

Urban Tourism: A Potential as Tourism Attraction in Gorontalo City

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the potential of urban tourism as a tourist attraction in Gorontalo City. This type of research is qualitative, with data collection methods through observation, interviews, literature studies, and documentation. In this research, interviews and observations were conducted as primary data, and literature studies and documentation were used as secondary data. The data in this study were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The results of this study show the potential of urban tourism in Gorontalo City, namely the governor's office, old town area, monument of Gorontalo national hero Nani Wartabone, Gorontalo culinary and culinary center, Gorontalo State University, Gorontalo Mall, Gorontalo central traditional market, city park, Taruna Remaja field, Dulohupa traditional house, Popa Eyato Museum, Tamendao Beach, Mufidah souvenir, Kerawang Shop, Baiturrahim Mosque and Hunto Mosque, Lahilote Swimming Pool and Sport Center, and Otanaha Fort. Furthermore, tourism-supporting components such as road availability and various modes of transportation, Djalaludin Airport, Gorontalo Port, and Dungingi Terminal There are also clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies; banks and money changers; mini markets; police stations to ensure the safety of tourists; and the Gorontalo City tourism office. The development of urban tourism attractions can be realized with the cooperation of all tourism stakeholders, both local government and the private sector.

Keywords: *Tourism Potential, Urban Tourism, Tourism Attraction*

INTRODUCTION

Gorontalo is one of the provinces on the island of Sulawesi that has many tourist attractions that need to be maximized and developed. This province has a very diverse range of tourist attractions, including natural, cultural, historical, artistic, and man-made attractions. These various tourist attractions can attract a number of tourists, supported by tourism development efforts made by the provincial government. One of the efforts made by the Gorontalo provincial government to support the development of provincial tourism is to form a Regional Tourism Promotion Agency (BPPD) consisting of pentahelix elements, namely academics, business, community, government, and media (ABCGM). This agency functions to encourage the advancement of tourism in Gorontalo Province, especially in Gorontalo City.

Gorontalo City is the capital of Gorontalo Province. As the only urban area in Gorontalo Province, Gorontalo City has the potential to develop urban tourism. Of the 5 districts and cities in Gorontalo Province, data from the provincial tourism office shows that

Gorontalo City has the highest number of tourist visits compared to the other 4 districts. In addition, the data shown by BPS Gorontalo City also proves that the number of domestic and foreign tourist visits to Gorontalo City continues to increase within the past three years (2017–2019). There were 176,351 tourists visiting Gorontalo City in 2017, which then grew rapidly to 276,307 in 2019 (BPS Gorontalo City, 2020). This supports the argument that Gorontalo City has the potential to be developed as a tourist destination, especially for urban tourism.

Urban tourism is a tourist activity conducted in urban or metropolitan areas and involves interaction between visitors and the environment related to the city. Usually, tourists do urban tourism motivated by business activities, conferences, entertainment, sports, education, or special interests or culture. In short, urban tourism is a form of tourism activity focused on urban areas that utilizes urban elements and everything related to city life (service centers and economic activities) as a tourist attraction (Lapko, 2014).

Based on the results of research conducted by Wardhani in 2012, countries in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, showed a significantly increasing number of urban tourism tourist visits, which reached 69.6 million people in 2010, compared to data from 2000, which showed 36.1 million tourist visits. This tourist activity contributes 4.6% to the country's revenue in ASEAN. As a city that is used as the center of government and industry in Gorontalo Province, Gorontalo City has the potential to be developed as an urban tourism destination, but until now no such development has been carried out in Gorontalo City. The increasing number of tourist visits to Gorontalo City and tourist visits to urban areas in ASEAN countries, especially Indonesia, is an opportunity for Gorontalo City to be developed as an urban tourism destination and attract tourists to visit. Considering this opportunity, a study on the potential of urban tourism as a tourist attraction in Gorontalo City needs to be carried out and studied further. In addition, the components of tourist attractions in Gorontalo City need to be identified to support the development of Gorontalo City as an urban tourism destination.

