

Enhancing Sustainable Tourism Through Open Innovation: The Mediating Role of Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of Open Innovation on Sustainable Tourism with Competitive Advantage as a mediating variable in tourism businesses in Riau Islands. The study employed a quantitative approach using an explanatory, cross-sectional survey design. The sample consisted of 250 tourism business actors, namely business owners or managers, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through online questionnaires, structured interviews, and five-point Likert-scale measurements. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 26; path significance and mediation decisions were interpreted using p-values. The results indicate that Open Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage and Sustainable Tourism. In contrast, Competitive Advantage does not have a significant effect on Sustainable Tourism and does not mediate the relationship between Open Innovation and Sustainable Tourism. The findings imply that stronger collaboration, external learning, and open innovation practices are crucial for advancing tourism sustainability. The study is limited by its cross-sectional design, its geographic focus on Riau Islands, and the use of a single mediator. Future research is recommended to adopt a longitudinal design, include variables such as green innovation capability or government policy, and expand the research setting. The originality of this study lies in testing the relationship among Open Innovation, Competitive Advantage, and Sustainable Tourism in the context of tourism MSMEs in Riau Islands.

Keywords: Open Innovation, Competitive Advantage, Sustainable Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most strategic sectors in economic development because it contributes significantly to national income, job creation, and local economic growth. At the same time, tourism is increasingly used as an important indicator of a destination's competitiveness, attractiveness, and long-term sustainability. However, efforts to implement sustainable tourism comprehensively, by balancing economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions, have not yet been realized effectively across destinations. This condition reflects the growing need for integrated strategies that combine environmental protection, local community empowerment, digital promotion, and destination governance that is responsive to global change.

Sustainable tourism is essential because, although tourism can generate substantial economic benefits, it may also create serious social and environmental problems when it is not managed responsibly. Previous studies have shown that tourism can contribute to environmental degradation, habitat destruction, cultural change, carbon emissions, and social polarization if sustainability principles are ignored (Butler, 1999; Gössling et al., 2023; Sharpley, 2020; Streimikiene et al., 2021). Moreover, shifts in tourist preferences indicate that travelers are becoming more concerned with environmental and social responsibility, leading them to prefer destinations that demonstrate stronger sustainability commitments (Elhoushy et al., 2025; Mowforth & Munt, 2016).

These challenges are also visible in Riau Islands, where tourism development has been accompanied by environmental pressure, unequal socio-economic benefits, waste-management problems, and the vulnerability of coastal and island destinations to climate-related risks. The region has considerable marine and cultural

potential, making sustainable tourism development highly relevant for Riau Islands and the wider archipelagic tourism context. Issues such as coral reef damage, plastic waste, weak stakeholder coordination, and the need for stronger community participation underscore the urgency of building a more inclusive and environmentally responsible tourism model (Andini et al., 2025; Darmawan, 2020; Ikhwan et al., 2020; Khairunnisa et al., 2024).

In the tourism industry, competitive advantage no longer depends solely on conventional facilities. It increasingly rests on innovation that enables firms to create distinctive and memorable tourist experiences. In this context, open innovation becomes especially important because it allows tourism firms to access external knowledge, technologies, and collaborative networks that can accelerate innovation processes and improve organizational adaptability (Chesbrough, 2015; Rehman et al., 2024). This logic is also consistent with the broader sustainability agenda reflected in the Triple Bottom Line and its subsequent development into the Quadruple Bottom Line, which emphasizes the integration of economic, social, environmental, and cultural or governance dimensions (Elkington, 2017; Ragazou et al., 2024).

Theoretically, this study is grounded in Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which explains how organizations respond to environmental change through sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring resources (Teece, 2007). Within this perspective, open innovation represents organizational openness to external ideas and collaborations for value creation (West & Bogers, 2014). Empirically, prior research has shown that open innovation can strengthen competitive advantage and promote sustainable tourism outcomes (Lalicic, 2018; Musiello-Neto et al., 2021; Rehman et al., 2024). However, empirical explanations of whether Competitive Advantage translates Open Innovation into Sustainable Tourism remain limited, particularly among tourism MSMEs in Riau Islands. This gap is important because competitiveness in small island destinations may be driven by market access, price, and location rather than by sustainability-oriented differentiation.

