

# Tourist Perception of the Existing Conditions of Kurenai Beach Tourism



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**ABSTRACT:** Kurenai Beach is a tourist destination on the coast of Tomini Bay, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province. This beach has fine white sand and stretches quite wide, allowing various beach tourism activities to be carried out. It is essential to measure tourist perceptions of a tourist destination because tourist perception is a form of assessment of the existence of tourism that aims at the development of future destinations and helps guide beach managers to make decisions in pursuit of sustainable beach tourism. Some factors that influence tourists' perception of choosing a beach include attractions, accessibility, and amenities. This research aims to provide scientific information on tourists' perceptions of the Kurenai Beach tourist area as a first step towards sustainable tourism management. Tourist perceptions were obtained through incidental interviews with 120 tourists. Tourist perception is measured on five components: the physical condition of facilities and infrastructure, accessibility, tourist attraction, tourist infrastructure, and the quality of tourist areas. Data analysis in this study used the Likert scale to determine tourists' perception of the existing conditions of Kurenai Beach tourism. The results showed that, in general, tourists' perceptions of the current conditions of Kurenai Beach tourism were on good criteria, with a total percentage value of 67.4%. The tourist attraction component has the highest perception value, and the physical condition component of facilities and infrastructure has the lowest perception value. The low achievement of the value of tourist perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach needs special attention in the context of the sustainability of this tourism in the future.

**KEYWORDS:** visitor perception, tourism sustainability, Likert scale, Kurenai Beach, Tomini Bay

## I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the driving sectors of the Indonesian economy. The government revenue from the tourism sector was recorded at 229.5 trillion in 2018, which increased to 280 trillion in 2019 (Kemenparekraf, 2020). However, the sector experienced a significant impact, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was indicated by a decrease in revenue from the tourism sector to 7.5 trillion in 2021 (Widi, 2022). The government has made various efforts to save tourism in Indonesia, namely through emergency response, recovery, and normalization efforts. Since 2020, efforts to save tourism have been at the recovery stage, namely the gradual opening of tourist attractions in Indonesia. Preparations began with implementing the CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability) protocol at tourist attractions and support for optimization of MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Conference, Exhibition) activities. The beach is one of the most visited tourist destinations (Hasan et al., 2022). BPS (2019) states that beach tourism is included in the second order regarding tourist visits. Indonesia's coastal potential is quite significant, which supports the tourism industry, considering that Indonesia is an archipelagic country with a coastline of 99,093 km (Arifin et al., 2020).

Gorontalo Province, with a coastline of 903.7 km, is divided into the Tomini Bay area along 572.5 km of the south coast and the Sulawesi Sea area along 331.2 km of the north coast (DKP Gorontalo Province, 2021). The length of the coastline and the presence of small islands have considerable potential for coastal tourism development. Some well-known beach tourism destinations in Gorontalo Province are Minanga Beach, Botutonuo Beach, Tilalohe Beach, Dulanga Beach, Pohon Cinta Beach, and Kurenai Beach. Kurenai Beach is a coastal area on the shores of Tomini Bay, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province. This beach has wide white sand, allowing various beach tourism activities. In addition, the location of Kurenai Beach is very strategic as it is easily accessible and not far from Botubarani Whale Shark Tourism ( $\pm 4.1$  kilometers) and the center of Gorontalo City ( $\pm 15$  kilometers). Preliminary observations indicate that the Kurenai Beach area is now beginning to be visited by many tourists.

