ASSESSING MAFINDO'S COMMUNICATION APPROACH IN THE TULAR NALAR PROGRAM: A STUDY OF DIGITAL LITERACY FOR THE ELDERLY IN BANDA ACEH

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Abstract

Internet use in Indonesia continues to increase across all age groups, including the elderly. However, limited digital skills make the elderly particularly vulnerable to hoaxes and digital crimes. In Aceh, this issue is especially concerning, as the province was identified among the top three regions with the highest hoax dissemination in 2019. In response, the Indonesian Anti-Slander Society (Mafindo), through its Tular Nalar program, aims to provide digital literacy education to vulnerable groups, including the elderly. This study explores the communication strategy employed by Mafindo Aceh in implementing the Tular Nalar Lansia program in Aceh. Guided by Charles Berger's Planning Theory and Hafied Cangara's communication strategy model, the study adopts a qualitative case study approach to offer a contextually relevant analysis. Data were gathered through interviews with the Mafindo Aceh Coordinator, two facilitators, and three elderly participants, along with non-participant observations and document analysis. Findings reveal that although the program was implemented in a structured manner, several weaknesses remain, such as the lack of localized research, inadequate participant selection, and limited evaluation mechanisms. The study underscores the need for communication strategies that are inclusive, culturally

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sensitive, and tailored to the elderly's abilities to enhance the impact of digital literacy initiatives.

Keywords*: Communication Strategy; Digital Literacy; Tular Nalar Program; Elderly*

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and internet usage has brought significant changes across various age groups. A survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in early 2024 showed that the number of internet users in Indonesia had reached 221.56 million, or 79.50% of the total population (278.69 million), mostly dominated by the productive age group (APJII, 2024).

Although the elderly group remains the least represented among internet users—comprising only 18.98% for the 44–59 age group, 6.58% for those aged 60–78, and just 0.24% for individuals over 79—they are highly vulnerable to digital crimes such as fraud and the spread of hoaxes. According to KOMINFO, individuals over the age of 45 are the largest contributors to hoax dissemination in Indonesia (Wuriyanti & Febriana, 2022). This finding is supported by Nisa et al. (2023), who noted that the elderly are not only frequent victims of digital crimes but also prone to consuming and spreading false information.

Several factors contribute to this vulnerability. Salsabilla and Zainudin (2021) identified barriers to internet use among the elderly, which include individual factors like a lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes; structural factors such as limited financial resources and access to digital devices; and functional factors like declining health and cognitive ability, which often result in

reliance on others for digital engagement. As a result, elderly users are at risk of becoming both victims and unintentional disseminators of misinformation due to their limited ability to assess the accuracy of online content (Sarbani et al., 2024).

As of early 2024, Indonesia's elderly population reached approximately 32 million people, accounting for 11.75% of the total population, and is projected to grow to 20–25% by 2050 (BPS, 2023). This demographic shift indicates that the number of elderly internet users will inevitably increase. As a result, they will face greater challenges in adapting to digital media, highlighting the urgent need for targeted digital literacy interventions.

Banda Aceh was selected as the case study location due to its distinct sociocultural context and its status as one of the regions most affected by hoax dissemination. A 2018 study by LIPI identified Aceh as one of the top three provinces in Indonesia with the highest rates of hoax circulation (CNN Indonesia, 2019). Despite this, no localized research has been conducted to map the specific patterns of hoax dissemination among the elderly in the region.

Aceh's strong religious identity and the community's adherence to Islamic values significantly shape public perception and communication practices. These characteristics present both a challenge and an opportunity for implementing digital literacy programs like Tular Nalar. In response to these challenges, the Indonesian Anti-Slander Society (MAFINDO) launched the Tular Nalar program in Banda Aceh with a communication approach that was carefully adapted to the region's unique religious and collectivist cultural environment.

The Tular Nalar program in Banda Aceh specifically targets the elderly population, who are among the most vulnerable to misinformation and digital fraud. According to the Mafindo Aceh Coordinator, DGL, the program addresses two participant groups: elderly individuals aged 60 and above, and pre-elderly individuals aged 45–59. The program's content focuses on identifying hoaxes, verifying information, and countering hate speech—delivered through culturally sensitive and age-appropriate methods tailored to the participants' capabilities. This makes Banda Aceh a highly relevant and meaningful site for studying the

effectiveness and adaptability of digital literacy empowerment strategies in a religious and collectivist setting.

