

The Level of Social Bond among Indonesian Higher-Education Students Who Access Facebook

Azalia Primadita Muchransyah, Tri Iswardani A

Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia

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Abstract

Along with technological advances and the rapid flow of information, people's need to access the internet is increasing. According to data held by www.internetworldstats.com, a site which monitors internet usage in the on-line world, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 25 million in 2008. This is because, aside from its role as a source of information, the internet also serves as a tool for learning and recreation. In this study, we would like to enquire into the level of social bond among Indonesian students who have experienced Facebook addiction. Facebook continues to grow in popularity, especially among students, who have a tendency to see it as a psychological substitute for increasingly fragile social bonds between people. Therefore, for individuals who have weak social bonds, Facebook can cause addiction. We define social bond as the relationship of an individual to his/her society. A social bond is composed of four key elements: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. This study aims to outline the character of the social bond among Indonesian students who access the site Facebook. Research was carried out through both quantitative and qualitative methods. With regards to the former, 214 respondents were split into three groups: (1) those with Facebook addiction, (2) those having problems due to their use of Facebook, and (3) average Facebook users. Our qualitative research consisted in interviews with two respondents: our first respondent has a Facebook addiction with a high level of social bond, and the second has a Facebook addiction with a low level of social bond.

Keywords: social bond, Facebook, addiction.

BACKGROUND

Along with advances in technology and the rapid flow of information, the need for people to access the Internet is increasing. According to www.internetworldstats.com, a site that continues monitoring the use of the internet on-line, in 2008, internet users in Indonesia the number of users reached 25 million. This is because, aside from serving as a source of information, the internet also serves as a tool for learning and recreation.

Based on data obtained from www.alexa.com, an on-line site that monitors access to the entire site around the world, Facebook was ranked the fourth most accessed site worldwide after Google, Yahoo!, and YouTube. In Indonesia, Facebook was ranked third behind Google and Yahoo! This makes Facebook the most popular social networking site, both in Indonesia and worldwide.

Based on AllFacebook.com, which provides statistical data of Facebook users around the world, the majority of Facebook users in Indonesia are between the ages of 18-25 years. The age span falls in the category of young adults, according to both Havighurst, who defines the category of young adult as corresponding to the age range 18 to 35 years, and Bigner (1994), who states young adulthood begins when the individual reaches the age of 18 and continues until the age of 45. Those who are in the age range 18-25 years are generally those who are in college or university students.

According to Arthur T. Horvath, Ph.D., ABPP from Center for Cognitive Therapy (in Basyuni, 1999), addiction is an activity or situation that we want to experience over and over again, and to that end, if necessary, we are willing to pay (or accept the negative consequences). In recent years studies have shown that there are examples of substances addictions (alcohol, cigarettes, food, drugs, etc.) and activities addictions (gambling, impulsive sexual activity, shoplifting, shop too much, etc.). Rich and Copans (2000) state that most people associate addiction exclusively with substance abuse, yet addictive behaviors can have a broader meaning. The key to addiction is an obsessive and compulsive need for substances, objects, relationships, activities, or other things. It should be emphasized that addiction is more about the response, wants, and needs of someone for something, not the thing itself. It may therefore be said that a person may be addicted to almost anything, including Facebook.

In his article “The Roots of Addiction in Free Market Society”, Bruce K. Alexander (2001) notes that addiction in the modern world can best be understood as a compulsive lifestyle in which individuals in desperation seek a form of substitution after undergoing dislocation from their core closeness, a bond between themselves and groups—from family to spiritual community— essential for each individual in different types of societies. The article also suggests that dislocation is an important cause of addiction, and using examples from the history of Canada and Scotland he

showed that the creation of the free market—the internet being one of its products—led to the spread of dislocation to the poor and the rich. As free market globalization increases, so does the spread of dislocation and addiction.

Humans who are not able to reach psychological integrity in the form of a bond between themselves and their groups develop a “substitution” lifestyle which is accompanied by destructive habits, including, though not limited to, the use of illegal drugs and relationships that do not have the quality of closeness, are not stable, or culturally acceptable to add to their minimum psychological integration. Those who cannot find a better way to achieve psychological integration depend on their substitute lifestyle to a level of intensity corresponding to addiction. This is consistent with the theory of social bond formulated by Travis Hirschi who states that deviant behaviors, including addiction, occur when someone has weak or even zero level of social bond.

