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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Molaei, H. (2017). Social Media and Politics: Examining Indonesians' Political Knowledge on Facebook. *Journal of Cyberspace Studies*, 1(1), 119-139. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jcpolicy.2017.59873>

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Social Media and Politics: Examining Indonesians' Political Knowledge on Facebook

Hamideh Molaei

(Received 6 June 2016; accepted 30 September 2016)

Abstract

The Internet and social media have played a significant role in contemporary political sphere of Indonesia. In particular, they have been widely used for political activism and discussion; but whether the discussions are constructive is another issue. Constructive political discussion requires several preconditions; one of the most important requirements is rational reasoning. Citizens must be equipped with some degree of political knowledge and competency to provide reasonable arguments and justifications in discussions. The primary objective of this paper is to examine the level of political knowledge of Indonesian Facebookers regarding corruption which is currently a serious issue in Indonesia. An online survey was conducted among the most active users of an anti-corruption Facebook group of Indonesians. The results of the study generally suggested that the participants were well informed about the current affairs of their society and showed a high level of political knowledge in terms of the Corruption Eradication Commission and also the incumbent politicians; however, the results indicated a low level of knowledge regarding laws and regulations surrounding corruption as well as the issues related to the former politicians.

Keywords: social media; Facebook; political discussion; political knowledge; Indonesia; corruption

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Introduction

Today, social media have become an important part of Indonesians' everyday lives for various functions; i.e. education, business, entertainment, social life and in particular for politics and political engagement. With more than 50 million active users, Indonesia is the fourth largest source of Facebook users after the USA, Brazil and India (Socialbakers, 2016). Currently, Facebook is the fourth most trafficked website in the country (Alexa, 2016).

Social media with their user-generated content feature have significantly changed people's modes of social and political participation (Fortunati, 2009). These participatory media have provided a big opportunity for Indonesians' social and political participation. They have also posed several challenges to people's constructive political engagement.

Several studies have enthusiastically referred to the positive role of the Internet and social media for democracy because they facilitate citizens' social and political engagement (Enjolras et al., 2012; Gil De Zúñiga et al., 2009; Holt et al., 2013); on the other hand, others proposed the challenges that are provided by the Internet and social media (Albrecht, 2006; Dahlberg, 1998; Gerstenfeld et al., 2003). It is important to mention that each of these opinions may be correct since these platforms may be used both in constructive and an unconstructive manor due to their nature of user generated content.

Online political discussion is a significant type of political participation that has been facilitated by the rise of social media (Molaei, 2014). Constructive political discussion requires several preconditions; the most important one is reasonable argument and justification. In this regards, political knowledge is a significant factor required for offering convincing arguments.

This paper aims to examine the level of political knowledge of Indonesian Facebookers about corruption through an online survey. Previous studies looked into different aspects of the Internet and social media for political participation in Indonesia (Hill & Sen, 2005; Lim, 2003, 2005a, 2005b). In particular, there are invaluable pieces of research about online social movements (Hamayotsu, 2013; Lim, 2013; Molaei, 2015) and the quality of online political discussions (Molaei, 2010, 2014; Wayansari, 2011). This study; however, attempts to contribute to the existing

literature by examining the level of political knowledge and competencies of Facebook users. The article first defines 'political knowledge' as the focus of the paper. Then, it provides a historical overview of corruption – as one of the most controversial political issues in Indonesia and the main topic of discussion in the selected forum. The details of the online survey that was undertaken as the main research method are examined. After which the main findings of the paper are discussed. Finally, the conclusions bears significant findings about the importance of political knowledge for political discussions.

