

# Customers Oriented Determinants of Product Quality Performance in Thailand: Mediating Role of Sustainability Efforts of Tourism Business performance

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## Abstract

Thailand is one of the top countries earning from tourism. The tourism industry plays a significant role in the country's economy. However, certain elements limit the industry to perform potentially. Hence, the present study is aimed to investigate the role of product quality performance affected by customer-oriented determinants with the mediating role of business sustainability. According to the present study, product feature reliability, and durability have a direct relationship with product quality performance. However, sustainable business mediates between product feather, reliability, durability, and product quality performance. Hence, 480 tourists who were declared respondents of the present study, were surveyed to collect primary data. This primary data was analyzed by using statistical software called Partial Least Square (PLS), to obtain the final results of the present study. It is concluded that increased value of product features, reliability, and durability also increase the value of business sustainability and product quality performance. The present study will help to boost quality product performance and tourism business sustainably particularly in Thailand.

**Keywords:** Product feature, product reliability, product durability, sustainable business, and product quality performance.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Developing countries recognize tourism as an expedite to their economic growth (Rahman & Saima, 2021). Because it is believed that the tourism industry demands less investment as compared to other industries. It is also a fact that tourism is one of the major means of creating new business and job opportunities that result in an effective increase in local income. The tourism industry in Thailand is considered one of the major industries that add sufficient value to the national economy. However, there are many elements that limit the potential of the tourism industry. According to the present study product and services offered by tourism, agencies have a significant role in tourism business sustainability and

quality performance of offered products and services.

The tourism industry in Thailand is considered the world's top tourism industry, however, regardless of such accomplishment, the tourism industry in the country does not mean that there are no controversies and problems with the industry (Alola, Eluwole, Lasisi, & Alola, 2021). Allegations by critics show that Thailand's tourism industry is proposed to quantity instead of quality. Moreover, tourists coming from different parts of the world, are convinced with the current products and services offered by tourism agencies in Thailand, however, they think that there is plenty of room available for tourism agencies to make their service and products more

convenient user-friendly. Hence, the present study is aimed to investigate the role of customer-oriented determinants of product quality performance in Thailand by exploring the mediating role of sustainability efforts of tourism business performance.

Hence, the present study is aimed to investigate the role of features, reliability, and durability of products and services offered by tourism agencies particularly concerning the tourism business sustainability and product quality performance. The present study will explore the relationship between business sustainability and product quality performance in the tourism industry of Thailand. By investigating the role of features, reliability, and durability of products in sustainable business and product quality performance, the present study will allow tourism agencies to enhance their business. Moreover, the present study is aimed to explore tourists' problems especially regarding product quality performance offered by tourism agencies.

The role of the present study is very significant to the tourism agencies as well as the tourists visiting Thailand coming from various parts of the world. The present study will allow tourism agencies to understand the relationship between feature, reliability, and durability of product and product quality performance. Moreover, the present study by describing the relationship between business sustainability and quality of product performance benefits the tourism agencies to increase their business performance. Furthermore, tourists will be able to identify perfect services or products availed from tourism agencies, hence, they can choose the best available services or products for them.

Many studies are available describing the role of features, reliability, and durability of a product (Alola et al., 2021). It is noticed that studies describing the role of sustainable business and product quality performance are also available in the past literature. However, the past literature missed investigating the relationship between feature, reliability, the durability of a product, and business sustainability. There was no study available describing the relationship between feature,

reliability, the durability of a product offered by tourism agencies in Thailand, and their product quality performance. Hence, the present study is a unique study describing the role of feature, reliability, durability of a product offered by tourism agencies in business sustainability and product quality performance.

The present study has both theoretical as well as practical implications. Theoretically, the present study investigates the relationship between feature, reliability, the durability of a product, business sustainability, and product quality performance. Practically the present study describes that both the tourism agencies and tourists will get significant benefits such as tourism agencies will be able to increase their product quality performance and the tourists will be able to recognize a better service and product for them.

## 2. Literature Review

Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework of the study. This study considered features, reliability and durability as independent variables. Business sustainability is considered a mediating variable. Finally, product quality performance is considered a dependent variable.