Building on these arguments, this study proposes that innovation in the Riau Islands tourism sector can support not only business survival but also sustainable development and destination competitiveness. The study, therefore, aims to analyze the effect of Open Innovation on Sustainable Tourism in tourism businesses in Riau Islands and to test whether Competitive Advantage mediates this relationship. It also seeks to explain how innovation openness can strengthen business competitiveness while advancing tourism sustainability from the perspective of Dynamic Capabilities Theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic Capabilities Theory was introduced by David Teece and has become an important foundation in strategic management, particularly in explaining how organizations adapt to rapidly changing environments. The theory emphasizes that firms need the capability to integrate, build, and reconfigure resources to respond to change and create competitive advantage in dynamic markets (Teece, 2007). In the context of sustainable tourism, Dynamic Capabilities Theory offers a useful lens for understanding how tourism businesses respond to social, environmental, and market challenges. In tourism businesses, dynamic capabilities are reflected in the ability to monitor shifts in tourist demand, adopt digital tools, learn from stakeholders, and reconfigure services to meet sustainability expectations (Nguyen et al., 2023). Open innovation operationalizes these capabilities because it enables firms to sense opportunities through external knowledge, seize them through collaboration, and reconfigure resources into new products, processes, and destination practices (Correia et al., 2020; Randhawa et al., 2016). Accordingly, Dynamic Capabilities Theory connects the three constructs of this study: Open Innovation is positioned as a capability-building mechanism, Competitive Advantage as a strategic outcome of reconfiguration, and Sustainable Tourism as a broader destination-level outcome produced when innovation is directed toward economic, social, environmental, and cultural value.

Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism refers to tourism development that balances present economic benefits with the protection of environmental resources, community well-being, cultural continuity, and the ability of destinations to remain viable in the future. Early discussions emphasized the need to manage tourism growth so that it does not degrade

the very resources on which destinations depend (Butler, 1999; Sharpley, 2020). More recent reviews show that sustainable tourism is increasingly assessed through multidimensional indicators that include economic contribution, environmental protection, social inclusion, cultural preservation, governance, and destination competitiveness (Gkoumas, 2019; Streimikiene et al., 2021).

The environmental dimension is particularly important because tourism activities can intensify energy use, emissions, waste production, and pressure on coastal ecosystems. Climate-related studies emphasize that destinations need carbon-management strategies, adaptation initiatives, and stakeholder coordination to reduce negative impacts while maintaining tourism value (Elhoushy et al., 2025; Gössling et al., 2023). For island and coastal destinations such as Riau Islands, this perspective is relevant because marine resources, beaches, coral reefs, and local environmental quality directly shape tourist experiences and long-term destination resilience.

The social and cultural dimensions also determine whether tourism development is sustainable. Tourism should generate fair economic benefits for host communities, strengthen local participation, and preserve local culture rather than turning communities into passive objects of tourism development (Anarta & Darwis, 2025; Mowforth & Munt, 2016; Partanen & Sarkki, 2021). Cultural sustainability indicators further show that heritage, local identity, and community-based experiences must be managed as strategic assets within sustainable cultural tourism (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025).

Governance and institutional capacity are equally important because sustainable tourism requires coordination among government, businesses, communities, and tourists. Local government efforts, ecotourism value-chain management, digital transformation, and government support have been shown to strengthen sustainable tourism practices when they are translated into clear standards, incentives, and collaborative mechanisms (Jokom et al., 2025; Kapera, 2018; Rivera & Gutierrez, 2019; Schönherr et al., 2023).

Therefore, this study conceptualizes Sustainable Tourism through four interrelated dimensions: economic, social, environmental, and cultural sustainability. In the Riau Islands context, these dimensions are not only normative goals but also practical requirements for managing waste, protecting coastal ecosystems, improving community benefits, and preserving local cultural experiences.

Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage is a central concept in business and management and has traditionally been associated with a firm's ability to create greater value for customers than its competitors through differentiation, cost leadership, or strategic focus (Aquino & Porter, 2022). In tourism, competitive advantage operates not only at firm level but also at destination level, because tourists evaluate the combined value of accessibility, service quality, authenticity, price, technology, safety, and sustainability (Királová, 2015; Rodríguez-Díaz & Pulido-Fernández, 2020).

