

The Indonesia's Public's Level of Knowledge Regarding Messages About the Labuan Bajo Super Priority Tourism Destination

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Abstract

Tourism destination messages have an important role in introducing the identity, potential and values of a tourist location to the public. In the process, the message can be conveyed through various media, and it is necessary to see the level of public knowledge of the message. Labuan Bajo as one of the Super Priority Tourism Destinations (DPSP) designated by the government has a tourism message that focuses on marine tourism, conservation and culture. This research was conducted to determine the level of public knowledge of these three messages using the level of knowledge theory which is divided into 3 types, namely, Declarative knowledge, Procedural Knowledge, and Self-Regulatory Knowledge. This research uses a descriptive quantitative approach and an online survey method which was distributed to 400 respondents (Indonesian people) who had never visited Labuan Bajo. The results show that Indonesian people have the highest level of knowledge regarding the Labuan Bajo tourism destination message, especially in Declarative Knowledge, and lower in the Procedural Knowledge indicator. Thus, it can be concluded that the Indonesian people who participated in this research have higher knowledge of information than procedural knowledge. These findings imply that tourism communication should not only emphasize information but also provide more practical and experience-oriented messages that help potential visitors understand how to engage with the destination. Strengthening procedural knowledge through digital campaigns, storytelling, and interactive tourism content may enhance destination awareness and encourage future visitation.

Keywords: level of knowledge; tourism communication; destination messaging; Labuan Bajo; social media.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an important element in life. Communication can occur when there is interaction between the sender of the message (communicator) and the recipient of the message (communicant). Pace et al. (1979) explains that when viewed from the perspective of communication techniques, one of the goals of communication is to secure understanding, namely making the interlocutor understand correctly the message conveyed clearly and without misinterpretation.

In the context of communication, understanding also does not arise automatically but rather through the process of conveying, managing and receiving messages. According to Effendy (2003), the S-O-R (Stimulus - Organism - Response) theory has three main elements, namely the message given (stimulus), the person receiving the message (organism), and the impact that arises (response). The message received by the individual (stimulus) is processed cognitively by the recipient (organism) to produce a certain response (response), one of which is a level of knowledge (Effendy, 2003). Thus, the level of public knowledge can be seen as an indicator of the success of a communication process. Based on the S-O-R framework, the response (R) examined in this study is the public's level of knowledge after being exposed to Labuan Bajo tourism destination messages. In other words, knowledge represents the cognitive outcome of the communication process, indicating the extent to which the messages have been understood and retained by the audience. To operationalize this response, the present study adopts Schraw's (2006) classification of knowledge, which distinguishes knowledge into declarative, procedural, and self-regulatory dimensions. Schraw (2006) states that humans store many different types of knowledge in memory. Each type of knowledge has a different function, but all of them are equally important and needed to support the ability to think and learn in everyday

life. In this section, the three main types of knowledge and their subtypes are discussed: (1) declarative knowledge is knowledge about the facts and concepts that we know, (2) procedural knowledge is knowledge about how to do something, and (3) self-regulatory knowledge is about knowledge about ourselves as learners, what we know, and how to organize and control our learning process. These three types of knowledge are equally important and complement each other. The level of knowledge, for example in the context of tourism communication, is often related to the amount of information that tourists remember to decide on tourist attractions, for example travel discounts, entrance ticket discounts, safety of tourist attractions, or the weather when traveling (Prakoso, 2018). Stimulus turns into knowledge when humans consciously receive and process the stimulus. The uniqueness of a stimulus is one of the factors that makes it knowledge (Goldstein, 2014) because humans choose it to be stored and processed in the brain. In the context of tourism communication, promoting the uniqueness of a destination is often known as destination branding. Uniqueness is a stimulus that plays an important role in conveying information about a destination in order to touch the target's cognitive aspects and increase knowledge (Blain et al., 2005).

So the uniqueness of a tourist destination (uniqueness) as a stimulus becomes an important element, because in this pillar there are many indicators that are specifically valuable for a destination that other destinations do not have. The stronger and different the uniqueness being communicated, the greater the chance that the message will attract attention and be processed by the public. This process will then influence the level of public knowledge regarding the destination being promoted. According to the Insight Report on the implementation of Quality Tourism, the uniqueness of tourist attractions can be in the form of unique natural attractions, unique appearance/arrangement of the destination, prominent cultural elements, satisfactory accommodation & amenities, supportive and trusted business actors, as well as the friendliness of the local community which is then published visually so that it can be known by the public.