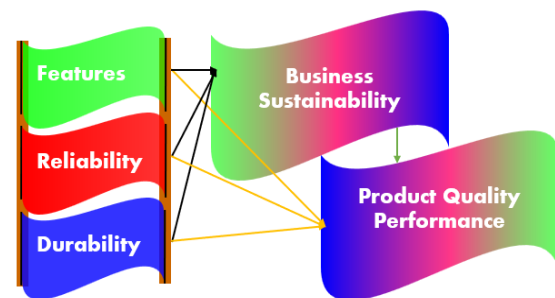


Figure 1: *Theoretical framework of the study shows the relationship between product features, reliability, durability, business sustainability, and product quality performance.*

### 2.1 Product Features and Business Sustainability

Business sustainability is one of the major elements of any kind of business. Businesses

spend their resources to increase the value of their business sustainability (Donner & Radić, 2021). Because business sustainability guarantees more profits. Besides profit gain, there are many other constructive benefits such as a continuous increase in quality customers, allowing businesses to stay ahead of their competitors, and providing opportunities to take a risk to bring innovation in business. are associated with the business sustainability of a business. Hence, business sustainability has significant importance particularly for business tourism agencies in Thailand. Certain factors directly influence the business sustainability of tourism agencies in the country, however, according to the present study features of a product offered by tourism agencies have a significant influence on their business sustainability. A product or service offered by tourism agencies having multiply features always attracts more tourists (Yang, 2021; Kerdpitak, 2022). A product with new and effective features distinguishes itself from all the other products with the same functionalities. Tourists always look for products or services offered by tourism agencies, that carry contemporary and modernized features such as inseparability, perishability, intangibility, and variability. Attracting new customers and increasing customer retention with the help of offered products and service has a significant positive influence on the business sustainability of tourism agencies. Furthermore, the results of the present study describe that the tourism agencies possessing products and services with more features have a sustainable business, while the tourism agencies without or lacking effective features of their current products or services, normally don't enjoy business sustainability. Hence, it is hypothesized that.

H1: Product feature has positive influences on business sustainability.

## 2.2 Product Features and Product Quality Performance

Features associated with a product have significant positive effects on the consumption of the product (Banovic & Otterbring, 2021). A product without having effective features

normally doesn't have recognition among its consumers, while a new product having modern features quickly becomes a hot product among consumers. In many cases products have numerous features but there is no definite system available to represent those features due to this, the product remains fail to draw the attention of consumers. According to the present study, various tourism agencies come with many products that have sufficient features to attract tourists however, these tourism agencies miss to represent those features or don't have a proper way to represent the features of their offered products which ultimately result in a decrease in the value of the product quality performance. There is always a need to intrude features of the offered product hence, consumers of the products have sufficient knowledge about the benefits of the products (Rodríguez et al., 2021). Tourists without having sufficient knowledge about the features of a product don't pick it instead they go for a product that comparatively has fewer features, but all these features are represented to the tourists in an effective way that attracts them. Hence, results of the present study describe that product quality performance becomes more when products or services offered by tourism agencies in Thailand have more and more effective features, while the product quality performance begins to decrease when products or services offered by tourism agencies to tourists are carrying less or no features. Therefore, it is hypothesized that.

H2: Product features have positive influences on product quality performance.

## 2.3 Product Reliability and Business Sustainability

The environment, society, and the economy play a significant role in business sustainability (De la Torre et al., 2021; Kholiavko et al., 2021). Any disturbance in the environment directly influences a business's sustainability. In the same way, any change in the value of the economy and society also has a direct relationship with business sustainability. Hence, business sustainability is the coordination and management of financial, social, and environmental concerns and

demands to ensure the ongoing, ethical, and responsible success of a business. According to a past study, sustainability in business ensures a significant boost in the business bottom line and brings ease to earn more profit (Liute & De Giacomo, 2021; Kerdpitak et al., 2022a). Besides, this, Business sustainability improves reputation, attracts new customers, brings more innovative strategies, and reduces business costs. Most of the tourism agencies in Thailand are unable to achieve business sustainability due to various factors that have a direct and indirect influence on them. However, according to the current study, the reliability of a product or a service offered by tourism agencies to tourists has a significant influence business sustainability of those tourism agencies. It is determined that with an increased value of product reliability, tourism agencies remain successful to achieve sustainable business. While the tourism agencies that don't pay attention to making their services or products reliable often face difficulties to make a sustainable business. Hence, product reliability has a significant positive meaning to a sustainable business. Improving the value of product and services reliability, attracts more tourists to use those products or services, in this way, attracting more tourists is simply means an increased value of business sustainability particularly for the tourism agencies in Thailand. Therefore, it is hypothesized that.

