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## Utilization of media in distributing public information in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyse the use of media in disseminating public information in Liang Village, Central Maluku Regency. Public information disclosure is a crucial aspect in realizing transparent, accountable, and participatory governance. The research method employed was a qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques that included interviews, observations, and documentary studies. The results show that the Liang Village government utilizes various communication media, both traditional and digital. Traditional media that are still predominantly used include village announcement boards, mosque and church loudspeakers, and face-to-face meetings. Meanwhile, digital media such as WhatsApp groups and social media are beginning to be used to accelerate the flow of information, especially among the younger generation. However, several obstacles remain, including limited internet access, low digital literacy among some members of the public, and a strong reliance on conventional communication methods. This study recommends optimizing the use of digital media in a more structured manner, enhancing the technological literacy of civil servants, and collaborating with community leaders to expand the reach of public information. Thus, appropriate media utilization can improve the effectiveness of government communication and strengthen public participation in national development.

**Keywords:** Central Maluku, Liang Village, Media utilization, Public information.

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## 1. Introduction

Negeri Liang is a coastal area within Salahutu Sub-district, Central Maluku Regency, Maluku Province. As a strategic provincial area, Negeri Liang holds significant economic, social, cultural, and tourism potential [1]. With its unique geographical location, consisting of coastal settlements and diverse topography, Negeri Liang boasts a vibrant local community with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds [2]. In today's digital era, utilizing media as a means of

disseminating public information is crucial to support information transparency, increase public participation, and strengthen transparency in governance [3].

The dissemination of public information through digital and traditional media in Negeri Liang is expected to accelerate public access to information, support the development of local potential, and encourage collaboration between the government, local communities, and various other stakeholders [4]. The main challenges faced are increasing public understanding of the information disseminated and overcoming technical limitations and information technology facilities so that public information can be accessed widely and comprehensively [5]. Efforts to utilize media in disseminating public information in Negeri Liang aim to ensure that all levels of society can access accurate, transparent, and timely information, in order to support sustainable development and the well-being of the local community [6].

Public information is a right of every citizen, as mandated by Law No. 14 of 2008 concerning public information disclosure. Transparent and accessible access to information is a crucial foundation for achieving good governance [7]. Through effective dissemination of public information, the public can learn about, understand, and participate in every development process and policy implemented by the government [8].

In today's digital era, the media plays a strategic role in accelerating communication between the government and the public [9]. Both traditional and digital media are primary means of conveying information, disseminating policies, and fostering public participation [10]. However, the effectiveness of media utilization is highly dependent on the social, cultural, and infrastructure conditions available in a region. Negeri Liang, located in Central Maluku Regency, is one such region with unique social and cultural dynamics. As a traditional village, public information dissemination mechanisms still rely heavily on traditional media such as bulletin boards, loudspeakers in mosques and churches, and state meetings. However, with technological advancements, people, especially the younger generation, have begun using digital media like WhatsApp and social media to obtain information more quickly and conveniently [11].

This phenomenon indicates a shift in communication patterns that must be properly managed by the government to ensure effective and equitable public information dissemination [12]. On the one hand, traditional media has a broad reach for a population that is not yet fully digitally literate [13]. On the other hand, digital media offers greater speed and interactivity. The challenge is how the government can optimize both types of media to ensure the transparency of public information [14]. Based on this background, this study focuses on analysing media utilization in disseminating public information in Liang Village, Central Maluku. This research is expected to provide an overview of the media used, their effectiveness, and the obstacles faced in disseminating public information. It also offers recommendations for optimizing government communication at the state level.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Development Communication**

Development communication is a rapidly growing branch of the communication discipline in developing countries. It is both a discipline and a communication practice focused on communication activities for planned social change [15]. In other words, development communication is defined as an organized effort to utilize communication processes and media to improve the social and economic conditions of communities, particularly in developing countries [16].

Development communication is the process of conveying material or information aimed at improving conditions [17]. More broadly, development communication encompasses the reciprocal exchange of messages between the government, the community, and other relevant parties, from the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of development [18].

The primary role of development communication is to educate and motivate communities to actively participate in the development process [19]. Development communication is not simply providing formal reports or highlighting program successes. It aims to instil ideas, shape attitudes, and teach skills needed in the development process [20]. Development communication functions not only as a means of disseminating information but also as an instrument of sustainable social change [21].

