# The Role of Online Promotion and Its Effect on Destination Loyalty

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#### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the influence of online promotion on destination loyalty directly or indirectly through destination awareness and tourist satisfaction. This study also examined the influence of destination awareness on tourist satisfaction. A sample of 250 domestic tourists was recruited as respondents using purposive sampling method. Data were collected with survey design and analyzed using hierarchical regression model. The results show both destination awareness and tourist satisfaction are important variables that should be considered by marketers to capture the opportunity of tourists visit. It is found that information from online promotion will trigger awareness and increase tourist satisfaction

Keywords: online promotion, destination awareness, tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently the tourism industry around the world is growing so fast as well as tourism in Indonesia. Various media are showing this phenomenon, especially online social media where marketers and netizens upload information and images of tourist attractions around the world. The rapid development of the tourism industry is not separated from the support of internet technology. The Internet is one of medium for marketers to disseminate information quickly, easily, cheaply and accurately (Chi & Qu, 2008; Alkharabsheh et al., 2011). The role of the internet is not only for communication between friends, dissemination of knowledge and information to netizens but also as a powerful marketing tool. The Internet in the field of tourism marketing is very important because it can help users in getting

benefits, increase productivity, efficiency, and time savings (Tan et al., 2012). The Internet makes it easy for travelers to get news and knowledge about interesting tourist destination. In the tourism industry, the internet is the most popular media used by netizens to search for tourist attractions to be visited, although it must be recognized that some areas have not reached internet yet (Lai & Vinh, 2013).

Online promotion is one of the marketing activities through internet. Online promotion is a powerful way to market tourism products. With online promotions marketers can display complete information, interesting images, and even videos featuring tourist destinations from different points of view. Thus the prospective travelers can easily see, compare and choose the destination according to their desires. In addition, tour operators and travel agents are also the information main source that can help tourists in choosing the destination tourism (Lai & Vinh, 2012).

Online promotion can trigger awareness of potential tourists to visits (Petrevska, 2012). Netizens who have not been interested in visiting a destination, but by looking at an interesting online promotion can raise their awareness and then interested to travel. A detailed, accurate and attractive online promotion tends to increase tourist satisfaction. Cho and Byun (2014) stated that tourist satisfaction will increase when tourists get credible and reliable information. Satisfaction is a very important measure for a business's success (Aaker, 1991). When tourists experience satisfaction they are expected to revisit and recommend to friends and colleagues (Cho & Byun, 2014, Chiu et al., 2016). As Oliver stated (1999) that consumers who repurchase certain brands and spread positive word of mouth lead to consumer loyalty.

The research object is the island of Bali, because this island is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Indonesia and even in the world. Various international awards, especially in the field of tourism by Travel and Leisure Magazine has chosen Bali as World's Best Island in 2009, while Lonely Planet's chose Bali island as the second ranking of Best Travel 2010 (www.wisata-pulaubali.blogspot.co.id). Based on statistical data, the growth of domestic and foreign tourists visiting to island of Bali from year to year has increased. Here is Figure 1 show the amount of domestic and foreign tourist visits over the last seven years (BPS, 2018).

Below is the number of domestic tourists who were visited Bali Island during year 2011 to 2017:

4,001,835

11,148,935

4,927,937

13,573,633

5,697,739

14,433,372

Travelers	Year							
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
Domestic	5,675,121	6,063,558	6,976,536	6,394,307	7,147,100	8,643,680	8,735,633	

3,766,638

10,160,945

Table 1. Number of Domestic and Foreign Tourist in Bali Island

Source: https://bali.bps.go.id/ and www.wisata-pulau-bali.blogspot.co.id,

3,278,598

2,826,709

Foreign

Total

2,949,332

8,501,830 | 9,012,890 | 10,255,134

Figure 1 shows the statistical trend of the number of visitors who were traveling to Bali Island per year, and the difference in number of visitors between domestic tourists and foreign tourists during year 2011 to year 2017.