Johnpaul (2015) explains that tourism consists of three main elements, namely accessibility, accommodation and attractions. In line with this view, Ramesh (2015) expanded these elements by stating that the most important components of tourism are accommodation, accessibility, facilities, attractions and activities. To disseminate information about these tourism elements, promotion needs to be carried out so that the message can be conveyed to the audience. The promotion process is a form of tourism communication which according to Bungin (2015) is defined as all forms of interaction between destination managers and target customers and all existing stakeholders so that all destination marketing goals and objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Tourism communication studies how messages about tourist destinations, tourist experiences, and the parties involved in them are created, delivered, understood, and used to influence tourist behavior. This field combines general communication theory with specific tourism issues, such as environmental sustainability, crisis management, intercultural meetings, and efforts to build the image and identity of a destination.

Indonesia, as a country with more than 27,000 islands and a variety of advantages and rich ecosystems, currently places the tourism sector as one of the drivers of national development through the development of five Super Priority Tourism Destinations (DPSP). In 2015, the government first initiated tourism development that was more focused on 10 Indonesian priority tourist destinations outside Bali, called Ten New Balis. The ten New Balis include Lake Toba in North Sumatra Province, Tanjung Kelayang in Bangka Belitung Province, Tanjung Lesung in Banten Province, Seribu Islands in DKI Jakarta Province, Borobudur Temple in Central Java Province, Bromo-Tengger-Semeru area in East Java Province, Mandalika in West Nusa Tenggara Province, Labuan Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara Province, Wakatobi in Southeast Sulawesi Province, and Morotai in North Maluku Province. After determining ten national priority tourist destinations, the government then issued a policy to focus development on five Super Priority Tourism Destinations (DPSP) which are often shortened to Super Priority Destinations (DSP) in Indonesia, namely Borobudur, Likupang, Mandalika, Lake Toba, and Labuan Bajo. These five destinations are the main destinations that are focused on so that they can become destinations known as part of Wonderful Indonesia.

In 2023, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy will release the Insight Report Quality Tourism which assesses the quality of destinations based on four main pillars, namely basic competitiveness, sustainability, uniqueness and high value. Based on this data, the highest tourism score is in the pillar of uniqueness and was achieved by DPSP Labuan Bajo in 2023. This finding shows that Labuan Bajo has an advantage in the pillar of uniqueness as a DPSP, even surpassing the uniqueness score of Nusa Dua which at that time was a benchmark for implementing Quality Tourism. One of the supporters of the high score for Labuan Bajo's uniqueness pillar comes from natural attractions, including the Komodo dragon which is one of the attractions and advantages that Labuan Bajo has as a Priority Destination. However, in 2025, the highest number of visits among the 5 DPSPs will be Borobudur with a total of 1.7 million visits. Meanwhile, Labuan

Bajo only reached 500,008 visits, even less than Likupang, which in the period from January to June 2025 alone had reached 851,000. In fact, if you look at the four pillars of Quality Tourism from 2023-2025, Labuan Bajo is very superior in the pillar of uniqueness. This explains that Labuan Bajo still needs to improve the quality of its destination in the other three pillars and one of the reasons why tourist destinations are less visited is because the level of public knowledge is less than optimal (Kim, S., Lehto, X., & Kandampully, J., 2019). Even though the name Labuan Bajo is well known, Labuan Bajo is not just a name, but there are many tourist details in the area that the public may not yet recognize. Therefore, it is necessary to see the extent of the Indonesian people's knowledge about Labuan Bajo.

From a communication perspective, this phenomenon shows the possibility of a gap between the destination message conveyed and the knowledge of the community as the recipient of the message. Various communication activities carried out via social media have the potential to increase brand awareness, but do not necessarily produce a complete understanding of the destination's identity. People may know Labuan Bajo as a Komodo dragon habitat or a premium tourist destination, but do not necessarily understand that Labuan Bajo's destination branding also emphasizes aspects of conservation and preservation of local culture. Therefore, it is important to measure the extent to which people really know the main messages that form the identity of the destination. Research on tourism communication so far has mostly discussed destination branding strategies, destination image, brand awareness, and the influence of communication on tourists' interest in visiting. Research by Pinontoan et al. (2024) showed that integrated communication was able to strengthen the identity of cultural tourism destinations, while Limbono and Lolita (2023) found that social media and influencers were effective in increasing Labuan Bajo brand awareness. Meanwhile, Batoebara (2023) emphasized that tourism communication plays a role in building people's understanding of destinations. However, these studies still focus on aspects of perception, image and communication strategy, so they have not specifically measured the level of public knowledge of the content of destination branding messages.