Several studies have discussed the challenges of digital literacy faced by the elderly. A study by Nisa et al. (2023) stated that the elderly are often victims of digital crimes and vulnerable to consuming and spreading hoaxes. This study examined digital literacy in terms of digital skills and digital safety. The results showed that while some elderly individuals demonstrated good capabilities, their overall digital skills were still low.

Several studies have examined the challenges of digital literacy among the elderly, highlighting their vulnerability in the digital age. Nisa et al. (2023) found that the elderly are frequently victims of digital crimes and are prone to consuming and spreading hoaxes. Their study, which focused on digital skills and digital safety, revealed that although some elderly individuals demonstrated a basic understanding of digital literacy, their overall digital competencies remained low. In a similar vein, Muljati et al. (2024) explored digital literacy in the context of health and found that elderly individuals with higher levels of digital literacy were better able to access, understand, and use health information, which in turn improved their decision-making and well-being.

Setiansah et al. (2023) focused on the impact of training programs such as the "Elderly Academy," which effectively increased participants' awareness of safe digital practices. Their findings emphasize that structured training can enhance digital resilience and contribute to a better quality of life for the elderly. Meanwhile, Mahdi (2024) underscored the broader role of information technology in promoting independence among elderly individuals. He also identified persistent barriers, including limited access to devices, distrust of technology, and generational gaps in digital use. Mahdi advocated for a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach involving families, educational institutions, and communities to support digital inclusion for the elderly.

Despite these valuable insights, most existing studies tend to focus on digital literacy from functional or cognitive perspectives—such as accessing information, improving decision-making, or reducing vulnerability to fraud—without exploring

how communication strategies are tailored to the sociocultural contexts of elderly users. Furthermore, there is limited discussion on how empowerment programs like Tular Nalar adapt their communication approaches to align with specific local values, particularly in regions with strong religious and collectivist traditions such as Aceh. This gap underscores the need to examine not just what is delivered in digital literacy programs, but how it is communicated, to ensure greater accessibility, relevance, and impact for elderly participants.

This study aims to analyze the communication strategies used by MAFINDO in the implementation of the Tular Nalar Lansia Program in Banda Aceh. The focus of the analysis includes the five stages of communication strategy proposed by Hafied Cangara (2013), which are research, planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting. Hafied Cangara's communication strategy framework was selected because it offers a comprehensive approach to designing, delivering, and evaluating communication programs. Cangara (2013) emphasizes the importance of understanding audience characteristics, communication objectives, message content, and media selection in building effective strategies. In the context of the Tular Nalar Lansia program, this framework is highly relevant, as communication is not merely the transmission of information but also an empowerment process that must be aligned with the participants' specific needs— particularly within Aceh's religious and cultural context. This makes Cangara's framework especially suitable for analyzing socio-educational digital literacy programs targeting vulnerable groups such as the elderly.

Moreover, the selection of this framework is based on its strong contextual relevance to the Indonesian setting. Cangara's model is widely applied in government and community-based programs across the country. This makes it particularly appropriate for examining the *Tular Nalar* program, which operates at the grassroots level in Aceh. The framework's emphasis on localized research, participatory planning, and culturally sensitive implementation aligns closely with the practical challenges faced by program organizers in the region, thus enhancing the relevance and applicability of the analysis.

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Moreover, Cangara's framework complements Charles Berger's Planning Theory, which provides a theoretical lens on how communicators make strategic choices to reduce uncertainty through strategic choices. This theory represents one of the frameworks for message construction that acknowledges how communicators must choose appropriate strategies to achieve effective communication outcomes (Yudinta & Syaifuddin, 2023). While Planning Theory offers a conceptual foundation, Cangara (2013) presents a structured, operational model consisting of five stages: research, planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting. This combination allows for a comprehensive analysis of the communication strategies employed in the program.

The significance of this study lies in its focus on addressing the increasing challenges faced by the elderly population in Indonesia, particularly in adapting to digital media. With the elderly population expected to grow substantially in the coming decades, the need for digital literacy education becomes crucial, especially to help them navigate the digital landscape, filter accurate information, and avoid digital fraud. In regions like Aceh, where the spread of hoaxes has been prevalent, initiatives like the Tular Nalar program are essential in empowering elderly individuals with the skills to critically engage with digital content. By examining the communication strategies employed by Mafindo Aceh, this study aims to contribute to the development of effective approaches to enhance digital literacy and critical thinking, ensuring that elderly individuals are better equipped to handle the challenges of the digital era.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopts a qualitative approach using a case study method. The case study was chosen because the focus is on a single, specific program—the *Tular Nalar Lansia*—with the aim of thoroughly examining how Mafindo implemented its communication strategy in Banda Aceh.