Political Knowledge

As discussed earlier, a degree of background knowledge on politics is one of the requirements for providing reasonable arguments in discussions. Hence, it is necessary to define 'political knowledge'. The term civic and political knowledge are used interchangeably. According to Maiello, Oser & Biedermann (2003), knowledge of politics and political institutes is called civic knowledge, a form of knowledge that has some positive functions such as promoting political participation as well as enhancing support for democratic and civic values. It also helps citizens to better understand the current affairs shaping their societies (Galston, 2004). There is no specific definition of civic knowledge; but, the term generally refers to relevant information and the level of skills and understanding of civic and political affairs surrounding regional, national and global issues. A country's democracy relates to its citizens; however, it cannot truly work without informed citizens (Gans, 2003). According to Popkin & Dimock (1999):

Basic political knowledge structures the kinds of inferences that citizens make about the world. The way that citizens reason about politics [and] the kinds of information they use to make political decisions are all affected by their familiarity with the political world (p. 142).

The above quotation, offers a sound definition of political knowledge. It both considers the role of political knowledge for political discussion among citizens and for political decision-making.

The more civic and political knowledge that people accumulate, the better they can recognize the effect of public policies on their interests. In essence, they are able to promote their interests more efficiently (Galston, 2007). Low civic and political knowledge generates weakly rooted political ideologies, a superficial understanding of public policy, intolerance of minority groups and distrust political institutions (Hart et al., 2004). These functions of civic and political knowledge are very important, but this study aims to focus on the quality of political discussion in attempt to ascertain to what extent people use political knowledge to strengthen their arguments in Facebook discussions. To this end, it is imperative to determine what civic and political knowledge mean in different studies and also in the current study.

When assessing their student participants' civic knowledge, Torney-Purta, Barber & Wilkenfeld (2006) focused on the former's knowledge of democratic processes and concepts. They also examined how students interpret political information by asking them about an election leaflet or a political cartoon. In another study, Torney-Purta (2001) examined students' knowledge of particular concepts such as democracy, citizenship and government, and their attitudes regarding the government, the nation, immigrants and women's political rights. According to McAllister (1998), political knowledge can be defined in two different ways: (1) factual knowledge, which pertains to political events, personalities and institutions; and, (2) background knowledge, which is about political concepts and the ways of operating political institutions. Democratic citizens must have knowledge of the political affairs and history of their countries (McAllister, 1998). Knowledge of political parties, and political leaders, and of related fields such as political economy and political history, is vital for effective citizenship as it provides a significant context for understanding current politics (Carpini & Keeter, 1993).

Citizens' knowledge is essential for their political participation. To this end, they have to access to reliable and comprehensible resources such as portrayals, news, reports, discussions and so forth about social and political affairs (Dahlgren, 2000). All of the above points about civic and political knowledge were taken into consideration for operationalizing the political knowledge concept in order to use it for examining the Indonesian Facebookers' level of

political knowledge. Given that this paper has examined Facebookers' knowledge of corruption as one of the most controversial political issue in contemporary Indonesia, it is necessary to provide a historical overview of the issue in the country.

Corruption in Indonesia

Corruption is one the most serious issues in contemporary Indonesia (Henderson & Kuncoro, 2004). According to the recent statistics released by Transparency International, Indonesia's corruption score was 36 out of 100 (on this scale, 100 denotes the cleanest and 0 shows least transparent country (Transparency International, 2014). Corruption has a long history in Indonesia. It roots back to ancient times, that is, before European colonisation and when the rulers of states received tributes from the merchants as a guarantee to protect them (Arifianto, n.d.). During the classical agricultural based kingdoms around the 10th century, Javanese kings rewarded officials by instating them in positions in which they were expected to exploit for the rulers' benefits (King, 2000, p. 606). Corruption was promoted by the Dutch East India Company during colonisation in several ways. As Smith contends "the men of the Company were underpaid and exposed to every temptation that was offered by the combination of a weak native organisation, extraordinary opportunities in trade, and an almost complete absence of checks from home or in Java" (1971, p. 23). In this regard, "officials became rich by stealing from the company. Some forms of theft came in time to deserve a less harsh name, as they were so current and open that they could be regarded as legal" (Smith, 1971, p. 23). These kinds of illegal activities continued even after the company's closure and the arrival of the Dutch Governor General during the 19th century (Smith, 1971).