With this description in mind, the researchers want to enquiry into the level of social bond among Indonesian students who have experienced Facebook addiction. Facebook is chosen because it is currently very popular, especially among students, for whom it often serves as a psychological substitute for increasingly tenuous social bonds in the community. Therefore, for individuals who have weak social bonds, Facebook can lead to addiction.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key question to be answered through this study is “Is there any relationship between Facebook usage patterns and social bonding among Indonesian students?” This question is then followed by derivative questions based on the four elements of social bond, namely: (1) “Is there any relationship between Facebook usage patterns and attachment among Indonesian students?”, (2) “Is there any relationship between Facebook usage patterns and commitment among Indonesian students?”, (3) “Is there any relationship between Facebook usage patterns and involvement among Indonesian students?”, and (4) “Is there any relationship between Facebook usage patterns and belief among Indonesian students?”

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Social Bond

Social bond is the relationship between the individual and society (Shoemaker, 2005 in Durkin et al., 2007). According to Travis Hirschi (in Durkin et al., 2007), the sociologist who formally introduced the theory of social bond: “human beings are

moral beings as an extension of their existence as a social being.” Social bond theory assumes that emerging motivation of deviant behaviors exists in all people, and concern over this behavior is exactly what makes an individual persists in deviant behavior. When social bond is weak or even nonexistent, individuals have less regard for to sacrifice their time and energy towards socially acceptable behaviors and are at a higher risk of committing deviant behaviors (Faupel, Horowitz, & Weaver, 2004 in Durkin et al., 2007).

According to Hirschi (in Durkin et al., 2007), there are four elements of social bond—attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Attachment refers to the bond between individuals with their significant others, such as family members. The second component of social bond is commitment, which refers to the amount of investment of time, effort, and resources in conventional activities such as getting an education or a job. These investments represent the stages of conformity (Akers, 1997 in Durkin et al., 2007). The third element of social bond is involvement. This aspect consists in the amount of time a person invests in conventional activities, such as school/college work or participation in extra-curricular organizations. The final component of social bond is belief, which is the acceptance of the value of the conventional system.

In this study, the operational definition of social bonds employed concerns the strength or weakness of the relationship between individuals and society which prevent them from committing deviant behaviors. Social bond is itself measured on the basis of four elements, namely attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Thus, it can be inferred that deviant behaviors, including addiction, may occur when attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief is weak or nonexistent.

B. Addiction

Marlatt, Baer, Donovan, and Kiulahan (in Thombs, 1999) provide an operational definition of addictive behavior: a repetitive habit that increases the risk of disease and/or personal and social problems associated with it. Addictive behavior is often subjectively experienced as a loss of control (out of control) so that the behavior occurs again despite trying to end or decrease use of the substance. DSM-IV-TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2000) states that the definition of substance dependence is a compulsive substance abuse that is at least partly biological and partly due to encouragement beyond personal control. Psychoactive drugs, for instance, are very rewarding (positively interpreted by the brain) and reinforcing (Hyman et al., 2001 in Thombs, 1999).

Maladaptive Facebook access leads to destruction or clinically significant distress manifested by three or more symptoms based on DSM-IV criteria and can occur at any time within 12 consecutive months (Ivan Goldberg, 1996 in Basyuni, 1999). These criteria have been modified to the ends of the case study as follows: :

1. Tolerance: The need to access Facebook increases with the aim of achieving a sense of pleasure.
2. The symptoms of a desire to access Facebook that usually arises when off Facebook (for example, when offline).
3. Accessing Facebook in larger quantities (frequency) or within a longer period of time (duration) than intended.
4. The desire to reduce or control the activities of accessing Facebook.
5. Too much time spent in accessing Facebook, looking for ways to be able to access Facebook, or refrain from accessing Facebook activities.
6. Decreasing social activities, work, or recreational activities caused by accessing Facebook.
7. Continuing to access Facebook despite the consequences of physical or psychological harm.

C. Theoretical Dynamic

Addiction to Facebook arises as a compulsive behavior which occurs because of the need to find a substitute for a weak level of social bond. Having managed to satisfy their social needs by accessing Facebook, some will continue to increase the activity to generate further positive emotions. Accessing Facebook, which originally as a substitute activity, becomes a habit and it takes on a compulsive character. Recurring and chronic Facebook addiction can have damaging consequences for one's life.

