

## Master's Thesis

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An International NGO Startup's Use of Social Media Technology

The Case of Anti Corruption International: A Discursive Analysis on the Organizational Use of the Term 'Corruption' on Twitter.

Master's Thesis in *Globalization – Politics and Culture*

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# Master's Thesis

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## Summary

Social media technologies today play a central part in our societies at large, but also within organizations. As such, it is both of relevance and importance to look at how organizations use social media technologies. Presented as a case within this larger topic, this study aimed at researching an international NGO startup's use of social media technology – more specifically, by doing a discursive analysis on the organizational use of the term 'corruption' on Twitter. *Chapter 1: Introduction* elaborates more on this.

In Chapter 2 and 3 a context through which to interpret any findings within the analysis was provided, firstly by taking a closer look at the featured organization, Anti Corruption International, followed by a global context in which the organization operates within, namely that of a globalizing world. The type of organization that Anti Corruption International can be defined as was then looked at, thus providing an overview of some of the features characterizing international NGO startups. This overview is followed by a presentation of the global problem that the organization is working towards eradicating, namely that of 'corruption' which also happens to be the term investigated in the discursive analysis of the organization's use of the said term on Twitter. Following this came a presentation of some perspectives on reasons as to why organizations might use social media technologies.

With this context in mind, the discursive analysis was conducted assisted by the social media capturing software, Chorus. The software which is designed to capture Twitter discourse, provided a visual analysis of some structural patterns that the programme could observe within the dataset collected. The programme showed some terms to be co-occurring more strongly with the term 'corruption' than other terms. What could be interpreted by this, was that not only did the organization use the term 'corruption' on Twitter as a means of broadcasting information and encouraging for social interaction with its target group (a young, international audience), it could also be interpreted as to show that the organization used the term 'corruption' in order to call for action by joining the organization and its cause. Furthermore, the co-occurring terms also made for an interpretation of the organization using the term 'corruption' in a manner that re-produced itself as an entity, by constructing its identity as an anti-corruption organization working towards the eradication of corruption.

The reasons as to why this particular research topic was chosen mainly had to do with this particular topic being regarded as valuable to the organization, seeing as no prior research had been done concerning the organization's use of social media technologies broadly, or the organization's use of the significant term 'corruption' more specifically. As such, the aim of this research was to provide the organization with some insights into a segment of its social media practices – insights that the organization could build on and apply in order to fill the slightly innocent, yet oblivious void that the organization finds itself within due to a deficiency of knowledge and insight concerning its current use of social media technologies. For fledgling organizations and sustainable organizations alike, unawareness concerning the organization's use of social media technologies is not exactly seen as to be beneficial to the organization, seeing as social media technologies can impact organizations in unforeseeable ways.

Thus, this study might serve to address a segment within the knowledge gap that exists within the featured organization concerning its use of social media technologies. The interpretations made within the study might serve to create the basis for further studies to be carried out by the organization itself on this particular topic. Additionally, comprehensions of social media practices within organizations such as international NGO startups, even small segments of their use, serves to identify trends in usage, which further serves to provide an understanding of how new technologies such as these can be leveraged to fulfill the global objectives of an international NGO startup, and at large, providing a deeper understanding of the purpose of using social media technologies within organizations.

## Acknowledgements

The experience of writing such a comprehensive paper as this, did – truth be told – stir some mixed feelings within me from the very start of this journey until the closing end. At times it was challenging; although at this stage well familiar with how to write a paper, the essential finality of this thesis caused some various thoughts and feelings to surface within me at different stages during the process of writing. Initially, with the submission of this paper I would be wrapping up my two years of study at NTNU – two great years of academic developments and personal achievements. However, at times this finality felt like the last few pages before a new chapter, like the end of a new beginning.

Thus, I sometimes felt out of my depth and outside of my comfort zone – wandering into the unknown – a feeling that sometimes terrified me. Other times I would feel curious and motivated by the possibility that this thesis had provided me in further exploring the specific topic of this paper. This motivation has undoubtedly developed during these past two years of studies, seeing as I have become more familiar, both academically and practically, with one of the main themes of this paper, namely that of *corruption*. Respectively, the experiences that I have gained during these past couple of years have in one way or another related to the issue of corruption; through academic work, such as final term papers, an internship assignment, and assistant research work on a published report and guide, as well as through practical work experience gained through volunteering and internship positions in ISFiT 2015, Anti Corruption International and Transparency International Ireland. These experiences have motivated and inspired me to further understand and explore this societal phenomenon – albeit, this time through the specific topic and research question of this Master's Thesis. However, before proceeding onwards, I would like to give my sincerest gratitude to a few special people that have been of tremendous support to me while writing this paper.

First of all, I would like to thank Ståle Angen Rye, førsteamanuensis at the Department of Geography at NTNU, for agreeing to be my Master's Thesis supervisor during the final term of my *MSc Globalization – Politics and Culture* study programme. Ståle has during the process of writing this paper shown continuous support and offered helpful tips, remarks and guidance – his assistance has been much appreciated. For this I express my sincerest gratitude.

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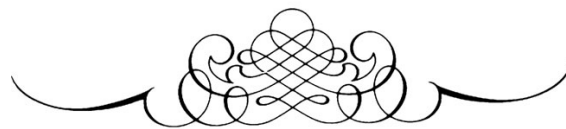
Last but not least, I would also like to thank my parents, Steven and Anne Brit, whom have supported me throughout all of my achievements and been there for me when I've needed it the most, and my boyfriend Jason, whom has believed in me from the day we met. The constant love, support and motivating words from you all have truly been invaluable and dear to me, and I count myself blessed to have you all in my personal life.

From the bottom of my heart, I offer my deepest gratitude.

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Yours sincerely,

*Camilla Mør*





## Chapter 1: Introduction

As was mentioned in the *Acknowledgements*, this thesis represented a possibility to further explore a topic that the undersigned during these past two years had become more familiar with through both academic and practical experiences. Often researchers will have been provided with motivation and a spark for undertaking a specific research project due to first- or second hand experiences of a societal issue. And thus: “for many researchers, projects develop out of already-existing memberships of social groups and/or access to particular spaces”. (Crang & Cook, 2007, p. Loc. 324 (Kindle edt.)) This has been no exception in the case of this thesis; it can be said that the undersigned’s first-hand experience of, and existing membership within, the organization that is featured in this study, strongly influenced the topic of this thesis.

However, extending beyond the personal involvement and preferences of the researcher, motivation for doing this specific thesis was also found from within the featured organization, seeing as the topic of this research also was regarded as important and relevant to the organization – a point as to which we’ll return to further ahead in this introduction, and also within *Chapter 4: Methodology and Other Underlying Issues*. The organization that is featured in this study, namely that of Anti Corruption International (ACI), can briefly be presented as an international NGO startup that is focused on anti-corruption work and aims to encourage and engage young people around the world to partake in the eradication of corruption – a mission that the organization works towards achieving through international cooperation in the search for solutions to this global problem. (Anti Corruption International, 2015b) A more thorough presentation of the organization will be included further on in the paper. Thus, this leaves us with revealing the chosen topic of this Master’s Thesis:

*“An international NGO startup’s use of social media technology.”*

where the narrowing perspective and research question is as follows:

*“The case of Anti Corruption International: A discursive analysis on the organizational use of the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter.”*

After having decided upon the topic, the point of ensuring a certain degree of academic integrity became the next issue of importance – this achieved through a background reading of literature selected on its basis to contribute to an overall context which is important within the interpretation process of any given discourse analysis. This context is presented in two parts: *Chapter 2: A Global Backdrop* and *Chapter 3: Social Media Technology*. Thus, by including a context and a circumambient interconnectedness to various themes within the topic and research question of this thesis, an attempt is made to ensure the academic integrity of this paper, in addition to justifying the undersigned’s subjective interpretations presented in the analysis of the research question.

So how exactly is this paper structured? Well, after completing the current chapter, *Introduction*, we move on to *Chapter 2: A Global Backdrop* which, firstly, includes a presentation of the featured organization, Anti Corruption International. Secondly, a larger frame of reference is presented – the global context that the international organization operates within – namely that of a globalizing world. Thirdly, we will take a look at what kind of organization Anti Corruption International is, namely that of an international NGO startup, and how such an organization can be comprehended. Fourthly, the main problem that the international NGO aims at eradicating will be placed in a larger context – thus providing a broad frame of reference through which to understand the term which later will be investigated in the discursive analysis of the organization’s use of the term on Twitter – namely that of *corruption* as a societal phenomenon and global problem. With this as the global backdrop for the thesis, we will continue on to *Chapter 3: Social Media Technology*. In this chapter authors such as Albu & Etter (2016), Fischer & Reuber (2011), and Chaher & Spellman (2012) among others are reviewed due to their differing perspectives on how social media technologies in general can be used by organizations, which is then followed by a section which takes a more specific look at Twitter – the social media platform through which the undersigned extracted the qualitative data required in order to conduct the discursive analysis. Proceeding onwards to *Chapter 4: Methodology and Other Underlying Issues*, we look at the methodology behind this study before arriving at *Chapter 5: Analysis* – the section in which the research question is explored and investigated by analysing the collected data, before finally arriving at *Chapter 6* - the conclusion of this paper.

As aforementioned, the research within this paper will be done through a discursive analysis which will be conducted by collecting a larger number of tweets from the organization’s

official Twitter account. Accordingly, an analysis such as this would use a qualitative methodology, seeing as the attention is focused towards gathering Twitter discourse (tweets) as data to be used further ahead in the study. Once the tweets have been collected, they will be organized and thus analysed in a manner that aims at addressing the research question of this paper. The research methodology behind these choices, such as for instance the specifics regarding the dataset, will be explained and elaborated further ahead in the chapter on methodology which addresses various aspects one should consider surrounding the different choices that were made during the extent of this research.

The background as to why this particular research topic was chosen – besides this specific topic being of interest to the undersigned – had as previously mentioned mainly to do with this particular topic being of relevance and importance to the international NGO startup that is featured in this study. For the organization to have a segment of its use of social media technologies analysed, and to be more specific, have its use of the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter analysed – a term with special significance for the anti-corruption organization – was considered to be a topic of relevance.<sup>1</sup> Not only do social media technologies play a central part in our societies at large – they also play a (sometimes underestimated) role within the practices of today’s organizations – an aspect that will be explained more thoroughly in *Chapter 3: Social Media Technology*. Although this paper is a case study of a single organization, arguably, the importance of understanding the use of social media technologies on a micro level by an international NGO in its early stages of development cannot be overstated. As globalization has experienced a rapid expansion in the post World War II period, only recently have social media technologies allowed for global solidarity and unified approaches for activists around the world to tackle global problems. Therefore, to understand the practices of such social media technologies within organizations such as international NGO startups, even just a small segment of their use, serves to identify trends in usage, which further serves to provide a comprehension of how new technologies such as these can be leveraged to fulfill the global objectives of an international NGO startup, and at large, provides a deeper understanding of social media technologies’ purpose within organizations.

Presented as a case within this greater topic, this paper serves to analyze one such international NGO startup’s use of Twitter, and more specifically, analyse the organization’s

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<sup>1</sup> More on this in *Chapter 4: Methodology and Other Underlying Issues*.

use of a certain term (corruption) based on messages that the organization has generated on the social media platform of Twitter. The analysis of the collected dataset will be conducted in order to gain insight into some trends of usage regarding the organization's application of the term 'corruption' on the social media platform of Twitter. Priorly to research, it is thought that Anti Corruption International might use the term 'corruption' on Twitter in a manner that represents its agency as an anti-corruption organization – although in which ways that it would do so is unknown. For the organization featured in this study, it is both of interest and of importance to have this small segment of its use of Twitter analyzed – this in order to receive the final study when completed. The study is regarded as valuable to the organization, seeing as no prior research has been done concerning the organization's use of social media technologies broadly, or the organization's use of the significant term 'corruption' more specifically. Thus, this research might provide some valuable insights that the organization can apply in order to start filling the slightly innocent, yet oblivious void that the organization finds itself within due to a deficiency of knowledge and insight concerning its current use of social media technologies, and as we will see, unawareness concerning an organization's use of new technologies such as these can affect the organization negatively. The void that it finds itself within can mostly be explained due to the organization being an international NGO startup driven by young people and students on a volunteer basis, which again comes down to the organization being a startup who is still finding its way towards become an established, sustainable organization. Thus, due to limited resources, there is a scarcity of research concerning the organization's different areas of practice. However, when something as small as this paper is added to the startup, it nourishes a fledgling organization. Viewed through humble eyes, the produced interpretations within this analysis might be of use to the organization regarding its future development and implementation of strategies and policies on social media technologies and communication at large. Potentially, an analysis such as this could also create the basis for further studies to be carried out by the organization itself on this particular topic. On the grander scale of things, so to speak, significant interpretations could be used by the given organization in its plans for a better future – perhaps by affecting the organization's current strategy on how to reach its global objectives and mission as an international NGO startup, which ideally and ultimately would lead to the organization seeing its vision of a world free of corruption turn into a reality.

Thus, it is this topic and research question that will be addressed and analysed further on in this paper. However, before continuing on to find out more about organizations' use of social

media technologies in general, and more specifically about the social media platform of Twitter, a presentation of the featured organization will be given, in addition to a global backdrop in order to add some context, whilst simultaneously ensuring a certain degree of academic integrity to this paper. Thus, let us proceed.