H3: Product reliability has positive influences on business sustainability.

#### 2.4 Product Reliability and Product Quality Performance

Product quality performance refers to the services or functions of a product when it is used (Sasono et al., 2021). However, product quality performance is used to prevent the extent to which the product or service elates the consumer from the angles of both quality of conformance and the quality of design. Product quality performance is one of the key points that add significant meaning to make the product famous among its consumers hence, it returns more business to its producer. According to a past study, compromise shown in the product quality performance leads

towards product failure (Mladineo, Zizic, Aljinovic, & Gjeldum, 2021). Most of the products fail because these products remain to fail to satisfy consumers, while other products produced by competitive producers become hot products of the market having all the features necessary to maintain the quality of a product. According to the current study, tourism agencies, particularly in Thailand, are struggling with their product quality performance, because they are unaware of the certain factors which have a direct relationship with their product quality performance. As per the current study, product reliability is one of the major factors that has a significant influence on product quality performance especially for the tourism agencies working in Thailand. It is noted that the tourism agencies designing a product that is more reliable normally remain successful to achieve maximum value for the product quality performance of their product. While the tourism agencies that don't focus on their product reliability usually remain unable to enjoy a prominent value of their product quality performance. Hence, it is hypothesized that.

H4: Product reliability has positive influences on product quality performance.

#### 2.5 Product Durability and Business Sustainability

A product's physical proper functionality refers to the product's durability (Obadi & Xu, 2021). Hence, product durability, no need for excessive repair, or maintenance especially when it is operational by its users. A durable product gets no or minute changes in its design and lifetime. A durable product sustains a greater number of operational cycles. Hence, product durability refers to its reliability and quality that are long-lasting. Products' durability allows things to be more economical, hence, it produces ease particularly both for the tourists and tourism agencies. While non-durable products are more costly because they need frequent replacement or repairs (Norshariza et al., 2020; Kerdpitak et al. 2022). Hence, durable products are in favor of a business and have a significant positive effect on business sustainability. However, a durable

product needs to meet tourists' satisfaction, industry standards and serve its purpose. While a product that is durable but doesn't meet tourists' need remain unsuccessful to satisfy them or don't meet industry standards, is altogether useless such a product will result in a sufficient decrease in the value of business sustainability. Hence there is a need to follow the following key points while designing a durable product for tourists. 1) Understand what quality is meeting the requirement of tourists. 2) Begin with a solid product strategy. 3) make quality an essential component of company culture. 4) always prefer quality. 5) Perform multiple tests before introducing them to tourists. Last but not the least, maximum involvement of a quality management system guarantees more durability for a product. Hence, the increased value of product durability results in business sustainability. Therefore, it is hypothesized that.

H5: Product durability has positive influences on business sustainability.

## 2.6 Product Durability and Product Quality Performance

The quality of a product refers to its ability to elate the market and satisfy a customer (Marques, da Silva, & Antova, 2021). However, the quality of a product often consists of the following features of a product: 1) Consistency 2) reliability 3) conformance 4) serviceability 5) durability 6) features, and 7) aesthetics. Increasing the value of consistency, reliability, conformance, serviceability, durability, features, and aesthetics of a product has significant positive effects on the quality of a product. Various factors limit tourism agencies to produce product quality performance and have a negative impact on it. However, there are certain factors that add significant meaning to the value of product quality performance. It is found that tourism agencies particularly working in Thailand are inadequate to produce notable product quality performance. Due to this reason, these tourism agencies are losing the value of their business day by day. According to the current study, product durability is one of the major elements that has significant positive effects on product

quality performance. It is observed that the tourism agencies focused on product durability, are enjoying comparatively more business, and standing ahead of their competitors. Because product durability helps them to tourists' retention and r satisfaction. While the tourism agencies without having no durable products, often spend their resources to maintain or replace their non-durable products, hence, in this way, they increase their expenditures which has negative effects on their net profit. While the decrease in the value of durability of a product result in a decrease in the value of product quality performance. Hence, it is hypothesized that.

H6: Product durability has positive influences on product quality performance.