Corruption may have declined for several years after the independence of Indonesia due to several factors such as 'the idealism generated by the revolution', 'the foundation of the new republic' and 'a free and critical press' (King, 2000, p. 607). However, corruption became prevalent again in mid-1950 (King, 2000). During the Sukarno era, two significant factors promoted corruption in Indonesia: (1) the dreadful inflationary budgets which made salaries insufficient to earn living and (2) administrative deterioration which made financial accountability

collapse (Mackie, 1970). Indonesians experienced the worst corruption condition during Suharto's presidency. Civil servants' low salaries were identified as one of the factors that underpinned corruption during the Suharto era (Robertson-Snape, 1999). Interestingly, this point is admitted by President Suharto in his book titled *My Thoughts, Words and Deeds: An Autobiography*:

Corruption in our country is not the result of corrupt minds but of economic pressures. Eventually, when economic development has gone so far as to produce a good overall standard of living, government employees will receive adequate salaries and have no reason to practise corruption (Suharto, 1991; cited in Robertson-Snape, 1999, p. 590).

Although president promised to fight against corruption and to establish a good and clean government, his legacy after 32 years was *Korrupsi, Kollusi, Nepotisme* (KKN) corruption, collusion and nepotism (Robertson-Snape, 1999). By that time, Indonesia's corruption rank was 80 among 85 different countries with a score of 2 out of 10 (Transparency International, 1998). It is important to note that Suharto played an active role in sustaining the problem. He advocated key government and military figures to benefit from national economic sources in order to secure his power (Robertson-Snape, 1999). Moreover, the New Order's state economy policies between 1966 and 1983 facilitated and increased corruption through government intervention in the economy of Indonesia. The privatisation and liberalisation of economy in 1983 could not rehabilitate this situation. As Robertson-Snape maintains:

Rather, liberalisation in Indonesia provided the opportunity for a rapid expansion of the business interests of favoured groups in society, most notably, members of the Suharto family and Suharto's Chinese cronies, who had succeeded in securing licences, approvals and major loans on favourable terms. The Suharto family now hold major interests in most of the vital sectors of the economy, including, roads, car manufacturing and telecommunications (1999, p. 595).

Moreover, the lack of transparency, accountability and free press were significant political factors in sustaining corruption in archipelago in the Suharto era (Robertson-Snape, 1999). Corruption did not go away after the fall of Suharto. Habibie and most of the members of his government who were part of Suharto's patronage system did not like to eliminate the system (Arifianto, n.d). The fourth president of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid not only failed in fighting corruption; but was also prosecuted by the Parliament due to corruption scandals and replaced by his vice president Megawatt Sukarnoputri (Amir, 2010). Anti-corruption activities of the three post-Suharto presidents, Habibie, Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri were not successful (Sherlock, 2002). Yudhoyono's anti-corruption policies were more efficient compared to his predecessors. For example, he ordered the establishment of an interdepartmental team including the National Police, the *Development Finance Comptroller* (BPKP) and the *Attorney General's Office* (AGO) under the Deputy Attorney General to collaborate in prosecuting some special corruption cases (Schütte, 2007).

Another notable anti-corruption activity that was conducted during Yudhoyono was the establishment of the Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or KPK). KPK played a crucial role in current Indonesian civil society. KPK was established in late 2003 under Law No. 30 of 2002 (Schütte, 2007). It aimed to bring Indonesia free from corruption and to change Indonesia to an anti-corruption nation (KPK, 2004). In order to fulfil its duty in the best possible way, KPK had been granted legal authority to investigate and prosecute corruption cases in different ways such as recording communications and investigating people's bank accounts (Schütte, 2007). In return, KPK is not allowed to give up a corruption case once its initial investigation has been started (Butt, 2011).

KPK has accomplished several important anti-corruption cases since its establishment. For example, the number of corruption cases that were brought to courts for trial were five in 2005, while this figure climbed to 25 in 2008 (KPK, 2004, 2008). These accomplishments increased Indonesians' trust to KPK. According to a poll conducted by *Kompas* (an Indonesian national daily newspaper) in November 2009, 57% of respondents were satisfied with KPK's performance, while 22% were satisfied with

the performances of the National Police, only 19% were satisfied with the *Attorney General's Office (AGO)*, (Schütte, 2012).