## Chapter 2: A global backdrop

### Anti Corruption International – A global movement

The idea of Anti Corruption International (ACI) was born at an international student festival in Trondheim, February 2015. Dealing with the festival's main theme on *Corruption*, 450 international students came together for two weeks in workshops to deal with the causes and consequences of the global phenomenon that is corruption. Many of the participants went home with a thought to take a step further from awareness to action – and in March 2015 action became a reality. Together they formed Anti Corruption International - a youth-led organization consisting of motivated, young activists from all around the world. (Anti Corruption International, 2015e) By bringing together the ambitions, talents and skills of committed young people – ACI has developed into a global force devoted to taking up the battle against corruption and the corrupt. By empowering youths and students located in countries all around the world to search for approaches and solutions of a creative, innovative and groundbreaking nature targeted towards the problem that is corruption, the youth-led organization aims to set about real, tangible change. Partially, this will be achieved through creating chapters, forces and alliances on a national, regional and international scale, in order for ACI activists to have a supportive system around them when anti-corruptive measures and tools are implemented, thus targeting specific problems within the specific locations that are found to be of a corrupt nature. (Anti Corruption International, 2015c)

In so doing, it is the idea of societies free of corruption that ACI promotes. In amongst other measures such as targeting education, holding campaigns, facilitating conferences, utilizing and creating new technology to be used in the fight against corruption, and developing suggestions for policies to be propositioned to both state and non-state actors who have the authority or influence to oppose corruption – the organization is confident that change will in effect occur. (Anti Corruption International, 2015c) Still in the developing phase, ACI today has over 600 members from over a 100 countries around the world, near to 30,000 likes on its official Facebook page, and over 13,000 followers on its official Twitter account. (Anti Corruption International, 2016a, 2016b)

To understand the significance regarding the social media numbers, we can compare them to those of the world's largest global movement against corruption – namely that of

Transparency International (TI). Today a large international NGO, TI was first established in Germany in 1993 on similar grounds as to how ACI was established, by a few individuals who wanted to see a world free of corruption. As an organization, TI is an influential actor on the global stage and has since it's early days been putting corruption on the agenda. As such, it can be described as a well-established organization with over 100 national chapters around the world. As the largest international NGO working towards eradicating corruption from societies around the world, the organization has in comparison to ACI near to 300,000 likes on it's official Facebook page, and near to 110,000 followers on its official Twitter account. (Transparency International, 2015a, 2016b, 2016c) Now, compared to ACI, TI has a more visible position in the online world of social media. However, when taking both organizations' years of operation into account, arguably, the disparity in social media numbers between the two organizations level out to a certain degree. As a well-established organization, founded in 1993, it would only be natural for TI to have a more visible position in the online world of social medias. ACI on the other hand, being a new international NGO startup, can be said to be experiencing significant growth – especially taking its recent one-year anniversary into account.

The characteristic dimension to ACI as an organization is that it truly believes that young people have a key role to play in confronting global challenges and making the world a better place. By believing that young people have the power to bring about a positive transition within our societies, ACI aims to unite young people across the globe, and to use this power to curb corruption. Established on the grounds of idealism, the organization both promotes and recognizes that young people can take on a leading role in the fight against a global problem, and as such, be in the forefront of positive change. (Anti Corruption International, 2015a, 2015e) The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs also recognizes the inherent power and abilities of young people today. This must be viewed in light of fact that, globally, the number of adolescents and young people is at an all-time high. Furthermore, this number is only expected to increase in the coming decades. As such, the department recognizes that the number of young people around the world compose a significant, vigorous force for social transformation and political change. (United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015a) In a recent report, the department wrote that: “youth can be a positive force for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive.” (United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015b) Yet, often young people find that their voices are seldom heard in public



deliberation and in processes where decisions are made. To counteract this, ACI gives young people a platform where they not only can be heard, but also can contribute to the desired positive change by cooperating internationally and learning from each other, both offline and online. (Anti Corruption International, 2015e) Thus far, during ACI's one (1) year of existence, national chapters have been established, *campaigns*<sup>2</sup> have been held, partnerships have been formed, letters have been propositioned to world leaders, events and *summits*<sup>3</sup> around the world both have and are being planned, and *a technological tool to detect corruption*<sup>4</sup> is being developed as we speak. With the uniting vision of eradicating a global problem from societies across the world, and thus creating a world in which entrusted power is used in the interest of everyone, this youth-led international NGO startup can be viewed as up and coming on the battlefield against corruption, and as such, having started its journey towards turning this vision of a world free of corruption into a reality. (Anti Corruption International, 2015c, 2015d, 2015e, 2016d)

Arguably, much of the work that Anti Corruption International has done this far would not have been possible to this extent without the use of social media technology – let alone developing in the manner that it has done. As can be read on the organization's webpage: "ACI integrates all means of technology to easily and quickly trade ideas and information. The Internet enables the members to communicate and work together in groups in order to find solutions for corruption-based problems." (Anti Corruption International, 2015d) It is no secret that some of the most used online communication technologies within the organization are those of the social media platforms Facebook and Twitter, as can be seen from the organization's respective pages, through which it tries to reach out to its members, followers and an unknown, international audience. (Anti Corruption International, 2016a, 2016b) The undersigned has thus considered this and more as a good prerequisite for looking into Anti Corruption International's use of social media technology, and more specifically, for doing a discursive analysis on the organizational use of the term 'corruption' on Twitter. Before continuing on to *Chapter 3: Social Media Technology* which takes a closer look at organizations' use of social media technologies in general, and more specifically, Twitter as a social media platform, we will move on to the next section of the current chapter, *A*

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<sup>2</sup> Such as the campaign where a call was made for world leaders to curb corruption in Indonesia's forestry sector – for more on this, see: (Anti Corruption International, 2015f)

<sup>3</sup> Such as the TYALS – *The Young African Leaders Summit*, 2016, which will be held in Uganda. For more on this see: (Anti Corruption International, 2016c)

<sup>4</sup> For more on this, see CleanVote in references: (Anti Corruption International, 2016d)

*globalizing world*, which places Anti Corruption International in a larger, global context. Arguably, as a global movement with members in over a 100 countries around the world, ACI can be defined as an international NGO startup operating in today's *globalizing world*.

## **A globalizing world**

Today it has become common sense that the world we live in is increasingly globalizing and highly interconnected. Across the world people can sense that there is something of importance taking place – it is a sense that, somehow, a number of issues are interdependent and interlinked under the encompassing umbrella term *globalization*. (Dicken, 2011) This worldwide interconnectedness could already be sensed during the last few decades leading up to the First World War, as people started witnessing that interconnections were intensifying and increasing. Prior to 1913 and the First World War, transitions had been occurring all across the world. To name a few, trending migration flows could be observed, a last-minute race of strategy was being played by the old imperialistic powers in an attempt to colonize parts of the world that were yet un-colonized, and additions within the process of industrialization had provided our societies with technological improvements and innovations within the fields of communication and transportation, which in effect shortened distances and boosted international interaction. (Osterhammel & Petersson, 2005)

Another occurrence in the prewar era was the broadening integration and flow that the global economy was encountering within its capital, commodity and labour markets – as follows, webs of exchange would intertwine both empires and states from across the world in a web that was expanding at an increasing rate, thus further stimulating and encouraging the global economy to grow. The broadening integration that was occurring at an increasing rate during the prewar era, put our world in the midst of a process of globalization – a process that would encounter both upturns and downturns in the succeeding years. To delineate, one such downturn would be brought about due to the outbreak of World War I (which, consequently, shock the global economy to its core) and the interwar era that followed. These decades would create a process of de-globalization, which was a result due to the diminishing changes and serious setbacks that had been created, thus diminishing the interdependencies and integration within the dimensions of social life. (Osterhammel & Petersson, 2005)

Returning to our current reality, although upturns and downturns will make themselves present from time to time, our world is today again within a process of globalization that is more encompassing than it has been at any previous time. (Cohn, 2008) As aforementioned, there is a feeling that can be sensed around the world of something important taking place. Having become a relatively trendy and popular term, *globalization* is a term that is often used and misused. But what *is* globalization? Well, numerous academics offer us definitions that can help us understand what the term actually fathoms. Although being a relatively complex term, there are a number of definitions that explain the phenomenon in a manner that is comprehensible, achieved through unfolding the main essences of what the processes of globalization actually contain. A small selection of these definitions are offered in the section below.

Perhaps mostly referring to the feeling that can be sensed around the world, Cohn's definition of the term pays attention to the interdependency that the process fathoms:

*"Globalization is a process that involves the broadening and deepening of interdependence among societies and states throughout the world. Broadening refers to the geographic extension of linkages to encompass virtually all major societies and states, and deepening refers to an increase in the frequency and intensity of interactions."* (Cohn, 2008, p. 369)

Relating to the interlinkages of today, Cohn mentions some factors that are contributing to the facilitation of globalization processes as never before, referring to the advancements in the areas of transportation, technology and communication. (Cohn, 2008)

Referring to a set of processes that are interrelated, Osterhammel and Petersson (2005) take a slightly different approach by explaining globalization as a term that implies change and dynamism over time. These sets of processes do not necessarily occur simultaneously or follow the same path as each other, and the effects and consequences of these processes will often be found to vary around the world. The authors stress that in order to use the term correctly, *globalization* should only be applied in a context where existing relations have acquired a certain degree of stability and regularity between distant locations on our planet. Furthermore, these relations should also be observed to be affecting a larger number of human beings. In a context where such relations have crystalized into institutions and gained

permanence, the authors claim that we can speak of processes of globalization occurring. (Osterhammel & Petersson, 2005)

Another definition of the much talked about term that concurs with the abovementioned definition offered by Osterhammel and Petersson, is the one offered by Manfred B. Steger. Although similar in their approaches to the term, Steger stresses the point that in order to describe the term more accurately, *globalization* should be explained as to contain “a multidimensional set of social processes that resists being confined to any single thematic framework”. (Steger, 2003, p. 1 (Preface)) Steger further mentions that often when academics attempt to address globalization, it is one particular aspect of the process that gets addressed – namely the emergence, system, structure and history of the global economy. This tactic is an attempt to simplify the complexity of globalization. However, to understand globalization as solely being a process consisting of a cross-border flow of capital would be inadequate. Such an understanding would only represent a single fraction of the larger picture surrounding the globalization processes and their transformative powers. Affecting societies on a deep level, it is not solely the dimension of economics that has experienced its transformative powers; the dimensions of ecology, technology, politics and culture – which in totality constitute social life – are also affected by its powers. (Steger, 2003)

As can be understood from a perspective such as this, rather than confining globalization as predominantly being a phenomenon of an economic nature, it should be viewed as a complex set of processes within the sphere of social life. Furthermore, it must be understood that these processes sometimes are contradictory to each other. Due to its dynamic powers, transformations of social life are cultivated and social conditions change to a degree where expanding, intensified global flows and interconnectedness become characteristics of the phenomenon. These characteristics affect interdependencies and social exchanges across the world, including the environmental, cultural, political and economical dimensions. Steger mentions that, arguably, some claim that these transformations of interconnectedness and expanding flows across the world contribute to pre-existing boundaries and borders being of a diminished relevance. (Steger, 2003)

This leads us to the understanding that all the aforementioned dimensions of ecology, culture, politics, economy and technology will be affected if changes occur within a given dimension of social life. As mentioned above, the situation that currently is characterizing our world is

the interconnectedness at an increasing and intensifying scale, which includes multiple processes that are interlacing and overlapping. Jordan (2013) broadly defines these processes in her term of *globalization* as “flows of trade, finance, culture, ideas, and people made possible by modern technology and the accompanying compression of time and space.” (Jordan, 2013, p. 403) In the context of globalization, Jordan argues that in a world this highly interconnected, the complexity in which international organizations interact with other agents in the spheres of social life will necessarily have to be taken into account in any comprehension of such organizations and their practices. (Jordan, 2013) With this in our minds, let us take a closer look at one particular type of such organizations – namely international NGO startups.

### **Defining International NGO Startups**

Defining the term *international NGO startups*, not to mention conceptualizing it, can seem like a task that is both difficult and complicated. Likely, this boils down to the lack of academic literature on this particular type of young organizations, and thus a lack of definitions of the term. However, understanding what it means to be an international NGO startup is quite essential and important for said organizations, both in the startup period and in the period that follows, when attempting to build and stabilize the organization and its capacity. Thus, if divided into two separates – *international NGO* on the one hand, and *startup* on the other hand – one can discover numerous sources of relevant literature, closely followed by complimenting definitions of the two terms. This way we can hopefully attain a better understanding of what an international NGO startup as an organization actually is, thus gaining a deeper comprehension of what kind of organization Anti Corruption International currently can be described as, whilst simultaneously understanding more of what terms affect the practices of such fledgling, dynamic organizations.