"Communication" comes from the Latin word "communico," meaning "to share." Communication is understood as the process of conveying ideas, thoughts, and opinions from a communicator to a recipient, taking into account the message, medium, and expected response. Communication is a complex process involving interaction, understanding, and reciprocity that shapes social relationships [19]. In the context of traditional societies like Liang, communication occurs not only through modern media but also through traditional channels, such as customary deliberations at the *baileo*, *pela gandong*, and community meetings that foster social cohesion.

### **2.2. The Role of Media in Development Communication**

The media serves as the primary channel for delivering messages. This emphasizes that development must be understood as a social process that demands broad participation, where communication becomes the "bloodstream" of development. Development messages will not be effective if not delivered through media appropriate to the characteristics of the target community. In practice, oral, written, audio, and audiovisual media are used according to the socio-cultural conditions of the community [22]. Development communication, particularly in developing countries, serves as a vehicle for planned social change [21].

The media plays a strategic role in supporting development communication in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku. As a means of conveying information, the media serves as a bridge between village governments, traditional institutions, and the community. Through traditional media such as face-to-face meetings, announcements at village halls, as well as modern media such as local radio, social media, and WhatsApp groups, the community obtains information about development programs, government policies, and social activities [23].

The primary role of the media is educational, informative, and participatory. The media educates the public by providing an understanding of the importance of development, informing them of the opportunities and challenges facing villages, and encouraging active citizen participation in program planning and implementation [24]. Furthermore, the media also functions as a tool of social control, enabling the public to express their aspirations, criticisms, or suggestions regarding development [25].

Thus, the media in Negeri Liang not only serves as a one-way communication channel from the government to the public but also fosters reciprocal communication that strengthens community involvement in development. An effective media role will encourage transparency, accountability, and active participation, ultimately improving the quality of village development.

The media plays a crucial role in supporting development communication processes, including in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku. As a means of disseminating information, the media serves as a bridge between the government and the community in communicating development programs, public policies, and social activities [26]. Information conveyed through the media helps the public understand the direction of development and the roles they can play [27].

In Liang Village, the media used is not limited to modern forms such as local radio, social media, and digital chat groups, but also relies on traditional media such as announcements at village halls, traditional pulpits, and face-to-face meetings [28]. These media play a role in socializing development programs, educating the public about the benefits of development, and fostering active citizen participation. Thus, the media functions not only as an information tool but also as a means of education and participation [29].

Furthermore, the media serves as a dialogue space that enables two-way communication between the government and the public [30]. Through the media, citizens can express their aspirations, criticisms, and suggestions regarding development progress, thereby creating transparency and accountability [31]. The effective role of the media can ultimately strengthen public awareness, increase involvement in development, and encourage more inclusive and sustainable development in Negeri Liang.

### *2.3. Challenges in the Digital Era*

The digital era brings many opportunities, but also presents various challenges for the people of Negeri Liang, Central Maluku. One major challenge is limited technological infrastructure, such as unequal internet access and limited access to digital devices [32]. This situation makes it difficult for some people to utilize digital technology in their daily activities, whether for education, economics, or public services [33].

Furthermore, digital literacy remains a challenge [34]. Some residents, especially the elderly, are not yet accustomed to using digital media to seek information, conduct transactions, or participate in development communication [35]. This lack of understanding can create a digital divide between generations and social groups, resulting in only a small percentage of the population truly benefiting from technological developments.

Another challenge is the negative impact of digital information flows, such as the spread of hoaxes, content that is inconsistent with local culture, and the potential decline in traditional social interactions. This has the potential to impact social cohesion and the cultural values of Negeri Liang. A strategy is needed to strengthen digital literacy, equalize access to technology, and manage information wisely so that the people of Negeri Liang can face the digital era more adaptively and productively [36].

As an archipelagic region, Negeri Liang faces limited access to a stable internet network. Telecommunications infrastructure is not evenly distributed, so some people still struggle to access digital services [37]. This has resulted in slow adoption of technology in social, economic, and governmental life [38]. Although digital devices such as smartphones are becoming commonplace, some people lack the skills to utilize them productively. Low digital literacy leads citizens to use social media primarily for entertainment, rather than for economic, educational, or public service support [39].

