studies. The assistance provided not only alleviates the burden of educational costs, such as tuition, but can also be used to support other academic needs, such as purchasing books, stationery, and supporting lecture activities. The Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship awards recipients Rp. 750,000 per month for one year and can be extended if the student still meets the KSE scholarship requirements. Each month, the Karya Salemba Empat Foundation will request a monthly report on the use of educational funds.

The purpose of providing monthly financial reports is to understand the use of funds by students and to provide students with knowledge on proper financial management. In line with research (Kurniadi, R., Suarman, S., & Syahza, A. 2025) it shows that scholarship recipients have a fairly good level of financial literacy, especially in basic understanding and management of personal finances, which reflects an increase in personal capacity in managing resources independently. Based on Figure 1, explains the form of the students monthly report after receiving the scholarship.

The screenshot displays the 'SISTEM ONLINE KSE' Student Area interface. The main content is a 'Data Table for Report Two' showing financial data for various components. The table has columns for 'No.', 'Nama Komponen', 'Jenis', 'Debit', and 'Kredit'. The data is organized by semester from 2023-5 to 2025-8. A summary at the bottom indicates a financial status of 'SURPLUS' with a date reported of 15-08-2025 06:29:pm.

No.	Nama Komponen	Jenis	Debit	Kredit
1.	Orang tua	K	1.500.000	
2.	Upah (pekerjaan)	K	0	
3.	Beasiswa	K	750.000	
4.	Lainya	K	0	
5.	Konsumsi	D		500.000
6.	Transport	D		100.000
7.	Tempat tinggal	D		310.000
8.	Internet/printing	D		100.000
9.	Buku/Fotocopy	D		100.000
10.	Kursus	D		0
11.	SPP	D		383.000
12.	BOP	D		0
13.	Praktikum	D		0
14.	Penelitian	D		0
15.	Sertifikat	D		100.000
16.	Lainya	D		200.000
			2.250.000	1.793.000

Summary
 - Financial status : **SURPLUS**
 - Date reported : 15-08-2025 06:29:pm
 - Actions : edit | delete

Figure 1. Example of a financial report for a KSE scholarship recipient

Excerpt from an interview with Eva Refita (Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipient at Riau University) "I feel motivated to be more active than before receiving the scholarship, because every semester the foundation asks to submit the academic report on the KSE portal. So, there is a desire within me to be diligent in my studies, because I do not want the foundation to be disappointed in me if my GPA decreases." Excerpt from an interview with Tasya Widia Maharani (Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipient at Riau University) "The existence of this scholarship makes me want to study harder, because not everyone receives a scholarship. Therefore, I want to make the best use of this scholarship to enhance my participation during my college years."

Based on the results of the interviews above, it is clear that students receiving Karya Salemba Empat scholarships feel motivated to improve their Grade Point Average (GPA) due to the existence of the scholarship. This is because students strive to maintain or improve their grades due to the obligation to report their academic achievements to the scholarship organisers. The existence of this obligation shows that scholarships serve as a control instrument and provide academic motivation for students. Therefore, the requirement to fill out the third report on the KSE student portal encourages students to maintain consistency in their studies, which in turn leads to an improvement in their academic performance.

Not only providing financial aid, the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship also offers training and mentoring programs, and there are community groups at each partnering university such as at Riau University known as the Karya Salemba Empat Community, which is a gathering of scholarship recipients at Riau University under the auspices of the Karya Salemba Empat Foundation. As a non-profit organization operating in the field of education, particularly providing scholarships to outstanding students from various state universities in Indonesia. The presence of the community in the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship serves as a platform for scholarship recipients to gather at each partnering university. This is necessary for organizing and facilitating various activities. Moreover, the

community also acts as a facilitator in the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship program, connecting donors with scholarship recipients, the foundation with recipients, and recipients with each other. The Karya Salemba Empat Community at Riau University has existed since 2015 and continues to run various programs, both foundation programs and community-specific programs until now in 2025. These programs also operate in the fields of education, social issues, economics, the environment, and health. Thus, students can become creative and innovative individuals as they can design and implement their own activities.