While KPK has been granted great authority over corruption cases, the Indonesian Police and prosecutors are able to discredit KPK officials (Butt, 2011). In one case, in 2009, the police and prosecutors used their power against KPK commissioners. Antasari Azhar, the former head of KPK was arrested in early 2009 being accused of murdering a businessman (Rondonuwu, 2009; Butt, 2011). In another case, the Police arrested two deputies of KPK in October 2009 accusing them of accepting bribes. This time the case became significant since Indonesian netizens started a strong anti-corruption movement on Facebook. The Indonesian Facebookers established a group titled 'The movement of 1000,000 Facebookers to support Chandra Hamzah and Bibit Samad Riyanto' to support two deputies of KPK.

A discussion forum was established as part of the Facebook group and was successful in attracting the attention of many Facebookers. The forum was selected as the case study due to the high rate of engagement and discussion. It is important to mention that some of the posts were replied by over 1000 comments. In this regard, for the purpose of this study, it was significant to examine the level of political knowledge of the people participating in discussions about the issue.

Research Methods

Online survey was used as the main method to explore the level of political knowledge of the most active users of the anti-corruption Facebook group about mainstream political issues in Indonesia and in particular corruption. Online survey is an appropriate method for examining the issue, because in this way, we can obtain some information from the most active users of the forum that could not be gained through content analysis of their discussions. In addition, online survey removes the limitations of other self-reporting methods such as interviews which require direct, face-to-face contact with Indonesian Facebook users participating in the online anti-corruption movement. According to Wright (2005), online surveys make it possible for researchers to access groups of participants who would not be contacted through other channels easily. In this study, the selected group

were online users; and, it was not possible to talk to them face to face.

Online surveys, as significant tools for collecting data from target audiences via the Internet (Bhaskaran & LeClaire, 2010, p. 9) have been applied in different studies in the field of media and communications. In particular, they have been used as a prevalent method in Facebook studies (Joinson, 2008; Roblyer et al., 2010; Steinfield et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2010). In Facebook studies, inviting participants to take part in survey through the website has some positive points. The most important benefit is that researchers are able to ensure that all respondents are Facebook users, a factor that increases the reliability of the research. For the purposes of this study, I invited Facebook users to take part in an online survey by sending them messages through their Facebook profiles.

Participants and Procedure

The participants in the survey were selected among the most active users of the forum; that is those who contributed to discussions by writing four or more comments. Invitation letters containing the URL for the questionnaire were sent only to the participants who gave me permission to send them messages through their Facebook profiles. It is important to note that one of the Facebook features allows users to set their privacy settings so that they can both send and receive messages from users who are not Facebook friends. This sampling technique has both positive and negative outcomes. One of its advantages is that it removes ethical considerations: the researcher gain permission to send messages to the participants. However, by excluding those who do not provide their contact information, it challenges appropriate sizing of online populations (Wright, 2005).

Instrument

The questionnaire was designed to measure both the participants' civic and political knowledge as well as the level of their political news and information acquisition. It also aimed to explore users' attitudes towards other participants and their experiences during discussions. The online survey consisted of 21 questions divided into three parts. The first part examined the rate of participants' use of up-to-date news and information resources. The second parts

aimed to measure the participants' civic and political knowledge; and finally, the third part contained four demographical questions including age, sex and education and the country of residence.