There is a significant difference in technology use between younger and older generations. Younger generations adapt relatively quickly, while older generations remain more comfortable with traditional communication patterns [40]. This gap has the potential to create an imbalance in participation in digital-based development programs. The digital era brings a global flow of information that can erode local cultural values [41]. The younger generation is increasingly exposed to foreign culture through the internet, which, if not handled wisely, could weaken traditions such as *pela gandong* (a traditional gathering), deliberations in the *baileo* (a community meeting), and the practice of cooperation (*gotong royong*), which are characteristic of Negeri Liang.

Negeri Liang's economic potential, such as fisheries, agriculture, and marine tourism, could potentially be promoted through digital platforms (2020). However, limited digital marketing skills, access to online markets, and business management capabilities remain significant challenges [42]. A lack of understanding of cybersecurity makes the public vulnerable to hoaxes, online fraud, and misuse of personal data. Furthermore, there is still minimal awareness of ethical communication in the digital space [43]. These challenges highlight the need for a development communication strategy that focuses not only on providing infrastructure but also on increasing the community's digital literacy capacity, empowering the technology-based economy, and strengthening local cultural identity to maintain relevance in the digital age [44].

## **3. Methodology**

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because it focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of media utilization in disseminating public information in Negeri Liang, as well as the effectiveness, constraints, and strategies implemented by the village government in communicating with the

public [45]. The research was conducted in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku Regency. This location was chosen because it is one of the traditional villages that still actively combines the use of traditional and digital media in disseminating public information [46].

The research subjects were the Negeri Liang government, the primary communicator in disseminating public information. Research informants were determined using a purposive sampling technique, selecting informants based on their role and relevance to the research problem [17]. Informants in this study included: (1) the Head of the Liang Village Government (King of the Village); (2) the Secretary of the Village and government staff; (3) community and religious leaders; and (4) representatives of youth and the general public as recipients of information.

Data was collected using several techniques, namely: (1) In-depth interviews with government officials, community leaders, and residents. (2) Direct observation, namely observing how information is disseminated via bulletin boards, loudspeakers, social media, and face-to-face forums. (3) Documentation studies, in the form of announcement archives, government activity documents, and official government social media posts.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively and descriptively with the following stages: (1) Data reduction by sorting and simplifying data according to the research focus; (2) Data presentation by displaying data in narrative form, tables, or charts; and (3) Drawing conclusions and verification to formulate research findings according to the problem formulation.

To ensure data validity, this study used triangulation techniques, including source triangulation (comparing information from various informants), technical triangulation (comparing interview results, observations, and documentation), and time triangulation (collecting data at different times to obtain consistent information).

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1. Result

Media utilization in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku, is carried out in various forms adapted to the social conditions of the community. Traditional media such as announcements at village halls, mosque loudspeakers, and face-to-face meetings remain the primary means of conveying information about development projects, social activities, and official government announcements. These media forms are considered effective because they directly reach a wide audience, especially those unfamiliar with digital technology.

Furthermore, modern media are also beginning to be utilized, such as local radio, social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram), and online chat groups. These digital media are used to expedite the dissemination of information regarding government programs, community activities, and emergency information. For example, announcements of community meetings, schedules of traditional activities, and information regarding social assistance can be quickly disseminated through WhatsApp groups, which are widely subscribed to by the community.

Media utilization in Negeri Liang also serves as a means of education, participation, and social control. Media is used to raise awareness of the importance of development, encourage active community participation, and open up a two-way dialogue between the government and citizens. By combining traditional and modern media, development communication in Negeri Liang can reach a wider segment of society, despite still facing challenges such as limited internet access and digital literacy.

The following is the percentage of forms of media utilization in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku Regency, as shown in Table 1:

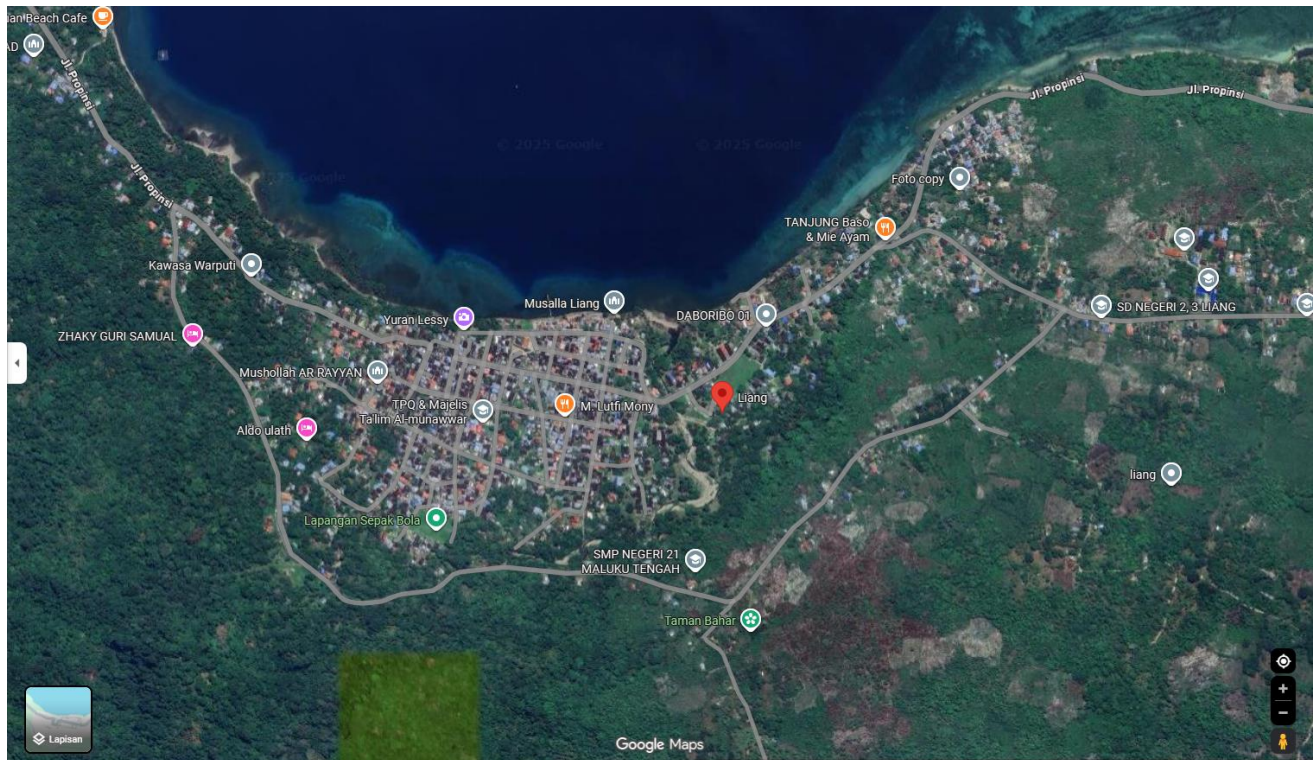
**Table 1.**  
Percentage of forms of media utilization in Negeri Liang

Media	Form	Percentage	Utilization
Traditional media	Village hall announcements, mosque loudspeakers, face-to-face meetings, traditional pulpits.	40%	It is still dominant because it is easily accessible, simple, and can reach the wider community, especially the elderly group.
Digital media	WhatsApp groups, Facebook, Instagram, and radio streaming.	35%	Starting to develop, especially among the younger generation, village officials, and small business actors.
Local/conventional radio	Used for general information, entertainment, and socialization of government policies.	15%	Used for general information, entertainment, and socialization of local government policies.
Print media	Flyers, bulletin boards, banners/billboards.	10%	It functions to complement the delivery of information visually, although its use is limited to formal announcements.

The research results show that the Negeri Liang government uses two main types of media to disseminate public information: traditional media and digital media. The most frequently used traditional media are bulletin boards in state offices, mosque/church loudspeakers, and state meetings. These media remain effective in reaching older adults and those who are less active in using digital technology. The digital media used include the official government WhatsApp group, social media (Facebook and Instagram), and information dissemination via local radio broadcasts. These media are faster, more practical, and more widely accessed by young people and those with smartphones.

The Negeri Liang government utilizes various communication media to carry out its duties and disseminate information to its citizens. Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are actively used for live broadcasts and the dissemination of information related to government and community activities. For example, the @liangmelasdatas account posts departures and other important events. These social media platforms also serve as communication channels between the public and government officials, even reaching the President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Local mass media is used as a means of external government communication in development projects, such as road infrastructure development in the Liang Melas Datas region, which also involves online media and television. Direct meetings serve as a means of face-to-face communication between the government and the community to convey and receive information and aspirations directly. Village digitalization, as a modernization step, involves the implementation of digital villages that integrate information technology into public services and the development of the digital economy. This program is introduced to the community with the active involvement of the village government and the community. Therefore, the Liang State Government combines traditional media, direct meetings, with social media, mass media, and digitalization for effective communication with its citizens and the wider government.



