IMPLEMENTATION OF "*EKSTRA-ZS*" DIGITAL EDUCATION TO ADDRESS PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN THE ELDERLY

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

The number of older adults continues to increase, so the Indonesian government mentions the importance of various programs to empower them. Empowerment is not only physical but also psychological. The condition of older people who have begun to experience deterioration, both physical, psychological, and social, can cause psychological problems in the elderly. Therefore, they need to be given education and skills to manage their emotions and overcome difficulties. 'EKSTRA-ZS' Digital Education activities are one way to empower them psychologically. Educational materials containing emotion identification, relaxation, techniques, self-talk techniques, dhikr, and gratitude are given in the form of videos. They at RSGS, as beneficiaries, feel the effect of EKSTRA-ZS digital education because they feel calmer and can manage their emotions after watching these videos.

Introduction

Individuals who experience aging are referred to as elderly, which is a stage of human development that has an age of more than 60 years. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 1998 concerning the Elderly Welfare also states that the elderly are individuals who have reached the age of over 60 years and have limitations that require assistance in efforts to improve their welfare. These efforts include maintaining personal hygiene, consuming balanced nutrition, having an elderly-friendly environment, doing regular physical activity, having a social life, and having the opportunity to work (Kemenkes, n.d; Noeraini, 2024).

The aging process in the elderly can cause physical and mental deterioration that makes the elderly vulnerable to health issues and affects daily life activities (Nurhayati et al., 2023), such as different economic conditions, decreased physical function, reduced social

relationships, and so on (Octarina, 2023). They are also vulnerable to psychological problems due to biological and social changes that impact their mental health, increasing the risk of depression and other psychological disorders (Wulandari, 2024), such as dementia, anxiety, substance abuse, and self-harm behavior (Octarina, 2023; Wulandari, 2024). Therefore, paying attention to their physical and mental health is essential because it will affect their quality of life (Sumarman et al., 2018).

According to BPS (2023), Indonesia has entered an aging population phase since 2021, with 1 in 10 residents being elderly (11.75%), and more women than men (52.82% vs. 47.72%). The government emphasizes elderly empowerment programs to ensure independence, prosperity, and dignity (Government Strengthens the Elderly Empowerment Program, 2021). Globally, the UN launched the *Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021–2030* to improve older people's quality of life, involving governments, organizations, and communities (WHO Team, 2020). A significant challenge for this initiative was the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused over 80% of deaths worldwide, mainly among the elderly. In Indonesia, the elderly had the highest fatality ratio (12%) and a 19.5 times higher risk than other age groups (Miaron, 2023; Margarini, 2021). To address this, programs such as *Gerakan Sayang Lansia* were implemented to increase awareness of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural needs (Kusniasih & Lestari, 2022; Yuniarsih et al., 2021; Zahra, 2021). Other initiatives included yoga training to enhance physical and emotional health (Mulyana et al., 2019) and activities like gymnastics, memory games, and health education to promote active and healthy lifestyles (Indrayogi et al., 2022).

Existing programs mainly address physical needs by increasing endurance, but remain limited in supporting older people's mental health. Depression, often linked to minimal social support, is a common issue, along with loneliness, fear, anxiety, and worry (Dimala, 2023). One initiative, the video *"Senyuman untuk Lansia"*, was created to empower them in overcoming such psychological problems (Khairani et al., 2022).

To address these needs, this study designed activities providing knowledge and skills for emotional management. Educational materials were delivered through videos and guidebooks, enabling them to revisit the content as needed. This digital approach was expected to help them manage emotions, cope with psychological challenges, and improve well-being.

The program targeted elderly residents of the Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD) Rumoh Seujahtra Geunaseh Sayang (RSGS), a social institution under the Aceh Social Service.

RSGS serves elderly individuals facing physical, economic, and social neglect, aiming to support their physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs for a meaningful life. However, many remain less empowered and independent, with a lower quality of life than those living with families (Hasanah et al., 2016). Some feel uncared for and isolated (Selantoro et al., 2018). Nonetheless, religious activities at RSGS, such as congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, and dhikr, foster independence (Selantoro et al., 2018). Therefore, this program aimed to empower elderly residents at RSGS by implementing the EKSTRA-ZS digital education program to enhance emotional management skills and improve psychological well-being.