In line with ethics requirements, the questionnaire first asked the participants whether they were under or above the age of 18. The survey was designed only to allow respondents above the age of 18 to take part. Respondents under the age of 18 were provided with a link stating that they were not eligible to participate in the survey. Before commencing the survey, the participants were provided with a summary about the research project. In the first part of the questionnaire, seven Likert-type questions (three-point scale) were used to measure the respondents' access to and use of up-to-date political information. It was considered important to measure these items because people must be aware of what is happening in the societies in which they live (Dahlgren, 2000). But to achieve this awareness, they must have access to reliable and comprehensible resources. The more up-to-date knowledge they achieve, the more they can take part in constructive discussions. The questions were presented as follows: 'How often do you use the Internet?', 'How often do you use the Internet to get political news?', 'How often do you look for national news on the Internet?', 'How often do you look for international news on the Internet?', 'How often do you watch the news on TV?', 'How often do you read the news in newspapers or magazines?' and 'How often do you listen to the news from radio'. The proposed selected responses to these questions were: 'weekly', 'monthly', 'more than one month'.

The second section contained 10 questions regarding different aspects of corruption in Indonesia; in particular, the most important topics that people discussed in the selected Facebook forum. The 10 'true', 'false' and 'do not know' questions aimed at measuring the participants' background knowledge of the main topic of discussion. Assessing people's political knowledge by questioning them about history, political issues and the political system of their countries is a method frequently used by some scholars. Popkin and Dimock (1999) for example examined a selected number of Americans' political knowledge using a set of questions focusing on the country's political system, including information about political parties, the President, the Congress and the Supreme Court. Similarly, the political knowledge of some

Australian voters was assessed using a series of questions about Australian history and the country's political system (McAllister, 1998). This method was also used in a focus group study conducted by Carpini and Keeter (1993), and by the National Constitution Centre in the United States in 1987 (Dudley & Gitelson, 2002). Below is the list of questions with their correct answers.

1. KPK (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi [Corruption Eradication Commission]) has the authority to request financial information about suspects and to freeze financial transactions. (True)
2. Attempted bribery carries a minimum 3-year sentence and a maximum jail term of 12 years. (True)
3. KPK is authorised neither to record people's communications nor to investigate people's bank accounts. (False)
4. Where corruption is found under Law No. 31 of 1999, the Court may order life imprisonment or the death penalty. (True)
5. Muhammad Busyro Muqoddas is the current head of KPK. (True)
6. Sri Mulyani Indrawati was recently appointed Managing Director of the World Bank Group. (True)
7. Sri Mulyani and Boediono were two important figures involved in the Bank Century issue. (True)
8. The Indonesian parliament took serious action against Sri Mulyani and Boediono for the case of Bank Century Bailout. (False)
9. In corruption cases, the KPK and the Public Prosecutor can arrest a person and detain him/her for a total of 60 days. The Indonesian police can arrest a person and detain him/her for a total of 110 days. (True)
10. Abdurrahman Wahid – the fourth president of Indonesia – was prosecuted by the Parliament because of corruption scandals and replaced by his vice president Megawati Sukarnoputri. (True)

Findings

The findings of the paper are presented in two sections. The first section explains the rate of news media usage by participants

and the second section discusses the participants' knowledge about mainstream political issues and in particular corruption in Indonesia. The questions in this section are mainly about the topics that people discuss with each other such as the case of the detention of Bibit and Chandra – two deputies of Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia – and the issue of the Bank Century bailout. In total, 67 people accepted the invitation, out of them 45 participants submitted the completed survey.

The participants were from different age groups. Thirty five per cent of them were 18 to 29 years old. Thirty two per cent were 30 to 39 years old. Twenty one per cent of the respondents were 40 to 49 years old and 11.6% were above the age of 50. Fifty seven per cent of the respondents hold Bachelor degrees and 16.6% hold Master degrees. In addition, 16.6% hold Diploma degrees and 9.5% had secondary school education. It is also important to note that 87.8% of the respondents lived in Indonesia and only 2.4% lived outside the country.

Facebookers' Rate of News Media Usage

In the first section, the participants were asked to answer how frequently they used the Internet. In addition, they were asked how often they used the Internet, television, radio and print media to access national and international political news. As discussed earlier, it was important to assess the participants' access to and use of up-to-date political information. As Dahlgren (2000) contends people must be aware of what is happening in societies they live in. Access to reliable and comprehensible resources is an important factor that contributes to achieving this awareness.