The tourism ministry's efforts to focus on branding Labuan Bajo as one of the DPSPs that needs to be improved can be seen more clearly through the contribution of the Labuan Bajo Flores Authority Implementing Agency (BPOLBF) as the official party with an interest in coordinating and developing tourist destinations in an effort to improve quality and support the local economy. BPOLBF also participates in conveying the message of the Labuan Bajo destination as one of the DPSPs through uploads to marketing communication tools media which is officially owned by the Labuan Bajo Authority. The Labuan Bajo Flores Authority Management Body (BPOLBF) uses tools that have been modified to adapt to the era of digital technology by prioritizing promotion on the social media platforms Instagram, Tiktok, X, Facebook and YouTube as part of social media marketing. The Labuan Bajo Authority also has an official website which is one part of marketing communication tools as digital marketing. Through all these media, BPOLBF not only promotes Labuan Bajo as a priority destination, but also many other things related to Labuan Bajo. This needs to be a concern because of the large amount of content uploaded, it is necessary to know whether the audience who has seen the Labuan Bajo destination message content as a DPSP knows the message conveyed.

Previous studies have primarily examined tourism communication from the perspectives of communication strategies, knowledge management, and digital knowledge exchange, rather than evaluating how tourism messages are understood by the public. For instance, Jensen (2008) investigated knowledge communication within online travel communities, emphasizing how travelers exchange experiences and information through virtual interactions. Similarly, Yiu and Law (2014) reviewed the application of knowledge management and knowledge sharing in tourism organizations, highlighting organizational learning and knowledge transfer as strategic resources for tourism development. Meanwhile, Diop et al. (2025) explored Pentahelix communication strategies for promoting sustainable tourism, focusing on stakeholder collaboration and communication processes among government, business, academia, communities, and the media. At a broader level, Salgado Moreno et al. (2024) demonstrated that tourism communication research has largely concentrated on destination promotion, digital communication, branding, and stakeholder engagement while identifying the need for empirical studies that assess communication outcomes from the audience perspective. Despite these contributions, there remains limited empirical evidence regarding whether tourism destinations successfully generate different levels of public knowledge, particularly among potential visitors who have never visited the destination. Existing studies generally explain how tourism messages are created, shared, or managed, but they rarely measure the extent to which audiences comprehend these messages using a multidimensional knowledge framework. Furthermore, previous tourism communication studies seldom distinguish between declarative, procedural, and self-regulatory knowledge, leaving an important gap in

understanding which dimensions of destination knowledge are successfully communicated, and which require further improvement.

The novelty of this study lies in its shift from examining how tourism destinations communicate to understanding what the public learns from those communications. While previous studies have primarily focused on communication strategies, stakeholder collaboration, and knowledge sharing, this research evaluates tourism communication through three dimensions of knowledge—declarative, procedural, and self-regulatory knowledge. This multidimensional approach offers a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of destination messages by identifying not only whether people know about a destination, but also whether they understand how to engage with it and regulate their own learning. Furthermore, by focusing on individuals who have never visited Labuan Bajo, this study provides insights into the cognitive impact of destination communication at the pre-visit stage, an area that remains underexplored in tourism communication research. Accordingly, this study contributes to tourism communication literature by extending the evaluation of destination communication beyond promotional effectiveness toward the measurement of audience knowledge outcomes. It also provides practical insights for designing destination messages that not only increase awareness but also strengthen visitors' practical understanding of tourism experiences.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research is based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory put forward by Hovland in 1953. This theory explains that communication is a stimulus process that is received by an individual (organism) and produces a certain response (response). In the context of communication, the stimulus is in the form of a message conveyed by the communicator and will influence cognitive, affective and conative processes so that the effectiveness of communication is largely determined by the quality and strength of the message received (Effendy, 2003; Yasir, 2009). Therefore, the S-O-R theory is the basis for understanding how messages about tourist destinations are able to shape people's knowledge as a cognitive response to the communication received.