For tourism MSMEs, competitive advantage may arise from unique local experiences, trust, digital marketing capability, service responsiveness, and the ability to integrate technology into the tourism value chain. There are many ways for Riau Islands to increase its competitive advantage, including building trust (Adha & Masnita, 2023), involving AI in marketing (Masnita, Ali, et al., 2024), implementing AI technology, and strengthening organizational structures that support internal decision-making (Masnita, Ramadina, et al., 2024).

However, the literature also suggests that competitiveness does not automatically become sustainability. A destination may be competitive because it is affordable, accessible, or commercially attractive, while sustainability requires stronger attention to environmental protection, community welfare, and cultural continuity. This distinction is important for the present study because Competitive Advantage is tested not only as a business-performance construct but also as a possible mechanism linking Open Innovation to Sustainable Tourism (Harahap et al., 2024; Hameed Marhoon & Omar, 2024; Streimikiene et al., 2021).

Accordingly, this study defines Competitive Advantage as the ability of tourism businesses to offer superior value through differentiation, cost efficiency, and market focus. Organizations that are adaptive, learning-

oriented, and innovation-oriented are expected to be better positioned to sustain their advantage over time (Correia et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2023).

Open Innovation

Open innovation refers to the use of internal and external ideas, knowledge, and pathways to accelerate innovation within organizations. Rather than relying exclusively on internal capabilities, firms can benefit from collaboration with universities, research institutions, business partners, communities, and other external actors in order to develop more innovative products and services (Chesbrough, 2015). It is commonly understood through inbound openness, such as acquiring ideas and technology from external actors, and outbound openness, such as sharing or commercializing internal knowledge beyond organizational boundaries. Reviews of open innovation emphasize that external knowledge, partnerships, and absorptive processes are critical for strengthening innovation performance in dynamic markets (Randhawa et al., 2016; West & Bogers, 2014).

In the tourism sector, open innovation is particularly relevant because tourism products are created through the interaction of many actors, including firms, communities, tourists, government agencies, technology providers, and destination-management organizations. Through open innovation, tourism MSMEs can access external resources, broaden their market reach, and improve the quality of tourism services while responding more effectively to sustainability demands (Lalicic, 2018; Musiello-Neto et al., 2021).

Recent tourism studies show that open innovation may appear in digital platforms, stakeholder co-creation, heritage-site transformation, big-data analytics, and collaborative destination governance (Cardoso et al., 2024; Lalicic, 2018; Naramski et al., 2022; Rehman et al., 2024). For MSMEs, these forms of openness are valuable because they compensate for limited internal resources and help firms access knowledge, technology, and market networks that would otherwise be difficult to build independently.

Thus, in this study, Open Innovation is positioned as a practical expression of dynamic capabilities. Tourism MSMEs that can absorb external ideas, collaborate with partners, and develop an innovation culture are expected to produce more distinctive services and more sustainable tourism practices.

Hypotheses Development

Based on Dynamic Capabilities Theory, firms that are open to external knowledge are more capable of identifying market opportunities, redesigning services, and combining internal resources with partner expertise. In hospitality and tourism, open innovation has been associated with stronger organizational strategy, learning, and sustainable competitive advantage (Musiello-Neto et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). Accordingly, the first hypothesis is proposed as follows: H1: Open Innovation has a positive effect on Competitive Advantage.

Open Innovation is also expected to contribute directly to Sustainable Tourism because it supports collaboration, learning, and the development of more environmentally and socially responsible tourism practices. Recent studies indicate that open innovation, big-data analytics, digital transformation, and stakeholder co-creation can strengthen sustainable tourism outcomes by improving decision-making, resource efficiency, tourist experience, and community participation (Jokom et al., 2025; Lalicic, 2018; Rehman et al., 2024; Schönherr et al., 2023). Therefore, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows: H2: Open Innovation has a positive effect on Sustainable Tourism.

Finally, Competitive Advantage is expected to support Sustainable Tourism when superiority is built on innovation, quality, cultural authenticity, efficient resource use, and responsible destination practices. Prior studies suggest that sustainability can become a source of tourism competitiveness when destinations integrate environmental and social value into their competitive positioning (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025; Rodríguez-Díaz & Pulido-Fernández, 2020; Streimikiene et al., 2021). Based on this reasoning, the third hypothesis is proposed as follows: H3: Competitive Advantage has a positive effect on Sustainable Tourism.