## 2.7 Business Sustainability and Product Quality Performance

Business sustainability is one of the basic goals of every kind of business (Bocken & Short, 2021). Because sustainability in a business grants many positive facilities that provide ease in doing business (Hussain et al., 2021). Hence, the increased value of business sustainability is always beneficial for a business, however, there are a few major key points that are needed to follow to achieve business sustainability. These key points are: 1) businesses need to use a sustainable product. Because by using a sustainable service or product, businesses can save their resources hence, by saving resources, businesses get more sustainability in their business. 2) Businesses are required to offer remote products or services. Remote services offered by tourism agencies are more result-oriented because, by proper use of remoter services, tourists are immediately addressed for their current problems, hence, the tourists always prefer the service providers, this also ultimately results in an increase in the value of tourism agencies business sustainability. 3) Compost products offered by tourism agencies play a significant role in their business sustainability. 4) Last but not least, business sustainability can be acquired by installing energy-efficient improvements that have a significant positive effect on business sustainability particularly of tourism agencies

in Thailand. However, according to the current study business sustainability has a prominent positive influence on product quality performance. When a tourism agency has a sustainable business, now it becomes easy for the tourism agency to emphasize the quality of their products. Hence, the increased value of business sustainability results in an increase in the value of product quality performance. Therefore, it is hypothesized that.

H7: Business sustainability has a positive influence on product quality performance.

H8: Business sustainability mediates the relationship between the product feature and product quality performance.

H9: Business sustainability mediates the relationship between product reliability and product quality performance.

H10: Business sustainability mediates the relationship between product durability and product quality performance.

### 3. Research Methodology

Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods are commonly used by researchers to conduct their research studies. All the aforesaid research methods are applied to achieve certain purposes; however, researchers choose them according to the nature of their research study. The current study opted quantitative research method because it is according to the nature of the study. After selecting the quantitative research method, the area cluster sampling approach was preferred because the population of the current study belongs to a wide region. The population of the current study resides in various parts of Thailand, which is certainly a wide area, hence, the area cluster approach is one of the best approaches especially when the under-consideration area is wide.

Furthermore, a sample size of 800 was preferred because this sample size is recommended by Comrey and Lee (1992). According to Comrey and Lee (1992) "sample having less than 50 participants will be observed to be a weaker sample; sample of 100

size will be weak; 200 will be adequate; sample of 300 will be considered as good; 500 very good whereas 1000 will be excellent." Hence, the current study preferred an 800-sample size.

Hence a survey was conducted aiming to collect primary data from the respondents of the current study, 800 tourists coming from various parts of the world to Thailand, were the respondents of the current study. A questionnaire consisting of 3 major sections was designed aiming to extract primary data from the respondents. In the first section of the questionnaire, respondents were responsible to answer the questions asked about their demographic information such as their name, experience, number of visits, etc. While in the second section of the questionnaire the respondents were responsible to answer the questions related to the key variables of the current study such as features, reliability, the durability of a product, business sustainability, and product quality performance. However, the last section of the questionnaire was filled with the 20 questions based on a 5-Point Likert scale starting from "a" as "Absolutely Agree" to "e" as "Absolutely Not".

Initially, the basic contact information of the respondents was collected from the Thai national Tourism Department after ensuring the concerning bodies that this information will remain confidential and only be used for the objectives of the current study. Then all the 800 respondents were contacted via their email address, however, 120 respondents never replied, while the rest 680 respondents were communicated aiming to describe the purpose of the current study and then a questionnaire along with a brief introduction of the current study was sent via email to each respondent. After 25 days of email sent to the respondents, there were 255 responses received from the respondents. Then a reminder email was sent to the rest of the respondents, hence, after 20 more days of the reminder email, there were further 245 responses, received from the respondents. Now, there were 500 responses in total, however, 20 responses were excluded out of 500 responses, because these 20 responses were full of ambiguities. Hence, there were 480 responses that were used as primary data of the

current study, then this primary data was analysed by PLS to obtain the final results of the current study. However, all the measures and scales were related to previous studies.

#### 4. Data Analysis

Partial Least Square (PLS) is employed in this study to examine the relationship between features, reliability, durability, business sustainability, and product quality performance. PLS is a popular statistical tool to analyze the primary data (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, & Thiele, 2017; Hair et al., 2019). Before

examining the relationship, this study considered reliability and validity confirmation. Reliability is considered through factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and Cronbach alpha. PLS measurement model is given in Figure 2 and results are reported in Table 1. It is found that all the variables have factor loadings above 0.5. Furthermore, CR is above 0.7 and the average variance extracted (AVE) is above 0.5. CR above 0.7 and AVE above 0.5 confirmed the convergent validity. Additionally, discriminant validity is ensured through the AVE square root as given in Table 2.