## "Tourists' perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach tourism"

The management of recreational ecosystem services depends on public perceptions, so the perceptions should be considered to improve their management (Daily, 2000). Tourists' perceptions of the coastal environment can provide helpful information to guide beach managers in pursuing sustainable beach tourism (Chen and Teng 2016). The individual choice of a particular beach depends on the site's characteristics and the visitor's perceptions. The key factors influencing the visitor's perception in choosing a specific beach include the state of beach development, i.e., functional, comfortable, user-friendly, and safe beaches (Breton et al., 1996; Alves et al., 2014). According to Chen and Teng (2016), beach cleanliness, safety, information provision, sediment and habitat management, and population density are tourist indicators when choosing a tourist destination. According to Keliwar and Nurcahyo (2015), tourist perception is an impression that manifests itself in the form of interpretations and attitudes towards tourist attractions, tourism facilities, public facilities, tourism information, and services provided to tourists while at the tourist attraction. Every tourist who travels has a different perception of the objects visited, which depends on the travel experience, education level, environmental conditions, socio-cultural conditions of the tourist's home country, and psychological influences. Thus, this study provided scientific information on visitors' perceptions of the Kurenai Beach tourist area as a first step for sustainable tourism management in Kurenai Beach.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

### *Time and Place*

The research was carried out from March to October 2023 in Tomini Bay, Kurenai Beach, and Bone Bolango Regency, as shown in Figure 1. This research uses survey and interview methods.

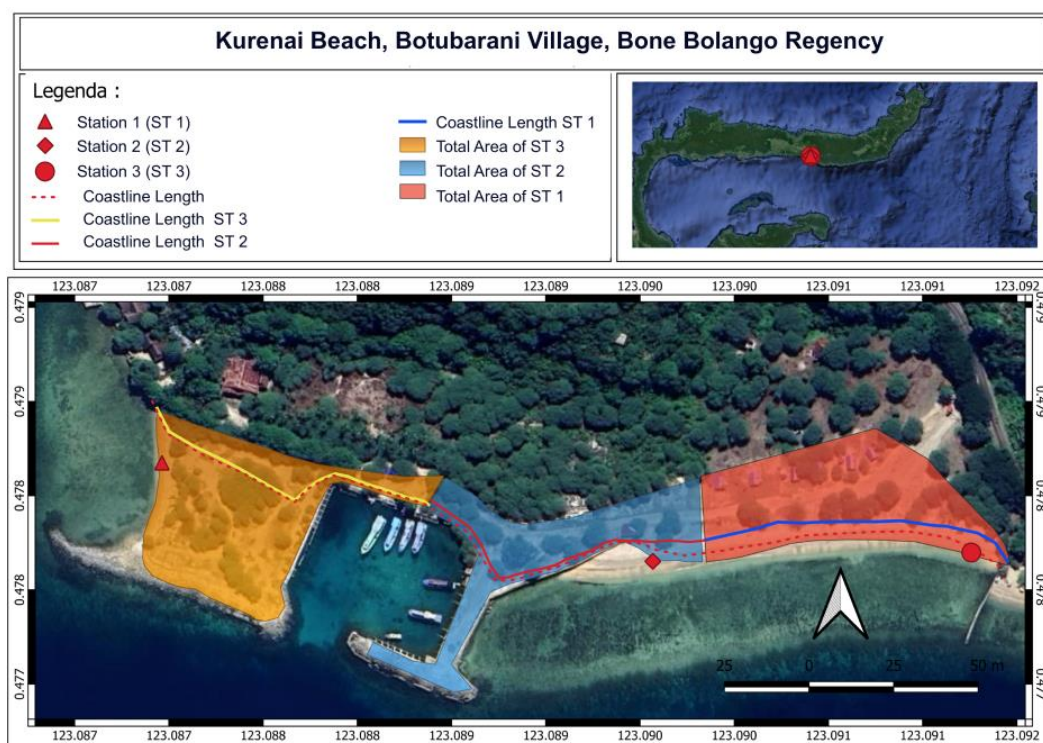


Figure 1. Map of Research Location

### *Data Retrieval Methods*

Data collection on tourist perceptions in this research used the incidental interview method with 120 respondents. This method is considered for visitor or tourist respondents as it is easy to collect data from respondents who happen to be in the tourist area of Kurenai Beach. The data collection is carried out every week, considering the characteristics of the respondents, namely those aged 17 years and above (Ahmad et al., 2022).