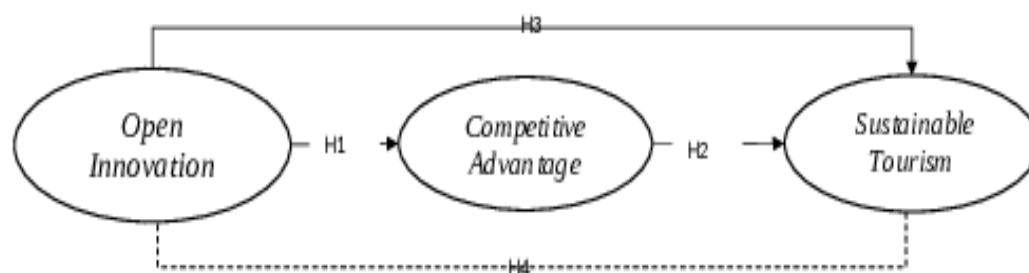


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach to test the causal relationships among Open Innovation, Competitive Advantage, and Sustainable Tourism, as well as the mediating role of Competitive Advantage. The study adopted an explanatory research design because it seeks to explain the position of each variable and identify the causal influence among them (Hair et al., 2019). Consistent with deductive survey research, the model was developed from theory and prior studies and then tested using cross-sectional data collected from tourism business actors (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020).

Variables and Measurement

The variables in this study were operationalized systematically. Open Innovation was defined as an innovation process involving internal and external collaboration to obtain new ideas, knowledge, and technology for value creation, and was measured through inbound open innovation, outbound open innovation, and innovation culture (Cardoso et al., 2024; Musiello-Neto et al., 2021). Competitive Advantage was defined as a firm's ability to provide superior value through differentiation, cost leadership, and focus (Correia et al., 2020). Sustainable Tourism was defined as tourism development that emphasizes economic, social, environmental, and cultural sustainability (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025; Jokom et al., 2025). All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Sample

The sample consisted of tourism business actors in Riau Islands, including businesses operating in restaurants, resorts, hotels, accommodation, and related tourism services. The required minimum sample size was calculated using G*Power 3.1 and yielded 213 respondents (Kang, 2021). In practice, 250 valid responses were collected and used in the analysis. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected directly from respondents using an online questionnaire and structured interviews. The respondents met the following criteria: they were owners or managers of tourism businesses in the Riau Islands; their businesses had operated for at least three years; they employed at least three permanent or contract workers; they had implemented at least one sustainability aspect in social, environmental, economic, or governance terms; they possessed a Business Identification Number (NIB); and they served domestic and/or international tourists.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 26. Hypothesis testing was interpreted using the probability value (p), with $p < 0.05$ as the criterion for statistical significance. The indirect effect was assessed using the Sobel probability value, also with $p < 0.05$ as the decision criterion.

RESULTS

A total of 250 online questionnaires distributed to tourism MSMEs in the Riau Islands were returned and deemed usable. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, SEM-AMOS, and the interpretation of structured interview results. Descriptive analysis was used to explain respondent characteristics, while SEM-AMOS was used to test the proposed hypotheses.

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	144	57.6
	Female	106	42.4
Age	20-25	46	18.4
	26-30	34	13.6
	31-35	75	30.0
	36-40	48	19.2
	>40	47	18.8
Highest Education	High School	85	34.0
	Diploma	84	33.6
	Bachelor's Degree	74	29.6
	Master's/Professional	5	2.0
	Doctorate	2	0.8
Position	Manager	141	56.4
	Senior Manager	71	28.4
	General Manager	33	13.2
	Director	5	2.0
Years in Operation	3 years	60	24.0
	4-6 years	73	29.2
	>7 years	117	46.8
	Total	250	100.0
Number of Employees	6-10 employees	112	44.8
	3-5 employees	82	32.8
	>10 employees	56	22.4
Business Type	Culinary/Restaurant	73	29.2
	Homestay/Accommodation	70	28.0
	Travel & Tour	45	18.0
	Local Crafts	33	13.2
	Other Tourism Businesses	29	11.6

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Implements Sustainable Tourism	Yes	151	60.4
	No	99	39.6

The respondent profile shows a predominance of male participants (57.6%), respondents aged 31-35 years (30.0%), high-school and diploma graduates, and managers (56.4%). Most businesses had operated for more than seven years (46.8%), employed 6-10 workers (44.8%), operated in the culinary or restaurant sector (29.2%), and had already implemented sustainable tourism practices (60.4%). This profile indicates that the respondents represent relatively established tourism businesses with operational experience and increasing adaptation to sustainability issues.