Data collection was conducted through interviews, observations, and documentation. Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The study involved six informants: the Coordinator of Mafindo Aceh, two Tular Nalar

facilitators, and three elderly participants of the Tular Nalar program, as detailed in Table 1. The criteria for elderly informants were prior participation in Tular Nalar activities and being aged 55 or older.

Table 1.
Research Informants

No	Name	Gender	Status
1.	DGL	Female	Coordinator of Mafindo Aceh
2.	IR	Female	Tular Nalar Facilitator
3.	FA	Male	Tular Nalar Facilitator
4.	NH (Elderly) 75	Female	Housewife
5.	AS (Elderly) 60	Female	Teacher
6.	SN (Elderly) 64	Female	Hospital Staff

The data analysis technique used in this study follows Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which includes data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. They stated that qualitative data analysis activities are conducted interactively and continuously until completion (Miles & Huberman, 2014). According to Sugiyono (2010 p. 335), data analysis techniques involve systematically organizing data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process includes categorizing the data, breaking it into units, arranging it into patterns, identifying key elements worthy of study, and drawing conclusions to ensure the data is understandable to both the researcher and others

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Overview of the Implementation of the Tular Nalar Program for the Elderly in Banda Aceh

The Tular Nalar Lansia Program is one of the national programs run by the Indonesian Anti-Slander Society (MAFINDO), targeting vulnerable groups, namely the elderly. The implementation of the program in Banda Aceh involves

several key stages, beginning with the submission of proposals by the regional Mafindo office to the central Mafindo office. Once approved, facilitators attend a national training organized by the central MAFINDO team. This training aims to equip facilitators with an understanding of digital literacy training modules.

The Tular Nalar Lansia Program is then implemented through face-to-face sessions. Generally, these activities begin with an introduction to MAFINDO, the Tular Nalar program, and the facilitators, followed by group discussions and a post-test. After the training is completed, a two-week mentoring program is conducted via WhatsApp groups. This mentoring aims to strengthen participants' understanding of the material and maintain ongoing communication between facilitators and participants.

This study not only observes the course of the program but also analyzes how the communication strategy of the Tular Nalar Lansia Program is implemented. Therefore, the discussion in this chapter is structured based on the main themes that emerged from the research findings. This approach enables a deeper analysis of the implementation of communication strategies in the Tular Nalar Lansia Program in Banda Aceh.

Program Implementation Not Based on Local Research and Mapping

The Tular Nalar program was implemented based on preliminary research, which showed that the elderly group is the most frequent victim of digital fraud. In addition to being victims of hoaxes, the elderly also ranks among the largest disseminators of hoaxes in Indonesia. National research conducted by MAFINDO, supported by the 2018 LIPI Survey, revealed that Aceh is among the regions with the highest rate of hoax dissemination in Indonesia. The widespread dissemination of hoaxes has caused various problems within Acehnese society, peaking during the 2019 general election. This indicates that elderly individuals in Aceh are more vulnerable to hoax exposure than those in other regions. This issue underlies the establishment of Mafindo in Aceh, as revealed in an interview with Mafindo Aceh Coordinator, DGL.

(1) *"The elderly, besides being quick to fall for hoaxes, also tend to spread them — why? Why are the elderly targeted, for example, because they… they don't read everything, they just share it immediately. As for Aceh, the Tular Nalar Program was based on national-level research. But specifically in Aceh, if we look at the index—what's it called—Aceh was among the top three regions with the highest hoax dissemination rates in 2018. Based on LIPI's research, the top three were Aceh, Padang, and West Java. This caused division in society. Eventually, we thought it was necessary to have an organization that focuses on this, because at that time there was no institution in Aceh focused on digital literacy and hoax prevention. Finally, on October 22, 2022, we made the declaration." (DGL, interview, July 16, 2024).*

Although national data provided a strong initial justification for program implementation, no additional or follow-up research was conducted by Mafindo Aceh to understand the specific conditions of the elderly in the region. As noted in an interview with Tular Nalar facilitator IR, the research was only conducted at the national level by Mafindo's central office.