### *Data Analysis*

Tourists' perceptions of the existing conditions of Kurenai Beach were analyzed using a Likert Scale. Each answer in the questionnaire is given a value or weight (Hamzah et al., 2023) as follows:

- Very good/Very participatory given weight (5)
- Good/Participate weighted (4)
- Good enough/Enough weighted (3)

## "Tourists' perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach tourism"

- d. Less good/Less weighted (2)
- e. Do not know/Do not participate are weighted (1)

The percentage of answers that have been obtained then calculated using the formula (Sugiyono, 2017) as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Information:

- P : Percentage of answers (%)
- F : The frequency of each answer that respondents have chosen
- N : Number of respondents

Furthermore, to determine the interpretation/score value of tourist perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach, it is divided into five classes referring to Amirin (2011) with the following criteria:

- 0% – 19,99% = Very not good
- 20% – 39,99% = Less good
- 40% – 59,99% = Good enough
- 60% – 79,99% = Good
- 80% – 100% = Excellent

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Characteristics of Tourist Respondents*

Tourists who were respondents in this study were those who came to the Kurenai Beach area and engaged in tourist activities. The number of tourist respondents in this study was 120. Interviews with tourists were conducted to determine the tourists' perceptions of the existing condition of tourism at Kurenai Beach. Information on the characteristics of tourists who visited Kurenai Beach can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Percentage of characteristics of traveller respondents at the study site**

Characteristic	Classification	Percentage (%)
Regional Origin	Gorontalo Province	96,7
	Outside Gorontalo Province	3,3
Gender	Male	48,8
	Female	51,2
Age (years)	≤ 17	0,8
	18–27	39,7
	28–37	28,1
	38–47	21,5
	48–57	9,1
	≥ 58	0,8
Work	Housewives	11,6
	SOEs/BUMDs	4,1
	Student	7,4
	Honorary Employees	4,1
	Private Employees	26,4
	Professional (Doctor, Judge, Lecturer, Teacher, Accountant)	3,3
	Civil servants	19,0
	Entrepreneurial	10,7
	Fisherman	0,8
	Other	12,4

Table 1 shows that tourists visiting Kurenai Beach are dominated by local (Gorontalo Province) tourists, 96.7%, and only 3.3% come from outside Gorontalo Province. The high percentage of local tourists from Gorontalo Province shows that this destination is well known to the people of Gorontalo Province. However, there are also tourists from outside Gorontalo Province. The

## "Tourists' perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach tourism"

interview results showed that tourists from outside Gorontalo Regency who visited Kurenai Beach came from North Sulawesi and Central Sulawesi. Although still small in number, this is undoubtedly a positive factor that needs to be considered by the tourism managers of Kurenai Beach so that the tourists who come continue to grow from regional and national tourists to international tourists. The more tourists from different backgrounds that visit, the more successful the promotion of these destinations can be. The results of the study, as presented in Table 1, show that based on gender, tourists visiting Kurenai Beach are more female, with a percentage of 51.2%, and male tourists, with a percentage of 48.8%. Andani (2017) stated that the role of women in tourism activities is necessary to reduce gender inequality.

Prasetio (2011) states that age affects a person's physical ability to make tourist visits. The results showed that the majority of tourists who visited Kurenai Beach were in the age group of 18-27 years (39.7%). These results indicate that tourism at Kurenai Beach is in demand by young people who like to travel. Based on the type of work, tourists visiting Kurenai Beach are dominated by those who work differently. Hamzah (2020) states that work can influence interest in travel, where work provides an individual with income and the ability to travel. The interview results showed that private employees dominated the visiting respondents by 26.4%. The results of this study are similar to the findings of Hakim et al. (2019), where private employees dominated the respondents travelling to Padang-Padang Beach, Badung. The results of this study indicate that remote employees in Gorontalo Province mostly use their holidays for tourism.