In the tourism sector, communication not only functions as a means of promotion but also as a process of conveying information that shapes people's knowledge, perceptions and meaning of a destination (Syahadat et al., 2026). According to Bungin (2015), tourism communication is part of development communication and marketing communication which is designed to influence audience knowledge, attitudes and behavior through message management, media selection and appropriate communication strategies. Tourism communication also involves various actors such as government, industry players, local communities, media, and tourists. Through various media, especially digital media such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and websites, the effectiveness of communication is reflected in changes in the cognitive, affective and conative domains, so that the success of tourism communication can be measured by the extent to which people understand the message conveyed.

One implementation of tourism communication is through destination branding, which is a strategic process for building and communicating a destination's identity so that it has a different image and position compared to other destinations. Destination branding is not only realized through logos or slogans, but through consistent delivery of narratives, symbols and experiences so as to shape public perceptions of destinations (Pinontoan et al., 2024). The success of a destination branding strategy also depends on the consistency between positioning identity, image and brand associations communicated to the public (Limbono & Lolita, 2023). In the context of this research, the Labuan Bajo Super Priority Tourism Destination branding was built focusing on three main messages, namely marine tourism, conservation and culture. So, the success of destination branding here is not only shown by the high popularity of the destination, but also by how high the public's knowledge of these three messages is.

The public's understanding of destination branding message here is measured through the concept of Level of Knowledge. According to Schraw (2006), knowledge consists of three main dimensions, namely Declarative Knowledge, Procedural Knowledge, and Self-Regulatory Knowledge. Declarative knowledge relates to knowledge about facts, concepts and experiences that individuals have, which includes semantic and episodic knowledge. Procedural knowledge is knowledge about how to do something, including the use of scripts, algorithms and heuristics in completing a task. Self-regulatory knowledge is knowledge about an individual's ability to organize, evaluate and control their own thinking and learning processes. These three dimensions complement each other and describe a person's level of knowledge of an object, including the messages conveyed in tourism communication.

Delivery of destination branding messages to the public is carried out through various marketing communication tools as communication channels. Marketing communication tools are a set of communication instruments used to convey messages in a planned manner in order to build knowledge, influence attitudes and encourage audience behavior. Apart from conventional marketing communication tools such as advertising public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, personal selling, and event marketing, technological developments have expanded the use of digital media through digital marketing, social media marketing, mobile marketing, product placement, and guerrilla marketing. In the context of tourist destination communication, these various channels become a medium for disseminating messages regarding the identity and value of the destination so as to expand the reach of communication while increasing opportunities for the formation of public knowledge.

So, through the linkage of these theories, this research views that destination branding messages regarding marine tourism, conservation and culture act as stimuli delivered through various marketing communication tools in tourism communication practices. The message is then processed by the community as an organism, which ultimately produces a response in the form of the level of community knowledge of the Labuan Bajo Super Priority Tourism Destination.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive quantitative approach with an online survey method to measure the level of knowledge. Data was collected by distributing questionnaires in the form of Google Form, via social media (Instagram, Tiktok) and Populix.

Table 1. Questionnaire Indicators and Sub Indicators

Indicators	Sub Indicators
Declarative Knowledge	Semantic Episodic
Procedural Knowledge	Scripts Algorithms Heuristics
Self-Regulatory Knowledge	Domain Specific Domain General

The population of this research is 287.198.383 Indonesian people according to Statistic's Indonesia (2026). Then, sample size in this study was calculated using Slovin's formula, as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

$$n = \frac{287.198.383}{1 + 287.000.000 (0.0025)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{287.198.383}{1 + 717501}$$

$$n = \frac{287.198.383}{717501}$$

$$n = 399,99 \approx 400$$

Based on the population of Indonesian people at the time of the research, the total number of respondents needed to participate in this research was 400 respondents. Purposive sample is applied here, specifically Indonesian citizens, aged at least 18 years, had heard of or knew about Labuan Bajo as a tourist destination but had never visited. The questions on the questionnaire will have their validity and reliability calculated to ensure that the questions given can answer the formulation of this research problem. After being declared valid and reliable, the questionnaire will be distributed to audiences who meet the sample criteria.