(2) *"We didn't conduct any surveys; the data research was only done at the national level. We used that data as the basis… the foundation for this program." (IR, interview, July 23, 2024).*

The absence of local research reflects a lack of data-driven understanding and proper mapping of community needs, which directly affected the selection of training locations. During the planning phase, these locations were not determined through field surveys, largely due to the limited time available during the open tender period. As a result, site selection was influenced more by existing partnerships and facilitator accessibility than by the actual urgency of hoax dissemination in specific areas. According to the Mafindo Aceh Coordinator

(DGL), this limitation was also caused by logistical challenges, including time constraints and the difficulty of reaching remote locations.

> (3) *"We only used national-level research data because we were limited by the open tender timeline, and it was difficult to conduct surveys due to the distance constraints we faced." (DGL, interview, July 16, 2024).*

According to Berger's theory, initial research is highly relevant to the principle of information gathering, which serves as the foundation for communication planning. Planning is a process that involves a combination of various action plans—a mental representation of the steps an individual will take to achieve specific goals (Littlejohn & Foss, 2014). In this context, the research stage is a critical part of the broader planning process. The planning stage is essential for reducing uncertainty, understanding the target audience, and mapping the specific needs of the elderly.

However, the implementation of the Tular Nalar Program relied heavily on general information derived from national-level data, without conducting in-depth research into the specific needs of the target group—particularly elderly individuals in Aceh. This reliance on generalized data risks reducing the effectiveness of the communication strategies employed. When research is conducted solely at the national level without considering the local context, there is a significant risk that the program may not align with the actual needs and characteristics of the local community. Diastuti and Hendrartini (2020) emphasized that the use of accurate, context-specific data is essential for effectively identifying problem priorities during the planning process. Their study in Tana Tidung Regency showed that the failure to meet Minimum Service Standards in promotive and preventive health programs was due to limited human resources, poor data integration, and a lack of local stakeholder commitment. Similarly, Jamilah and Herdiana (2024) argue that an initial needs analysis is a critical foundation for developing programs that are relevant and effective. It ensures that programs are tailored to the actual conditions of the target group, thereby enhancing quality and impact.

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In the case of the Tular Nalar Program, activity locations were not selected based on field surveys but rather on convenience and facilitator accessibility during the open tender period. This indicates that the choice of activity locations tended to be less aligned with actual local needs. As noted by Praja et al. (2020), well-structured planning can significantly enhance program effectiveness, whereas rushed planning often leads to the neglect of important contextual factors, ultimately resulting in a mismatch between program goals and outcomes.

Program Adjustment Based on the Characteristics of the Elderly and Local Religious Values

Based on research findings, the planning of the Tular Nalar Program was developed following strategic communication steps, identifying the target audience, defining objectives, crafting messages, and selecting communication methods. Mafindo's initial step was to identify the communication targets by recognizing the characteristics, needs, and both physical and psychological conditions of the elderly.

Next, Mafindo defined the communication objective: to educate the elderly about hoaxes and digital crimes. For message development, themes and messages for each activity are formulated by Mafindo's central office, based on current issues and insights from Mafindo volunteers across Indonesia.

In choosing communication media or methods, Mafindo does not utilize technological tools. Instead, it opts for simple communication methods that match the elderly's capabilities and conditions, such as printed materials and basic writing media. Nevertheless, Mafindo still includes content related to technology use. The communication method used by facilitators in Tular Nalar activities involves two-way verbal communication, applying participatory and persuasive techniques through discussions to build rapport with elderly participants.

The method of delivering material is also adjusted to suit the elderly. Facilitators are encouraged to avoid patronizing attitudes and to use interpersonal

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communication as an approach to connect with elderly participants. Facilitators must also avoid using technical terms that are difficult to understand. In addition, they are urged to use local languages and slow down their speech tempo to help elderly participants grasp the information being delivered. This method encourages greater participation from the elderly in discussions.

(4) *"Usually, when we are too young, often we are not listened to by older people. So, our entry point is not to be condescending, and that is important. Another approach we use is IPC, Interpersonal Communication, which is important for older people. We respect them, we listen to them." (DGL, interview, July 16, 2024).*

During the discussion, facilitators provide information on digital crimes, teach ways to avoid hoaxes, and demonstrate how to fact-check simple information using Google or Mafindo's Kalimasada tool. The elderly are also encouraged to seek help from their children, grandchildren, or other family members if they have difficulty accessing Google. Additionally, they receive information on personal data security. Facilitators are advised to use local languages or dialects to build rapport with the elderly.