### **Tourists' Perception**

Tourists' perception of a tourist attraction is one of the things considered in the progress of a tourist attraction. Tourist perception is related to tourists' opinions of the attractions visited, so in more significant cases, it can affect the number of tourist visits (Marcelina et al., 2018). Tourist perception shows assessments of services, facilities and infrastructure, accessibility, tourist attractiveness, tourist infrastructure, and quality of tourist areas.

#### **1. Tourists' Perception of Kurenai Beach Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure**

Facilities and infrastructure are essential aspects that must be present in a tourist attraction to support the tourism activities carried out in the tourism industry. Kurenai Beach has several facilities and infrastructure that support tourism activities, but the availability of these facilities and infrastructure may differ from the needs and desires of tourists. Based on this, tourists' perceptions of Kurenai Beach are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Tourists' perception of Kurenai Beach tourism facilities and infrastructure**

<b>Tourists' Perception of Facilities and Infrastructure</b>	<b>ΣTS</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Parking lot	433	71,6
Stalls	436	72,1
Restaurant	436	72,1
Lodging	299	49,4
Camping Tent	370	61,2
Security Post	400	66,1
Toilet	381	63,0
Trash Can	313	51,7
Path	370	61,2
Gazebo	329	54,4
Resource Center	350	57,9
A Place to Relax	451	74,5
Ticket Counter	420	69,4
Snorkelling/ Diving/ Water Sport/ Fishing Rod	396	65,5
<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>384,571</b>	<b>63,57</b>
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 2 shows that tourists' perceptions of tourist facilities and infrastructure at Kurenai Beach are on good criteria, with a percentage value of 63.57%. The facilities and infrastructure that received the highest score were places to relax, with a score of 74.5%. The facilities and infrastructure with the lowest score are trash can facilities, with a score of 51.7%. In general, the facilities and infrastructure at Kurenai Beach need to be completed and have been arranged accordingly.

Some of the tourism facilities and infrastructure at Kurenai Beach, such as parking lots, restaurants, stalls, and toilets, are newly built. While other tourism facilities and infrastructure at Kurenai Beach have been in place for a long time, some tourists suggest

## "Tourists' perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach tourism"

that more attention should be paid to the existing facilities and infrastructure so that tourism activities can run well. According to Fajriah and Massadun (2014), the availability of facilities and infrastructure in a tourist attraction is very important in attracting and increasing the number of visitors, which can affect the development and progress of the tourist attraction.

### 2. Tourists' Perceptions of Accessibility

Accessibility is the ease of achieving goals related to comfort, safety, and travel time from one place to another (Nabila & Widiyastuti, 2018). The comfort and ease of accessibility experienced or perceived by tourists is influenced by road conditions, road width, availability of transport, and road signs to tourist sites. The results of the interviews on tourists' perceptions of the accessibility conditions of Kurenai Beach can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. Tourists' Perceptions of Accessibility**

Tourists' perceptions of accessibility	ΣTS	Percentage (%)
Road conditions	428	70,7
Road width	408	67,4
Transportation availability	367	60,7
Road signs	362	59,8
<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>391,250</b>	<b>64,67</b>
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 3 shows that tourists have a good perception of the accessibility of the Kurenai Beach tourist site, with a percentage value of 64.67%. The road conditions to Kurenai Beach have the highest perception value, while the availability of road signs has the lowest perception value.

The journey to Kurenai Beach only takes one route if the journey starts from the direction of Gorontalo City. The means of transport used to reach tourist destinations can be public transport and private vehicles. The interview results showed that 117 respondents used private cars to visit tourist attractions, and three others used public transport. Tourists who come to Kurenai Beach are dominated by tourists from Gorontalo City, who choose to visit Kurenai Beach because of its proximity to Gorontalo City, with a travel time of ±15-30 minutes. In addition, this tour is much cheaper than other beach tours in Gorontalo Province. Tourists consider these factors, making Kurenai Beach the leading tourist destination that can be visited. The interview results showed that as many as 70.2% of the respondents stated that Kurenai Beach was the top tourist destination. Furthermore, 89.3% of the tourists surveyed had visited Kurenai Beach 2-5 times. The number of visits and the enthusiasm of tourists to visit Kurenai Beach is high, so special attention should be paid to the beach's accessibility for tourists.