Before interpreting the path coefficients, it is important to ensure that the structural model demonstrates an adequate level of goodness of fit.

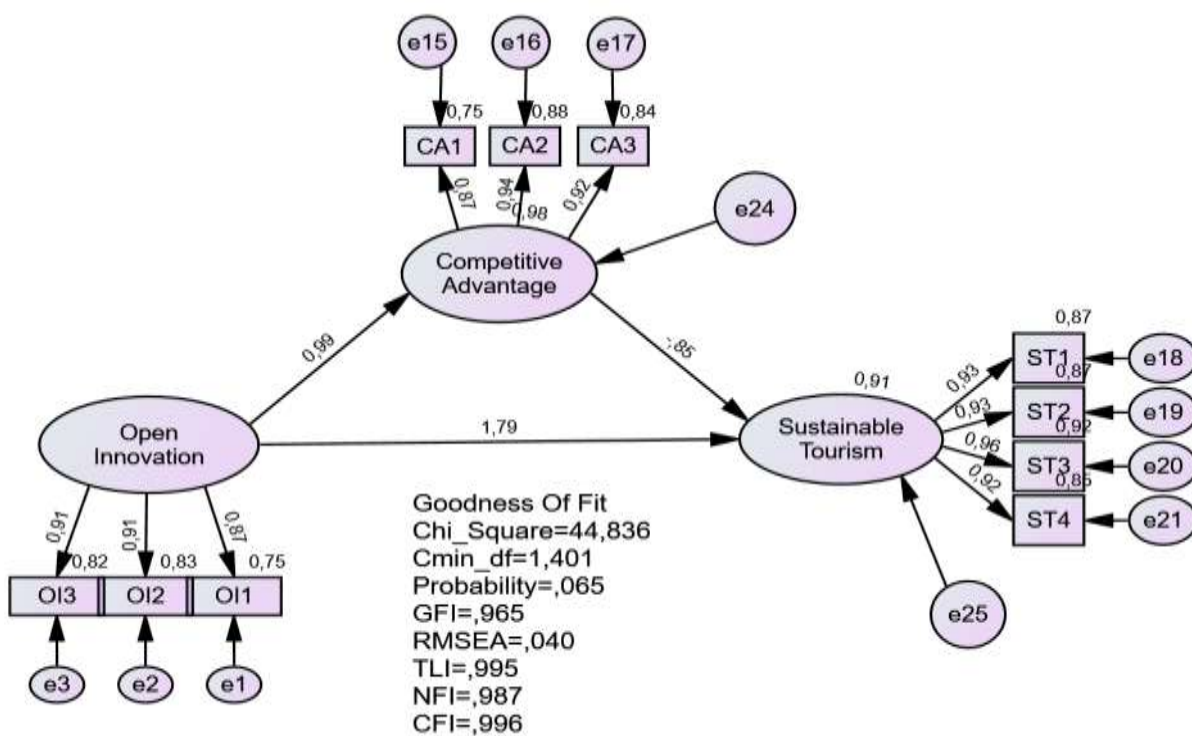


Figure 2. Structural Model Test Results

The structural model demonstrated good fit. The goodness-of-fit indices met the required criteria: Chi-Square = 44.836, CMIN/df = 1.401, Probability = 0.065, GFI = 0.965, RMSEA = 0.040, TLI = 0.995, NFI = 0.987, and CFI = 0.996. Structurally, Open Innovation has a positive effect on Competitive Advantage and Sustainable Tourism, whereas Competitive Advantage does not significantly strengthen Sustainable Tourism. Thus, the model is considered fit, and the direct influence of Open Innovation is more dominant in explaining Sustainable Tourism in the Riau Islands tourism context. To determine the explanatory power of the endogenous variables, the Squared Multiple Correlations results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Squared Multiple Correlations

Variable	Estimate
Competitive Advantage	0.978
Sustainable Tourism	0.915

The estimated values indicate that Competitive Advantage has a very strong explanatory contribution of 0.978, while Sustainable Tourism has an estimate of 0.915. Both values indicate that the model explains the endogenous variables very well.