Method

The activities carried out were in the form of EKSTRA-ZS digital education for the elderly group at RSGS. The flow of the activities process is carried out with structured planning, as seen in Figure 1.
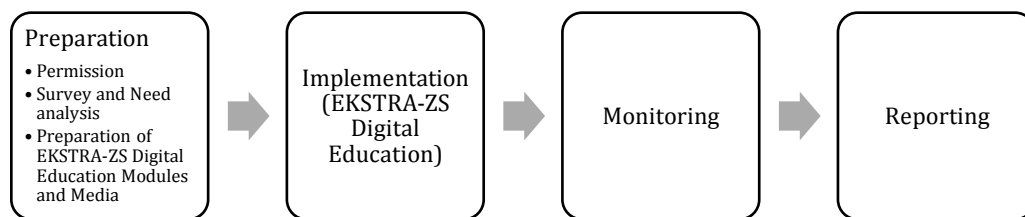

Figure 1. Flow of EKSTRA-ZS Digital Education Activities

The EKSTRA-ZS digital education activities as follows:
1. Preparation stage, activities at this stage go through several steps, namely:
   a) Permission and approval

      The team's initial stage was to take care of permits and obtain approval from the RSGS for the activities to be carried out. The RSGS was well-received at this meeting because of the need to provide education directly to the elderly.
   b) Survey and need analysis

      This survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 15 older adults at RSGS to determine psychological conditions (levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and psychological well-being). An elderly companion assisted with the completion of the questionnaire at RSGS.

c) Analysis of survey results

The team analyzed the results of the survey on their psychological conditions at RSGS (levels and categories of stress, anxiety, depression, and psychological well-being). The survey results were the primary basis for providing in-depth material for older people.

d) Preparation of EKSTRA-ZS Digital Education modules and media

The preparation of the module begins with searching for literature related to managing fear and anxiety in the elderly group. This module is needed to guide intervention media preparation through videos and guidebooks. Videos are considered the right intervention media in providing educational materials to older people. Digital education is made in the form of videos (MP4), which are arranged with simple guides (e-books) so that they can be shared online (via the WhatsApp application) to older people who have smartphones. In addition, the team also prepared videos in the form of CDs and a guidebook (in the form of flip charts), which were given directly to the RSGS so that this educational activity could be carried out periodically. The material provided in the form of videos can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2. EKSTRA-ZS Digital Education Materials

This digital education is named EKSTRA-ZS, which stands for emotion (*emosi*), stress, relaxation (*relaksasi*), dhikr (*zikir)*, and gratitude (*syukur*), which are the materials contained in the educational videos. The digital educational content that has been prepared is tested first before being given to them. At this stage, the team involves five older adults. They will be given a digital educational video and then asked to assess the content, images, sound, and educational messages conveyed in the video content and whether they can be adequately

understood. It is used as input for the team in improving digital education on emotional management before the video is distributed through social media or to village officials to be delivered to the target group. The team also validated the digital educational video with five experts with educational backgrounds or experience related to the development of older people. Four of the experts were academics, and one was a health practitioner. Figure 3 shows the validation process of the material in the guidebook for them.

Figure 3. EKSTRA-ZS Material Validation Activity

2. The implementation stage

At this stage, the team provided a guidebook and sent videos via WhatsApp to those with smartphones. In addition, the videos loaded onto the CD are given to the RSGS, and the guide is printed as flip charts. In the guidebook, several pages contain sheets that can be filled in, such as identifying the emotions felt and forms of Gratitude. The videos prepared for this stage consist of five videos with five materials: emotion identifications, relaxation techniques, self-talk techniques, dhikr, and gratitude. One video was given in one week, so the total time needed is five weeks for five videos. Figure 4 shows the handover of materials to the RSGS and the implementation of activities at the RSGS.