Respondents' answers via this online survey were submitted using a Likert scale which is a research instrument to measure the level of agreement to a series of questions. This level of agreement uses a 1-5 Likert scale, with categories ranging from Strongly Agree (SS) to Strongly Disagree (STS). The data obtained will be presented and analyzed using statistical tests, where each variable is calculated based on the average value (mean) with an interval range of 1.33. So the resulting level of knowledge is based on a mean value of 1.00 - 2.33 (Low); 2.34 - 3.66 (Medium); 3.67 - 5.00 (High).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Validity and Reliability Test

Validity tests are carried out to measure the accuracy of measuring instruments in carrying out their functions. A questionnaire is declared valid if the questions in it reveal something that is to be measured accurately. Validity test calculations were obtained with the help of JASP. Each question item in the questionnaire is calculated using a formula which shows that if the result of r calculated $> r$ table is 0.3061 then the statement is declared valid. The following is a table of calculation results for the validity test of this research. The results showed that all questionnaire items had calculated correlation coefficients (r -count) exceeding the critical r -value, indicating that all items were valid and suitable for further analysis.

Reliability testing is a procedure carried out to ensure that a research instrument can provide consistent and stable measurements. Reliability testing also shows the extent to which measurement results can be trusted, in contrast to validity which measures accuracy. In this research, an instrument is considered reliable if the respondent's answers to questions remain stable. Calculations are carried out using JASP software with the condition that if the alpha coefficient is >0.6 then the questionnaire is declared reliable. The following are the results of the reliability test in this research.

Table 2. Reliability Test

Variable	Alpha Coefficient	Critical Limit	Description
Knowledge Level	961	0,6	Reliable

4.2. Level of Knowledge

According to Schraw, the level of knowledge consists of 3 indicators, namely Declarative Knowledge, Procedural Knowledge, and Self-Regulatory Knowledge. After being distributed to 400 respondents who met the criteria, the following are the Knowledge Level results obtained.

Table 3. Results of calculating the average of respondents' answers

Indicator	Sub- Indicator	Dimension		Mean	
Declarative Knowledge	Semantic	Marine Tourism	4.35	4.32	4.26
		Conservation	4.36		
		Culture	4.25		
	Episodic	Marine Tourism	4.25	4.2	
		Conservation	4.22		
		Culture	4.15		
Procedural Knowledge	Script	Marine Tourism	4.21	4.16	4.12
		Conservation	4.11		
		Culture	4.17		
	Algorithms	Marine Tourism	4.06	4.09	
		Conservation	4.15		
		Culture	4.08		
	Heuristic	Marine Tourism	4.09	4.11	
		Conservation	4.17		
		Culture	4.07		
Self-Regulatory Knowledge	Domain Specific	Marine Tourism	4.28	4.26	4.25
		Conservation	4.22		
		Culture	4.27		
	Domain General	Marine Tourism	4.24	4.23	
		Conservation	4.21		
		Culture	4.26		
Total Mean					4.21

Based on Table 3, the research results show that there are differences in the level of respondents' knowledge between the indicators of declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. The declarative indicator obtained the highest mean value of 4.26 with the semantic sub-indicator of 4.32, while the procedural indicator obtained a lower mean value of 4.12 with the algorithm sub-indicator of 4.09. This difference shows

that respondents have a stronger understanding of factual and conceptual knowledge than technical or operational knowledge regarding Labuan Bajo.

Based on the category intervals used in this research, all mean values fall into the high level of knowledge category. However, there are several variations in the level of understanding between knowledge dimensions which indicate differences in information processing power for each indicator.

The high score on the declarative indicator and semantic sub-indicator through the statement "I know that Labuan Bajo and Komodo Island are government protected areas" shows that the audience has a strong understanding of the facts, concepts and identity of the Labuan Bajo destination. Respondents were able to recognize information regarding Labuan Bajo's status as a leading tourist destination even though they had never visited in person. It indicates that the initial cognitive stage of the Cognitive-Affective-Conative model has been successfully achieved (Alzboun et al., 2025; El-Emam, 2009). Cognitive image is the mental representation of a destination's physical and functional knowledge, such as its unique attributes and infrastructure (Alzboun et al., 2025). This success suggests that social media has been an effective "significant stimulus," providing potential travelers with the brand information necessary to form a baseline attitude toward the destination (El-Emam, 2009). However, research emphasizes that for this cognitive awareness to result in actual travel, it must be mediated by affective evaluations—the emotional feelings of security or excitement a traveler assigns to the destination (Alzboun et al., 2025). This shows that BPOLBF's communication strategy through social media has succeeded in building the semantic knowledge of the Indonesian people regarding Labuan Bajo. Semantic knowledge according to Schraw (2006) is related to an individual's ability to understand general information, concepts and meanings stored in long-term memory, so a high score on this dimension indicates that the identity of the Labuan Bajo destination has been embedded quite strongly in the audience's cognitive structure.