Hypothesis testing was then conducted to examine the causal relationships among the constructs in accordance with the conceptual framework. The decision to accept or reject each hypothesis was based only on the p-value

using $p < 0.05$ as the significance criterion. The structural estimation results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Direct Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Dependent variable	Independent variable	Est.	S.E.	p	Decision
H1	Competitive Advantage	Open Innovation	1.095	0.059	0.000	Supported
H2	Sustainable Tourism	Open Innovation	2.390	1.365	0.040	Supported
H3	Sustainable Tourism	Competitive Advantage	-1.028	1.225	0.401	Not supported

The results show that H1 and H2 are supported, whereas H3 is not supported. Open Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage, with an estimate of 1.095 and $p = 0.000$, and also on Sustainable Tourism, with an estimate of 2.390 and $p = 0.040$. By contrast, Competitive Advantage does not have a significant effect on Sustainable Tourism because the estimate is negative (-1.028) and $p = 0.401$. These findings confirm the dominance of the direct effect of Open Innovation in the model.

The mediating effect of Competitive Advantage in the relationship between Open Innovation and Sustainable Tourism was then tested using the Sobel test, as shown in Figure 3.

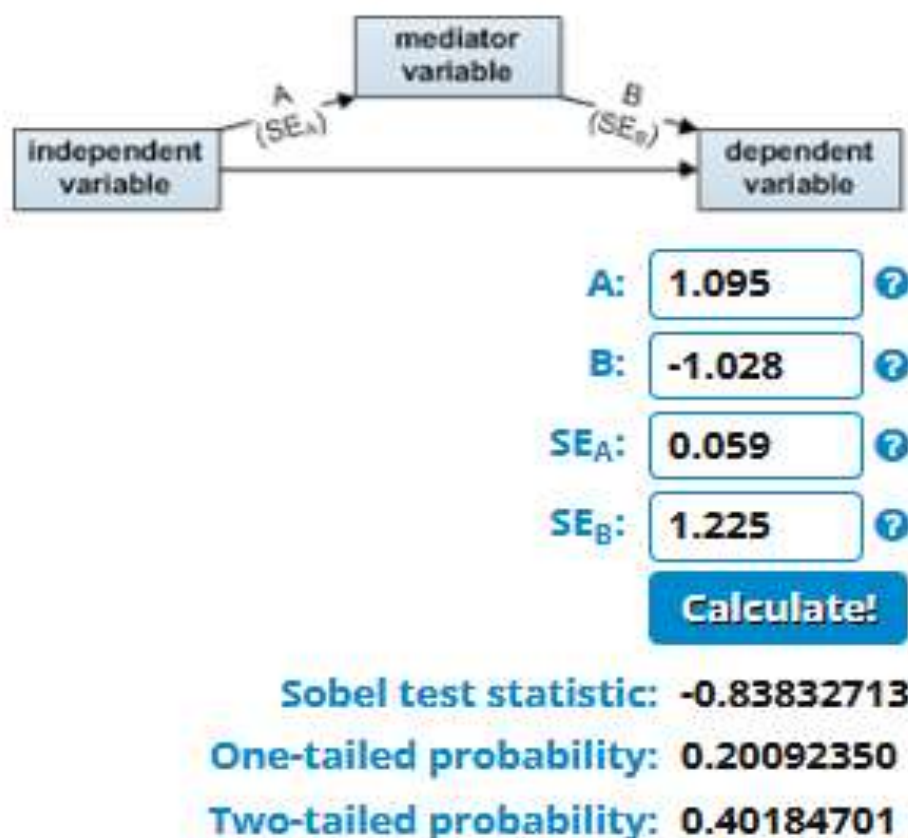


Figure 3. Sobel Test Results

Based on the Sobel test, the two-tailed probability is 0.402. Because this p-value is greater than 0.05, Competitive Advantage does not significantly mediate the effect of Open Innovation on Sustainable Tourism. Thus, the mediation hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Open Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage. This result confirms that the greater the openness of tourism business actors to ideas, technology, and external collaboration, the stronger their ability to build competitive superiority. From the perspective of Dynamic Capabilities Theory, this result is consistent with the notion that organizations capable of sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring resources are better positioned to develop competitiveness in dynamic environments (Teece, 2007). The finding is also in line with previous studies showing that open innovation strengthens competitive advantage through organizational learning, knowledge integration, and adaptive capability (Musiello-Neto et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023).