Figure 1.
Facilitator Giving Instructions for Filling Out the Post-Test

Figure 1 shows the facilitation process carried out by the facilitator during the post-test at the end of the activity. The facilitator provides direct guidance and applies personal communication to ensure that each elderly participant understands the instructions well and can complete the post-test accurately.

To ensure the message is easily understood, facilitators link hoax phenomena to local policies in Aceh. For example, they discuss the Fatwa MPU No. 6 of 2018, which declares hoaxes to be *haram* (forbidden) and harmful to society. Facilitators are expected to connect hoaxes with slander and explain the legal sanctions, noting that spreading false information can lead to criminal charges, even if done unknowingly.

(5) *"We link it to the policies in Aceh, which must be connected to the Islamic sharia policies, with the message we inform, such as the Fatwa MPU No. 6 of 2018, which states that hoaxes are haram. By linking it to religion, it will be easier for the elderly to understand, because it's the same as slander. In addition to religion, we also discuss legal sanctions, that those who spread hoaxes can be subject to criminal penalties." (DGL, interview, July 16, 2024).*

By relating the program material to religious values, facilitators can more easily build emotional closeness and enhance the elderly's understanding of digital literacy. This strategy shows how the program implementation not only adapts to the characteristics of age but also aligns with the local values that live within the Acehnese community.

According to the findings, messages in the Tular Nalar Program were designed based on emerging issues and experiences from other regions. Planning theory suggests that in the planning process, communicators often refer to pre-existing plans (canned plans) stored in long-term memory to make planning more efficient (Morissan, 2015). In the context of message development for the Tular Nalar Program, the experiences of Mafindo volunteers in other parts of Indonesia served as references for creating content relevant across different regions.

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However, messages developed based on phenomena from other regions may not always align with the specific conditions in Aceh, highlighting the need for a deeper analysis of the local context. Yefni's (2018) research found that materials used in empowerment programs require an analysis and an understanding of the local realities within a specific community. Therefore, applying certain examples universally is not effective, as elderly populations in different regions may have varying preferences.

Throughout the program, facilitators apply two-way communication by engaging in discussions about the elderly participants' experiences to create an interesting and inclusive dialogue, allowing all participants to actively engage in the activities. As stated by Sukarni (2018), communication is essential and serves as a means through which humans exchange experiences and ideas.

Mismatch of Target Categories in Program Implementation

The implementation of the Tular Nalar Program showed a mismatch between the targeted participant category and the actual participants in the field. Although the program was specifically designed for elderly participants, not all attendees fell into that category. Field observations and data revealed that some participants came from the productive age group. This indicates that the recruitment of participants was not fully aligned with the program's objectives.

This discrepancy stems from two main factors. First, the selection process by the village authorities was less selective. Although Mafindo provided clear selection guidelines, these were often not followed by local authorities.

Second, the requirement from program organizers that each activity must involve 100 participants posed a challenge in recruitment. To meet this target, village officials included participants outside the elderly category, leading to a diversity of age groups and needs. This leads to a diversity of participants in terms of age and needs, which ultimately affects the focus and effectiveness of the empowerment efforts.

(6) *"Actually, our target is elderly people, all of them are elderly. But*

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sometimes we can't ensure that all are elderly, because when we request, for example, 100 participants, if they don't have enough, they include others until the number reaches 100 participants. So, one or two who are not elderly end up joining." (IR, interview, July 23, 2024).

In the second observation, an elderly participant fell ill during the activity, which disrupted the session as participants' focus was diverted by the incident. For the elderly age group, the availability of health facilities is a crucial factor that must be considered from the planning stage.

As noted in a study by The SMERU Research Institute, one common barrier in social programs is the lack of coordination among stakeholders, particularly regarding accurate targeting and data collection. This mismatch can reduce program effectiveness as it deviates from the originally defined criteria (Hayfaza, 2023).

One key finding was the difference in participation between the pre-elderly and elderly groups. Pre-elderly participants tended to be more active than elderly participants. In an interview, an elderly participant, AS, noted that it was mainly the pre-elderly group that actively engaged in discussions with the facilitators. This indicates a knowledge gap between the two age groups, affecting their level of involvement in discussions.

The pre-elderly group generally used the internet more frequently, while the elderly typically used mobile phones only to communicate with their children or grandchildren; some did not use mobile phones at all. This highlights a clear digital activity gap between the groups. Therefore, training materials and approaches in the Tular Nalar Program need to account for these differences.