The Role of the Salemba Four Scholarship Program in Enhancing the Personal Development of Recipient Students at Riau University

The Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship not only provides financial assistance but also through programs implemented for scholarship recipients, students' self-development becomes better. Through various structured and ongoing activities, the program can encourage individual quality improvement, both in cognitive aspects and character development (Hardiman, S., Nurkolis, N., & Kusumaningsih, 2025). Therefore, the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship not only provides educational financial assistance but also provides a platform for scholarship recipients to develop themselves. In this study, the self-development indicators studied were: interests and talents, self-confidence, gaining experience, time management, and an optimistic drive to succeed

(1) Development of interests and talents : The Karya Salemba Empat scholarship also plays a role in developing the interests and talents of its recipients. The Karya Salemba Empat community at Riau University provides a platform for students to explore their potential and desires in various fields, such as art, communication, or leadership. Informants explained that involvement in the community, such as being a committee member for events and participating in the entrepreneur academy and technology for Indonesia programs, can channel students' interests and talents. The establishment of programs by both the foundation and the community itself indicates that the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship not only provides financial assistance but also serves as a facilitator for personal development, encouraging students to be more confident in developing their potential.

(2) Increase in Self-Confidence: On the self-confidence indicator, the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship also has a positive impact on its recipient students. The presence of various programs, such as seminars, training, and committee activities, provides students with new responsibilities. This encourages an increase in students' courage in interacting or speaking in public. Based on interviews with several informants, it was found that student involvement in carrying out activities in the Paguyuban can enhance self-confidence not only in the campus environment, but also has an impact after graduation and entering the workforce. Therefore, the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship plays a role in shaping individuals who are adaptive, courageous, and ready to face challenges in various fields. In line with research (Wololi, Y. L., Nurwahyuni, N., Puswiartika, D., & Fitriani, 2025) which states that group guidance can increase individual self-esteem, which is

characterized by increased self-confidence, the ability to express oneself, and a more positive attitude of self-acceptance.

(3) **Gaining Experience:** The program held at the Karya Salemba Empat Association at Riau University also provides opportunities to gain new experiences. For instance, training in public speaking, English excellence, CV creation, the Gurindam House program, and other large programs serve as learning tools that not only enhance academic competencies but also social skills, leadership, and expand students' networks. Based on interviews with informants, it was stated that the opportunities provided by the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship are chances that should not be missed because these opportunities allow students to grow and discover their potential. Thus, these experiences make students more prepared to face life after graduating from university.

(4) **Time Management:** Students who receive the Karya Salemba Empat scholarship, particularly at Riau University, must develop time management skills among academic responsibilities, organizational tasks, and personal life. Involvement in executing programs within the community encourages the creation of effective time management strategies. Through interviews with KSE scholarship recipients at Riau University, findings revealed that there are strategies for optimally managing responsibilities. For instance, students prioritize attending classes and then balance internships and KSE activities on weekends. Similar strategies are employed by prioritizing team communication, ensuring that the organization's schedule can run smoothly without sacrificing academic obligations. These findings indicate that the KSE program can enhance students' skills in managing time and adapting to various situations. Furthermore, alumni of the KSE scholarship at Riau University reported that the experience of being a KSE scholarship recipient can serve as preparation for leadership and independence in the professional world. This highlights that the KSE scholarship not only provides financial assistance but also supports students in developing relevant soft skills for their careers after graduation.

(5) **Optimistic Push to Succeed:** In addition to technical skills, KSE scholarship recipients also experience a positive impact in encouraging students to be optimistic about success. The strict selection process for obtaining the KSE scholarship enhances self-confidence, while involvement in the KSE program can improve students' networking and build personal branding. The experiences gained by students can foster an awareness that success is a result of a combination of consistent effort and the ability to seize opportunities. Thus, students can develop themselves, build resilience, and view their backgrounds as not a hindrance. Therefore, the KSE scholarship plays a role in shaping students' characters to be adaptive, optimistic, and ready to face life after graduating from college.

