

# Are Travellers Interested in Tourism Information Provided By Local Government Website?

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**Abstract.** Nowadays, Internet becomes the prior source of information, including tourism information. Therefore, the government can utilize it to promoting their tourism potential. In West Java, Tasikmalaya regency is an area which has various tourism potentials. To promote local tourism, an official website, [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id), had been set up. This research investigates travellers' attitude toward promotion activities perpetuated by Tasikmalaya Government through [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id). To answer research problems, the data being obtained and analyzed using descriptive method. The components of attitude being examined are cognitive, affective, and conative aspect. Result shows that travellers' cognitive and affective attitudes is positive. Although they found several shortcomings in this website, they admitted that Tasikmalaya government has initiated a good step in promoting tourism. Respondents stated that they will advise others who need official information to access this website.

*Keywords:* tourism, government, website, Tasikmalaya Regency

## Introduction

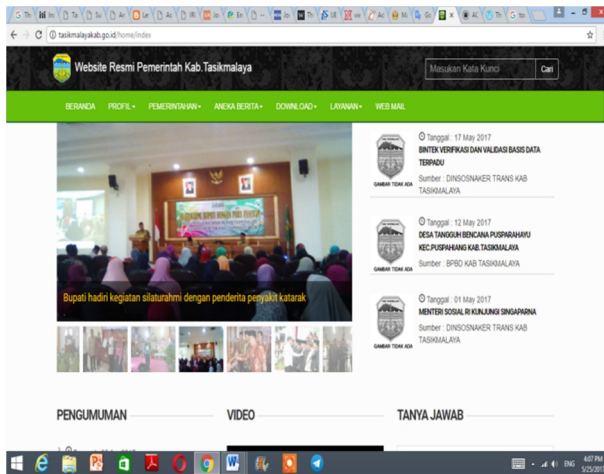
Speaking about Tasikmalaya, people usually associate the area located in the southeast of West Java province with embroidery crafties. Tasikmalaya embroidery is famous. Not only in West Java, Tasikmalaya embroidery has also gained popularity beyond Java Island. But, embroidery is just one of many tourism object treasured by Tasikmalaya. Apparently not many people know that Tasikmalaya has other tourism potential as interesting as embroidery central. In this region, some tourism attractions are actually very potential if managed properly. Among them are Galunggung Mountain, Kampung Naga, Pamijahan, and South Beach.

Tasikmalaya Local Government seemed very aware that in order to develop their tourism potential, promoting it is very

necessary. To gain the goal of promotion, official website, [www.tasikmalayakab.go id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) became the main strategy

The website [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) is managed by Dinas Komunikasi dan Informatika Tasikmalaya (the Communication and Information Office), while the tourism information is provided by Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan (Government Tourism and Culture Office). This website is a means of communication and information from the local government aimed to all stakeholders who need information about Tasikmalaya. In fact, the target of this socialization is also not only citizens of Indonesia, but also foreign tourists who may be interested in visiting Tasikmalaya. This can be seen from the menu options written in English provided by the site manager. Various menus and information are provided on this website, ie

homepage, profile, government, work program, regional potential, public information, interaction, news, and help.



Picture 1. Tasikmalaya Official Website: the Interface



Picture 2. Tasikmalaya Official Tourism Information

One of the menus in this website which is very important for developing the region's tourism is "Tourism Information". This menu delivers information about various tourism potentials existed in Tasikmalaya.

The question is to what extent this online media be able to promoting their tourism potential? In order to answer the questions, the researchers took students of Tasikmalaya as respondents. As students, they know potential of their region so that they can appreciate and deliver judgments towards the local government website in promoting the local tourism.

By measuring the attitudes of students from tasikmalaya about this topic, it is expected a valuable input will be affected

Tasikmalaya Government to command the next step in disseminating the potential of their area. The research questions is formulated as follows: how are the cognitive, affective, and conative (behavioral) attitudes of Tasikmalaya regarding tourism promotion of Tasikmalaya through [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id)?

## Defining Attitude

Attitude is a very important concept in human life. Attitudes can be defined as the tendency to act, to perceive, to think, and to feel toward an objects, ideas, situations, or values. Attitude is not behavior, but it is a tendency to behave in certain ways toward the object of attitude. Objects of attitude may be things, people, places, ideas or situations, or groups. So the word "attitude" can not stand alone. Attitudes must be followed by the word "against", or "on" attitude objects. When someone says "my attitude is positive," we should question "attitude toward what or who?" (Rahmat, 2001: 40).

In addition, attitude has a driving force or motivation. Attitude is not just a recording of the past, but it also determines whether one should be pro or contra to something; determine what is liked, expected, and desired; and set aside what is not desirable, what to avoid (Sherif & Sherif in Rahmat, 2001: 40). As object of this study, if a person's attitude is positive to the works of online media in promoting tourism, he will express his agreement towards the continuation of this program, even encourage others to access the media to get information about Tasikmalaya tourism destination.