In the implementation of the Tular Nalar Program, there is no separation between elderly and non-elderly groups, resulting in participants from various age groups being combined. This integration has the potential to affect the effectiveness of empowerment for the elderly, who have different needs and abilities compared to younger participants. As stated in the findings of Sasfira et al. (2022), to achieve effective communication, different audience groups must be managed differently.

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Moreover, it is important to separate participants based on age and digital media ownership to ensure a smooth empowerment process and avoid disparities among participants. However, such adjustments were not fully implemented during the program, which may have led to difficulties in information absorption for some participants. This aligns with the assertion by Latief & Asniwati (2023), who emphasized that audience segmentation is essential to effective communication and that message delivery should be tailored to the specific characteristics of the target audience.

In the context of the Tular Nalar Program, the distinction between pre-elderly and elderly participants highlights the need to segment training materials to better suit each group's needs and level of technological engagement. For pre-elderly participants, who tend to be more active internet users, the training can focus more on digital literacy. Meanwhile, for the elderly group, who are generally less digitally active, the content should emphasize scams that occur in face-to-face interactions and how to protect personal information in everyday life.

During the program's implementation, an incident in the second observation where an elderly participant fell ill highlighted the importance of anticipating unexpected events during activities. Organizers need to ensure the event can continue smoothly under such circumstances. This aligns with Fauzia et al. (2022), who stress the importance of risk management and emergency preparedness for the elderly, emphasizing the need for appropriate support systems in such situations.

Limitations in Evaluation and Challenges of Digital Assistance for the Elderly

Evaluation is a crucial stage in implementing the Tular Nalar Program, aimed at assessing the program's success in achieving its goals. During the evaluation, Mafindo Aceh or its partners will meet with Mafindo's central office to discuss challenges encountered during implementation, such as the material presented, the extent to which elderly participants understood it, and other related issues.

(7) "After the activity, there is an evaluation. What are the challenges faced by

friends across all regions, what are the challenges in Aceh? How about the material given yesterday, was it difficult? These questions will later be asked by the national-level facilitators.' (DGL, interview, July 16, 2024).

The evaluation for elderly participants is limited to measuring their cognitive understanding through a post-test conducted after the training, with no assessment of the overall activity results. Furthermore, Tular Nalar facilitator IR mentioned that there has been no in-depth evaluation of the participants, as activities are carried out based on a project-based approach. Consequently, comprehensive evaluations cannot be conducted at this time.

Based on the research findings, Mafindo used a post-test to assess the cognitive understanding of elderly participants. However, focusing solely on cognitive aspects does not provide a comprehensive picture of the program's success. Observations during the sessions revealed that the post-test did not always accurately reflect the elderly participants' understanding of the material. Some elderly participants were seen asking those seated nearby for help in answering post-test questions. This indicates that they may not have fully grasped the content, and that their test results may have been influenced by others. In other words, the post-test outcomes may not truly reflect individual comprehension but rather collective input from surrounding participants. As highlighted in the research by Magdalena et al. (2021), the use of pre-test and post-test techniques in learning processes does not always yield positive results. The post-test, conducted at the end of the training by administering questions aligned with the material presented, showed that while some participants improved their knowledge, others were not successful (Magdalena et al., 2021).

Following the in-person activities, additional support was provided through WhatsApp groups to reinforce understanding of the educational material. The mentoring was conducted over approximately two weeks to monitor and remind elderly participants about the digital literacy materials. Participants were divided into several groups, each facilitated by a designated facilitator.

During the mentoring, facilitators provided several case examples to be discussed together in the WhatsApp group. However, not all participants were able to engage in these discussions, as some may not have used digital technology or lacked suitable devices. Facilitators were also unable to determine the extent to which participants understood the materials shared during the mentoring sessions.

Research by Hudri & Nurhayati (2020) also shows that support through digital platforms like WhatsApp can be effective if participants are active and capable of using the technology. However, in the Tular Nalar Program, the low level of active participation suggests a need for a more proactive approach to engaging participants. This could involve closer monitoring of participant activity and offering more intensive, direct support.