As such, let us take a closer look at the term *non-governmental organization* (NGO). As various academics and researchers seem to focus on different facets of NGOs in their definitions of the term, seeking out a single, unanimous definition of what such organizations in essence *are* can be challenging. Seeing as NGOs include numerous institutions and groups that primarily have a cooperative or humanitarian objective rather than a bottom line, in addition to being largely or entirely independent of a government, the diversity that is enveloped in the term *NGO* strain any simple definition of such organizations. (UNEP -

Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, 2003) However, there are some definitions that illustrate in broad essence what such organizations are. One such definition is offered by Cousins (1991), who tells us that NGOs are a type of organizations that can be taxonomized and defined in terms of both their level of operation and orientation. By level of operation, Cousins mentions that, on the one hand, NGOs can be classified based on whether they are community-based, citywide, national or international. By orientation, NGOs can on the other hand be classified based on whether they are oriented towards charity, service, participation or empowerment. (Cousins, 1991) Another definition offered by the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics within the United Nations Environment Programme tells us that:

*“Quite simply, an NGO is (a) formally or informally organized around shared purposes; (b) non-governmental, and so not part of the state apparatus; (c) self-governing, rather than externally controlled; and (d) voluntary both in the sense of being non-compulsory and in the sense of voluntary involvement in their governance or operations.”* (UNEP - Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, 2003, p. 5)

If we take a closer look at the term *startup*, we will find explanations of another type of organizations. Used with increasing frequency over the past few years, the term startup has become quite hip and is often associated with young ventures, technology and risky experiments. Attached to the term is a certain lure of innovation; the term suggests that the organization has a finger on the pulse of the future, thus offering a dimension of freshness to the newly started endeavor, in addition to a *cool*-factor that can be used to the organization's advantage. Often startups will adapt technology to solve problems, however, by definition startups do not have to be tech-oriented. Traditionally, startups have been set up for-profit. However, today it's not just business ventures that can call themselves startups, also organizations oriented towards other end goals can adopt the youthful mentality and the technological know-how that so often characterizes a startup, thus also labeling themselves as such. (Robehmed, 2013a, 2013b) But what exactly is a startup?

Since it is difficult to frame the definition of startups in terms of what will often be drastically shifting employment, profit and revenue numbers, there are no concrete rules on how a startup should be defined. Similarly, there exists no one answer on how to succeed in the startup game. Although a multitude of “how-to” guides are available on the subject, at the end of the

day, a startup is a risky experiment. (Malhotra, 2015; Robehmed, 2013b) Running from the simpler explanations to the more extensive explanations, there exist a variety of definitions of the term. The Merriam-Webster dictionary offers us a simple understanding of a startup being a new business, and that *to start-up* can be understood as: “the act or an instance of setting in operation or motion”. (Merriam-Webster, 2015) Robehmed (2013) offers a more extensive explanation by adding a few metrics that can be applied to frame what is generally thought to define a startup:

*“If you are generating revenues below \$20 million, have less than 80 employees, and remain resolutely in control of the company you started, you are likely running a startup. Likewise, if you [...] are intent on it becoming big enough to take over the world, even if you’re still working from your bedroom – you’re probably a startup founder.”* (Robehmed, 2013b)

Concurring with the metrics mentioned by Robehmed, are those offered by Malhotra (2015), who mentions that there exists some guidelines that are generally accepted when determining whether an organization can be labeled as a startup, thus highlighting the following points: (a) revenue under \$20 million; (b) under 80-100 employees; and (c) the founders still being in control of the organization. These points are by Malhotra mentioned as clear signposts of an organization being a startup. (Malhotra, 2015)

Others again, focus on different metrics as indicators of an organization being a startup, such as: (a) a dynamic and flexible culture open to change; (b) a long-term focus; (c) an ability to grow at a quick pace<sup>5</sup>; (d) employees feeling that the work they do have a real impact; and (e) an  $x$  number of years in operation<sup>6</sup>. Especially the focus on growth and impact are marked out as characteristic of a startup culture, as mentioned by Chase Adam, founder of Watsi – a medical crowdfunding charity. “All we focus on [is] growth and impact – at the end of the day, we just need to make the numbers go up and to the right,” said Adam. (Chase Adam cited in Robehmed, 2013a) Interestingly, there exists alternative pathways for startups when determining growth – one way for instance, is to determine growth by user acquisition, which

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<sup>5</sup> This due to their scalable design and different growth strategies compared to the more established, sustainable organizations.

<sup>6</sup> Numbers between 3-5 years have been mentioned as the number of years it takes for a startup to graduate from startuphood – thus ceasing to be a startup, and becoming a fully-fledged, established organization. (Robehmed, 2013a, 2013b; Traaseth, 2016)

is viewed to generate value at a later stage, as done by Facebook and YouTube in their early days. (Malhotra, 2015) This focus on large growth and impact can make it almost impossible to distinguish the difference between a startup and a nonprofit, seeing as the parallels between the two are so clear, as mentioned by Ted Gonder, founder of the nonprofit organization Moneythink, which teaches inner city students about financial literacy. (Ted Gonder cited in Robehmed, 2013a)

Whether the startup is a for-profit venture or a nonprofit organization, it will often use technological know-how to design webpages, set up tech platforms and create apps that can be used to further the startup's cause. Characteristically, startups will continuously evolve and test new innovations – a facet that can be a result of the entrepreneurial spirit and ambiance that circles within the startup. Often driven by a passion surrounding the vision and mission to change the world, a startup will try to solve clear points towards its cause, thus believing that the organization is either offering something or doing something that wasn't there before. (Robehmed, 2013a, 2013b) The benefits of using technology to further the startup's cause makes itself prominent here, as the use of technology combined with the characteristic forces of globalization makes it possible for the startup to have a wider impact and a greater chance of major growth, than what would otherwise have been possible.

Others again claim that labeling an organization a *startup* cannot be delineated by metrics – it is a culture. Thus, the organization can remain a startup throughout all stages within the organization – regardless of age and size.<sup>7</sup> World-renowned entrepreneur, Steve Blank, points to the mentality of the startup at the outset as characterizing it from any other type of organization – thus suggesting that the mentality of “the startup” is a culture. (Steve Blank cited in Malhotra, 2015) Nevertheless, a startup is usually thought to be a young organization still growing up, thus having a dynamic culture as characterized by fluctuating and drastically shifting metrics within the early years of setting up. However, as the startup becomes more settled, and can show to growing figures regarding the abovementioned metrics, it is often an indicator of the organization graduating from startuphood, and becoming a fully-fledged, established organization. (Robehmed, 2013a, 2013b)

From these explanations we can attain a better understanding of what an *international NGO*

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<sup>7</sup> As opposed to footnote #2, which mentions the number of 3-5 years as the time when a startup usually is thought to graduate.



*startup* is. In this paper, the term is defined as to mean the following; firstly, an *international non-governmental organization* (NGO) that is in its startup phase. An international NGO, also known as an INGO, is international in scope with offices or chapters of the organization located around the world with the aim of addressing national/regional specific issues that the said organization aims to target in its mission as a non-governmental organization.

Secondly, the term international NGO *startup* is defined as to mean an organization that is still in its early stages of being an organization. As mentioned above, there exists a multitude of various definitions of what a *startup is*. However, most definitions encompass at least one metric referring to the organization's early stages of being. As could be read above, most definitions of a startup will either including metrics such as finances<sup>8</sup>, organizational model, physical size<sup>9</sup>, or metrics such as timescale<sup>10</sup>, culture within the organization, and mentality. Taking some of these metrics into account, the definition that will be used in this paper understands an international NGO startup first and foremost in terms of timescale, growth and impact, in addition to the use of technology to further the organization's cause. The reason for choosing these metrics, rather than some of the other metrics that were mentioned above, for instance such as finance, has to do with the nature of international NGO startups. Seeing as such organizations in many cases are non-profit organizations, metrics such as revenue and physical size – which depend on the finances within the organization – might not be the most relevant when defining whether an organization is an international NGO startup, seeing as finances might not always be so stable within an international NGO startup. By letting the major metrics being those of timescale, growth and impact, in addition to the use of technology to further the organization's cause, the definition is left quite open and encompassing. A more narrow definition might be understood as to exclude certain organizations if the definition depends too strictly on measures that determine if a given organization is within the early stages of being or not. However, it can be recognized that the generally accepted guidelines of a startup, such as having under \$20 million in revenue and under 80-100 employees, still are guidelines that are quite spacious and fathoming. Nevertheless, in this paper, an international NGO startup is defined as to mean a non-governmental organization that aims to be international in scope, and as such is scalable regarding the organization's growth and impact, which uses technology to further its cause,

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<sup>8</sup> For example, *revenue*.

<sup>9</sup> Such as: number of employees, offices etc.

<sup>10</sup> Meaning *x* numbers of years in existence.

and which has existed under a number of 3 years.

Having just passed its 1 year anniversary, the global movement that is Anti Corruption International can in light of these reviewed perceptions be understood as an international NGO startup. As could be read in the beginning of this chapter, in the one year that has passed, ACI has experienced phenomenal growth. With the aim of achieving further growth and impact, combined with its use and development of technology, ACI as an international NGO startup has the potential to positively affect and change societies around the world with its work. Simultaneously, also the traits of globalization can be used to the organization's strength and benefit. By using the multiple forces and flows that are so characteristic of globalization, ACI is provided with an additional opportunity to achieve further impact and growth, which if used to its advantage, initially can make the organization achieve further milestones on the pathway towards its vision of a world free of corruption, namely a world in which entrusted power is applied in a manner that benefits everyone, and not just a few. On this note, let us proceed. In order to understand a little more about the term that later on will be analyzed, the next section takes us through the basics concerning both the term and the global problem that is *corruption*.

## Corruption

The concerns about corruption have intensified globally during these last couple of decades. In countries all over the world, corruption is a problem that affects us all, and as such, is of concern to citizens, governments and organizations alike. Often described as an act of injustice, the global phenomenon that is corruption can be found to have a multitude of negative and destructive consequences. Doing anything from destabilizing social cohesion and societies to undermining the institutions and values of democracy, or from undermining the development of sustainable economies due to significant blows regarding the misuse of external aid or domestic savings, to threatening justice and ethical values, it can be said that corruption is a multifaceted problem. (Corruption Watch, 2015; Transparency International Ireland, 2012) Referring to an interesting point here is Vito Tanzi - one of the previous Directors of the Fiscal Affairs Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF); Tanzi explains that except from the attention that corruption has attracted in the more recent years, evidence can be found to support the notion that corruption also was a problem that made itself prominent in societies that existed thousands of years ago. Discussing corruption in his book *Arthashastra*, Kautilya, a prime minister of an Indian king, wrote upon the issue two

thousand years ago. The poet Dante similarly reflected upon the problem in *Dante's Inferno*, a literary work dating back to the medieval times seven centuries ago. Also a topic in various literary works of another great writer, corruption was similarly an issue of prominence within the writings of Shakespeare. Thus, existing in societies dating back thousands of years ago, it would seem that corruption is not exactly a new societal problem. (Tanzi, 1998)

Nevertheless, there is no denying that the issue of corruption has attracted attention that has been both of an unprecedented and increasing scale during the more recent decades. As mentioned by Tanzi, this very well might signal that the phenomenon of corruption has grown in recent years, judged by the increased attention it is getting. The flows and forces within the processes of globalization can perhaps have contributed to an increase of the malpractice. The processes of globalization have to a certain degree made the world smaller due to developments within the fields of technology, which as such has streamlined transportation- and communication technologies, which arguably have made everything from connecting with people in other parts of the world – such as through social media technologies, to transferring capital across borders easier. As such, globalization has not only laid the ground for conditions that work in favour of international cooperation, but arguably also for the organization of criminal activity. However, additional factors also play a contributing role as to why corruption as an issue is getting so much exposure recently. To point out some of these contributing factors, the following can be mentioned: (a) the creation of an atmosphere in where corruption as a subject is no longer perceived as a taboo<sup>11</sup>; (b) the view that corruption distorts business dealings<sup>12</sup>; (c) that obvious cases of high level corruption no longer are being ignored by decision makers; (d) the non-governmental organizations' growing role<sup>13</sup>; (e) a newfound willingness to not only talk about the issue, but also whistleblow against it and report upon such acts of wrongdoing, and; (f) individuals today having the opportunity to share their experiences and stories of corruption to an audience of international scale, made possible by the interconnectedness, flows and forces characterizing the processes of globalization. (Tanzi, 1998) What can be concluded from looking at these factors and more, is that as a phenomenon corruption is one of large diversity and great complexity, making it a

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<sup>11</sup> Mostly credited to the increase of free press and democratic governments.

<sup>12</sup> Largely a result of the persuance of efficiency in today's market economy.

<sup>13</sup> Especially within the anti-corruption movement, where anti-corruption NGOs work towards establishing chapters of their organizations around the world and contribute to the exposure of corruption by publicizing reports on the topic.

phenomenon that encompasses human actions of a whole array. Proceeding onwards, let us take a look at what corruption exactly is.

Being a multi-faceted phenomenon, it is safe to say that there exists a whole range of definitions that explain what corruption is. As such, finding one universal and comprehensive definition of *corruption* is an impossible task, seeing as no such universally accepted definition exists, as argued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Their case for this argument roots in the reality of what such a task invariably will encounter when attempting to develop a definition that is universal; in countries around the world, problems of a criminological, legal and political nature will make themselves prominent in such attempts, making it impossible to find one singular and encompassing definition. Nevertheless – originating from two words within the Latin language, *currumpere* (to break into pieces; to ruin) and *corruptus* (spoiled) – the definitions of *corruption* that currently are in vogue are alternatives of the following: "the misuse of a public or private position for direct or indirect personal gain". (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2004, p. 27) Solely focusing on the concept of *public office*, on the other hand, is the definition of corruption offered by the World Bank – perhaps understandable considering that the World Bank's primary mission lies in supporting government programmes, projects and policies that are subject to certain conditions, and its task of giving a helping hand to governments by lending them funds. Thus, it is understandable that the World Bank wants to highlight a certain facet of corruption, seeing as the misuse of their funds by individuals holding positions in public office would be occurrences that would go against the Bank's aims for the funds. By keeping it simple, the definition that the World Bank has settled for ensures to include the wide array of acts encompassed within corruption: "the abuse of public office for private gain". (The World Bank - The Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Network of the Bank, 1997, p. 12) Correlating to this relatively simple definition is a taxonomy developed by the World Bank, listing the alternative outlines of acts that are formed when public office is abused. This way specific types of activities or transactions that fall within the Bank's definition of the unjust act gets identified. Yet another definition of the term, this time offered by the world's leading non-governmental anti-corruption organization, namely Transparency International (TI), understands corruption as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain", simultaneously classifying the acts as "grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs" (Transparency International, 2015c).