The Role of Scholarship Recipients from Karya Salemba Empat University of Riau in Increasing Students' Awareness of Society

To increase students' social awareness, Karya Salemba Empat scholarship recipients at the University of Riau are implementing a Community Service

program. These programs are designed to develop responsible and environmentally conscious students, enabling them to be active not only academically but also socially. In line with (Rindanita, N., Iskandar, I., Suyuti, S., & Nongtji, 2026), program implementation also contributes to increasing participants' responsibility, problem-solving skills, and active social engagement. Some of the community service programs that have been implemented include:

(1) Catfish Cultivation Program: The catfish farming programme is one way in which students show their concern for the community in the economic sphere. This activity involves students and local residents in the process from fish breeding to harvesting. It is not just about farming; in this activity, students act as facilitators, educating the community about catfish farming and providing technological innovations to make it easier for the community. Thus, the community gains tangible benefits both in terms of income and improved skills in managing fish farming. This demonstrates that student involvement is not merely technical assistance but also empowers the community through knowledge transfer and hands-on practice.

(2) Main Waste Bank Program: The main waste bank program focuses on raising environmental awareness while supporting the circular economy of the community. Scholarship recipients of Karya Salemba Empat at Riau University play a role in assisting the waste bank in encouraging and educating the community to participate in the waste bank program. Thus, the waste owned by the community can be exchanged for their needs, depending on the type of waste exchanged. Based on interview findings, this program can help the community earn additional income while also building clean and sustainable living habits. The involvement of students in this program demonstrates the implementation of social concern in the field of the environment.

(3) School Waste Bank Program: In addition to waste management at the community level, scholarship recipients of Karya Salemba Empat at the University of Riau also implement waste banks at the elementary school level. This aims to instill early awareness of the importance of managing waste. Based on interviews with teachers and involved students, it was found that this program is effective in enhancing children's understanding of the importance of protecting the environment. The role of students in guiding children directly is concrete evidence of the development of social awareness based on education.

(4) Program Rumah Gurindam (Tutoring): The Gurindam House is a free tutoring program focused on high school students in Pekanbaru, especially final-year students who are preparing to face higher education. This program not only helps students academically but also provides motivation, shares college experiences, and equips them with soft skills. This shows that the program serves as a platform for scholarship recipients of Karya Salemba Empat at Riau University to contribute to education in the community.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the important role of the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship in providing financial assistance to recipient students, which serves as one of the factors in increasing student motivation and achievement in pursuing higher education, such as activeness in organizations, leadership abilities, and social skills. The presence of the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship for recipients at the University of Riau not only provides educational financial assistance to recipients, but also has training programs, seminars, and community service activities to develop student character so that they can be accepted by the community. At the Karya Salemba Empat Association of the University of Riau, programs are design in line with the vision of the KSE Scholarship. These programs are beneficial in various fields, including education, social issues, economics, health, the environment, and technology.

Through programs implemented by the Paguyuban Karya Salemba Empat at Riau University, this association has played a role in improving student self-development. These programs train students to become more confident individuals, able to manage their time well, gain as much experience as possible, maintain an optimistic mindset, and develop their interests and talents. Through community development programs and tutoring centers, this scholarship trains students to engage directly with the community, understand social realities, and make real contributions. This fosters the character of students who are sensitive, caring, and positively accepted by the community as agents of change. This shows that the KSE scholarship is able to produce students who excel academically while also being socially responsible and able to build harmonious relationships with their surroundings. Therefore, it can be see that the role of the Karya Salemba Empat Scholarship has been successful in providing educational assistance to students, improving student self-development, and enhancing the social spirit of recipient students at Riau University.

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