Based on an interview with IR, a facilitator of the Tular Nalar program, it was stated that the implementation of the Tular Nalar mentoring has not yet fully established a mechanism for continuous support. However, considering the program's contribution to improving digital literacy among the elderly, it is important to consider implementing ongoing mentoring so that the information provided can be more effective and applicable in daily life. As noted in the research by Sulistiyani & Wulandari (2017), advocacy (group mentoring) aims to maintain consistency and intensity in empowerment efforts to ensure the target group remains motivated and capable of applying the information provided in their lives.

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are carried out based on a project-based approach. Consequently, comprehensive evaluations cannot be conducted at this time.

According to Kirkpatrick's four-level evaluation model (1994, as cited in Ritonga et al., 2019), effective program evaluation should include the following stages: reaction, learning, behavior, and results. The first level measures participants' responses, such as their feelings, engagement, and willingness to learn. The second evaluates the extent to which knowledge is acquired, often supported by mentoring. The third assesses behavioral changes in participants, while the fourth examines the program's broader impact on their daily lives. In the context of the Tular Nalar Program, evaluations should ideally measure not only what participants have learned but also how they apply that knowledge and whether it influences their behavior related to digital literacy. However, based on current practice, Mafindo's evaluation approach is still limited to Level 2—Learning— where participants' cognitive understanding is assessed through a post-test after the training. This method provides only a partial view of learning outcomes and does not evaluate deeper understanding or long-term application. The program has yet to address Level 1 (Reaction), Level 3 (Behavior), and Level 4 (Results), which are essential for measuring engagement, real-world application, and lasting impact. Additionally, Mafindo could involve participants in giving direct feedback during training and follow-up sessions. A more comprehensive and innovative evaluation approach would provide a clearer picture of program effectiveness and enhance its long-term impact in empowering the elderly with sustainable digital literacy skills.

Overall, the lack of evaluation and the weak mentoring system indicate that the program was not comprehensively designed to meet the needs of elderly participants. A more thorough evaluation and an adaptive mentoring strategy that considers participants' capabilities are urgently needed to ensure the program has a more tangible and sustainable impact. In summary, Table 2 outlines the implementation process of the Tular Nalar program.

Table 2.
Overall Assessment of the Tular Nalar Lansia Program

Stage	Obstacle(s)	Solution(s)
Research	No local research conducted for Aceh.	Conduct localized needs assessment to ensure contextual relevance.
Planning and Implementation	- No preparation for unexpected incidents (e.g., illness). - Mixed-age group discussions reduced focus on elderly needs. - WhatsApp mentoring ineffective due to limited device access.	- Include risk management and emergency protocols. - Separate groups based on age or digital ability. - Provide alternative follow-up methods suitable for elderly users.
Evaluation	No evaluation of behavioral change or participant feedback.	Expand evaluation using Kirkpatrick's four-level model.
Reporting	No major obstacles	Include participant impact data for richer reporting.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the communication strategy implemented by Mafindo Aceh remains less than effective. Several aspects need to be considered by Mafindo Aceh in the execution of the Tular Nalar program for the elderly to improve the program's overall quality. The communication strategy involves a planning process aligned with Charles Berger's planning theory and the planning stages proposed by Hafied Cangara (2013), which include research, planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting. The communication strategy applied by Mafindo includes the following:

1. Research was conducted at the national level to observe the spread of hoaxes; however, no local research was carried out specifically for the Aceh region.

2. Planning began with proposal submission, facilitator training, message development, and building collaboration with village authorities.

3. Implementation of the Tular Nalar activities included an opening session (introducing Mafindo, Tular Nalar, and facilitators), group division, discussions, post-test, senior exercise (senam lansia), group photo, closing,

and distribution of souvenirs. Additionally, there was a two-week follow-up via WhatsApp groups.

4. Evaluation consisted of two parts: program evaluation—conducted through meetings with Mafindo's central office to discuss challenges during implementation—and participant evaluation through post-tests.

5. Reporting was carried out by the local organizing team (Mafindo Aceh/partners), who submitted reports to Mafindo's central office. The central office then reported to Google and conveyed the program outcomes to government institutions.

Future research is expected to emphasize on program evaluation activities, especially on how Mafindo conducts evaluations and measures the success of the Tular Nalar Program to assess its impact and overall effectiveness. It is recommended that future studies focus on how Mafindo determines participant age groups within the Tular Nalar Program, particularly the criteria used to distinguish between elderly, pre-elderly, and elderly companions. Further research is also suggested on the effectiveness of message delivery by facilitators during the empowerment sessions specifically, how the facilitators competencies affect the clarity and success of communication with elderly participants.

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