Definitions aside, corruption is a reality within our societies, and it is a problem that can be detected in countries worldwide. Albeit the type and level of corruption will differ within countries accordingly, it is the consequences that are found to be so destructive – the cost of corruption has real impacts within the developments of the social, political and economical spheres of human societies and social life. By deminishing and undermining that of which has already to this day been developed, constructed and achieved, surely, it is clear that corruption not only negatively affects but also threatens our global society. Apart from corruption increasing the global inequality and reducing the efficiency across the world, the scale of its costs are enormous. Differing estimates exists concerning the absolute cost of corruption. One figure that gets mentioned repeatedly, estimates that corruption each year has a global cost that equates to more than 5% of the world’s total gross dometic product (GDP) – a sum of US\$ 2.6 trillion. To put this figure into perspective, the sum lost to corruption each year is 19 times larger than the total 2013 sum of official development assitstance (ODA) which globally amounted to US\$ 134.8 billion. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014; Runde, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2012, n.d.) With the possibility of corruption taking place in both public and private office at various levels, the act often described as the abuse of power for personal gain encompasses a range of actions covering everything from nepotism and state capture, to embezzlement and bribery. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014) Although the act of corruption can take many a form, at the end of the day, what really matters are the consequences of such acts. Malpractices such as these affect our societies and our environment directly: ”It diverts scarce public resources to those who need it least, denying those that need it most adequate public services and the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life”. (Transparency International Ireland, 2015, p. 7) What this means is that it is the weakest and most vulnerable citizens of this world that are hurt the most by such actions of injustice and malpractice. When a person in a position of authority and power chooses to abuse his/her power for reasons of personal gain, he/she abuses the trust that is invested in him/her by those dependent on the integrity of the said person in power. These dependants are the victims of such malpractice. Thus illustrated, the act of corruption in which a few get enriched through the robbery of rightful opportunities and resources from fellow human beings, can be interpreted as a reversed Robin Hood act.

What is even more wrong on the fundamental level, is that apart from the real economical costs, corruption diminishes the social contract of trust between human beings. Successive findings within Edelman’s annual global studies, the *Edelman Trust Barometer*, indicates that

people's trust in societal institutions are declining globally. The leading global communications marketing firm's more recent study of 2015 showed that among the four institutions measured in the study, trust had declined in three of the institutions. What is more, of the countries included in the *2015 Edelman Trust Barometer*, 60% of the countries were found to distrust *media*; also found to be declining in trust were the institution of *governments*; and similarly, *business* was also experiencing a decline in trust. Among the four institutions featured in the study, the one institution that continued to be most trusted was the *non-governmental organizations*. (Edelman, 2015b) The global decline of trust in these institutions can be interpreted as a sign of the belief among people that corrupt malpractices and dodgy deals will be treated favourably. A crucial point in the preservation and further cultivation of healthy relations within our societies is that of maintaining and building the human contract of trust, and in order to build trust, integrity is key. (Edelman, 2015a)

After the leakage of the Panama Papers' this spring, it will be interesting to see what the 2016 *Edelman Trust Barometer's* findings will be, seeing as appointed people in all three institutions of *government* (heads of states, such as Iceland's prime minister, Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson), *business* (such as banks) and *NGOs* (ironically so, the Head of Transparency International in Chile) this far have been exposed of hiding wealth through tax heaven corruption. The institution that perhaps will have the better outcome concerning an increase in trust and credibility, might possibly be that of *media* due to the incredible investigative journalism carried out in the exposing of these financial sins. (The Economist, 2016; The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), 2016)

To discover just how bad the problem of corruption is within and between countries around the world, Transparency International developed the *Corruption Perceptions Index* which measures the levels of perceived corruption within the public sectors of each country. By putting the perceived levels of corruption in each country literally on the map, the index forces governments and state leaders worldwide to take their heads out of the sand, and actually notice and acknowledge that corruption is a global problem. The way that the index works, is that based on expert opinion, each country will be scored on a scale from 0-100, where there score of 0 ranges as *highly corrupt* and is marked by the colour of dark red, whereas the score of 100 on the opposite end of the scale ranges as *highly clean* and is marked by a light yellow colour. The index shows a majority of countries holding low scores – which implies that corruption occurs at a high level within the public sector of these countries –

while other countries will hold higher scores – thus fading in colour and implying that corruption occurs at a minimum level within the public sector. Despite differences in scores, no country scores a clean 100. Furthermore, what is interesting when looking at the index – is that some patterns become clear. It cannot be denied that a significant number of the world’s countries today hold a low score (highly corrupt) on the index, with 68% of the countries marked as having a serious problem. While taking a look at the index, unsettling patterns emerge – the countries that are found to have the highest levels of corruption within the public sector, are also the countries suffering from inequality, conflict, poverty and war. The toxic nature of corruption makes it not only painstakingly difficult to end such destructive problems, it also adds fuel to them. (Transparency International, 2016a) The urgency of ending corruption is clear. Frank Vogl, former senior official at the World Bank and founder of Transparency International, said in a recent interview to Anti Corruption International that:

*”The urgency of this is increased by the fact that the systems of dirty money are also used by terrorist organizations. The financing of terrorism only happens because of the cooperation between terrorist, criminals organizations and corrupt officials, and the use of intermediary financial institutions. And obviously after the horrible things that we have seen [recently] in for example Brussels, Ankara, Istanbul, Bagdad and Pakistan, we have to end terrorist financing, and this is another part of this whole picture.”* (Frank Vogl & Anti Corruption International, 2016)

As such, corruption and conflict are closely associated. However, it is not all good for the cleaner countries on the index, seeing as an emerging pattern is showing that many of the countries with low levels of public sector corruption at home, are found to be implicated in not so clean deals abroad. (Transparency International, 2016a) The Panama Papers are for instance a reminder of this. Simultaneously, there is no hiding that the *Corruption Perceptions Index* has some flaws in that it (1) is based on perceptions of the occurrence of corruption and not the actual reality, and (2) that the index solely focuses on public sector corruption, thus not fathoming the corrupt acts that occurs in the private sector, which are equally as concerning.

Hindering political, social and economic development worldwide, corruption has been singled out as the most obstructive problem. (World Economic Forum, 2012) As with many a problem, the first step towards addressing the issue and finding a solution towards it lies in

recognizing it. We can't change what we don't acknowledge. There is no denying that corruption is a global problem and a great concern. A step back into history shows us that acknowledgement and recognition has not always been the case; corruption has for a long time been the elephant in the room, an issue not talked about, and perceived as a topic of taboo – not until the more recent decades have the political debates stopped shying away from the issue. Today, the topic of corruption is one of the most talked about worldwide, and it has become an issue that is raised on the global agenda. (Transparency International, 2015b)

Nevertheless, it is possible to decrease the levels of corruption. Interpreted as a sign of interest in anti-corruptive measures, transparency and good governance by citizens worldwide, a public polling revealed that corruption was a top three issue on the national agenda in 67 countries out of those included in a poll conducted by the World Economic Forum. As such, recognition and awareness is indeed being raised. (Runde, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2013) What is more, with the FIFA and Petrobras scandals leaking out in the year of 2015, and the current leakage of the Panama Papers, citizens all over the world have shown not only to unite, but also to take straightforward action through public pressure and civil society campaigns against corruption and the corrupt, demanding accountability, transparency, and for governments to ensure that needed reforms are put in place. In the interview to Anti Corruption International, Frank Vogl said that he thinks that:

*“the disclosure of these new [Panama] papers will add very substantially to the effort to build public pressure. We are already seeing that major demonstrations are taking place, such as the one yesterday in Reykjavik in Iceland, and I think we are going to see a lot of pressure in the next couple of weeks, as plans are set for an International Anti Corruption Summit that is to be hosted by the British prime minister David Cameron on the 12th of May.”* (Frank Vogl & Anti Corruption International, 2016)

Joining in the calls for transparency and good governance is one of the world's largest youth-led anti-corruption organizations, Anti Corruption International. Established with the aim of uniting young citizens around the world to not only play a part in the battle against corruption, but also take a leading role in the eradication of this global problem, Anti Corruption International seeks to encourage young people to help expose such malpractices and, through international cooperation, search for solutions, tools and measures to be developed and used in the eradication of this destructive problem. As a part of this process, the organization uses



social media technologies as a way of reaching out and connecting to an international audience. For organizations communicating and interacting through social medias, it is very important to have their use of such technologies analyzed as briefly was discussed in the *Introduction* of this paper and which will be further discussed in the following chapter on *Social Media Technology*, before continuing on to the methodology and then upcoming analysis in which we will be reviewing Anti Corruption International's engagement on the social media platform of Twitter, in which a discursive analysis will be done on the organizational use of the term 'corruption' on Twitter. Before continuing on to the methodology of this research, and the actual analysis in which the research question is addressed, we will take a look at why organizations use social media technologies in general, before turning our attention to Twitter as a social media platform more specifically.



## Chapter 3: Social Media Technology

### Organizations' use of Social Media Technologies

*Social media are the collection of Web- and mobile-based platforms where individuals and groups interact. They include blogs such as Wordpress, update streams such as Twitter, general social networks such as Facebook, image-sharing platforms such as Flickr, location platforms such as Swarm, social news forums such as Reddit, business networks such as LinkedIn, and curation platforms such as Pinterest. (Nahon, 2016, p. 40)*

One might ask, why focus on an organization's use of social media technologies? Well, the complex cultural situation that one can find in today's highly globalized and interconnected world has been labeled a variety of names ranging from the information age to technoculture, to labels such as a cyber society or a virtual society – and one of the main ideas behind all of these labels and more, is that across the globe, technology such as social medias are bringing people across the world closer together as never before, through new means of communications and social interactions. These developments have not slowed down, if anything, they continuously evolve. As such, developments within social media technologies have during these past few decades provided societies with a whole new range of ways in which to communicate with one another. Thus, as Chaher & Spellman have said it: “avoiding social media is no longer an option.” (Chaher & Spellman, 2012, p. 15)

### Social Medias' Facilitation for Social Interactions

Thus understood, social media technologies today play a central part in our societies at large, and this is no exception in the operations of organizations. Traditional research on new technologies typically argues that technologies such as social medias offer its user access to a continual flow of information, communication and social interaction – and thus, when organizations use new technologies such as these a positive reputation will typically follow. (Albu & Etter, 2016) Hence, it can be argued that the use of social media technologies in organizations such as international NGO startups is of importance, if not also essential, because of the easy and affordable access it gives its user to a constant communication flow which can be said to be fundamental for a young, international organization starting out.

However, an organization's usage of social media technologies can also be said to be of importance because of all the other opportunities and advantages that such a usage represents. For instance, people with similar interests can more easily be located due to the ready-made tools offered by social medias. As such, the availability of social media enables its users (for purpose here: the organization) to more easily identify new target groups of the organization, while the low cost and accessible equipment makes it easy to broadcast information towards the targeted groups. Collaboration across physical borders is made less of a hindrance, seeing as communication and interaction through social media platforms can happen virtually, and in real-time, thus also facilitating for the collaboration in production of information and knowledge among actors in the realm of social medias. New goals can be identified and strategies developed to reach those goals concerning various areas that are of specific interest to the given organization. Marketing, lobbying and advocacy can also be achieved more efficiently than ever before through well-managed use of social media, and campaigns can more easily be organized. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Chaher & Spellman, 2012; Nahon, 2016) Nevertheless, the most obvious, yet still important point, is that which was mentioned above; that social media technologies today are regarded as significant tools and conduits for online social interaction and communication – “The special appeal of social media resides in their ability to not only host but also facilitate and enhance social interactions.” (Nahon, 2016, p. 40) This point, which we will see below, is an important point for the constitution of the organization as an entity, however, a point which can offer implications of both positive and negative natures for the organization.