Tourists, especially those from rural areas, are attracted to visit a city because it is considered a center of opportunity and high social activity, so visiting the city becomes one of the options for a vacation because facilities in the city have relatively easy access. The development of infrastructure in the city attracts visitors, not only urban residents looking for better livelihood opportunities, but also makes the city a cheap and easily accessible recreational area. According to Hall & Page (2006), the main reasons why people visit cities in their leisure time include (1) sightseeing; (2) participation in cultural, religious, or sporting events; (3) vacation; (4) shopping; (5) personal business; (6) visiting family or relatives; and (7) education and/or participation in business meetings, trade shows, or conferences. Urban tourism types can be identified by the following characteristics:

1. National capital and/or cultural center city
2. The center of a metropolitan city or a city full of history
3. The oldest part of a city

4. A waterfront area that has been equipped with urban facilities
5. Industrialized city
6. Entertainment centers and family playgrounds
7. Tourist service center

Some previous studies have defined urban tourism, including Selby (2004), which argues that urban tourism is a form of tourism development with tourist sites located in the city, where areas or spots in the city, the elements of the city, and even the city itself become a major tourism commodity with the aim of supporting the city's economy. Meanwhile, in the sub-section of the book entitled "Urban Tourism Resources," published by the Trisakiti Tourism Institute, it states that urban tourism is a tourist activity that occurs in metropolitan areas and involves interaction between visitors and the environment with respect to the city. Furthermore, Tondobala (2012) argues that the growth and development of tourist areas in a city depend on several things:

1. How to utilize the potential of existing attractions
2. Exploring the potential that has not been developed;
3. Supporting tourist attraction development opportunities with the availability of infrastructure and facilities in accordance with environmental conditions; and
4. Conduct professional and sustainable management of the area.

In developing an object of tourist attraction, the main components need to be fulfilled. Tourism experts are still debating the main components; however, the basic components of a tourist attraction are in accordance with the components proposed by Yoeti (2008), namely attractions, accessibility, and amenity. On the other hand, Cooper (1993) emphasizes that there are four basic components that must be met by a tourist attraction: (1) attractions, such as natural tourism, man-made tourism, and other attractions; (2) amenity, such as the availability of accommodation, restaurants, travel agents, souvenir shops, places of worship, and various other public facilities; (3) accessibility, such as the availability of transportation facilities and adequate road conditions and connections; and (4) ancillary services, additional services provided by the government in supporting tourism activities, such as Tourist Information Centers and stakeholders who play a role in tourism.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a type of qualitative research that uses observation (direct observation), interviews, literature studies, and documentation as data collection methods. This research uses primary data as the source of data obtained through interviews and direct observation in the field. In addition, secondary data was obtained through a literature study. Data analysis in this research is qualitative descriptive data analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Urban Tourism Potential in Gorontalo City

Gorontalo City is the capital city of Gorontalo Province, with an area of 79.59 km², or 0.71% of Gorontalo Province. As the capital of the province, this city has various tourism potentials that can be developed as urban tourism. The tourism potentials are the governor's office, old town area, historical monument of Gorontalo Nani Wartabone national hero, Gorontalo culinary and culinary center, campus, Gorontalo State University, Gorontalo Mall or shopping center, Gorontalo central traditional market, city park, Taruna Remaja field, Dulohupa traditional house, Popa Eyato Museum, Tamendao beach, Mufidah souvenir, Kerawang shop, Baiturrahim Mosque and Hunto Mosque (Sultan Amai), Lahilote Swimming Pool and Sport Center, and Ot.