High semantic knowledge can also be explained from a cognitive perspective through the mere exposure effect mechanism (Zajonc, 1968), which is defined as a condition where repeated exposure to information can increase the feeling of familiarity with an object or information. Consistent exposure to content about Labuan Bajo through social media causes the audience to become more familiar with information related to this destination. This familiarity then gives rise to perceptual fluency, which is a condition when the brain processes information that feels familiar more easily than new information. So, the audience can understand and remember information about Labuan Bajo more quickly without requiring a large cognitive effort. This is also related to the concept of limited human information processing capacity (finite processing capacity) explained by Thompson and McGill (2008), where information that is simple, consistent and familiar tends to be more easily stored in the audience's long-term memory.

Then, the high semantic value also shows that BPOLBF tourism communication has succeeded in forming the destination image of Labuan Bajo as a premium ecotourism destination in the minds of the Indonesian people. In tourism communication, social media not only functions as a means of disseminating information, but also as an instrument for forming a destination image through visual representations, narratives and tourist symbols that are displayed consistently. Therefore, respondents have a basic understanding of the characteristics and identity of Labuan Bajo through the social media stimuli they receive repeatedly.

In the Procedural Knowledge indicator, the algorithm sub-indicator gets a lower mean value than the previous indicator. This can be seen based on the results of respondents' answers through the statement "I know the procedures that need to be carried out to visit marine tourism destinations in Labuan Bajo" which got a mean of 4.06. If viewed based on intervals, this figure is included in the high knowledge category, however the mean obtained is not as high and the lowest mean compared to other indicators and sub-indicators. This happened because several respondents (64 respondents) gave "Neutral" answers, so it was concluded that these respondents still had doubts about the statements given. The strong emphasis on marine tourism across BPOLBF's social media content may have contributed to respondents' positive perceptions and relatively high levels of knowledge regarding this tourism dimension. However, considering that all respondents who participated in this research have never visited Labuan Bajo, this means that the knowledge possessed by the respondents does not come from personal experience, but rather is "indirect" knowledge which can come from other people or other sources such as social media. This source of knowledge is also known as mediated and inferential knowledge (Russell, 1912). The gap identified regarding procedural knowledge represents a significant obstacle in the transition from awareness to action (Bhati et al., 2020). In tourism consumer models, if a potential traveler feels the information provided is inadequate to facilitate action, they will initiate an external search, during which they may encounter "inhibitors"—non-internalized forces that impede their preference for the destination (El-Emam, 2009). Furthermore, media engagement (including social media and official websites) acts as a powerful mediator of travel intention (Bhati et al., 2020). If this engagement lacks

"instructing information"—practical guidance on how to navigate and book the experience—it fails to provide the "response efficacy" potential visitors need to feel confident in their ability to execute the trip (Bhati et al., 2020).

According to Russell (1912), knowledge that is indirect, mediated and inferential is included in descriptive knowledge or Knowledge by Description. This allows a person to have information about a place or phenomenon without having to have direct contact with the object. Russell also stated that someone can understand a description as long as it is composed entirely of things or concepts that they are directly familiar with. So that the respondents in this study felt that they theoretically understood the procedures because they already had direct knowledge from personal experience about other things related to visiting Labuan Bajo such as the concept of plane reservations, online registration, or the concept of tourist quotas through information obtained from various media.

Meanwhile, 64 respondents gave neutral answers, indicating that there were some respondents who were still doubtful. According to Russel Russell (1912), knowledge by description is inferential and can be doubted (duitable). Russell has the argument that only what we experience directly (acquaintance) cannot be doubted, meanwhile the visiting procedure in this context is a procedure mediated through social media, so this knowledge does have room for doubt. The neutral answers given by 64 respondents were proof that the knowledge they had about the procedure existed, but it was only "indirect" and had not been personally tested so they did not dare to state their answers confidently.

Based on table 3, the self-regulatory knowledge indicator gets a mean value of 4.25 which is also included in the high category. These results show that the Indonesian people have a good level of awareness in monitoring, evaluating and regulating their behavior regarding the Labuan Bajo tourist destination. This is proof that the communication carried out by BPOLBF on its social media has not only succeeded in building knowledge about destinations but also created awareness about the importance of behaving responsibly in tourism activities, so that the communication stimulus provided has produced a response in the form of a high level of knowledge.