**Figure 1.**  
Map of Negeri Liang, 2025.

Negeri Liang noticeboards and meeting boards are used to convey formal information such as village deliberation results, traditional activity schedules, and official announcements from the local government. Mosque/church loudspeakers are used to announce social activities, urgent meetings, and emergency information. Village officials use WhatsApp groups to quickly disseminate information such as vaccination schedules, social assistance, and disaster information. Social media is used to disseminate village government activities, document traditional events, and promote development programs.

The effectiveness of media in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku, plays a crucial role in tourism development and disseminating information to the public and tourists. Social media and other forms of media are used as promotional tools to increase awareness and increase visits to tourist areas such as Liang Beach, a key destination in the region. However, the application of media and communication concepts in tourism development in Negeri Liang is not yet fully optimized and requires close collaboration between the government, business actors, the community, academics, and the media to create broader economic, social, and cultural impacts.

Media, including social media, serve as a tool to promote and publicize Negeri Liang's tourism potential. This helps attract more tourists and provides relevant information about local facilities and cultural riches. Media is part of the pent helix model, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration between various stakeholders in promoting the tourism sector in this region.

Although the media has been used as a communication and promotional tool, its effectiveness is still limited by the lack of optimization in the implementation of an integrated communication strategy. A joint commitment and strengthening of the media's role in providing education, information, and promotion related to tourism are needed to maximize economic and social benefits for the local community.

Negeri Liang, located in Salahutu Sub-district, Central Maluku, boasts tourism potential supported by facilities such as accommodations, restaurants, and coastal tourism infrastructure. Adequate facilities and infrastructure are supported by the media's role in disseminating information, helping to enhance tourist appeal while ensuring visitor safety and comfort. With



a series of development strategies that actively involve the media and synergy between the community, government, and business actors, media effectiveness in Negeri Liang can be maximized in supporting tourism growth and the well-being of the local community.

Traditional media remains effective in reaching communities with limited digital literacy. Digital media is more efficient in terms of speed and interactivity, but is hampered by unstable internet access. A combination of traditional and digital media has proven more optimal in reaching all levels of society, reducing the risk of residents being left without information. Limited internet access in some areas of Negeri Liang hinders access to digital information. Low digital literacy among some communities, particularly the elderly. Limited human resources among civil servants in managing social media consistently. Budgetary constraints prevent all communication media from being fully developed.

The Liang Government's strategy involves optimizing the role of traditional leaders, religious figures, and youth as information agents. It is combining traditional and digital media to ensure information reaches all groups. It is also promoting simple digital literacy skills to the public to facilitate access to information through mobile devices. It is also collaborating with local media outlets (radio and regional news portals) to expand the reach of information.

#### *4.2. Discussion*

The use of media to disseminate public information in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku, demonstrates a dynamic between traditional and digital media. This aligns with development communication theory, where communication serves as a means of conveying information, building public participation, and strengthening the relationship between government and citizens.

Research shows that the Negeri Liang Government cannot rely solely on a single medium. Traditional media such as bulletin boards, mosque/church loudspeakers, and village meetings remain the primary choice because they are considered more familiar and can reach communities less familiar with technology [47]. Meanwhile, digital media such as WhatsApp and social media are used to expedite information distribution, especially among young people. This phenomenon reinforces the view that in rural communities, hybrid communication (a combination of traditional and digital) is an effective strategy for ensuring equitable information distribution.

Media functions not only as a conveyor of information but also as a means of public participation. Through WhatsApp groups and social media, the public can provide responses, suggestions, and even criticism of village government policies. Conversely, through face-to-face forums such as village meetings, communities with less digital literacy can still express their aspirations. This supports the principle of two-way communication in development communication theory, where the government is not only a transmitter of information but also a listener to citizen input.

The main obstacles identified were limited internet access, low digital literacy, and limited human resources in managing digital media. These conditions indicate that the process of digitizing public information is not yet fully optimized. From a development communication perspective, these technical and cultural barriers must be addressed by increasing the capacity of both communities and local governments.