Figure 1. Urban Tourism Potential in Gorontalo City

Sumber: Google

To be clear, the above potentials, such as the governor's office, are built on a mountainous area with a very beautiful view of the mountains, rivers, and Gorontalo city and cool air. The governor's office building also has a charming architectural design. Not far from the governor's office is Tamendao Beach, which is located not far from Gorontalo City. The beach area is laid out in such a way as to offer a variety of Indonesian cuisine, especially Gorontalo specialties, with the charm of sea views, mountains, and beautiful sunsets as the main attractions, supported by live music entertainment that makes tourists feel at home in this place. Tamendao Beach is the most popular place for local tourists to enjoy a weekend getaway with family or a youth hangout that is always crowded every day. Not only that, but this place is also a highly recommended choice for guests, both domestic and foreign. Like other cities, Gorontalo City also has a mall, Gorontalo Mall, which can be used as a shopping place, especially for tourists from the suburbs. Not far from the mall is the Biturrahim Mosque, which is the biggest mosque in Gorontalo City. As an area where the majority of people are Muslims, Gorontalo City offers many Islamic spots that are worth visiting. Besides the Baiturrahim Mosque, there is also the Hunto (Sultan Amai) Mosque, which has a long history and was built as a proof of the Sultan's love for his empress. This story is similar to the story of Shah Jehan in India, who built the Taj Mahal for his wife Mumtaz Mahal, which until now has been one of the seven wonders of the world. In the Gorontalo City area, there is Lahilote Swimming Pool, which can be used as a

swimming training place or for tourism. This pool is equipped with various facilities such as gajebo, stands, canteen, adult and children pools, changing rooms and rinse rooms, as well as toilets, a beautiful garden, a large parking lot, and so on. Next to the pool is a sports center, which is very suitable for tourists who like to exercise or do wellness tourism or sports tourism. Another option for swimming is at Blue Marlin Beach, which also offers an aesthetic swimming pool and dining area.

For tourists who have an interest in culture and history, in Gorontalo City there is a traditional Gorontalo house, the dulohupa. Dulohupa is a stilt house made of wood and planks. This place is built, maintained, and arranged in such a way as to display authentic and aesthetic elements. Not only that, Gorontalo also has a museum that stores many historical relics of Gorontalo, namely the Popa Eyato Museum. Then, tourists can visit Otanaha Fort, which is located on top of a mountain in Dembe village with a view of the mountains and Limboto Lake, which stretches over 25.37 km². This fort is one of the evidences of the history of the kingdom in Gorontalo, built by King Ilato in 1522 AD with building materials containing a mixture of Maleo bird egg whites, a typical bird of the Gorontalo region. There is also an old town area located near the mall and Baiturrahim mosque. The buildings in this area are still heavily influenced by Dutch architecture. Tourists can see a snapshot of the past by walking around the old town area. In the middle of the old town, there is a youth taruna field with a monument to a national hero from Gorontalo, Mr. Nani Wartabone. In the morning, this field is used as a sports area and is car-free. There is also a tennis court and a basketball court. In the afternoon and evening, this area transforms into a playground for children and a culinary area with varied menus and affordable prices, making it crowded every day. In this area, visitors often find foreign tourists doing culinary exploration because this area is very close to many hotels and can be reached only on foot from various hotels in Gorontalo City.

The historical and cultural tourism above is very educational and is not only visited by tourists but often also by students. Speaking of education, Gorontalo Province has many public and private universities, one of which is Gorontalo State University, which is also competing with other campuses in showing the splendor of the campus and, of course, with extraordinary academic and non-academic achievements. There are also shopping centers and souvenir shops, so tourists don't have to worry about buying ole-ole.

2. Supporting Components of Urban Tourism in Gorontalo City

The supporting components of tourism are important and cannot be separated from travel activities. The availability of roads and various modes of transportation in the city has been maximized so that all tourist attractions can be easily accessed by tourists and business people. As a tourist destination, Gorontalo Province, especially Gorontalo City, has various gateways as access for tourists to enter and exit Gorontalo tourist destinations, namely Djalaludin Airport, Gorontalo Port, and Duingi Terminal. Not only that, the availability of other facilities such as clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies, banks and money

changers, shops or mini markets, police stations to ensure the safety of tourists, and the Gorontalo City tourism office have been well prepared to help meet the needs of tourists while in Gorontalo City.