Attitude persists relatively. Studies show that a group of political attitudes is tend to be maintained and do rarely change. In addition, attitudes contain evaluative aspect: they contain either pleasant or unpleasant value. In addition, attitudes arise from experience; not brought from birth, but resulted of learning. Therefore, attitude can affirm or change (Rahmat, 2001: 40).

According to Rahmat, attitude consists of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. The cognitive component is how to believe in attitude object, affective component is how to feel toward attitude object, while behavioral component consist of habit and will (2001: 40).

Attitudes usually begin with the introduction of a person to something (objects, objects, people information and so on). If the objects are interesting and contain certain interests, attitudes will followed by action. Herein lays the emotional attachment of the individual to the object he reacts. Someone will favor a positive attitude toward something attractive to him and might be of his/her interest. It will be followed continuously or be appreciated in accordance with the concept of self and its needs.

It can also be said that components of action are included all behavioral associated with attitudes. If an individual has a positive attitude toward a particular object, he or she build a tendency to help or support the object. Conversely, if he behaves negatively, he will tend to harm or destroy the object (Crutchfield & Ballachey, 1982).

### **Tourism Information Seeking**

New Information Communication Technologies (ICT) are dramatically transforming spatial relationship within all Industries, at every scale, from local to global, including tourism industry (Peace et.al, 2007: ix). Tourism industry is growing fast because of the population who regularly surf the internet are also increasing rapidly day by day. Search engines, which direct people to the website, have become the most important tool for people seeking tourism information. Internet become the most favorite tools because it is relatively low cost, easy, and can be accessed nonstop 24 hour (Ho et.al., 2012: 1468).

Development of search engines, bigger capacity and increasing speed of networks have influenced the number of travellers around the world. Those traveler use technologies for planning and experiencing their travels (Buhalis et.al, 2008 : 609). To fulfill the traveller's information need, website must consider that the contemporary consumer is far less willing to wait or put up with delays, to the point where patience is a disappearing virtue. The key to success lies in the quick identification of consumer needs and in reaching potential clients with comprehensive, personalized and up-to-date products and services that satisfy those needs. Gradually new, experienced, sophisticated, and demanding travellers require interacting with suppliers to satisfy

their own specific needs and wishes. Living in a hectic life, consumers in the developed world often have short periods to relax their batteries and to engage in their favorite activities (Buhalis et.al, 2008: 611).

### **Methodology**

The method used in this research is descriptive method. This method aims to describe the data, which then performed an analysis of the collected and compiled data. Twenty students became respondents in this study. They are students of communication Management Departement at Faculty of Communication Science of Padjadjaran University. Being Tasikmalaya's native residence, they've already accessed [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id). Eighteen respondents are aged 17 to 20 years old, while two respondents aged 20 years old. This range of age seemed appropriate for those who considered mature enough to give any comments and evaluations toward object of study. Another consideration that matter for choosing respondents is the fact that they've already reached certain economic convenience that enable them to access the internet. This 'economic convenience' is implied on amount of allowance they receive each month. Most respondents, more than sixty percent, were enjoying monthly allowance of between Rp 500,000 to Rp 1,000,000. The amount of allowance owned by this student affects the level of ease of students in accessing the internet. The greater the amount of student's allowance, the easier the possibility of students to be able to access the internet. With that amount of allowance, they can buy internet access services from local phone service providers such as Tri, Telkomsel, XL, and Indosat. They do not just rely on campus or cafe wifi facilities.

Most of the respondents (60%) able to use devices for accessing the internet. On campus, they use Wifi, in dormitory or at home, their internet connection are provided by mobile gadget or smartphone. Now that these local operators are competing each other to offer unlimited package or unlimited use of capacity and time, the price is competitively cheap.

Facilitate by the ease of accessing the Internet, this data shows that students found no barrier or other significant obstacles to

open the website being researched ([www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id)).

### Reasons in Accessing Website

There are various reasons underlying student's intention in opening the official website of Tasikmalaya government. Some students said that they seek materials for lecture task (30%), another said that they're looking for specific information of Tasikmalaya regency especially information about recreation places (20%). There are reasons concerning updating news about Tasikmalaya Regency (10%). Meanwhile, the remaining of 40% chose other reasons, among which were checking their status as voters for the elections.

The area's most sought-after information is related to coastal tourism found in the district. This website provide information of tourist areas that can be visited in Tasikmalaya, including Cipatujah Beach. Many students need this information either for their personal use in finding a place of tourism in West Java for college holiday, or for the purposes of student organizations which they belong. Going out of town is a typical need of student organizations to execute some their special occasions. A tourism destination became their choice for activities such as procession events to celebrate new members, and so on.

### The Completeness of Tourism Information

Almost half of respondents (45%) argue that [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) is complete in providing information, 30% argue quite complete, 20% argue incomplete, and 10% argue very complete. [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) indeed provides information about various aspects of life in Tasikmalaya Region. According to the respondents, all menu provided by the website is could be accessed. They found no page with the status of underconstruction. The the web management is maintained professionally by Tasikmalaya Tourism and Culture Office.