In the Self-Regulatory indicator section, the domain-specific sub-indicator obtained a mean value of 4.26, which is slightly higher than domain-general with a value of 4.23. This mean value shows that audiences exposed to Labuan Bajo destination communications know and have a strong awareness of the impact of their behavior on the ecosystem and sustainability of the tourist destination. The majority also know their own limits and are prepared to evaluate their abilities when dealing with situations that may occur during their visit. Therefore, the high means of the self-regulatory indicator shows that the respondents who participated in this research could be potentially responsible tourists or prospective tourists who have awareness of social and environmental responsibility in tourism activities. This awareness can be seen from respondents' understanding of the importance of preserving nature, respecting local culture, and considering the impact of their behavior on the destinations they visit. It reflects a modern shift toward identity-driven communication (Arsyaningrum et al., 2026). Effective communication must transition from raw risk reassurance to identity reconstruction, reframing the region around cultural vitality and present-day strengths (Arsyaningrum et al., 2026). This approach moves beyond purely informational goals and instead focuses on building emotional solidarity and a shared sense of responsibility between the visitor and the local community (Alzboun et al., 2025).

The stimulus in the form of conservation, sustainability and destination governance messages conveyed by BPOLBF via social media was successfully processed by the audience to produce a response in the form of factual knowledge and reflective awareness of their own behavior. This shows that effective tourism communication not only aims to introduce the attractiveness of the destination but also creates tourists who have an awareness of social, cultural and environmental responsibilities.

When viewed from a tourism communication perspective, these findings show that tourism communication carried out by BPOLBF through its social media not only functions as a means of destination promotion, but also as an educational instrument capable of forming tourists' understanding, values and awareness regarding the principles of sustainable tourism. This is in accordance with the communication function in public relations which is not only for establishing a destination image, but also for building long-term relationships between a destination and its public through conveying values that support sustainability. According to Putra & Amal (2025), knowledge that has been formed in society is a communication asset that needs to be managed sustainably. Thus, the concept of public relations in successful efforts to build understanding by BPOLBF should be followed by a communication strategy that is able to internalize these values into public behavior. So that communication not only produces a positive image of the destination but also creates a public that supports the strategic goals of the destination, namely the realization of quality, sustainable and responsible tourism.

Then, when viewed as a whole, the level of knowledge of the Indonesian people regarding the Labuan Bajo Super Priority Tourism Destination Message is in the high category but with proportions that are not completely balanced. Respondents' knowledge tends to be higher in the indicators of declarative knowledge and self-regulatory knowledge. These results are proof that the community knows the identity, values and principles inherent in Labuan Bajo, and has awareness of the importance of responsible tourism behavior. But on the other hand, respondents did not fully know the procedures or steps for traveling in detail. In other words, people already know the "what" and "how" about Labuan Bajo, but do not fully understand the "how" of the processes or procedures that need to be carried out.

The strategic implication for tourism communication is that a balanced framework must be adopted to move the consumer respond toward positive output (El-Emam, 2009). Organizations should prioritize providing instructing information (procedural steps) and adjusting information (psychological reassurance) as the foundational layers of their communication strategy (van Rensburg et al., 2017). Strategically, this means that while maintaining brand awareness (declarative knowledge) is essential that the organization must invest more heavily in creating practical, actionable content to facilitate the decision and in integrating conservation narratives to foster a responsible regional identity (Arsyaningrum et al., 2026; van Rensburg et al., 2017).

5. CONCLUSION

The results of this research show that the Indonesian people's knowledge about the Labuan Bajo Super Priority Tourism Destination message is relatively high, especially in the Declarative - Semantic indicators. The research results show that the message about DPSP Labuan Bajo conveyed by local authorities has functioned as an effective means of communication in increasing public knowledge about the identity of the Labuan Bajo destination, especially in the conservation dimension, namely the dimension that includes sustainability, comfort and safety for tourists, so that Labuan Bajo as a protected tourist destination received an average score of 4.36. These results mean that the image of Labuan Bajo as a destination that prioritizes environmental sustainability is already in public knowledge.

Meanwhile, the procedural knowledge - algorithm indicator received a lower value than other indicators and sub-indicators. The results of calculating this indicator get an average value of 4.06, which is actually quite high, but the lowest compared to the other two indicators. Procedural - Algorithms explain how someone can understand the steps including how to solve the problem. The value of 4.06 represents a high level of public knowledge about the procedures that need to be carried out to visit the Labuan Bajo tourist destination, but it still shows that some respondents are doubtful, so they answer neutral and make the mean value tend to be lower than other indicators.