The availability of accommodation in Gorontalo City has also been adequate based on data from the Gorontalo City Tourism Office (2022) the list of hotels and inns are Aston Gorontalo Hotel & Villas, Grand Q Hotel, Maqna Hotel, Amaris Hotel, New Melati Hotel, Imperial Hotel, Milinov Butique Hotel, Krawang City Gorontalo Hotel, Grand City hotel, Crystal Green Hotel, Damhil Hotel, Eljie Hotel, New rahmat Hotel, Diponegoro Hotel, Guest House, Hotel New Horizon, Hotel Karina, Hotel Kasuari Baru, Hotel Liberty, The Garden Hotel, Hotel Mutiara, Hotel Ferryzone, Hotel Paradise, Hotel Saronde, Hotel Sumberia, Hotel Tentram, Penginapan Anugrah, Penginapan Imam Bonjol, Palems, Penginapan Salsabila, Penginapan New Tentram, Sunrise Hotel, Crystal Harmoni Hotel, Hotel Santorini, R7 Homestay, Gorontalo Inn Hotel, Galaxy Hotel GOrontalo, New Sentris Homestay, Hotel Meranti and Wisma 88.

In addition to tourist attractions and accommodations, facilities in the form of restaurants or eateries are also often places that tourists are looking for. The following is a list of restaurants, eateries, and food courts in Gorontalo City based on data from the Gorontalo City Tourism Office (2022), namely Angelato, Roemah Marly, Double Dippo, Community House, Kingdom Foodcourt & Coffee Toffee, Domestique, RJT Foodcourt, Green Park Caffee & Foodcourt, RM Pino's, Food Pedia Gorontalo, Marry Coffee, D'Cozy, Markas Food Sport and Music, RM Terapung Ainun, Janzen Eatery, Rechesee Factory Gorontalo, KFC, Mc Donald, Pizza Hut, Bakso Lapangan Tembak Senayan, Cabe Merah, Sollaria, J'Co, Coto Daeng Je'ne Berang, RM. Wong Solo, Manna Bakery & Caffee, RM Coto Makassar Semanan, Hungrypedia Gorontalo, Rumah makan Olivia, Titik Temu, Grande Bristo, and Double Dippo.



Figure 2. Supporting Components of Urban Tourism in Gorontalo City

Sumber: Google

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been done, Gorontalo City has the potential to be developed as an urban tourism destination because there is a governor's office, an old town area, a historical monument of Gorontalo national hero Nani Wartabone, Gorontalo culinary and culinary center, Gorontalo State University, Gorontalo Mall or shopping center, Gorontalo central traditional market, city park, Taruna Remaja field, Dulohupa traditional house, Popa Eyato Museum, Tamendao beach, Mufidah souvenir, Kerawang shop, Baiturrahim Mosque and Hunto Mosque (Sultan Amai), Lahilote Swimming Pool and Sport Center, and Ot. In addition, there are also tourism components that support the potential of Gorontalo City as an urban tourism destination, such as the availability of roads and various modes of transportation and the gate as an access point for tourists to enter and exit Gorontalo tourist destinations, namely Djalaludin Airport, Gorontalo Port, and Duingingi Terminal. Furthermore, other facilities such as clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies, banks and money changers, shops or mini markets, police stations to ensure the safety of tourists, and the Gorontalo City tourism office. The development of urban tourism will greatly impact the improvement and maintenance of each tourist attraction or object that is part of urban tourism. Urban tourism, which will become the new face of Gorontalo City, will encourage publication and promotion so that it can increase the number of visits to Gorontalo Province, especially Gorontalo City. The development of urban tourism attractions can be realized with the cooperation and synergy of all tourism stakeholders, both local government and the private sector.

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