Half of the students (50%) thought that [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) could fulfill the needs for information about the Tasikmalaya Region, 25% considered enough to fulfill, only 10% considered the website is

less able to met their needs. These results are positively correlated with previous cognitive attitude components such as perceptions about the completeness of information available on the website. Based on respondents' answers to these questions, a positive cognitive attitude toward [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) could be concluded.

### Website Attractiveness

The attitude of respondents to the completeness and ability of the website to provide information was contrasting with their attitude towards visual appearance of the website. Data collected showed that only 5% respondents felt that the page views [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) interesting, 60% was less interesting, and 10% said that the website wasn't interesting.

Although the website has successfully provided information needed by users, but most of the students argued that the visual appearance of website page is less interesting. Indeed, the page design is somewhat stiff because it uses a shape or shaped box that has a sharp angle. In addition, the selected color is also a dark green color. For the respondents of this study, the form was unattractive, because they liked the sheer colors or "pastel" and non-rigid forms, such as curves and dull angles. Student disagreement is also obvious because the pages is just too small for a lot of information. Various menus are displayed in a "scroll bar" mode. It would be better if the menu is displayed directly featuring an attractive icons or animations according to the menu.

Considering the affective dimension, 50% said that they like the website. 5% choose 'very', 40% is 'quite like'. Only 5% is feel 'less like'. These results are again inconsistent compared with results of previous data about the unattractive visual appearance of the website. This shows that the need of intormation became the main driving factor of respondents in accessing this website. Therefore, it sufficient enough to conclude that visuals appearance of the website hasn't affected much the respondents so far.

The website also conducts polling about their appearance. Their polling result is resembling this research result. There are 43

respondents said very good, 39 said good, and 99 said average.

**Behavioral tendency**

Components of action tendency as part of an attitude include all behavioral traits associated with attitudes. If an individual has a positive attitude toward a particular object, he or she will have a tendency to help or reward or support the object. If he behaves negatively, he will tend to harm or punish or destroy the object.

Aspects of trends in action in this study can be seen by looking at the desire of respondents to reaccess [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id), in the condition how they will access, and how the suggestions of respondents to others in the use of this website. Study found that 20% of respondents are eager to access again, 45% want, 35% quite want, and nobody say they don't want to reaccess this website. This is reasonable, because after knowing and reading this web page, almost half respondents want to reaccess. This can be occurred because their needs for information about Tasikmalaya Regency can be fulfilled by this website. This is consistent with the fact that almost all (90%) of respondents stated that access to [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) was the main choice or reference for getting information about Tasikmalaya District, and only 2 people (10%) stated this website as a side option. In fact, none of them states make this website as a side reference other than print literature.

This condition occurs because now people tend to choose online media as an early reference. Even if you want to find the right print or informant literature, they look for the title and name on the internet, then look for the print version or meet the person directly. This happens along with the more complete search engine services on the Internet such as google, yahoo search, and so forth. These search engines can quickly and comprehensively search for the things we want to know.

The choice of people to access [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) as the first choice to find various information about tasikmalaya is possible because search engines will bring up the official site of an institution in number 1 and initial numbers. Therefore, all (100%) of respondents will Advise others who need

formal information about Tasikmalaya to open the official site of this Tasikmalaya Local Government. But all of them will advice people who need tourism information for their travelling plan to search it in tourist website or experienced traveler's blog.

In this research, on the questionnaire the researcher gave an open question about the respondent's suggestion to this local government website [tasikmalaya](http://tasikmalaya.go.id). Advising is one aspect that can show a tendency to act. A person's suggestion shows that he or she has an interest in the attitude object. In this case is to make the attitude object get better. In this study, the question of advice is an open question and not a choice question, so respondents should write down their suggestions and feedback on the menu that needs to be optimized at [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id).

As a result, 25% said the menu that needs to be optimized is local potency menu, 40% said photo gallery menu should be optimized, 25% suggest the complaint menu that should be optimized, and 10% recommend optimizing the regional news menu. None of the respondents did not give suggestions. The results of this study are in line with the results of the poll conducted in [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) itself is as follows:

**Table 1. Menu which Need to be Optimized**

No.	Menu	F	%
1	Potensi Daerah	104	32,9%
2	Galeri Foto	96	30,4%
3	Berita Daerah	75	23,7%
4	Media Interaktif	41	13%
<b>Total</b>		20	100%

**Conclusions**

Respondents Attitudes towards Local Potential Socialization as conducted by Tasikmalaya Regency Government through [www.tasikmalayakab.go.id](http://www.tasikmalayakab.go.id) indeed shows a positive trend, but it is not yet a certainty that the potential of this area will be able to attract travelers to visiting Tasikmalaya tourism destination. Therefore, this research can be used as a reference base for the Government of Tasikmalaya Regency to

optimize this online media in disseminating the tourism potential of the area or even to persuade travelers to visit various potential areas. This can be done by enriching the features and develop the design and promotion on the official site of this district of tasikmalaya Regency.

In addition, this study can also be used as a basis for further research that will examine more in depth about the optimization of online media use to improve the various joints of life in Tasikmalaya Regency.

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