The direct effect of Open Innovation on Sustainable Tourism further shows that innovation openness does not merely improve business performance but also promotes more sustainable tourism practices. This finding supports the argument that sustainability in tourism emerges from stakeholder collaboration, knowledge exchange, and community involvement in creating economic, social, and environmental value simultaneously (Lalicic, 2018; Rehman et al., 2024). In the context of Riau Islands, this result is particularly relevant because sustainable tourism development depends on the ability of firms and destinations to mobilize external knowledge and collaborative networks in response to environmental and social challenges.

In contrast, Competitive Advantage does not have a significant effect on Sustainable Tourism, and this hypothesis is therefore rejected. This result indicates that the competitive strength owned by tourism businesses does not automatically translate into destination sustainability. In the Riau Islands context, business competitiveness may still rest more heavily on accessibility, geographic proximity, price, and service efficiency rather than on environmental, social, and cultural differentiation. As a consequence, the competitive advantage developed by firms may remain market-oriented and short-term, rather than sustainability-oriented. This finding differs from studies that position sustainability and competitive advantage as mutually reinforcing in tourism destinations (Jokom et al., 2025; Rodríguez-Díaz & Pulido-Fernández, 2020).

The mediation test further shows that Competitive Advantage does not significantly mediate the relationship between Open Innovation and Sustainable Tourism. This means that the effect of Open Innovation on Sustainable Tourism occurs directly rather than through Competitive Advantage. Theoretically, this finding remains consistent with Dynamic Capabilities Theory because dynamic capabilities may enable organizations to produce strategic change in sustainability practices without necessarily passing through conventional forms of competitive advantage first. In other words, in the Riau Islands tourism context, open innovation functions more as a direct transformation mechanism for sustainable tourism through collaboration, adaptation, and cross-actor learning.

The theoretical implication of this study is the need to distinguish clearly between market-based competitive advantage and sustainability-based competitive advantage. The findings show that competitive advantage does not automatically become a bridge toward sustainability. Future model development should therefore avoid treating competitive advantage as a single undifferentiated construct and should instead consider more specific dimensions, such as cost advantage, differentiation advantage, relational advantage, and green advantage.

The practical implication for tourism business actors in Riau Islands is that performance improvement strategies should not stop at increasing visitor numbers, promotion, or operational efficiency. Tourism firms need to transform open innovation into a sustainability-oriented innovation ecosystem that addresses waste management, energy efficiency, local supply chains, cultural experiences, and collaboration with communities.

For local government, the implication is that tourism policy should be directed more explicitly toward converting open innovation into measurable sustainability outcomes. This includes the development of permanent

collaboration platforms, incentives for green technology adoption, destination waste-management schemes, destination data integration, and sustainability standards that are applicable to MSMEs.

This study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design means that the causal relationships identified are better interpreted as structural tendencies at a single point in time rather than as long-term dynamics. Second, the Competitive Advantage construct may still be too general to distinguish between conventional forms of advantage and sustainability-based advantage. Third, because the respondents are dominated by tourism MSMEs in Riau Islands, the findings cannot automatically be generalized to destinations with different industrial structures. Fourth, the rejection of the mediation effect may also be influenced by omitted variables, such as absorptive capacity, green capability, stakeholder integration, or the quality of policy implementation.

Future studies should test this model longitudinally in order to determine whether a competitive advantage that is currently insignificant may exert an influence on sustainable tourism over the medium or long term. Further research should also include additional mediating or moderating variables that are more sensitive to destination contexts, such as green innovation capability, destination governance, stakeholder collaboration intensity, digital absorptive capacity, or community embeddedness. In the context of Riau Islands, future research may also compare tourism segments, such as shopping tourism, MICE, marine tourism, cultural tourism, and ecotourism.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study confirms that, in the context of tourism in Riau Islands, Open Innovation is a major driver of tourism transformation, both in building Competitive Advantage and in promoting Sustainable Tourism. By contrast, Competitive Advantage is not proven to be a direct determinant of Sustainable Tourism and therefore also fails to mediate the relationship between Open Innovation and Sustainable Tourism. The deeper meaning of this finding is that sustainability in developing destinations such as Riau Islands does not automatically arise from growing competitiveness; rather, it emerges from the ability of tourism actors to learn, collaborate, and reconfigure their business practices openly. Accordingly, the future strategy of Riau Islands tourism should not focus solely on increasing visitor numbers or market competitiveness, but should direct innovation consciously toward the creation of real sustainability value for the environment, society, local culture, and long-term destination resilience.

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