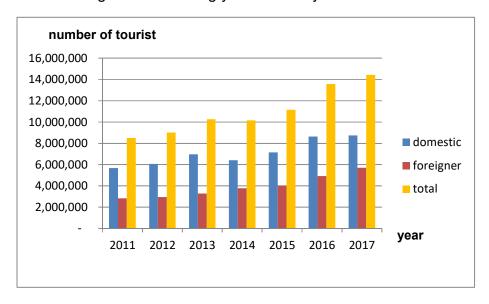


Figure 1. Tourists Visit on Island of Bali Year 2011-2017

Although the bomb tragedy in Bali in 2002 and 2005 has been forgotten by travelers, recent natural disasters such as the eruption of Mount Agung in island of Bali and the earthquake on island of Lombok (in 2018) have caused tourism on the island of Bali to be sluggish (https://travel.kompas.com). For this reason, local governments and related businesses need to increase their promotion in quality and quantity. Online promotion can be the ultimate weapon to market products in the tourism industry. It can be the right choice to communicate to potential customers quickly, easily and cheaply. Online promotion can be used as a tool to deliver special messages, new destination information and top destinations so that

it makes it easier for potential travelers to know, remember, and to be aware of tourist destination.

This study attempts to examine the effect of online promotion on destination loyalty, both directly as well as indirectly through destination awareness and tourist satisfaction. It is expected that with excellent online promotion can increase awareness of potential tourists, furthermore increase satisfaction and lead to loyalty.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Effect of Online Promotion on Destination Awareness

Online promotion is an important element that providing information for consumers through various types of advertising, especially through website (Alkharabsheh et al., 2011). Online promotion in tourism is related to accurate information of tourism products, accommodation, accessibility, facilities, time relevancies, and clearly indicate product cost accurately (Chi & Qu, 2008, Alkharabsheh et al., 2011).

According to Petrevska (2012) information obtained from the internet can increase the level of consumer awareness of the brand before consumers purchase decision. Brand awareness is a necessary element before one builds a desire and can eventually purchase the product or service (Isa & Ramli, 2013). When consumers want to buy a product then consumers will first recognize and remember the brand of the product. The ability to recognize and remember a brand that will be bought is called brand awareness (Aaker, 1991).

Kasim and Alfandi (2014) in his research stated that visitor information about the tourist experience can form destination awareness and destination image of the potential tourist. Previous research has shown that online promotion positively affects destination awareness (Lai & Vinh, 2013; Alkharabsheh et al., 2011; Petrevska, 2012). Based on these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Online promotion has a positive effect on destination awareness.

# 2.2. Effect of Online Promotion on Tourist Satisfaction

Study conducted by Cho & Byun. (2014) found that Korean tourists prefer to seek tourist destination information via the internet and WOM. When tourists perceived information obtained through internet fit with their expectations, then they will experience satisfaction (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Research conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013), shows that online promotion positively affects the tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, the study stated that complete and accurate source of information tends to increase tourist satisfaction. Based on these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Online promotion has a positive effect on tourist satisfaction

## 2.3. Effect of Online Promotion on Loyalty Destination

Study conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013) on tourist industry in Vietnam found that online promotion significantly affect loyalty destinations. Online promotions that provide detailed and relevant information will greatly facilitate and help travelers choose the right tourist destinations. Thus a reliable online promotion will be able to encourage prospective travelers to make repeat purchases continuously. Based on these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is as follows: H3: Online promotion has a positive effect on destination loyalty

#### 2.4. Effect of Destination Awareness on Tourist Satisfaction

Empirical study conducted by Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010) on tourism in Mongolia proved that destination awareness affects image destination and perceived quality. High level of tourist destination awareness will lead to a better destination image as well as perceived quality. Furthermore, destination image and perceived quality will increase the tourist satisfaction. Research conducted by Lai and Vinh (2012; 2013) stated that destination awareness positively affects tourist satisfaction. Based on these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is as follows: H4. Destination awareness has a positive effect on tourist satisfaction