The government's efforts to optimize the role of traditional, religious, and youth leaders as information agents are a concrete example of the application of a participatory approach in development communication. This strategy is effective because community leaders have the legitimacy and trust of the community. Furthermore, the combination of traditional and digital media is a practical solution for reaching all levels of society without discrimination in access. Effective media utilization contributes to transparency, information openness, and increased public participation in development [48]. With fast and equitable access to information, the public more easily understands government programs, thereby increasing their sense of belonging to development in Negeri Liang.

The use of media to disseminate public information in Liang Village serves not only as a means of communication but also as an instrument of development. Despite challenges, the combination of traditional and digital media, along with a participatory approach, has increased the effectiveness of government communication and strengthened public involvement in the village's development. Communities in Central Maluku still use traditional media such as the tifa (a traditional drum), leaves, and marinyo (a traditional musical instrument) as a means of conveying and disseminating messages in their daily lives, particularly regarding customary and cultural matters. This traditional media is highly effective because it is close to the community and possesses strong cultural values, enabling it to attract attention and engage residents in disseminating important information. A concrete example is the use of the tifa (traditional musical instrument) as a communication tool to disseminate traditional information by the King and the Traditional Council, as well as invitations to tahlil (religious gatherings) delivered verbally and face-to-face without the need for written invitations.

In the digital era, the Central Maluku Regency communication and informatics office have undertaken digital transformation efforts to improve the quality of public services and the effectiveness of information dissemination. The communication media used include the official website, social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, as well as an integrated complaints system that facilitates the public's access to services and information quickly and in real time. A Command Centre facility that integrates various monitoring applications also facilitates more efficient decision-making in local government.

Social media has become a primary agent for disseminating knowledge and information in Maluku, including Central Maluku.

Social media enables two-way communication between information providers and the public, allowing the public to provide feedback and interact directly. The use of social media has also expanded into various fields, such as archaeology and culture, which previously relied solely on conventional approaches such as exhibitions and scientific journal

publications. With social media, knowledge and information are more easily accessible and widely disseminated to the public.

Despite the availability of media and technology facilities, there remains a challenge in the form of limited public understanding regarding the use of public information in Central Maluku. This is a major challenge in the digital era that must be addressed to optimize information dissemination and benefit the community. Therefore, the use of media in disseminating public information in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku, involves a synergy between traditional media steeped in local cultural values and modern digital media that provide easy access to widespread, real-time information. Increased public understanding and adaptation to technology are needed to maximize the benefits of information dissemination.

## 5. Conclusion

The use of media to disseminate public information in Negeri Village, Central Maluku, demonstrates that social and digital media have become highly effective tools for disseminating information to the wider community and mobilizing public participation. Social media plays a crucial role not only as a platform for information exchange but also as a primary agent for publicizing local knowledge and local government activities. Collaboration with social media communities with extensive networks significantly increases the effectiveness of information dissemination. However, a persistent challenge is the limited understanding and utilization of public information by some members of the public. Therefore, capacity-building efforts and broader involvement of various community elements are needed to maximize the benefits of media in disseminating public information in this region. Furthermore, the use of social media is also expected to foster continued innovation and public collaboration to improve the quality of public services in Central Maluku.

Based on research on the use of media to disseminate public information in Negeri Liang, Central Maluku, it can be concluded that the Negeri Liang Government still relies on traditional media such as bulletin boards, loudspeakers at places of worship, and regional meetings to reach the public directly. However, digital media such as WhatsApp and social media are also being utilized, particularly to accelerate the dissemination of information to young people.

Information disseminated through various media not only provides the public with information about government programs and policies but also provides a platform for them to provide input, criticism, and support. The main obstacles to media utilization are limited internet access, low digital literacy among some members of the public, and the limited capacity of civil servants to manage digital media. These constraints mean that the effectiveness of information dissemination still needs to be improved. The involvement of traditional leaders, religious leaders, youth, and state officials as information disseminators significantly helps bridge communication between the government and the public, enabling messages to be more quickly received and understood.

Effective dissemination of public information, increased transparency and openness of information, strengthen public ownership of development programs, and encourage the achievement of development goals in Negeri Liang. In other words, development communication through media in Liang Village has been successful, although it still faces several technical and cultural challenges. Optimizing the use of media, both traditional and digital, is a crucial step towards realizing transparent, participatory, and inclusive governance.

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