### **The Communicative Constitution of Organization (CCO)**

The communication-centred perspective that understands organizations as structures produced across numerous spatiotemporal dimensions through human and nonhuman actors's discursive material, is a perspective better known as the *Communicative Constitution of Organization* (CCO). This perspective addresses the communicative aspect of interactions that unfold through social media technologies, in which the social media technologies are perceived as having a contributing role in the process of constitution and stabilization of organizations as entities. Take for instance the social media platform of Twitter – due to this technology's *affordances*, a concept that encompasses the interrelated qualities of

*modification, relocation, persistence and visibility*<sup>14</sup>, it affords various prospects and constraints for communicative interactions. On the one hand, social media technologies such as Twitter enables communicative actions by way of opening up for discursive material (such as conversations and texts) being produced through inter- and intraorganizational communication, a process that plays a central part in the entities' constitution as organizations. The reason for this is that by using social media technologies, both members and non-members of the organization have the ability and accessibility to co-author texts that are organizational; as such the organization will be conversed about in a situational time and space in a manner that can frame and shape the specific identity of the said organization, which as such gets co-constituted as an entity. Simultaneously, on the other hand, authored organizational texts produced by non-members can also constrain communicative actions, by generating discursive material that is in dispute with the specific identity that the organizational members attempt to bring into existence through constitutive texts. Hence such constrained communicative actions contribute to a process of contestation of the organization. (Albu & Etter, 2016)

### **The Sociomateriality Perspective**

Emphasizing technologies' social performance is the *sociomateriality perspective* that complements the CCO perspective mentioned above. Accentuating how technologies actively perform as mediators in political, cultural and social networks, this research tradition applies a performative lens through which it looks at social media as technologies with agency that are authoring identities. Taking Twitter as an example - similarly to the CCO perspective, the sociomateriality perspective regards tweets (a message generated by a Twitter user) as textual artifacts that co-constitute situated actors, seeing as tweeting can be understood as performed acts in which an actor (Twitter user) takes a position in relation to peer actors. As such, this performative perspective understands communication and interaction on Twitter as a process of self-production. For an organization using social media technologies, the service that for instance Twitter can offer its user can be regarded as one that contributes to authoring identities, thus affecting the organization's process of self-becoming and constitution. Although some organizational, communicative activities are made possible due to the affordances (*modification, relocation, persistence and visibility*) of social media technologies,

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<sup>14</sup> Examples of these four affordances will be offered in the upcoming parts in a context where each quality is at its most descriptive and illustrative.

other communicative interactions are constrained by the same interrelated qualities afforded by the technology, and can as such pose challenges for organizations using this technology. For instance, due to Twitter's affordance of visibility, transparency through using said social media technology is possible as internal information and work processes and practices of the organizational actor can be made visible. However, the affordance of visibility also means that external communicative interactions unfold publicly, which can pose challenges and constrain said interaction if a discursive struggle unfolds. As could be seen through both the CCO perspective and the sociomateriality perspective, there is no doubt that the use of social medias can have an impact, both positively and negatively, on organizations, whether the organizations themselves are engaging in the use of such technologies or staying away from them, as will be illustrated further on in an example concerning British Petroleum (BP) and the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. As Albu & Etter mention, there exists a significant amount of research that looks at social medias' enabling role in organizational life, however limited research on (or research that typically underemphasizes) the negative consequences and possible conflicts and tensions that arise when organizations have the ability to author texts by using social medias. (Albu & Etter, 2016)

### **The Importance of Staying Updated**

Similarly, Ian Cleary, world leading social media professional and entrepreneur, highlights the potential abilities of social medias in impacting, both positively and negatively, the organization. Addressing those organizations that have an online presence through social media, Cleary places an emphasis on the importance of being aware of the organization's online presence seeing as its presentation can have significant impacts on the organization. Due to the potential impacts that might occur (and at that in unforeseeable ways), staying on top of developments and trends within the field of social media is key. (Cleary, 2015) Perhaps influenced by a perspective stemming from the school of technological determinism, it can be argued that although even the most proficient social media user cannot be guaranteed 100% control of how communicative interactions will unfold due to these social interactions' high complexity, one can be certain that little to no knowledge or know-how will not exactly be beneficial to the active user, or for that sake, actors (such as institutions and organizations) that altogether ignore social media technologies and stay off them entirely, and arguably as such, a low-skilled social media user will have limited possibilities to impact and control discursive and/or social interactions that unfold on social media platforms. To illustrate this

point, Chaher & Spellman for instance mention an example of an organization that arguably was not on top of trends within social medias, which entailed the loss of control and power, and subsequently meant that the organization had little to no input in affecting change, while at the same time illustrating the limits of traditional media:

*“In 2010, British Petroleum confronted the clout and tenaciousness of social media when a parody account - @BPGlobalPR – on Twitter dominated online conversations with its satiric thrashings of the oil behemoth’s blunders to stop oil from leaking into the Gulf of Mexico. At its peak, the unofficial site had 10 times more followers than the official one. BP responded with paid advertising, but its campaign failed to quell the attacks.”* (Chaher & Spellman, 2012, p. 12)

## **Gone are the Days of One-sided Communications**

There are many more examples that could have been mentioned to illustrate how social medias can impact an organization and cause unintended consequences, indeed – examples that might have much more serious consequences than the failed campaign of BP, who paid for advertisement in traditional medias in order to respond to the satiric thrashings of the parody account. However, the example shows that although some organizations might choose to stay off social medias, or indeed underestimate their impact and power, avoiding them is really not an option. Although traditional medias are still in existence, the days of one-sided communications are gone. As opposed to a more traditional, structured communication process where one part sends a message and one part receives the message, the receivers are today able to engage in a two-way dialogue through the multichannel platforms of social media, where the receiver now can choose which information to read, share and respond to. As such, communication has changed due to the nature of social media, and understanding and acknowledging this point is beneficial for the organization. There are several benefits that can be identified concerning the change in communications. To name a few of them: two-way dialogues can be developed into a channel for rapid and effective communication where a constructive dialogue can take place between the organization and its interested parties; the potential for improving and amplifying external communications is prominent; feedback from interested parties can be received immediately due to the near lightning speed that information is replicated and shared through social medias as soon as it’s generated; public awareness of the organization and its work can be increased, and new opportunities and ideas

can be identified through communicative interactions that unfold in the virtual spheres of social medias. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Chaher & Spellman, 2012)

## Power and Politics

As can be understood from the example with the satirical BP Twitter account, there is a certain dimension of power embedded within the use of social media technologies. Used creatively, online communication channels such as these can act as force multipliers. This dimension to social medias can be beneficial to organizations – it can be used to advance interests and improve the performance of organizations. However, psychologist and researcher Robert Epstein, who in his forthcoming book *The New Mind Control* looks at the Internet's subtle, yet powerful ways in which to exert influence, tells us that if new technologies such as these are used competitively, then they will have less power and as such pose less of a threat upon actors embedded within mutual relationships. By *competitively* Epstein means that two or more actors embedded within a mutual relationship are expositioned to have the same accessibility to use these social media technologies. Conversely, taking the example with BP vs. the satirical BP Twitter profile into account, the use of social media technologies cannot be said to have been used competitively within the relation between the two actors, seeing as only one of the actors (the satirical BP Twitter account) was using this new technology, whilst the other actor (BP) was keeping its distance from using this new technology. Thus, in this example the satirical BP Twitter account could be said to pose a threat to BP via using the new technology platform (Twitter), and a power dimension was thus present in the relationship between the two, where the dimension acted more favorably towards the satirical BP Twitter account. (Epstein, 2016)

However, the power afforded in these new technologies can also be said to empower individual actors from the general public. The disparity of power that organizations have maintained through their use of traditional media is reduced through the use of social media, seeing as the general public has access to the same technologies and communication channels as the organizations have regarding online social media platforms. (Chaher & Spellman, 2012; Nahon, 2016) The fluidity that social medias encompass, in that information is stored in a fluid and continuous state of reconfiguration, represents one such dimension of empowerment of the general public seeing as individual users are able to detach contextual information and use it for their own interest, such as undermining that information or



reproducing it (as could be seen above concerning the CCO perspective). (Albu & Etter, 2016) Thus, the power dynamics of social medias are different to the dynamics of traditional medias. In one way, power is more spread out, and made accessible to the general public as well as organizations – however, mastery of social media will contain a certain degree of power too – and this is perhaps not spread out as equally as accessibility is, as it requires a certain skill. Social media users that are technology-savvy and possess the know-how, will have a head start here – regardless of whether such skilled users are to be found within the organizations themselves or from the general public. (Chaher & Spellman, 2012; Nahon, 2016) In the article *Where there is social media there is politics*, Karine Nahon mentions that “the politics of social media refers to the power interplays among actors on social media platforms.” (Nahon, 2016, p. 39) Regarded as significantly political and social arenas due to the identified sociality forms of cooperation / coproduction, communication, and cognition that are present in shared spaces of interaction, social media platforms are biased artefacts, rather than neutral. Thus, within both offline and online societies, there is one fundamental character that can be observed – namely that of power relations which can be found in any social relationship between people and/or groups of people. (Nahon, 2016) Recent case studies related to the topic of social media politics, such as on power and politics in technology in general (Introna, 2006), or the power and control of information flows by mediators (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008), or indeed, networks and power laws (Barabási, 2003), all indicate that there exists various dimensions of power and politics within the realm of social medias. (Nahon, 2016) For an organization, mapping these actors and the potential power relations that can impact the organization and its message on social media platforms will be of importance.

### **Additional Implications tied to Using Social Media Technologies**

Since underestimating social media technologies is not a beneficial option for organizations, it is important to manage the skills of technological and strategic know-how as social media potentially can be leveraged as a powerful tool to be used for the organization’s advantage, not least in creating a reputable, transparent, and trusted name/brand for itself. However, if the organization pursues policies and strategies on social media that are formed out of perceptions that are out of sync with their targeted audience, failure is inalterable. As such, it is important that the organization identifies effective strategies, policies and practices – including monitoring and evaluation programmes – on the organization’s use of social media. (Chaher

& Spellman, 2012)

The availability of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter makes it possible for organizations to engage with targeted groups located across the world, in addition to the added potential of reaching interest groups that otherwise would have been difficult to reach. (Chaher & Spellman, 2012) Thus social media technologies can be seen as to have transformative powers with regards to areas such as efficiency and social network strengthening. The nature of this online technology, for instance regarding its immediate speed and possible degree of exposure, means that it is quick and easy to organize and unite through social media. An organization utilizing social media proficiently can thus for instance make a direct call for action such as through online campaigns that are aimed towards a certain target, knowing that there is a chance that their posted message might “go viral” in a matter of hours, hence, increasing the force behind the message. There is a certain power behind spreading a message through social media; it is “seen to reflect the opinion of the general public, regardless of whether it actually does so, affecting the decision making of people in power” (Chaher & Spellman, 2012, p. 9). Other calls for direct action, such as civil society campaigns and public pressure through physical presence and protests can also be organized at great speed through the use of social medias. Thus utilized successfully, the message that is being presented through social medias can have a significant impact and make impressions on the receiving public, and as such social media technologies can stir global, civic activism. According to the World Bank, a driving force behind citizen engagement that should not be undermined, is indeed technological progress, which plays a central part in our societies at large and as such are reshaping many facets of the world’s governments, societies and more. (The World Bank, 2016) Staying on top of technological progress, and keeping up to date with trends within social medias as mentioned by Cleary (2015) – this means anything from technology to terminology – is thus not to be taken for granted. What is more, due to social media’s continuous evolvement, ‘staying up to date’ needs to be approached as an ongoing learning process.

Thus, we can understand that social medias today play a central part in our societies at large, but also within organizations – and as such, it is both relevant and important to look at how organizations use social media technologies. Not only is it relevant on a structural macro level to understand how organizations use this technology, but also on a micro level – it is relevant and important for the individual organization to analyze its use of social media technologies.

This leads us to this paper's research question – namely that of doing a discursive analysis on the organizational use of the term 'corruption' on Twitter. As aforementioned, the organization chosen for the analysis is that of Anti Corruption International. Another question one might ask here is – why focus on Twitter as opposed to other social media platforms? This question and more will be elaborated in the following section, which looks at the social media platform *Twitter* – thus, let us proceed.

## **The Social Media Platform of Twitter**

In order to enter the world of online social interaction, the microblogging service, Twitter, has become a prominent platform offering us a gateway into the world of online communication, and is as such often portrayed as a platform that offers new ways in which individuals and groups of individuals can communicate with one another. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Chaher & Spellman, 2012) Not only does the practice of tweeting facilitate for increased levels of communication and social interaction, studies also suggest that the practice of microblogging encourages the growth of an entrepreneurial atmosphere in which information and ideas are created and shared at an instant among users of the social media service of Twitter – interactions that as such can affect effectual cognitions (thinking and behavior) which at a high interaction level can result in effectual churn and processes of creation. For an international NGO startup, the prospects of such results are desirable. (Fischer & Reuber, 2011)

As of 2016, Twitter has over 320 million monthly active users, and with every passing second, over 2,200 tweets are posted worldwide. (Chaher & Spellman, 2012; Twitter, 2016) Created back in 2006, the service lets its users create a username and an account with a profile and a short *bio*<sup>15</sup> from where the user can write about any topic within a limit of 140 characters, thus generating a text and a message, which then can be posted from the user's account – via Twitter – as a *tweet*, and thus available for a large audience to see. Due to the length limitation of each message, Twitter is often referred to as a *microblogging* service. Subscribers to a given Twitter account, called *followers*, are not the only ones able to receive and view tweets on their feed that have emerged in real time and originate from a given Twitter user – also other users will have access, and are as such afforded *visibility*, to a given

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<sup>15</sup> A personal description that characterizes the given Twitter user, no longer than 160 characters long, and found in the given user's profile. (Twitter Help Center, 2016)

user's tweets seeing as those who receive a tweet can forward it for an extended audience to see through the function called *retweeting*. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Twitter Help Center, 2016) This process enables another affordance, namely that of *relocation* – Twitter users are afforded the ability to “*relocate* tweets in the situational time and space of other potentially unknown users who are the recipients of retweets.” (Albu & Etter, 2016, p. 10) Due to them being persistent conversations, tweets are also made visible through searching for a specific user (such as @AntiCorruptIntl which is the *username* of Anti Corruption International), through browsing for a specific hypertextual conversation categorizer such as a *hashtag*<sup>16</sup>, or through similar functions that make historical interactions on the virtual site searchable and visible. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Twitter Help Center, 2016)