3. The monitoring stage

One month after they had watched the five videos, the team monitored at RSGS. Older people were gathered in the hall to watch the videos that had been given together. Then they were asked about their condition and feelings after participating in the EKSTRA-ZS digital education. At this stage, the team actually intended to ask to fill out a questionnaire as given during the needs survey. However, older people refused because they had difficulty reading and had to fill out the questionnaire again.

Figure 4. Educational Activities at RSGS

4. Reporting

All activity processes carried out need to be documented so that they can become recommendations for similar activities in the future or become material for improvement in perfecting other community empowerment activities, especially regarding emotional management in the elderly.

Results and Discussion

Results

This activity began with an initial survey filled out through an online form (Gform). The survey was completed weekly on 15 elderly people (6 men and 9 women) at RSGS. This survey aims to identify the psychological conditions (psychological well-being, depression, anxiety, and stress) of the elderly. The survey results obtained can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Elderly Psychological Condition (n=15)

Category	Psychological well-being	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	-	2 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (6.7%)
Low	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (6.7%)	11 (73.3%)
Average	7 (46.7%)	11 (73.3%)	9 (60.0%)	1 (6.7%)
High	5 (33.3%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)
Severe	-	1 (6.7%)	3 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	15 (100%)	15 (100%)	15 (100%)	15 (100%)

The survey results obtained strengthen the RSGS's suspicion that many elderly people experience psychological problems. Therefore, the EKSTRA-ZS digital education activity is one of the efforts to empower elderly people at RSGS to deal with their psychological issues.

Discussion

Indonesia is entering an aging population due to increasing life expectancy, which contributes to both physical and psychological health problems among the elderly (Kurniasih,

2023; Setyowati, 2019). Declining physical, social, and psychological functions make the elderly more vulnerable to mental disorders, including stress, anxiety, and depression (Wulandari, 2024). According to WHO, mental health enables individuals to cope with stress, realize their abilities, and contribute to their community. However, research in Banda Aceh found that nearly half of the elderly (49.5%) had low mental health status, indicating the need for greater emotional and social support (Shalafina et al., 2023).

A needs survey at RSGS revealed concerning conditions: 13.3% of the elderly experienced severe stress, 33.3% severe to very severe anxiety, and 13.4% severe depression. These results highlight that the mental health of the elderly in RSGS requires special attention. Early detection of psychological disorders is crucial to prevent more severe problems (Setyowaty, 2019). The findings support the importance of designing specific interventions targeting psychological well-being alongside routine physical health programs.

In practice, RSGS already implements routine health checks, morning gymnastics, and religious recitations, as well as allowing family visits (Afni et al., 2023). Despite these efforts, some elderly remain lonely, especially those without families or with families living far away. Feelings of isolation can even trigger behavioral responses, such as attempts to leave the shelter, reflecting unmet psychological needs. To reduce this burden, RSGS organizes outings, including city tours and visits to places of worship, as alternative strategies to improve the well-being of residents.

The implementation of EKSTRA-ZS digital education added a new dimension to these efforts. The program, which included emotion identification, relaxation techniques, self-talk, dhikr, and gratitude, was well received by both the elderly and their caregivers. Participants reported feeling calmer and more capable of managing anxiety, while caregivers highlighted that the program reduced boredom from routine activities. RSGS management also expressed hope for the sustainability of the program to strengthen elderly independence and welfare. These findings align with previous initiatives such as the *Senyuman untuk Lansia* video, which also showed positive effects in supporting elderly psychological resilience (Khairani et al., 2022).

Survey results after implementation showed that psychological well-being among the elderly at RSGS varied, with 20% in the low category, 46.7% moderate, and 33.3% high. Factors influencing these variations include self-acceptance, positive relationships, life goals, environmental mastery, self-growth, and social support (Salsabila et al., 2023). This indicates that while the EKSTRA-ZS program is beneficial, comprehensive elderly care must continue to

integrate psychological, social, and spiritual aspects. Strengthening these dimensions will help improve the overall quality of life of the elderly in RSGS.

Conclusion

EKSTRA-ZS digital education effectively reduced fear and anxiety in the elderly at RSGS, helping them manage emotions and improve psychological well-being.

Acknowledgments

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