# 2.5. Destination Awareness as a Mediation of the Relationship between Online Promotion and Destination Loyalty

Loyalty reflects a customer's commitment to repurchase products or services in the future (Oliver, 1999). Lai and Vinh (2012) in their study stated that online promotion can stimulate awareness in tourists' minds. It is expected that high level of tourists awareness will lead to revisit to the same destinations. In fact, tourists who return to the same destinations will be more cost-effective than their first time to come to the destination, so this will benefit the tourists from the financial side (Chiu et al., 2016). This is understandable because they already have experience and know the environment of the location. Repeat tour visits lead to destination loyalty (Al-Azzam & Salleh, 2011). Based on these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H5: Destination awareness mediates the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty.

# 2.6. Tourist Satisfaction as a Mediation of the Relationship between Online Promotion and Destination Loyalty

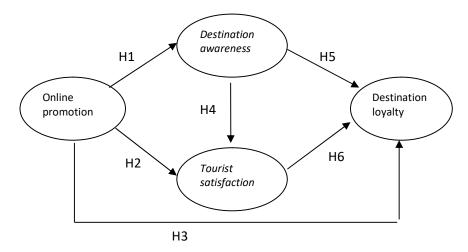
According to Gilbert and Veloutsou (2006), customer satisfaction is the key success factor for a long-term business. Consumers will experience satisfaction when the performance of products exceeds consumer expectations (Ellyawati et al., 2012; Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Satisfied customers will re-purchase the product and inform relatives and colleagues about their experience (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Previous empirical studies of online ticket purchases in Indonesia suggest that e-satisfaction leads to intention to repurchase (Lestari, 2017). Tourist satisfaction can be measured through perceived quality of services

obtained from online promotions, such as accessibility, web design, security assurance, personalization, responsiveness (Lestari, 2017). Study conducted by Cho & Byun (2014) stated that the source of information obtained by tourists becomes the basis for gaining satisfaction and then create a revisit intention. Similarly, study conducted by Ozdemir et al. (2012) stated that tourist satisfaction becomes the determinant factor of loyalty, visitation period and decision to recommend to others. In other words, tourist satisfaction is a predictor of destination loyalty (Kim, 2008; Chen & Myagmarsuron, 2010). Based on these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H6: Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty

#### 2.7. Research Model

This study is developed from the research conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013).



**Figure 2**. Research model

#### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Object

Pilot studies were conducted on this research to determine the object of the study. Survey off line to 20 respondents was conducted with convenience sampling method. It is found that all of respondents stated that if they have an opportunity to travel, the main desirable destination is going to Island of Bali. The result of the pilot study then used to determine of research object.

#### 3.2. Data Collection and Sampling

This study is designed by cross sectional survey method with paper and pencil test using structured questionnaire. Data were collected from online and offline survey and used non-random sampling technique with purposive sampling method.

Recruitment criteria of respondents in this study are tourists who have visited Bali Island in the last twelve months.

#### 3.3. Measurement

The questionnaire in this study consisted of two parts. The first part consists of demographics characteristics: gender, age, employment status, net income, frequency of visits to Bali Island, media used for booking tickets, and expenses incurred during the visit. The second part consists of 15 items of questions representing 4 observed variables, namely online promotion, destination awareness, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty variables.

To anticipate the limitations of single item indicator, this study were measured using multi item scales with five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire in this study was adopted from the Lai and Vinh (2013) and modified as needed for the purpose of the study.

#### 3.4. Validity and Reliability of the Measures

The validity test used to measure the instruments in how accurate the item is able to measure what should be measured (Hair et al., 2006). To test the validity of the research instruments, this study using Pearson Correlation method. We also test construct reliability of the instruments. A construct is said to be reliable if one's response to a statement is consistent and stable over time (Ghozali, 2011).