Although the results of the analysis of tourists' perceptions of the accessibility of Kurenai Beach are generally in the good category, tourists still hope that efforts will be made to improve accessibility. This aspect of accessibility needs to be a concern for both the government and tourism managers so that tourists' journeys to tourist sites are more comfortable. Tourists perceive the condition of roads to tourist sites to be inadequate; many have potholes and need to be more comprehensive, even though the access roads are used to visit tourist attractions. According to Handayani et al. (2019), accessibility conditions significantly impact the comfort of tourism activities and should be considered as an effort to support appropriate tourism activities.

### 3. Tourists' Perception of Tourism Attraction

Tourist attraction is the availability and use of the environment in tourist attractions as an element that attracts tourists to visit these tourist attractions. Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism states that tourist attraction is everything that has uniqueness, convenience, and value from the environment managed by humans so that it becomes a place of means for tourist visits.

The tourist attractions available at Kurenai Beach are natural scenery/relaxation/recreation/white sand, snorkelling/diving/water sports, fishing, swimming, and camping. Tourists' perceptions of tourist attractions at Kurenai Beach are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Tourists' Perception of Kurenai Beach's Tourist Attraction**

Tourists' Perception of Tourism Attraction	ΣTS	Percentage (%)
Natural scenery/Relaxation/ Recreation/ White sand	461	80,2
Snorkeling/Diving/Water Sport	234	74,3
Fishing	169	61,5
Swimming	240	73,8
Camping	224	75,9
<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>265,60</b>	<b>73,1</b>
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Good</b>	

## "Tourists' perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach tourism"

Based on Table 4, it is known that tourists' perception of the attractiveness of Kurenai Beach meets good criteria, with a percentage value of 73.1%. The indicator of tourist perception of the tourist attraction of Kurenai Beach received the highest percentage value compared to other indicators of tourist perception of the existing tourism of Kurenai Beach. The acquisition of this value proves that the tourist attraction of Kurenai Beach dominates other indicators in its existence as a tourist destination.

Wiradiputra and Brahmanto (2016) stated that the attractiveness of a good tourist area can influence tourist interest in the number of tourist visits. However, the attention of tour managers is needed to maintain the existence of tourist attractions so as not to decrease. According to Hardiyanti and Subari (2020), tourist attractiveness in a tourist area is closely related to the use of natural resources that need to be maintained to maintain these tourist attractions from time to time.

### 4. Tourists' Perception of Tourism Infrastructure

Tourism infrastructure is an artificial resource in a tourist destination to meet the needs of tourists, such as bridges, power grids, communication networks, and clean water facilities (Dalimunthe et al., 2020). The availability of infrastructure in a tourist destination is one of the things that tourists consider when visiting a tourist area. Tourism managers or owners need to pay attention to the availability of infrastructure so that tourism activities can run well and the number of tourists can be maintained. The tourism infrastructure available at Kurenai Beach includes communication networks, electricity networks, and clean water facilities. Tourists' perceptions of the tourism infrastructure at Kurenai Beach are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Tourists' Perception of Kurenai Beach Tourism Infrastructure**

Tourists' Perception of Tourism Infrastructure	ΣTS	Percentage (%)
Communication Network	445	73,6
Power grid	373	61,7
Clean Water Installation	411	67,9
<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>409,67</b>	<b>67,71</b>
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 5 shows that tourists' perception of tourism infrastructure is good, with a percentage value of 67.71%. The communication network has the highest percentage value of 73.6%. The high perception of tourists shows that communication and internet network access are available in the tourist area of Kurenai Beach. Electricity and clean water networks still need the managers' attention, although they are in a good category. The field observations show that lighting is unavailable at this location, so tourist activities are recommended to be carried out only from morning to evening. The availability of clean water at this site is minimal, as there are only two sources of water for washing and bathing, which are a considerable distance away. According to Moerwanto and Juniasmono (2017), infrastructure is required as a form of readiness and one of the essential aspects of carrying out a tourist activity.