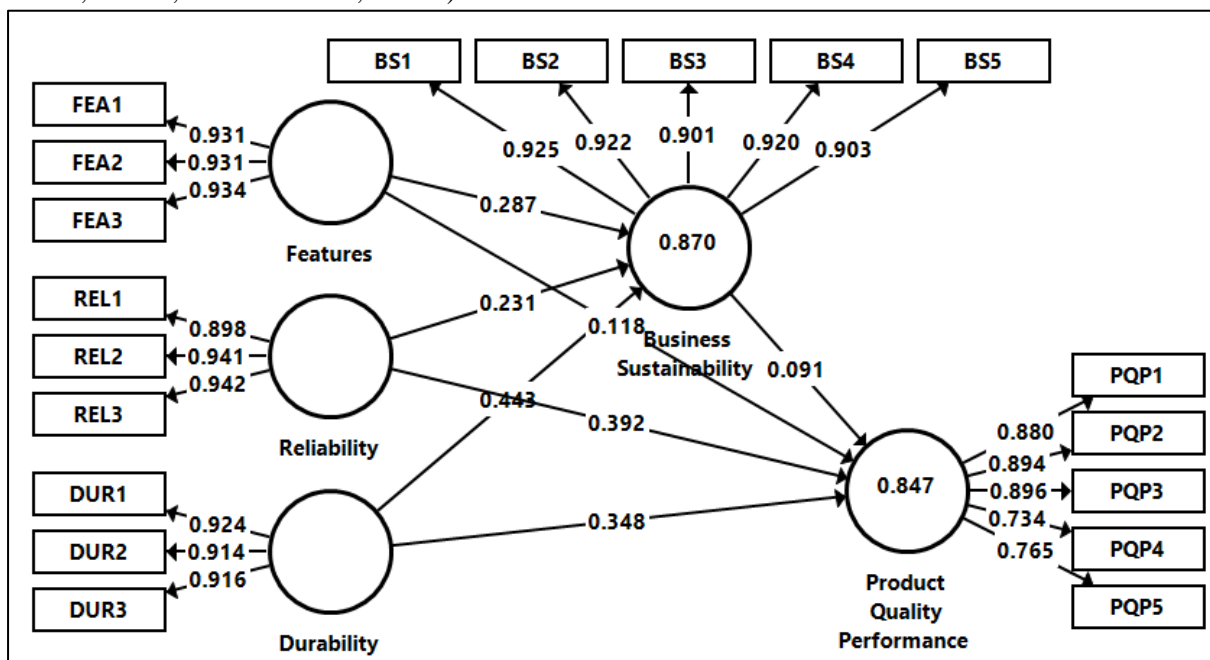


Figure 2. Measurement Model

Table 1. Factor Loadings

Variables	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Business Sustainability	BS1	0.925	0.89	0.905	0.836
	BS2	0.922			
	BS3	0.901			
	BS4	0.92			
	BS5	0.903			
Durability	DUR1	0.924	0.907	0.942	0.799
	DUR2	0.914			
	DUR3	0.916			
Features	FEA1	0.931	0.924	0.936	0.843
	FEA2	0.931			
	FEA3	0.934			
Product Quality Performance	PQP1	0.88	0.836	0.885	0.7

	PQP2	0.894			
	PQP3	0.896			
	PQP4	0.734			
	PQP5	0.765			
Reliability	REL1	0.898	0.865	0.895	0.699
	REL2	0.941			
	REL3	0.942			

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

	Business Sustainability	Durability	Features	Product Quality Performance	Reliability
Business Sustainability	0.914				
Durability	0.816	0.918			
Features	0.892	0.898	0.932		
Product Quality Performance	0.867	0.901	0.862	0.837	
Reliability	0.901	0.831	0.896	0.703	0.827

PLS structural model is used to examine the relationship between features, reliability, durability, business sustainability, and product quality performance. While using PLS structural model, bootstrapping is performed which is recommended by previous studies (Khan et al., 2019). PLS structural model is given in Figure 3 and results are given in Table 3 and Table 4. All the hypotheses are supported because the t-value is above 1.96. Therefore, it

is found that features, reliability, and durability have a positive effect on business sustainability and product quality performance. Furthermore, business sustainability has a positive effect on product quality performance. Additionally, three mediation effects based on business sustainability are proposed in this study, and results are given in Table 4. All these mediation effects are supported.