As shown in Table 1, 97% of the participants reported that they use the Internet at least once a week. The Table also reports that more than 95% of the respondents stated that they used the Internet to access national and international political news at least once a week. In addition, the Table shows that more than 85% of the respondents used television and print media to access news at least once a week. The statistics in Table 1 also shows that 45% of users used the radio to access news. With the exception of radio, other news resources including The Internet, television and newspapers were used frequently by the most active users of this site.

Indonesian Facebookers' Knowledge About Corruption

In addition to examining the rate of political information acquisition from different resources like the Internet, television and newspapers by the most active users of the forum, my study examined the users' level of knowledge about the most important current affairs of Indonesia. In particular, it examined information about topics that were discussed by users in the forum. The participants were asked to answer a series of questions regarding corruption, the case of KPK deputies and the issue of Bank Century.

Table 1. The Frequency of Political Information Acquisition by the Most Active Users of the Forum

Items	Frequency	Weekly		Monthly		More than a month		Total	
		F ¹	P ²	F	P	F	P	F	P
1 How often do you usually use the Internet?	47	97.9	1	2.1	0	0	48	100	
2 How often do you use the Internet to get political news?	47	97.9	0	0	1	2.1	48	100	
3 How often do you look for national news on the Internet?	46	97.8	0	0	1	2.1	47	100	
4 How often do you look for international news on the Internet?	43	95.5	0	0	2	4.4	45	100	
5 How often do you watch news on TV?	41	87.2	4	8.5	2	4.3	47	100	
6 How often do you read news in newspapers or magazines?	40	85.1	5	10.6	2	4.3	47	100	
7 How often do you listen to news on radio?	21	45.6	4	8.7	21	45.7	46	100	

¹ Frequency, ² Per cent

As shown in bold in Table 2, the correct answer for statements 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 is 'true' and for statements 3 and 8 is 'false'. As shown in Table 2, 7 out of 10 questions – that constituted 70%

of the total number of questions – were answered correctly by more than 50% of respondents.

The first and the third questions were specifically about the KPK's roles, rights, duties, and the level of power and authority. Table 2 indicated that more than 75% of the participants answered these questions correctly. It shows that they have a good level of knowledge about this key institution. Question 9 is also about KPK's level of authority. However, this question is relatively complicated and is answered correctly by only 30% of the respondents.

Questions 2 and 4 raise questions about general laws and regulations surrounding corruption. The results interestingly indicate that people have a relatively low level of knowledge in this respect. As Table 2 demonstrates, only 47% and 53% of the respondents correctly answered questions 2 and 4, respectively.

Questions 5, 6, 7 and 10 are about political figures including (Muhammad Busyro Muqoddas, who was the head of KPK when the research was conducted, Sri Mulyani Indrawati, the former finance Minister of Indonesia, Boediono, the former vice-president and Abdurrahman Wahid, the fourth president of Indonesia). The results indicate that more than 88% of respondents answered questions 5, 6 and 7 correctly, but only 38% answered question 10 correctly. One reason for attaining these results may be related to the political figures. Muhammad Busyro Muqoddas and Sri Mulyani Indrawati and Boediono were the core attention of people because of their current cases. In 2011, when the research was conducted, the issue of KPK and Bank Century in which these three figures played a key role were central. But Abdurrahman Wahid served as the president of Indonesia from 1999 to 2001. In this regard, his case is not a current controversial case. In addition, Abdurrahman Wahid is more popular for his ideas regarding religious tolerance rather than corruption. This may be one reason that people did not answer the question about him correctly. We can see that the respondents showed a high level of political knowledge about the KPK related issues and incumbent politicians, but they showed a lower level of knowledge regarding the corruption related laws and regulations and the former corruption cases and the politicians involved.