From a social perspective, addiction has four functions, one of which is the facilitation of social interaction (Thombs, 2006). In this case, addiction is used as a means to enhance the level of social bond. A person's level of social bond may prevent him/her from committing deviant behavior. This means that deviant behavior, including addiction, occurs when the four elements of the social bond—attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief—of a person is weak or nonexistent. Individuals who cannot achieve psychological integration in the form of a bond within themselves and a group develop a "substitution" lifestyle that is accompanied by destructive habits. Those who cannot find a better way to achieve psychological integration depend on their substitution lifestyle with a level of intensity amounting to addiction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, there are two research approaches employed, both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Based on its objective, this study belongs to the category of descriptive study. Descriptive studies occur when researchers want to see a detailed and specific description of a situation or social setting, or a relationship between them (Neuman, 2003).

A. Research Variables

The variables used in this study are the level of social bond and patterns of Facebook usage for students in Indonesia.

According to Shoemaker (2005) social bond refers to the relationship between individual and society. Social bond has four elements, namely attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief.

In measuring Facebook usage patterns, indicators used are the elements of the pattern of Facebook usage in the adaptation version of the IAT questionnaire (Widyanto and McMurrin, 2004), namely (1) Salience or closeness towards Facebook; (2) Excessive use; (3) Neglected works; (4) Anticipate to regain access to Facebook; (5) lack of control; and (5) Neglected social life.

B. Research Subjects

Respondents who are studied in this research are the individuals that have the following characteristics:

1. Research subjects are Indonesian citizens residing in Indonesia. This is because the study wants to enquire into the level of social bond among Indonesian students who have tendencies towards Facebook addiction.
2. Research subjects are students. In accordance with the research by Aryn Karpinski (2009) from Ohio State University, USA, who claim that the preoccupation with accessing Facebook can adversely affect the academic achievement of students, researchers want to gain a deeper understanding of Facebook usage of students in Indonesia, associated with addiction, with social bond as a contributing factor.
3. Research subjects are in the age range of 18-25 years. This is because the subjects to be studied are students, who are in the young adult development stage, which is also the highest age range number of Facebook users in Indonesia.
4. Research subjects have had a Facebook account for at least the past year. The reason for this criterion is that the researchers want to see the trend of addiction which according to DSM-IV criteria may occur at any time within 12 consecutive months (Ivan Goldberg, 1996 in Basyuni, 1999).

C. Sampling Technique

This study uses sampling method of non-random/non-probability sampling, because the exact number of the population to be measured is not known by researchers (Kumar, 1999), given the number of students who are spread all over Indonesia. The sampling technique used is accidental sampling, in which researchers will take

samples that are easily accessible in accordance with the characteristics of respondents who researchers have specified.

D. Research Instrument

1. Questionnaire

Questionnaires were distributed over the period of one week and were distributed online via the creation of an account on the site FreeOnlineSurveys.com and information about the questionnaire was spread via Facebook, e-mail, and mailing lists. To control the characteristic profile of the subjects, the researchers provide a column in which the characteristics of subjects could be selected.

Measuring tool used to measure the tendency of Facebook addiction was an adaptation of the instrument of Internet Addiction Test (IAT) developed in 1995 by Dr. Kimberly Young, a professor at St. Bonaventure University, USA, who is also an expert in the field of internet addiction. This questionnaire used the Likert model consisting of five scales. Answers' scorings were "never": 1, "rare": 2, "sometimes": 3, "often": 4 and "always": 5. The total score obtained by taking the sum of all scores of the 19 items there. Thus, the existing score range was 19-95. Subjects were categorized by determining group norms derived from the Z-score calculation. Results were interpreted by placing a value on the Standard Deviation of the following ranges (each category ranges 1.94 SD):

-2.03 SD up to -0.09 SD	: Average Facebook user
-0.09 SD up to 1.85 SD	: Those who have some problems because of Facebook
1.85 SD up to 3.79 SD	: Those who have significant problems because of Facebook, which are categorized as those who have Facebook addiction.