Today, a whole multitude of various actors use the service provided by this social media giant. Many of these actors are ordinary people from the general public with personal accounts, some are *parody accounts*<sup>17</sup>, others are fan accounts or commentary accounts, and others again are official accounts with actors such as institutions and organizations behind them. What these various actors have in common is that they are utilizing this specific social media platform in order to inform, connect, reach out and interact with interested parties such as their followers and other users that they target their tweets (and as such communication) towards. An example regarding official accounts can for instance be that out of all the five hundred companies mentioned in *Fortune 500* as of 2014, 83% of these organizational actors had active and official Twitter accounts. Talking about organizations, it is not only corporate organizations that use this specific social media platform to reach out and connect, also nonprofit and advocacy-focused organizations find Twitter to be a highly useful tool for developing new strategies of relevance to the specific organization. Similarly, organizations driven by technologies, such as many startups, find Twitter to be a significant tool for communication. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Twitter Help Center, 2016)

From a technological determinist exposition Twitter gives access to and diffuses information. (Albu & Etter, 2016) This particular feature of Twitter as a social media platform is of

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<sup>16</sup> The symbol # immediately followed by a word or phrase. The hashtag brings multiple messages from various users together underneath the umbrella-tag of the hashtag, seeing as it groups tweets from other users that also contain the same topic or keyword. These connections that are drawn between texts are self-conscious and intended connections. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Twitter Help Center, 2016)

<sup>17</sup> Parody accounts are set up with the aim of making fun or spoofing something/someone. In order to comply with Twitter's policy against impersonation, such accounts need to state in their profiles what the status of the account is, i.e. "parody", "fan-page" etc. (Twitter Help Center, 2016)

relevance in the context of this specific paper; the reason for this is that in order to analyze the use of a specific term (here: *corruption*) through organizational Twitter posts, the accessibility that Twitter offers in giving entry to the sea of information stored within the social media platform is necessary in order for the researcher to be able to collect the tweets needed for the dataset to be used in the analysis. This particular feature is also mentioned by Chaher & Spellman, who say that Twitter as a social media platform not only offers expressions from Twitter users that are contemporary, but that also are quantifiable and easily accessible. The expressions are easy to access seeing as they are immediately searchable and available 24/7 due to them being kept on the *Web at eternum*. Furthermore, in accordance with the affordance of relocation, tweets are also kept *ad infinitum* seeing as their relocation through retweeting continuously can make communicative interactions of the past available and present to new recipients and an indefinite audience. This point is also what makes it possible for content created on social media to “go viral”, and as such, actors creating content on social media platforms will often face the possibility of losing control regarding which audience can gain access to view the content originally created by said actors. The point of tweets being available online, falls into the affordance of persistence. The accessibility to the communicative interactions on Twitter creates the affordance of *persistence* – seeing as tweets can be accessed and viewed at any time after having been generated, and at the same time displayed in their original form, the affordance approach thus views tweets as persistent. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Chaher & Spellman, 2012) “Subsequently, because tweets are persistent and visible to various actors, Twitter use can have consequences past its original point of presentation,” – an important point that organizations using social media technologies such as Twitter should be aware of. (Albu & Etter, 2016, p. 10) The combination of Twitter’s affordances of visibility, persistence and relocation can arguably be said to create an ideal atmosphere for the fourth and final affordance of *modification*, seeing as an external audience are afforded the possibility to modify, alter and amend discursive material originally generated by another initial Twitter user. Especially hypertexts such as hashtags can be found to be textual content open for access by an external audience who thus are able to modify said content by using the same hashtag, yet in a new tweet generated by a different user than the user that primarily created and authored the content. This means that the message originally associated with said hashtag gets altered, and associated to a new message and/or audience. Through Twitter’s affordance of modification, primary content creators thus risk losing their position as sole authors of discursive material generated in communicative interactions within the ‘Twitterverse’. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Chaher & Spellman, 2012) Nevertheless, the

availability of posts, made possible especially through the affordances of visibility and persistence, makes it possible to analyse tweets— and as such, also the specific details within the tweets (for instance, a specific keyword), such as we will see further on in the analysis of this paper.

Chaher & Spellman mention that the expressions found within tweets often surround issues of a certain complexity that are “compressed into compact information bursts”, referring to Twitter’s post limitation of 140 characters. (Chaher & Spellman, 2012, p. 9) This limitation means that the user’s message needs to be on point. Chaher & Spellman further mention that often these expressions tend to be unconventional and overly emotional, aiming for the shock effect of the message so that the post’s impact is immediate and its dissemination is efficient and easy. Chadwick et al. writes that the value of creating a shock effect within the message that is generated can be seen in relation to the execution of power in systems in which both time and timeliness (temporal rhythms) are points of force. By generating messages of a shock/surprise value – with the aim of getting a head start in the game – actors will acquire a temporal power which can be used in the interest of said actor. (Chadwick, Dennis, & Smith, 2016) Regarding Twitter’s post limitation, Nahon, on the other hand, has a slightly different view on this particular architectural design-feature of the platform. With a focus on the politics and power relations within social medias, Nahon views Twitter’s 140 character tweet limitation as restricting, and as such, a design feature which has impacted what kind of content it is possible for Twitter’s users to generate. Thus:

*“When users are limited to 140 characters, their posts must be short, laconic, and simplistic, if not outright blunt. It is no coincidence that Twitter is mainly used for live event updates. It has been purposely structured this way by its designers, imitating SMS practices and consequently appropriating this user behavior as a tool for sharing activities in the immediate present. By constraining the agenda (to 140 characters), Twitter has privileged a particular type of content (real-time posts) over other content, such as complex and nuanced arguments.”* (Nahon, 2016, pp. 41–42)

Although Twitter’s 140 character limitation might be experienced as restrictive by its users, it can be said that this limitation is what makes Twitter to the platform it is today - a microblogging service. The aim of the service is to let its users generate short messages, and not long blogposts, seeing as these services are provided by other social media platforms.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that even given the character limitation, technology-savvy Twitter users will possess the know-how skills to work with this limitation in letting it facilitate for whatever motivation and/or agency the user will be driven by in generating the tweet. For instance, as we have seen, a given Twitter discourse can be dominated and shaped by powerful users, can facilitate for the negotiation of identity, and can contribute to the constitution or contestation of organizations. Examples such as these show that social media technologies can be used by organizations in a manner that facilitates for the user's agency. Seeing as the decision to use social media technologies, by organizations and other actors alike, arguably is a voluntary choice, we must ask what interest the organization has in utilizing new technologies such as these. In this chapter we have explored some perspectives concerning possible interests that an organization might have in using social media technologies due to the benefits these can afford the organization. However, there are other strings attached to organizations using such technologies, albeit not all of which can be identified as positive to the organization. In order to take a proactive approach, knowledge is key. By making out a set of plans, for instance through communications- and social media strategies, the organization will arguably be more inclined towards dealing with unforeseeable situations that might occur when an organization engages in social interactions that unfold within the realm of social media technologies. This will be a point of interest concerning the case of Anti Corruption International, in which the organizational use of the term 'corruption' on Twitter will be investigated by conducting a discursive analysis. However, firstly we will take a closer look at the methodology and other underlying issues behind this paper, before continuing on to the analysis. (Albu & Etter, 2016; Chaher & Spellman, 2012)





## Chapter 4: Methodology and Other Underlying Issues

In approaching the specific research question and indeed the conduction of this particular paper, there are some aspects that must be taken into account during the process of research. In this section of the paper, it is thus the research methodology behind all of the choices made within the conduction of this paper that will be contemplated and explained, such as: the choice of methodology; the choices made concerning the analysis; the choices made for how to proceed with the extraction of data; why the specific organization was chosen to be the generator of the Twitter discourse collected for the dataset; reflections surrounding why ‘corruption’ was chosen as the term to base the analysis on; in addition to reflections surrounding the role and responsibility of the researcher.

### Case Study: The Choice of Organization

The organization (Anti Corruption International) that was selected for this study, is an international NGO startup that in its everyday organizational life uses social media technology. More specifically, it is an organization that believes in transparency, and which as such regards the social media platform of Twitter as a tool that can shine a light into the practices of the organization, whilst simultaneously being a tool through which it can reach out to a wider audience and thus actively both establish and engage within thematical, communicative and social interactions which are viewed as valuable to the organization. As we have seen, there are many benefits that can be identified when using social media technologies due to the high complexity of the communicative interactions that unfold on technological platforms. Not only is the organization offered a tool through which it can communicate and share information, but other dimensions of such communicative interactions make themselves present too: the creation and negotiation of organizational identity; relationships of power and politics are being entered; and actions such as global civic activism can more easily be stirred and organized, to name a few. As of today, no prior analysis has ever been done concerning the organization’s use of social media technology, and more specifically, no prior analysis has ever been done concerning the organization’s use of the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter. As could be read in the previous chapter *Social Media Technology*, it is important for an organization to analyze its use of social media technologies, seeing as an underestimation of the use of new technologies such as these can impact an organization in unforeseeable ways. As such it was regarded as important for the organization

to have a segment of its use of Twitter analysed, this due to Twitter being one of the social media platforms that the organization uses at a significant rate. This was ‘the main rationale’<sup>18</sup> for selecting Anti Corruption International as the organization that had generated the data that was to be collected for the dataset, and as such the rationale for selecting the said organization to represent a case within this paper. At the time of research, Anti Corruption International had just passed its one-year anniversary, and was thus within its first year of using Twitter. (Anti Corruption International, 2016a)

## Qualitative Methodology

In order to shed a meaningful light on this particular study, an appropriate methodology needed to be selected. When deciding which method to choose, the researcher must strategically assess which approach will be the most suitable and advantageous to enlighten the issue under investigation. The decision rested between that of a *quantitative method* or a *qualitative method*. Both methodological approaches have their advantages and disadvantages, however, they both share a common quest – contributing to a heightened understanding of our societies, in addition to understanding how institutions, organizations, groups and individuals interact within these bounds (Holme & Solvang, 2004). In this study, a qualitative methodological approach was chosen as the most appropriate pathway in which to shed light on this particular topic and research question. With intersubjective and positioned characteristics, a qualitative methodological approach will assist the researcher in gaining a rigorous understanding of the studied issue. (Dwyer & Limb, 2001) Complexities within the everyday life can be explored and understood by engaging *in-depth* and applying *insider-knowledge-acquisitioning*-techniques which can be done in multiple ways, for instance such as through visual material/text analysis. The aim is to gain a deeper insight into the processes that shape societal structures, while simultaneously reflecting upon and interpreting shared understandings and meanings of people’s relations and experiences within these bounds. Knowledge is understood as *intersubjective*<sup>19</sup>, understandings of that which is being studied are often contextual and interpretative, and relations of power and positionality will often receive attention when reflecting about the research process. (Dwyer & Limb, 2001) The material that gets collected in research encounters for later interpretations is known as social

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<sup>18</sup> Another rationale for selecting the abovementioned organization to feature as a case within this paper had to do with the undersigned having previous knowledge and access to the said organization.

<sup>19</sup> An *intersubjective* understanding of knowledge views knowledge as situated and partial. (Dwyer & Limb, 2001)

data. Crang & Cook tells us that social data are mediums through which our world is understood, acted out and constructed, and that social data thus inevitably is both positioned and partial. (Crang & Cook, 2007) The techniques applied to collect social data happen through different forms of social interactions. What is worth paying attention to, it the different societal contexts behind these social interactions which can shape and influence said interactions. (Dowling, 2010)

The reason for choosing a qualitative methodological approach had its base in the actual research question of this paper. The research question conditioned that attention should be focused towards collecting data in the form of qualitative, discursive material (tweets) to be used further ahead in the study, where the research question also conditioned for investigations to be made into the language (text) of the collected data and its meaning. Once the discursive material had been collected, it was organized in an orderly fashion ready to be reviewed and thus investigated. In order to address the research question, it was decided that the research within this paper would be conducted by means of a *discursive analysis* – a type of analysis that will be further explained in the section below. Accordingly, an analysis such as this would use a qualitative methodology due to the attention being focused towards discursive, qualitative data material rather than quantifiable data material. These choices seem to be in compliance with what Dwyer & Limb (2001) tells us about the selection of qualitative approaches. According to the authors, the researcher’s views on production of knowledge, understandings of social reality, and the research question of the study will influence which approach to qualitative methodologies that the researcher eventually selects. Such decisions can be found to mirror the researcher’s attitude towards that which is being researched, together with views on the responsibilities and role of the researcher. (Dwyer & Limb, 2001)

## **A Discourse Analysis**

*“Discourse analysis involves looking beyond the literal meaning of language, understanding the context in which social interaction takes place and exploring what was said, when and why.”* (Shaw & Bailey, 2009, p. 417)

As has been mentioned throughout this paper, the specific research question of this thesis was decided to be the following: “The case of Anti Corruption International: A discursive analysis on the organizational use of the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter.” In order to address this

research question, a qualitative approach in the form of a discourse analysis will have to be conducted based on the collected material found within the dataset.