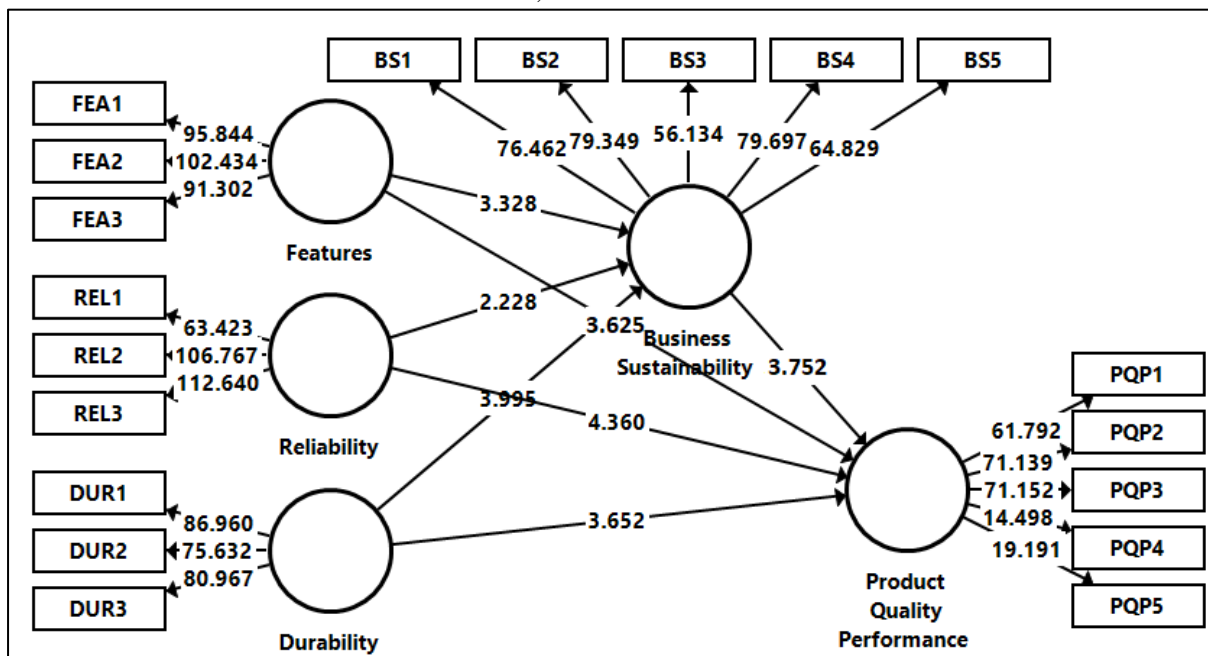


Figure 2. Structural Model



Table 3. *Direct Effect*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Business Sustainability -> Product Quality Performance	0.091	0.089	0.024	3.752	0
Durability -> Business Sustainability	0.443	0.45	0.111	3.995	0
Durability -> Product Quality Performance	0.348	0.341	0.095	3.652	0
Features -> Business Sustainability	0.287	0.287	0.086	3.328	0.001
Features -> Product Quality Performance	0.118	0.117	0.032	3.625	0
Reliability -> Business Sustainability	0.231	0.224	0.104	2.228	0.026
Reliability -> Product Quality Performance	0.392	0.402	0.09	4.36	0

Table 4. *Indirect Effect*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Reliability -> Business Sustainability -> Product Quality Performance	0.021	0.019	0.01	2.01	0.043
Durability -> Business Sustainability -> Product Quality Performance	0.04	0.042	0.011	3.612	0
Features -> Business Sustainability -> Product Quality Performance	0.026	0.025	0.013	1.999	0.044

## 5. Discussion

The first hypothesis of the present study is: “product feature has positive influences on business sustainability.” Turunen and Halme (2021) purposed that business sustainability is becoming more significant with the growing customers' awareness. Tourists are well aware of their needs and the places where they can find what they want. Osburg, Davies, Yoganathan, and McLeay (2021) agree that more features of a product appeal to customers hence, the business sustainability of the product producers increases. Moreover, a study conducted by Vassiliadis, Mombeuil, and Fotiadis (2021) describe that product features increase visitors' satisfaction and also add significant meaning to their revisit intention. Hence, a product having more features always has positive effects on tourists that ultimately result in an increase in the value of business sustainability.