In the Facebook Usage Pattern Measuring Tool, the alpha coefficient reliability value obtained was equal to .8923, which means that the measuring tool was reliable because it was above .60 (Gronlund, 1985 in Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, Aiken, 2006). Validity obtained for each item varied in the range of .403 to .781, which means each item had a significant correlation with the total score obtained at the level of .01 (1-tail). Only one item had a low validity: item 9 ("How often do you keep to yourself what you're doing when you access Facebook?") which had a validity of .125. So the researchers decided to eliminate the item number 9 given that that the dimension measured by the item would still be represented by two other items in the same dimension. Thus, by eliminating the item number 9, the Facebook Usage Pattern Measuring Tool had 19 items with the value of the reliability coefficient alpha of .9017.

The Social Bond Measuring Tool was created by Keith F. Durkin of Ohio Northern University, USA in 2007. It uses the theory of Hirschi (1969) which states there are four elements of the social bond—attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Prior to using the measuring tool, the researchers contacted Keith F. Durkin via e-mail. The translation and adaptation were carried out after permission was obtained from Keith F. Durkin.

The questionnaire consisted of 14 items that measured a person's social bond. The scores detecting the subject's level of social bond were obtained by creating group norms based on the scores obtained by all respondents. This questionnaire used a Likert scale consisting of six scales titled accordingly: "very inappropriate": 1, "inappropriate": 2, "somewhat inappropriate": 3, "somewhat appropriate": 4, "appropriate": 5 and "very appropriate": 6. However, there was one item (item number 11) which used a reversed scoring system (reversed item). Scoring of this item was "very inappropriate": 6, "inappropriate": 5, "somewhat inappropriate": 4, "somewhat appropriate": 3, "appropriate": 2, and "very appropriate": 1.

The Social Bond Measuring Tool had an alpha coefficient reliability value of .6218, which entails that the measuring tool was reliable because it was above .60 (Gronlund, 1985 in Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, Aiken, 2006). Although one dimension (belief) had a low reliability value of 0.0139, but the items were retained because overall they had good reliability and the dimension only had few items so if the items were not retained, the dimension and sub-dimensions to be measured would not be represented by other items in the measuring instrument. Meanwhile, the validity of measurements obtained figures ranging from .294 to .617, which means that each item had a significant correlation with the total score obtained at the level of .01 and .05 (1-tail). Only two items scored low validity: item 8 (.258) and 11 (.237). However, both items were retained because they both constitute a sub-dimension only represented by a single item.

The Social Bond Measuring Tool consisted of 14 items with a response scale that had a range of values of 1 up to 6 so that the range of scores obtained was 14 up to 84. In categorizing the subject, the group norms were determined by deriving the Z-score calculation. Results were interpreted by placing a value on the Standard Deviation of the following ranges (range of each category 3.565 SD):

-4.61 SD up to -1.045 SD : low social bond
-1.045 SD up to 2.52 SD : high social bond

2. Interview and Observation

In this research, interviews conducted were interviews with general guidelines, to make sure all important topics to be asked were included. In addition, the researchers also used a technique of observation of the physical condition and behavior of the

subjects during the interview and observation of each interviewed respondent's Facebook account.

RESULT

The number of respondents who completed the questionnaire was 250, although the responses open to being processed amounted 214. 150 subjects were female (70.1%) while the remaining 64 were male (29.9%). The respondents were in the age range of 18-25 years old – 7 people aged 18 years old (3.3%), 16 people aged 19 years old (7.5%), 24 people aged 20 years old (11.2%), 72 people aged 21 years old (33.6%), 62 people aged 22 years old (29.0%), 21 people aged 23 years old (9.8%), 9 persons aged 24 years old (4.2%), and 3 people aged 25 years old (1.4%). Based on place of domicile, subjects completing the study came from 16 cities spread over four islands in Indonesia, namely Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi and Bali. Most respondents came from Jakarta, amounting to 84 people (39.3%). Respondents were all active students from a variety of different colleges/universities. There were 41 colleges/universities with as many as 100 people (46.7%) from Universitas Indonesia. With regards to educational status, we found one two-year diploma (D2) student (.5%), 2 three-year-diploma (D3) students (.9%), 202 college (S1) students (94.4%), and 9 master degree (S2) students (4.2%).