Overall, from the findings of this research it can be concluded that exposure to messages delivered consistently by BPOLBF on its social media is effective in increasing public knowledge about DPSP Labuan Bajo messages. All indicators used to measure the level of knowledge of the Indonesian people have a mean result of above 4.00 which is included in the high category. The highest level of knowledge is factual and conceptual knowledge, while the lowest is knowledge related to procedures, regulations or technical steps in tourism activities.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire matrix

Indicators	Sub Indicators	Tourism Focused Dimension	Statements
Declarative Knowledge	Semantic	Marine Tourism	Saya mengetahui bahwa Labuan Bajo memiliki destinasi wisata bahari
		Conservation	Saya mengetahui bahwa Labuan Bajo dan Pulau Komodo merupakan wilayah yang dilindungi pemerintah
		Culture	Saya mengetahui bahwa di Labuan Bajo Terdapat beragam festival budaya Nusa Tenggara Timur
	Episodic	Marine Tourism	Saya pernah melihat informasi mengenai wisata bahari melalui media sosial otorita Labuan Bajo
		Conservation	Saya pernah melihat atau memperoleh informasi mengenai pulau komodo sebagai wilayah konservasi melalui media sosial otorita Labuan Bajo
		Culture	Saya pernah melihat informasi mengenai festival budaya Nusa Tenggara Timur melalui media sosial otorita Labuan Bajo
Procedural Knowledge	Scripts	Marine Tourism	Saya mengetahui bahwa wisata bahari berupa pulau dan pantai hingga aktivitas seperti snorkeling dan diving.
		Conservation	Saya mengetahui bahwa konservasi Labuan Bajo meliputi manajemen overtourism, dan peningkatan aksesibilitas (konektivitas jalan, udara, dan laut) serta travel map floratama* *peta perjalanan atau panduan wisata yang mencakup wilayah Flores, Alor, Lembata, dan Bima (Floratama)
		Culture	Saya mengetahui bahwa aneka ragam budaya di Labuan Bajo muncul dalam bentuk festival (lokasi wisata, tarian, musik tradisional, pameran seni, kerajinan tangan, kuliner, dan lomba budaya).
	Algorithms	Marine Tourism	saya mengetahui prosedur yang perlu dilakukan untuk mengunjungi destinasi wisata bahari di Labuan Bajo
		Conservation	Saya mengetahui aturan yang harus dipatuhi untuk menjaga kelestarian lingkungan di pulau Komodo
		Culture	Saya mengetahui ketentuan yang perlu diperhatikan dan dipatuhi untuk mengikuti event dan mengunjungi desa wisata labuan bajo
	Heuristics	Marine Tourism	Saya mengetahui bahwa apabila tidak dapat mengunjungi salah satu pantai di Labuan Bajo, saya dapat mengunjungi pantai lainnya sebagai alternatif.
		Conservation	Saya mengetahui bahwa dalam kondisi kepadatan pengunjung (overtourism) di pulau Komodo, diperlukan antrian untuk mengakses lokasi tersebut
		Culture	Saya mengetahui bahwa apabila tidak dapat mengikuti salah satu event di Labuan Bajo, saya dapat mengikuti event lainnya sebagai alternatif

Indicators	Sub Indicators	Tourism Focused Dimension	Statements
Self-Regulatory Knowledge	Domain Specific	Marine Tourism	Saya menyadari bahwa perilaku saya saat berwisata dapat memberikan dampak terhadap ekosistem bahari di Labuan Bajo.
		Conservation	Saya menyadari bahwa cara saya berkunjung dapat berdampak pada kelestarian satwa dan lingkungan di Labuan Bajo.
		Culture	Saya menyadari bahwa perilaku saya saat berkunjung dapat berkaitan dengan norma budaya masyarakat lokal.
	Domain General	Marine Tourism	saya mengetahui tindakan yang harus saya lakukan untuk melindungi ekosistem di wisata bahari labuan bajo
		Conservation	saya mengetahui cara untuk menjaga kelestarian lingkungan di Pulau Komodo
		Culture	Saya mengetahui cara untuk menghormati dan menjaga budaya lokal saat berkunjung ke Labuan Bajo