### 5. Tourists' Perception of the Quality of Tourist Areas

The quality of tourist areas is part of several other indicators that determine the success of a tourism activity. Tourist areas can be judged by the satisfaction with the use of facilities, the cleanliness, the comfort of traveling, and the satisfaction of tourists during tourist activities. Some of these components can increase tourists' interest in visiting a tourist area. Therefore, paying attention to and improving the quality of tourist areas is necessary to maintain and increase tourist interest in these attractions. Tourists' perceptions of the quality of the Kurenai Beach tourism are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Tourists' Perception of the Quality of Tourist Areas**

Tourists' Perception of the Quality of Tourist Areas	ΣTS	Percentage (%)
Tourism Hygiene	392,07	64,8
Satisfaction of the Use of Facilities and Infrastructure	376,50	62,2
Travel Convenience	268,20	71,6
Tourism Satisfaction	268,20	71,6
<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>326,24</b>	<b>67,5</b>
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 6 shows that tourists' perception of the quality of tourist destinations is good, with a percentage value of 67.5%. The indicator with the lowest percentage is tourists' perception of cleanliness and satisfaction with using facilities and infrastructure. Based on the results of the interviews, some tourists stated that the cleanliness of tourism and the availability of facilities and

## "Tourists' perception of the existing condition of Kurenai Beach tourism"

infrastructure at the Kurenai Beach tourist site still need to be improved. The availability of trash cans that are still lacking and the availability of infrastructure facilities, which need to be completed and updated, also affect tourists' perceptions. According to Budiyo and Soelistyari (2016), the quality of tourist sites is closely related to their beauty, accompanied by the cleanliness of tourists, the satisfaction of traveling, and the comfort of tourist activities. Hence, these aspects must be considered to maintain the quality of tourist sites.

### 6. Recapitulation of Tourists' Perceptions of The Existence of Kurenai Beach Tourism

A recapitulation of tourist perceptions of the existence of Kurenai Beach tourism, both tourist perceptions of the facilities and infrastructure, tourist perceptions of accessibility, tourist perceptions of attractiveness, tourist perceptions of infrastructure, and tourist perceptions of the quality of Kurenai Beach tourist areas can be seen in Table 7.

**Table 7. Recapitulation of Tourists' Perceptions of the Existence of Kurenai Beach**

Recapitulation of Tourists' Perceptions of Existing Kurenai Beach Tourism	ΣTS	Percentage (%)
Tourists' perception of the facilities and infrastructure	384,57	63,57
Tourists' perception of Accessibility	391,25	64,67
Tourists' perception of tourist attraction	265,60	73,1
Tourists' perception of tourist infrastructure	409,67	67,71
Tourists' perception of the quality of tourist areas	409,67	67,71
<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>372,15</b>	<b>67,4</b>
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 7 shows that the tourists' perception of the existing conditions of Kurenai Beach tourism is generally on good criteria, with a percentage value of 67.4%. Although it meets good criteria, the percentage value achieved is relatively low, so it is necessary to improve all aspects that support tourism activities at the Kurenai Beach tourism site. Widari (2021) stated that the assessment of tourists' perceptions of the existing conditions of a tourist area can help managers improve and evaluate the existence of tourism to maintain the existence of a tourist attraction.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Tourists' perception of the condition of the existence of Kurenai Beach tourism is assessed from five perception components, namely the physical condition of facilities and infrastructure, accessibility, attractiveness, infrastructure tourist perception, and the quality of the area is in a good category with a value of 67.4%. Although it meets good criteria, the percentage value achieved is relatively low, so it is necessary to improve all aspects that support tourism activities at the Kurenai Beach tourist site.

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