The number of subjects belonging to the category of average users of Facebook was 110. The number of those who belonged to the category of Facebook users who had problems as a result of use of Facebook was 94, while those classified as having Facebook addiction were 10 people. Respondents who had a high level of social bond amounted to 188 people, while respondents with low social bond amounted to 26 people.

From the quantitative result, the researchers then conducted interviews and observations of two subjects. The first subject has the initials of T, a female, aged 22 years old. The second subject has the initials of G, a male, aged 22 years old.

Both subjects were both experiencing Facebook addiction and were aware of their circumstances. Both also had the same unlimited internet connection facilities in their homes. The differences lie in the orientation of the usage of Facebook. T saw Facebook more in terms of a lifestyle choice which gave her pleasure: as a means of receiving gossip and updates about the people around her, while G saw Facebook as a major media interaction. This was closely related to differences in social bonding between the two subjects, in which subject T had a high level of social bond while G had a level of low social bond. While T made Facebook as a means to increase pleasure, G made Facebook a “substitution” of his low level of social bond. Another difference lies in their different perspectives on their Facebook addiction. T felt that her Facebook addiction was proof of her status as being up-to-date, while G did not pay much attention to this consideration. T was also still able to live a normal life

involving commitment, although somewhat distracted by Facebook, while G had difficulty completing his thesis even though he had no other activities.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results obtained, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between the tendencies of Facebook addiction and the level of social bond among Indonesian students, with the value of correlation of $-.152$ (significant at the level of 0.05 , one-tailed). This entails that the higher one's social bond, the less one is likely to suffer from Facebook addiction. Conversely, the more likely a person is to suffer from Facebook addiction, the lower the level of social bond.

This study also noted a correlation between Facebook addiction and each elements of social bond, which are attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, where it turns out that there are no significant relationship with these elements; except for commitment, that has a Pearson correlation value of $-.148$ (significant at the level of 0.05 , one-tailed). It shows that the relationship between Facebook addiction tendencies and commitment is of an inversely proportionate character: the higher the tendency towards Facebook addiction, the lower the person's level of commitment. On the contrary, the higher the commitment, the less likely one is to have a Facebook addiction.

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, it was found that there was a significant relationship between the two core variables studied, namely social bond and patterns of Facebook usage. On the other hand, the pattern of Facebook usage only has a significant relationship with commitment, not with other elements of social bond (attachment, involvement, and belief). This may be due to different cultural values held by Indonesians compared to the western world where the social bond theory was first popularized. There are, for example, different patterns of closeness to parents: in Indonesia it is reasonable for a child to be close to his/her parents even after he/she has married and begun a family.

Judging from the measuring instruments used in this study, further researches can integrate more typical Indonesian cultural values, for example the strong religious culture in Indonesia that can affect one component of social bond: commitment. The component of commitment should be in line with the involvement component, in which a person with a commitment to social norms should behave contributing to his/her involvement in the related activities directly in everyday life. However, in the measuring tool used in the study it was found that the realization of involvement in one's commitment is only related to learning and work and does not include, for example, religious activities. It could be a consideration for future studies in order to

further develop the questions related to these two components. Therefore, further research could be carried out by developing existing tools serving to enhance the items contained in the Facebook Usage Pattern Measuring Tool and Social Bond Measuring Tool so as to enhance not only their reliability and validity, but also become more adapted to the cultural values of Indonesian society. We also found some cases in which a person experiencing Facebook addiction apparently can still have a high social bond. This suggests addiction to Facebook is not caused solely by a low level of social bond, but may be influenced by many other factors such as level of education and access to the internet.

Subjects examined in this study were limited to students in Indonesia; whereas in fact, Facebook users in Indonesia are not limited to only students. Further researches can also be carried out by widening the range of subjects in terms of characteristics and social background, such as housewives, K-12 students, or employees. Researches could also be carried out between two or more groups of people with contrasting work backgrounds, such as those who work alone or in teams. Citizens living abroad could also prove to be an interesting object of research, assuming they have a different level and character of social bond compared to those living in the country of their birth and interacting with people coming from the same country. Studies could also be developed further by looking at Facebook as a phenomenon of addiction that can be assessed not only by the social bond theory alone, but according to other approaches, such as personality theory, psychoanalysis, and so on.

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The logo for the International Association for Forensic Psychology (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, thick, curved lines. The upper line is light blue and the lower line is light red, creating a stylized, open circle around the text.

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