The second hypothesis of the present study is: “product feature has positive influences on product quality performance.” A study on tourism economics conducted by Choy and Kamoche (2021) describes that features of

products and services offered by travel agencies to their customers normally describe the product quality performance, when more products and services are in demand, show a better quality of those products and services. However, research conducted by Marasinghe, Perera, Simpson, and Newsome (2021) determines that audience insights about the current features of a product have a significant positive impact on the improvement and development of new features of the product which adds a significant positive influence on the product quality performance.

The third hypothesis of the present study is: “product reliability has positive influences on business sustainability.” Chkanikova and Sroufe (2021) determined that product reliability increases customers' loyalty hence, it results in business sustainability. Research of influence mechanism of corporate social responsibility for smart cities conducted by Zhuang, Zhu, Huang, and Pan (2021) describes that customers' purchase intentions increase by increasing the value of product reliability, which ultimately results in a significant increase in the value of business sustainability. According to another past study conducted by Tayal et al. (2021) describes that enhancement in the product quality particularly enough

increase in the value of product reliability attracts more customers, and stand ahead among its competitive products, that ultimately also result in a sufficient positive increase in the value of business sustainability.

The fourth hypothesis of the present study is: “product reliability has positive influences on product quality performance.” According to Erlangga (2021), product reliability is one of the fundamental product quality features that has significant meaning to produce quality performance. A study conducted by Markovic and Bagherzadeh (2018) describes that both product innovation and product reliability draw customers’ attention and increase the rate of customer retention which finally results in an increase in the value of product quality performance. Research on technological forecasting and social change, conducted by Falahat, Ramayah, Soto-Acosta, and Lee (2020) determines that SMEs, business performance increases by increasing the value of the reliability of their products because it increases business sustainability.

The fifth hypothesis of the present study is: “product durability has positive influences on business sustainability.” According to Goworek et al. (2020), business sustainability in the fashion business increases significantly by increasing the customers’ satisfaction is increased by increasing the value of fashion products’ durability. Another research on cleaner production conducted by Rossi, Bertassini, dos Santos Ferreira, do Amaral, and Ometto (2020) describes that product durability is one of the optimal features that customers usually desire to have, hence, product durability helps to meet customers desire that results in business sustainability. A study by Abbas (2020) describes that product durability helps to reduce expenditures costs and save resources allocated to buying new products, hence, it also brings business sustainability.

The sixth hypothesis of the present study is: “product durability has positive influences on product quality performance.” Inventory performance has a significant positive influence on the quality of a product while using inventory productivity, inventory efficiency,

and inventory leanness (Lin, Liang, & Zhu, 2018). A study on the effects of agro-food supply chain integration on product quality and financial performance conducted by Zhao, Wang, and Pal (2021) describes that increasing product durability has a significant influence on food safety and product quality which is a useful way to enhance product quality performance. Another research by Kinokuni, Otori, and Tomoda (2019) determines that increasing the durability of a product decreases its social cost, and increases the value of its service flow, which ultimately results in an increase in the value of the product quality performance.

The seventh hypothesis of the present study is: “business sustainability has a positive influence on product quality performance.” A study conducted by Dobrovič et al. (2021) describes that tourists’ sufficient attention towards a tourism business supports the sustainable development of the business. A study examining the relationship between tourism and economic development in Pakistan describes that business sustainability and product quality performance are positively correlated (Arooj & Bano, 2021). Amoako, Obuobisa-Darko, and Marfo (2021) purposed that Product quality performance progress by enhancement in business sustainability.

The last three hypotheses of the present study are “business sustainability mediates the relationship between the product feature and product quality performance”, “business sustainability mediates the relationship between the product reliability and product quality performance”, and “business sustainability mediates the relationship between product durability and product quality performance” respectively.

## 6. Conclusion

Results of the current study show that increasing the value of features, reliability, and durability of the product offered by tourism agencies particularly in Thailand, also increases the value of product quality performance and business sustainability of the tourism agencies.

To obtain the above results a survey from 480 tourists was conducted aiming to collect primary data that were further analyzed by using PLS. Results achieved from PLS show that there is a direct relationship between features, reliability, the durability of the product, and product quality performance. The business sustainability of tourism agencies is also directly influenced by the features, reliability, and durability of their products. However, business sustainability mediates the relationship between features, reliability, durability of product, and product quality performance. Practically the current study will boost the knowledge of concerned authorities in tourism agencies particularly to increase the value of their product quality performance.

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