The research instruments were tested on 30 respondents, and processed using SPSS V.23. The value of item to total correlation indicates greater than 0.7 and all item were significant. Each construct has Cronbach alpha more than 0.7. The results of validity and reliability test can be seen in Table 1.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Research instruments	Pearson	Cronbach's
	Correlation	Alpha
	(r-value)*	coefficient
Online promotion		0.868
Online media that I used provide accurate information about tourist destinations on Bali Island.	0.636	
I get information about tourist destinations of Bali Island quickly through online media	0.854	
Online media that I used provide clarity and detailed information about tourist destinations on Bali Island	0.910	
The information I received through online media explain about what kind of tourist attractions in Bali Island	0.883	
Cost information related to tourist destinations is accurate	0.747	
Destination awareness		0.819
I am familiar with Bali Island as tourist destination	0.803	
Bali Island is a famous tourist destination that many people visited	0.850	
Bali Island is the first destinations to come to my mind when choosing a tourist destination	0.755	

Research instruments	Pearson Correlation (r-value)*	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient
Bali Island is a tourist destination that attracts domestic and foreign tourists	0.863	
Tourist Satisfaction		0.835
Bali Island gives me benefits more than the cost I spent	0.777	
Bali Island is the best tourist destination compare with other destinations in Indonesia	0.916	
Bali Island is much better than what I expected  Destination Loyalty	0.907	0.800
I will choose Bali Island again as my travel destination for my future travel	0.900	
I will recommend Bali Island to friends and relatives I will recommend Bali Island to other people who seek advice for traveling	0.848 0.833	

Source: Primary Data, 2017 Note: \*item to total correlation

The results of validity test show all the research instruments have r-value more than r-table (0.361) and all variables has coefficient Cronbach's Alpha more than 0.7. Therefore it can be stated that all variables are valid and reliable.

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Respondent Profile

Based on the data collected, the study found that a majority of tourists are women (63.6%). Most of the respondents are aged between 21 to 30 years (71.2%). More than half of the tourists have net income between 1,000,000 IDR to 2,000,000 IDR (56.4%) and are high school and under graduate students (75.6%). Furthermore, most passengers have traveled to Bali Islands one to two times (53.67%). Most of them bought online tickets (51.5%) and spent their expenses in Bali Island more than 2 million IDR (73.2%).

**Table 3.** Respondent Profile

Characteris	stics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:	Man	91	36.4
	Women	159	63.6
Age:	11 to 20 years old	59	23.6
	21 to 30 years old	178	71.2
	More than 30 years old	13	5.2
Occupation	: Students	189	75.6
	Employee/ staff	46	18.4
	Businessman	12	4.8
	Others	3	1.2
Net income	: 1.0 to 2 million IDR	141	56.4
	2.1 to3 million IDR	43	17.2
	3.1 to 4 million IDR	14	5.6

4.1 to 5 million IDR	23	9.2
5.1 to 10 million IDR	18	7.2
More than 10 million IDR	11	4.4
Number of visits: 1 to 2 times	134	53.6
3 to 4 times	61	24.4
More than 4 times	55	22.0
Expenses during visit:		
2.1 to 5 million IDR	183	73.2
5.1 to10 million IDR	53	21.2
More than 10 million IDR	14	5.6
Media to buy ticket: online	129	51.6
offline	121	48.4

# 4.2. Hypotheses Testing

#### 4.2.1. Model Verification

This study used 95% level of confidence to verify hypotheses and employed multiple linear regression analysis to process the data. Based on data collected, the study found that online promotion positively and significantly influence on destination awareness ( $\beta$ =+0.424, p-value≤0.05). This means that online promotion tends to influence destination awareness in the same direction. This shows that if the online promotion increases then the destination awareness will increase, and vice versa. Thus, the study supports hypothesis H1. Online promotion positively and significantly influence on tourist satisfaction ( $\beta$ =+0.333, *p-value*≤0.05). This means that online promotion tends to influence tourist satisfaction in the same direction. Therefore, if online promotion increases then tourist satisfaction will also increase, and vice versa. Thus, the study supports hypothesis H2.