The various approaches to discourse analyses can be difficult to pin down – a challenge not made easier due to the wide range of disciplines that influence these various approaches, ranging from disciplines such as philosophy and social psychology to anthropology and linguistics. However, generally speaking a discourse analysis is an analysis which gives a systematic account of a structure, a pattern, a strategy or a process that can be found within the discursive material (such as a conversation or a text) that is being investigated. Although discourse analyses can be conducted in various ways, a strikingly characteristic and common feature among many such analyses is their focus on illuminating any kind of structures, such as the structure of interactions and meanings or the structure of expressions. (Dijk, n.d.; Shaw & Bailey, 2009)

Although Shaw & Bailey tell us that there does not exist any set formulas for how to conduct a discourse analysis, they suggest writing while simultaneously reading and analyzing. This suggestion is in compliance with the advice of both Crang & Cook (2007) and Dwyer & Limb (2001). The infamous linear research model of “read-then-do-then-write” approach has been much talked about. However, it is often argued for an alternate path in research which steps away from this static model. As such, various authors from research backgrounds can be found to urge their readers who are doing research to in fact step away from the linear model and rather stir it up from the beginning – thus inferring that researchers should try to do all of the preceding stages simultaneously – collecting data while writing text and reading relevant literature. (Crang & Cook, 2007) Agreeing with this particular research path, Dwyer & Limb tell us that these aforementioned steps in fact are interrelated and should thus be portrayed as connected to one another – the connection among the stages of research, execution, interpretation and writing is quite substantial. (Dwyer & Limb, 2001)

Returning to the specifics of the discursive analyses again, a common feature within the process of interpreting the discursive material, is to regard the context surrounding the material as a key to gaining an insightful understanding of that which is being analyzed. One way for the researcher to obtain a sense of context can be achieved through doing a background reading surrounding that which one is analysing. With this in mind the undersigned did some background reading on the themes within the topic and research

question at hand. Thus, a background reading was done on the type of organization featured in this case study (an international NGO startup), followed by a background reading on the main problem that the featured organization is working towards eradicating, namely that of corruption, which also happens to be the term that will be investigated in this discursive analysis – this in order to attain a context, which would assist the undersigned in forming an understanding of how the organization uses the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter. Following this a background reading was done on organizations’ use of social media technologies, followed by some specifics regarding Twitter. An important part of the research process itself is the background reading, as this will offer the researcher some perspective and can heighten his/her understanding and thus abilities to more deeply analyse the subject at hand. After having decided what kind of data one wishes to extract and study, the researcher should become familiar with the data, either through listening, watching and/or reading, depending on the type of data. Once familiar with the data, the researcher can start identifying structures or patterns within the data, achieved through indexing and organizing the data. This can be achieved either manually, or by utilizing a computer software designed to assist the researcher in analysing the data. The computer-assisted software used in this study will be unfolded later on in this chapter. If the researcher has any intuitive thoughts surrounding what outcome the data might hold, such hypotheses can be tested against the data. Notably, a main point for choosing to do an analysis such as this, is often grounded in the researcher’s ambition to search for that which is often taken for granted so that the researcher can describe a structure with more originality and interest. Research such as this has a potential to push against current boundaries, exploring the alternatives, and ideally – providing new insight. (Dijk, n.d.; Shaw & Bailey, 2009)

### **Choosing the term ‘Corruption’**

The reason behind choosing the term ‘corruption’ to be that which will be analyzed within the discursive material collected, has to do with the fact that the term holds a special significance to the organization, seeing as its main objective and identity is tied to it being an anti-corruption organization. As such, the term signifies a great deal of meaning to the organization, seeing as it is the term for the actual global problem that the organization is working towards eradicating, and thus holds much of the reason as to why the organization was established in the first place. Intuitively, before the actual analysis has been conducted, it is thought that the organization might use the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter in a manner that

would represent its agency as an anti-corruption organization – although in which ways that it would do so is unknown. Insight into this segment of the organization’s use of social media technologies thus requires further studies, and in this case for a discursive analysis to be carried out. By analyzing the collected dataset (ACI’s Twitter discourse), insight into some trends of usage regarding the organization’s application of the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter can be gained. An analysis such as this, will be fruitful for the organization seeing as it wishes to get an overview of how it uses the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter. Insight into this specific segment of the organization’s use of Twitter, can be used as a basis for further research on this topic. It can also be used when reviewing and developing communications- and social media strategies, seeing as insights into a segment of the organization’s Twitter practices can be used in an assessment of whether the organizational practices and strategies concerning its use of Twitter (and at larger, social media technologies) are in line within one another, in addition to the overall goals and strategies of the organization.

What can be said is that, initially, an analysis such as this will offer the organization some input to consider regarding a segmented part of its communications- and social media practices. As we have seen, such practices can impact the organization both positively and negatively. Thus, being aware of issues such as these can be vital for an organization, particularly for an international NGO startup which in its adolescent, dynamic and organic years will be sensitive to both internal and external impacts, seeing as this can affect the fledgling organization’s make-or-break fate. Cold statistics show that 9 out of every 10 startups fail. Entrepreneur Neil Patel writes that one of the characteristics of successful startups is that they do not ignore *anything*, and that the reality for any startup is that a small issue can grow into a large issue. (Griffith, 2014; Patel, 2015) Getting a head start in the game and making smart decisions regarding issues that might potentially impact it at some stage are therefore beneficial to the organization. For the young anti-corruption organization featured in this study – one such issue is gaining some insight into how it uses the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter, seeing as this is a term of significance to the organization. Insights into trends of usage concerning the aforementioned term can possibly shape future decisions of the organization, seeing as identified trends in usage serves to provide a comprehension of how new technologies such as these can be leveraged to fulfill the global objectives of the international NGO startup, and at large, provides a deeper understanding of social media technologies’ purpose within organizations. Thus, let us proceed.

## Approach: Chorus and Data Collection

In order to conduct the discourse analysis, qualitative data was required. This data was collected from Anti Corruption International's official Twitter account, where a number of 772 tweets, spanning from the timescale 20th of April, 2016, until the 15th of April, 2016, comprised the dataset that would be used in the analysis. Due to the data being tweets, the discursive material was sourced from publicly available social media data – a feature that is one of the characteristics within the previously mentioned affordances of Twitter as a social media platform.

Although tweets can be accessed from the actual Twitter page itself due to the platform's affordances, when collecting larger numbers of tweets (social media data) such as that which was collected for the dataset to be used in the upcoming analysis, the more common practice for researchers conducting social media analytics is to look towards the computer sciences in order to find a computable software that the researcher can utilize in order to make the mining of big social data sets less of a problem, and subsequently so, less time consuming. The existence of such computable softwares has made the practice of collecting and visually analyzing 'big' social media data one that is increasingly feasible for social scientists. As such, we are seeing an inception of literature emerging with resources based on captured social media data. However, many social scientists still feel uncomfortable with learning how to operate computable tools which can assist in the research process, this mostly due to a lack of time, interest and technical knowledge. Subsequently, a majority of such computable techniques have yet to break ground within the field of social sciences. (Brooker, Barnett, Cribbin, & Sharma, 2016) Brooker et al. (2016) remarks that:

*“It is widely recognised that social media may have much to offer academic research, yet acquiring and making effective use of this material – part of what some refer to as ‘the big data challenge’ – seems to sit just outside of the technical skill set of many social scientists.”* (Brooker et al., 2016)

Although requiring some technical skills, there exists many computer-based social media research tools that today can be utilized by social scientists who wish to collect and organize social media data (both qualitative and quantitative data), such as for instance the tools referred to by Wasim Ahmed. (Ahmed, 2015) In the context of this thesis, the undersigned was interested in finding a software that allowed for the collection of social media data, and

more specifically, for the capture of Twitter discourse. Initially, the undersigned looked at utilizing *NVivo for Mac* – a computable software that amongst other functions can be used for collecting and organizing rich data set sources such as tweets. Built specifically for Mac users, *NVivo for Mac* is considered the best application available for Mac users who seek to analyze qualitative data. The application allows its user to access and collect online content within the researcher's topic of interest, while simultaneously offering its user to access metrics behind the collected data such as locations, demographics etc., to be used further ahead in the analysis of the collected data. (QSR International, n.d., 2015) Despite this, an expanded search of other available 'social-media-capturing-sofwares' led to the undersigned coming across another software called *Chorus*. Developed by an interdisciplinary team of social scientists, web developers and programmers at Brunel University in 2011, and released as a freeware in September 2013, Chorus is a software development project exclusively designed to both enable and facilitate for the practice of capturing and analyzing Twitter data to be used as resources in both qualitative and quantitative social science research. Thus, bringing together the methodologies and requirements of the social sciences with the existing metrics and algorithms from the computer sciences, an attempt has been made to develop a social media data tool that is user-friendly for researchers with limited technical skills. (Brooker et al., 2016)

Seeing as Chorus is a bespoke tool built for the research of Twitter discourse, it was found to be a more practical and relevant software to utilize in this specific case, rather than NVivo for Mac which is a more fathoming tool that assists researchers in multiple types of research. Convincingly, this made the undersigned abandon the initial idea of using NVivo for Mac. However, the undersigned got to understand why NVivo for Mac is the preferred tool for Mac owners; due to the undersigned's *operating system* (OS) being that of *Apple MacOS*, downloading the new software was a little difficult due to Chorus' preference of *Microsoft Windows* as its ideal operating system. Nevertheless, the issue was solved by finding a solution that fitted the Windows-based programme into the Mac app-bundle. After this issue was solved, the next issue in line was to ask for permission to use the software. After filling out a form on Chorus' website, which asked a few questions regarding the purpose for using the software (seeing as the developers are eager for information in order to continue developing the project), free access to use the software was granted. The undersigned could then start using the software package which comprised of the two separate programmes – *TweetCatcher* and *TweetVis*. (Brooker et al., 2016)



The firstmentioned programme, TweetCatcher, allows its user to search for Twitter data either by identifying a Twitter user (i.e. user-driven data, such as tweets collected from the user @AntiCorruptIntl) or by searching for a topical keyword found within general Twitter conversations (i.e. semantically-driven data). The latter programme, TweetVis, facilitates for both qualitative and quantitative approaches by applying social media data in social sciences through visual analytics (VA) which is an interdisciplinary computing methodology that conforms with Chorus' aims of facilitating for user-friendly, intuitive and explorative social media analytics. TweetVis offers two main functions; the first function is *The Timeline Explorer*, a visual analysis of Twitter data through various selectable metrics across time. The second function is *The Cluster Explorer*, which by using a 2D cluster map visualizes the topical and semantic similarities of the user's data set. (Brooker et al., 2016)

For this reason, the required Twitter discourse to be used in this study was accessed, captured, and as we will see, visually analyzed by utilizing Chorus. By typing in Anti Corruption International's username (@AntiCorruptIntl, i.e. user-driven data) in the TweetCatcher's search field, tweets from the organization could be searched for and then captured in order to comprise the organizational dataset. This led to a number of 772 tweets showing up, thus showing every tweet generated by @AntiCorruptIntl since it started tweeting on April 20th, 2015, until the day that the data was collected, April 15th, 2016. All 772 tweets were collected for the dataset, with the timescale of the tweets then stretching from the period 20.04.2015-15.04.2016 – five days short of being a whole year of tweets. Once the dataset had been collected, the Chorus software allowed for the tweets to be analysed, as we will see in *Chapter 5: Analysis*.

### **Aspects to consider**

When conducting scientific work, there is especially one important and presupposed issue that the researcher needs to be aware of at all times – namely that of being reflective towards and safeguarding ethical rules and implications surrounding one's activities as a researcher. For instance, when collecting data and assessing it, the researcher needs to consider factors that can impact said data, and thus affect the study's final results and/or quality. Researchers shape research, and as was mentioned in *Chapter 1: Introduction*, experiences of a first- or second hand nature relating to a given societal issue can often be found to have contributed to

a spark and motivation within the researcher to indeed study a particular research topic. "For many researchers, projects develop out of already existing memberships of social groups and/or access to particular spaces." (Crang & Cook, 2007, p. 324 (Kindle ed.)) When pondering upon this, it becomes evident that both the positioning and subjectivity of the researcher are significant issues within any research process that need to be considered. One way to do this, as mentioned by Dowling, is to use critical reflexivity in all steps throughout the research process. *Critical reflexivity* is achieved by acknowledging, examining and scrutinising one's social position as a researcher at all times within one's research – essentially this means that the researcher has to examine his/her own position with a vigor and concentration not unlike that which one would apply to the studied topic of one's research. (Dowling, 2010)

Besides the aforementioned, there are also further factors that need to be contemplated during the extent of the research process. For instance, the researcher needs to consider how he/she will represent the study's findings during the stage where the finale writings are done. Furthermore, the researcher will also need to consider the negotiation of *positionality*<sup>20</sup>. Being aware of the ethical issue on power and power relations are here of relevance. Power and the dimension of power can enter one's research in more ways than one. (Dowling, 2010; Dwyer & Limb, 2001) The most appropriate way to deal with this dimension, is by applying critical reflexivity to it, as existing power relations thus will surface and become less concealed. The dimension of power can also enter one's research another way – through the researcher's construction of knowledge about a society, a societal phenomenon, or representation of others. Through the researcher's interpretation of his/her collected data, such dimensions of power can be constructed and thus enter research. Constructed dimensions of power such as this can be both directly and indirectly powerful. *Directly powerful* – explained as when findings and results from one's research for instance directly impact policies, which again affect people's lives. *Indirectly powerful* – explained as occurring when the understandings and perceptions of the given topic of the study changes due to the researcher's knowledge construction and/or results from the study. (Dowling, 2010; Dwyer & Limb, 2001) Highlighting another dimension of power are authors Crang & Cook who refer to the relationships that the researcher has to people outside of research in his/her own social life.

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<sup>20</sup> Referring to role boundaries as fluid, dynamic and complex.