Table 2. The Rate of Participants' Correct Responses to Political Knowledge Questions

No. Questions	True	False	Don't know	Total
1 KPK has the authority to request financial information about suspects and freeze financial transactions.	81.4%, <i>35¹</i>	14.0%, <i>6</i>	4.7%, <i>2</i>	100%, <i>43</i>
2 Attempted bribery carries a minimum 3-year sentence and a maximum jail term of 12 years	47.6%, <i>20</i>	31.0%, <i>13</i>	21.4%, <i>9</i>	100%, <i>42</i>
3 KPK is authorised neither to record people's communications nor to investigate people's bank account.	16.7%, <i>7</i>	78.6%, <i>33</i>	4.8%, <i>2</i>	100%, <i>42</i>
4 Where corruption is found under Law No. 31 of 1999, the Court may order life imprisonment or the death penalty.	53.5%, <i>23</i>	25.6%, <i>11</i>	20.9%, <i>9</i>	100%, <i>43</i>
5 Muhammad Busyro Muqoddas is the head of the KPK.	88.4%, <i>38</i>	7.0%, <i>3</i>	4.7%, <i>2</i>	100%, <i>43</i>
6 Sri Mulyani Indrawati was recently appointed the Managing Director of the World Bank Group.	92.9%, <i>39</i>	4.8%, <i>2</i>	2.4%, <i>1</i>	100%, <i>42</i>
7 Sri Mulyani and Boediono were two important figures regarding the Bank Century case.	95.3%, <i>41</i>	2.3%, <i>1</i>	2.3%, <i>1</i>	100%, <i>43</i>
8 The Indonesian parliament took serious action against Sri Mulyani and Boediono in the case of the Bank Century Bailout.	23.8%, <i>10</i>	54.8%, <i>23</i>	21.4%, <i>9</i>	100%, <i>42</i>
9 The KPK and the Public Prosecutor in corruption cases can arrest a person and detain him/her for a total of 60 days. The Indonesian police can arrest a person also detain him/her for a total of 110 days.	31.0%, <i>13</i>	28.6%, <i>12</i>	40.5%, <i>17</i>	100%, <i>42</i>
10 Abdurrahman Wahid -the fourth president of Indonesia- was prosecuted by the Parliament because of corruption scandals and replaced by his vice president Megawati Sukarnoputri.	38.1%, <i>16</i>	52.4%, <i>22</i>	9.5%, <i>4</i>	100%, <i>42</i>

¹ The frequencies are shown in italics.

Conclusion

This paper investigated the level of political knowledge of Indonesian Facebookers who participated in the discussion board of the anti-corruption Facebook group ‘the movement of one million Facebookers to support Chndra Hamzah and Bibit Samad Riyanto’. Considering the responses of the most active users of the forum, I can argue that they were up-to-date regarding the current affairs of their society. The research revealed that most of the active users of the forum kept themselves up to date with news and information about current affairs by drawing from different sources such as television, newspapers and the Internet. Examining the level of users’ political knowledge showed that more than half of the respondents correctly answered 70% of the questions about political current affairs in Indonesia. In particular, the results demonstrate that they are well-informed about the main topic of the discussion forum which they have participated in. People showed a high level of knowledge regarding KPK as well as the incumbent politicians who were involved in the recent corruption cases in their country. In case of the selected movement, every day, people were exposed to news and information in different formats of broadcasting, print and online media. As the most active users of the forum reported, they frequently got up-to-date news about the cases from different resources. For the case of this study, exposing news via social media may affect the participants’ knowledge about corruption. The issue became clearer when the results showed a lower level of background knowledge regarding corruption related laws and regulations as well as the older corruption cases in the country. It is clear that these types of issues are rarely covered in mainstream news media every day.

Finally, it should be noted that the case study of the research was limited to corruption-related topics in Indonesia; and, because of the unique characteristics of the movement, the results cannot be generalised to other cases. In addition, I suggest that it would be useful for future research to examine the quality of users’ discussions in terms of providing knowledge and justification through content analysis.

Acknowledgment

The author wishes to thank the Iran's National Elites Foundation for the financial support throughout writing the paper.

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