The study found that online promotion influence positively and significantly on destination loyalty ( $\beta$ =+0.396, p-value≤0.05). This indicates that online promotion tends to influence loyalty destination in the same direction. This can be stated that if online promotion increases then destination loyalty will increase, and vice versa. Thus, the study supports hypothesis H3. Destination awareness shows a positively and significantly influences tourist satisfaction ( $\beta$ =+0.627, p-value≤0.05). This shows that if destination awareness increases then tourist satisfaction will increase, and vice versa. Thus, the study support hypothesis H4.

Table 4 contains a summary of regression output.

<b>Table</b>	4.	Out	put	of	Reg	ress	ion /	Anal	vsis

Independent Variabel	Dependent Variabel	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Online promotion	Destination awareness	0.424	7.379	0.000**
	Destination satisfaction	0.333	5.569	0.000**
	Destination loyalty	0.396	6.790	0.000**

Note: \* significant level p<.05
\*\* significant level p<.01

# 4.3. 2. Testing Mediating Variable

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the role of mediation variables. To determine whether the variable is a mediator variable, we employed criteria proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

# Destination awareness mediates the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty

Based on multiple regression output (see Table 5), it is found that online promotion and destination awareness have positively and significantly influence on destination loyalty ( $\beta$ 1=+0,114,  $\beta$ 2=+0,665, p-value <0.05). It can be stated that online promotion influences indirectly on destination loyalty through destination awareness. Direct effect of online promotion indicated positively and significantly influence on destination loyalty ( $\beta$ =+0,396, p-value <0.05).

The next step is to compare beta value between the direct effect equation and indirect effect equations. As indicates in Table 5, beta value of the indirect equation ( $\beta$ =+0.114) is smaller than the direct effect ( $\beta$ =+0.396). Thus the mediation in occurred is partial mediation. It means that the destination awareness partially mediates to the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty. Based on the findings, the study supports hypothesis H5.

**Table 5.** Output of Multiple Regression Analysis: Influence of Online Promotion and Destination Awareness on Destination Loyalty

Independent Variabel	Dependent Variabel	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Online Promotion		0.114	2.338	0.020*
Destination Awareness	Destination Loyalty	0.665	13.634	0.000**
R = 0.720		F-value = 133.184		0.000
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.515				

Note: \* significant level p<.05
\*\* significant level p<.01

# Tourist Satisfaction mediates the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty

Based on multiple regression output, it is found that online promotion and tourist satisfaction have positively and significantly influence on destination loyalty ( $\beta$ 1=+0.170,  $\beta$ 2=+0.678, p-value<0.05, see Table 6). It can be stated that online promotion influences indirectly on destination loyalty through tourist satisfaction. Direct effect of online promotion indicated positively and significantly influence on destination loyalty ( $\beta$ =+0.396, p-value<0.05).

The next step is to compare beta value between the direct effect equation and indirect effect equations. As indicates in Table 6, beta value of the indirect equation ( $\beta$ =+0.170) is smaller than the direct effect ( $\beta$ =+0.396). Thus the mediation occurred is partial mediation. It means that the tourist satisfaction partially mediates to the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty. Based on the findings, the hypothesis H6 supported.

**Table 6.**Output of Multiple Regression Analysis: Influence of Online Promotion and Destination Awareness on Destination Loyalty

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Promosi Online	Destination loyalty	0.170	3.817	0.000**
Tourist satisfaction		0.678	15.246	0.000**
R = 0,752		F-value = 160.779	1	0.000
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.562		•		

Note: \* significant level p<.05
\*\* significant level p<.01

#### 4.2. Discussion

The study found that online promotion positively affects destination awareness. This study confirmed the research conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013) and Alkharabsheh et al. (2011). Previous studies stated that online promotion tend to stimulate tourist awareness before they visit to a certain destination (Alkharabsheh et al., 2011). This study found that online promotions can be used as a source of information by tourists that triggered awareness to visits. Information through online promotions is considered fast, accurate and can explain the purpose of tour offered.

This study shows a significant effect of online promotion on tourist satisfaction. Tourists experience satisfaction because they perceived benefits gained greater than the cost. It means tourist gained the benefit of online promotions have

exceeded expectations. This study supports the previous research conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013) and Hague and Khatibi (2007).

Previous research about tourism industry in Vietnam (Lai & Vinh, 2013) found that source of information derived from various promotions through the internet or online media can bring up the destination awareness. It is expected that destination awareness can meet tourist want, because when they experience satisfaction they will revisit to the place, recommend to their colleague and spread positive WOM. In line with study conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013) and Al-Azzam and Salleh (2011), this study proves that destination awareness partially mediates on the relationship between online promotion and destination loyalty. It means that destination awareness has to be notice in building online promotion to increase destination loyalty. Furthermore, it can be inferred that When companies create online promotions should be able to create destination awareness.

Research conducted by Lai and Vinh (2012; 2013) found that online promotion influence on satisfaction and in turn on revisit intention. In their study, Cho & Byun (2014) stated that sources of information received, caused tourist satisfaction and destinations loyalty. According to Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010), tourist satisfaction leads to destination loyalty. The study support past study conducted by Lai and Vinh (2013) as well as Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010).

#### 5. CONCLUSION

To have a good quality of data, research instruments were tested on 30 respondents. Data were then tested using validity and reliability tests with Pearson Correlation method. The result stated that all of the instruments were valid and reliable.

Based on the demographic characteristics, it can be stated that domestic tourist market segment are young people, most of them are woman with low income. The low income in this study means an allowance or pocket money, considering that most of them are students. Most of travelers buy tickets through online media, this in accordance with the characteristics of today's young people who more frequently use recent technology to meet their needs.

All hypotheses in this study are supported. This means that online promotion effects on destination loyalty directly or indirectly through destination awareness and destination satisfaction. Furthermore, awareness also influences tourist satisfaction. This shows the importance of online promotion by the company. Online promotion can increase destination awareness and consumer satisfaction and in turn increase loyalty.

#### 5.1. Managerial Implication

Market segmentation is important for developing tourism marketing strategies, therefore tourism agencies and related institutions should focus on this segment. Online promotion is more geared towards young people, because most of them are using internet technology for their daily activities.

Based on the finding can be concluded that online promotion directly influence on destination loyalty, likewise, influence indirectly through destination awareness and tourist satisfaction. This means that both destination awareness and tourist satisfaction are important variables that should be considered by marketers to gain the opportunity of tourists visit. For this purpose, promotion has to be designed to generate destination awareness. As a follow up of this issue, manager should always updating new destinations and images of tourist attractions along with visitor reviews or testimonials. Marketing managers have to understand the media that is most used by young people as the basis of this market segment. This is used to promote tourism in the most widely used media by young people like Instagram, twitter, etc.

Because of the important information from online promotion for travelers to choose the destination, therefore the marketing tourism managers should always innovative and creative in developing promotion strategy. Destination awareness has always to be improved and so is satisfaction. The study proved that tourist satisfaction tends to increase revisit and will recommend to their colleague. Therefore, marketers should always pay attention and find out what makes the traveler experience satisfaction to recent information and market need, and bundling them into online promotion.

#### 5.2. Limitation

The sample in the study is limited. For future research is suggested that researchers should increase the number of respondents to better represent population. Data collection is held in campus, thus most of the respondents are students. For future research is suggested that researchers expand the research area in order to capture a heterogeneous of the sample. Furthermore, it should be realized that there are still many potential tourists who have limited knowledge of internet technology and not all of the area is covered by internet access. Thus online promotion is not the only promotional tool that should be used by marketers. Offline marketing should also be considered especially to reach tourists who do not have internet access.

In the previous study, destination loyalty was not only influenced by the observed variables in this study. There are some variables that need to be considered to be added in future studies, such as destination image, quality perception (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010; Rajesh, 2013) and tourist expectations (Lai & Vinh, 2013).

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