Personal relationships are seen as containing some power as these to a certain degree can influence the results of one's research. (Crang & Cook, 2007)

In the stage of the research process where data is collected, there is one part which plays a significant role – namely the researcher's relations to objectivity and subjectivity. However, by using critical reflexivity the researcher can deal with these two relations. The objectivity of the researcher is difficult to assure, this due to the personal involvement and engagement of the researcher during the stages of collection and interpretation of data and construction of knowledge – all parts of the research process. When mentioning the part about construction of knowledge, it is important that the researcher recognizes that values of a subjective nature can colour the researched topic to a certain degree. Such colouring can occur when the researcher tries to understand data, and partly understands it through his/her personal frames of references – an occurrence explained as gliding into subjectivity. As such, subjectivity can affect the construction of knowledge, and it is one of the concepts that Dowling talks about – a concept explained as the researcher's use of the *personal* during the process of conducting research (i.e. the *personal* referring to opinions, characteristics, social position, frames of references etc.). These unescaping facets are the reasons as to why knowledge can be understood as situated and partial. (Dowling, 2010; Dwyer & Limb, 2001) Making a contribution to these reflections are Crang & Cook who picture research as an activity that is embodied, which with all its identities engages and involves the whole physical being. The outcome of a study will thus be affected by what the researcher contributes to the research. Such illustrated, the concept of objectivity cannot be achieved during the research process. Authors Crang & Cook therefore recommend us to: “recognise and come to terms with their/our partial and situated ‘subjectivity’ rather than aspire to an impossibly distanced ‘objectivity’”. Once this is done, “‘subjectivity’ is much less a problem and much more a resource for deeper understanding.” (Crang & Cook, 2007, p. 171 and 243 (Kindle ed.))

Due to the research conducted being that of a qualitative methodological approach, the research can be said to be influenced by the researcher's subjectivity, whilst simultaneously being situated and partial. The approach chosen in this specific case was that of a comparative discourse analysis. Shaw & Bailey write that there is a concern among various researchers that analyses such as these (discursive), only represent findings within the study that are of the researcher's opinion, and nothing more. However, coming back at the critics, Shaw & Bailey defend the discursive analyst's research and subsequent findings as justified seeing as the

researcher's interpretations within a given research topic will carry references to the research data (discursive material) in addition to being supported by 'evidence' from other referenced sources. (Shaw & Bailey, 2009) Thus, the interpretations offered within a given discourse analysis are not constructed solely and isolatedly within the researcher's frames of reference, the interpretations are also constructed within a frame of context. As such:

*“Discourse analysts see research findings as socially constructed, for example, products of historical, geographical, economic and other contexts, and influenced by the researchers themselves (e.g. disciplinary background, age, gender, ethnicity and so on). Discursive ‘findings’ are therefore seen as rigorously produced interpretations rather than ‘discoveries’. Providing detail about study settings, participants and methodologies allows readers to judge credibility and plausibility of findings. As is the case for other qualitative approaches, discursive findings are judged for the insights they can offer and are theoretically rather than statistically applicable to other situations.”* (Shaw & Bailey, 2009, p. 418)

There exists a number of additional issues surrounding the actual research process itself that the undersigned could have included, such as computable issues that might affect the collection and analysis of data, in addition to further ethical issues. (Brooker, Barnett, Cribbin, & Sharma, 2015) However, these issues will have to be reflected upon personally by the undersigned due to the length limitations of this specific thesis. Thus, the specifics will have us proceed to the upcoming part, *Chapter 5: Analysis*. Influenced by these methodological reflections, the following analysis is presented.

## Chapter 5: Analysis

After having applied the Chorus TweetCatcher in order to extract the Twitter discourse needed for the dataset, it was time to become familiar with the collected data. Familiarization with the data was achieved through running the dataset through the second programme offered by Chorus, namely that of TweetVis. The dataset was run through a series of options at first, in order for the researcher to become more acquainted with both the software in itself, in addition to the collected Twitter discourse. Simultaneously, this would assist the undersigned in making an informed, reflected decision on which options to go with regarding what metrics would best illuminate and address the research question at hand – simultaneously, the skill level of the Chorus user will set some limitations as to which options can be applied, depending on whether the user is at a beginner- or advanced level of mastering the software.

Thus, it was time to proceed with the actual discourse analysis. As was explained earlier on, this would be done by analyzing the dataset containing the Twitter discourse – to be exact, 772 organizational tweets collected from Anti Corruption International’s official Twitter account spanning from the timescale 20.04.2015-15.04.2016. The analysis would be done by looking at how the organization used the term ‘corruption’ in its generated tweets. As was mentioned in the previous chapter on methodology, an important part within the process of analyzing and interpreting the collected data, is to have that of context in mind. The reason for this is that not only can the context around the data assist the researcher in understanding the data, but the context can also help the researcher to produce interpretations of said data, so that interpretations are not done solely on a subjective basis within the researcher’s frames of references, but is also influenced and informed by the context surrounding said data. Thus, when reflecting upon the collected data, the researcher should ask questions towards the discursive material, wondering what the context for said data is, why the social interaction (here: the act of tweeting) is happening, what the data is telling us etc., and generally just being quizzical towards the data at hand in order for the researcher to arrive at reflective interpretations. In order to answer the research question, let us interpret the organizational tweets.

Related Words

### Terms that co-occur with 'corruption'

Same Interval
  Same Tweet

Term	Score	DF
corruption	1.000	0231
anti	0.371	0019
environmental	0.351	0107
forestry	0.310	0019
supported	0.305	0038
just	0.299	0052
curb	0.298	0010
sector	0.297	0022
does	0.282	0010
world	0.280	0036
people	0.277	0028
government	0.276	0013
contribute	0.262	0005
development	0.259	0006
way	0.256	0005
international	0.249	0013
week	0.249	0005
happens	0.245	0002
reduce	0.245	0002
end	0.243	0049
environment	0.240	0003
resources	0.239	0003
ask	0.233	0008
believe	0.228	0006
young	0.226	0025
future	0.223	0006
demand	0.217	0012
youth	0.215	0014
democracy	0.209	0003
know	0.206	0006
letter	0.201	0002
pressing	0.201	0002
leaders	0.196	0012
political	0.196	0014
chance	0.190	0002
unemployment	0.190	0002
authorities	0.189	0006

Figure 1. *Same Interval* tweets.

DateT...	DateT...	User...	Tweet
04/04/16	18:57:...	AntiC...	President Aliyev elected by corruption & repression then continues on his corruption into office. [#PanamaPapers] [#Azerbaijan]
04/04/16	19:48:...	AntiC...	If there are 11.5 million documents from 1 law firm in 1 tax haven, one can only imagine the severity of the corruption. [#PanamaPap...
04/04/16	22:47:...	AntiC...	There can no more be a thinly veiled request for increased transparency & accountability we have seen the power of corruption: [#P...
04/04/16	22:52:...	AntiC...	We can't allow for [#PanamaPapers] to drift from focus its importance is vital to tackling corruption, improving transparency & accou...
04/05/15	13:20:...	AntiC...	Here at ACI we are developing our thematic committees, Which area's of corruption do you think we should work on?
04/11/15	17:54:...	AntiC...	Young people have to be a central component of stamping out corruption, We in ACI are working to make that a reality. [#UNCAC] [#C...

Figure 2. Sample tweets.

DateT...	DateT...	User...	Tweet
12/04/16	11:32:...	AntiC...	Guatemala's CICG: An Interesting Example of an International Justice Body Reducing Corruption - [@CampaignforACC] <a href="https://t.co/e...">https://t.co/e...</a>
13/03/16	15:06:...	AntiC...	RT [@DrQuesada:] Brazilians took streets to protest political corruption & weak economy <a href="https://t.co/7kRn6a3Qfz">https://t.co/7kRn6a3Qfz</a> <a href="https://t.co/NOVXaL...">https://t.co/NOVXaL...</a>
15/06/15	18:03:...	AntiC...	Have you received, your copy of the Anti-Corruption International newsletter? <a href="https://t.co/vszL42pC4">https://t.co/vszL42pC4</a>
15/09/15	17:40:...	AntiC...	We are uniting young people from around the world to fight corruption. Join us here:
16/02/16	10:12:...	AntiC...	Does (or should) corruption threaten the government in your country? Tell us where and how it threatens your gov. <a href="https://t.co/EWW...">https://t.co/EWW...</a>
16/02/16	21:55:...	AntiC...	We read an interesting article and it poses an interesting question: what beats corruption? <a href="https://t.co/LakeFEZlJ6">https://t.co/LakeFEZlJ6</a>

Figure 4. Sample tweets.

Related Words

**Terms that co-occur with 'corruption'**

Same Interval
  Same Tweet

Term	Score	DF
corruption	1.000	0231
environmental	0.631	0107
policy	0.491	0062
sustainable	0.487	0065
end	0.398	0049
supported	0.380	0038
just	0.343	0052
anti	0.247	0019
forestry	0.204	0019
sector	0.203	0022
curb	0.180	0010
international	0.158	0013
people	0.156	0028
young	0.156	0025
fighting	0.142	0005
way	0.142	0005
fight	0.135	0014
happens	0.134	0002
development	0.129	0006
prone	0.127	0004
conflict	0.120	0004
nigeria	0.120	0007
week	0.113	0005
world	0.112	0036
demand	0.110	0012
environment	0.110	0003
indonesia	0.110	0012
piece	0.110	0003
raise	0.110	0003
tackling	0.110	0003
need	0.108	0017
join	0.105	0018
future	0.103	0006
seen	0.103	0006
vpqf	0.103	0006
activists	0.096	0007
high	0.095	0004

Figure 3. Same tweet.



## A Discourse Analysis of Anti Corruption International's Tweets

The analysis of the dataset shows a few interesting points. Having selected the option called *Related Words* on TweetVis, the undersigned could select the term 'corruption' and find out what other terms co-occur with it, which would help us arrive at some interpretations of how the organization used the term 'corruption' on Twitter. Through the option *Related Words*, the TweetVis programme will structure the terms co-occurring with one's chosen term (here: corruption), simultaneously referring to the number of times the co-occurring words appears with the chosen term within one's data set, thus calculating the 'local probability' that your chosen term will appear with another term in the current dataset. This co-occurrence probability can be computed by the researcher to display this value within an interval defined by the user (i.e. *Same Interval*) in addition to providing the 'local probability' that one's selected term will co-occur within the same tweet (i.e. *Same Tweet*). (Brooker, Barnett, Cribbin, & Sharma, 2013)

By looking at *Figure 1*, we can firstly observe the function of *Same Interval* which shows us which terms are likely to co-occur with 'corruption' in same interval tweets by Anti Corruption International, where the interval is set as 24 hours by the researcher. Looking at the index that comes up, it is the *DF* value that is of interest to us. Chorus explains that "DF refers to Document Frequency, or the number of tweets in which the term appears." (Brooker et al., 2013, p. 12) The result shows which terms are most likely to co-occur with 'corruption' within same interval tweets. Within this same interval, the index shows us that the term that has the highest local probability to co-occur with corruption, is the term 'environmental'. Other terms with a high local probability are the term 'end', in addition to 'young', 'people', 'world', 'anti' and 'forestry'. These words all have a context behind them, and it is the researcher's task to reflect upon this data. That the index shows us that there is a high, local probability for the term 'environmental' to co-occur with the term 'corruption' within the defined tweet intervall, is not too surprising for the researcher. As was explained earlier on, the undersigned has some previous knowledge and first-hand experiences from the featured organization. Thus, the undersigned is familiar with some of the work that the organization has done – a context which the organization has generated tweets within. In *Chapter 2: A Global Backdrop*, some of the previous and current work of the organization was mentioned under the section called *Anti Corruption International – A Global Movement*. Here the researcher mentioned one of the organization's largest campaigns to this date – a campaign which was targeted towards curbing corruption in Indonesia's forestry sector, where the

campaign lead to a letter being writted, addressed to world leaders. (Anti Corruption International, 2015f) Thus the high, local probability of the terms ‘environmental’, ‘forestry’ and ‘world’ is very understandable, seeing as the campaign targeted *environmental corruption* within the *forestry* sector of Indonesia, with the outcome being a letter to *world* leaders.

The term ‘end’ is also likely to co-occur with ‘corruption’ – a term that can be seen in relation to the organization’s aim of eradicating corruption, or ‘end’ corruption. The term ‘anti’ relates to the organization’s objective as well, eradicating corruption and thus being ‘anti’ corruption, a term that also exists in the organization’s actual name – ‘Anti’ Corruption International. The terms ‘young’ and ‘people’ are also seen to co-occur at a high rate with ‘corruption’, and this can be seen in relation to who the organization is targeted towards, mainly students, and young people across the world. To illustrate this point, *Figure 2.* shows a sample of tweets from the dataset. At the bottom of the figure, there is a tweet dating back to 04/11/15 with the message “Young people have to be a central component of stamping out corruption. We in ACI are working to make that a reality. #UNCAC”. This tweet is not only directed towards the organization’s main target, ‘young’ ‘people’, but is also referring to the organization’s belief in young people taking a leading role in the eradication of corruption. (Anti Corruption International, 2015e)

Looking at *Figure 3.* we can firstly observe the function of *Same Tweet* which shows us which terms are likely to co-occur with ‘corruption’ within the same tweet. Many of the terms shown to have a high degree of co-occurrence within the same tweet, are terms that also co-occur with those found in the *Same Interval* function, such as ‘environmental’ and ‘forestry’. Words that are new in this index, are terms such as ‘sustainability’ and ‘policy’, which also can be seen in relation to the Indonesia forestry campaign where a call was made for Indonesia to have a more sustainable environmental policy. Re-occurring are also the terms ‘young’, ‘people’ and ‘world’ in addition to a new term ‘join’ which all have a high co-occurrence rate within same tweets. This would be similar to the use of the term ‘corruption’ as mentioned in the *Same Interval* section, where young people are the organization’s target, as further illustrated by *Figure 4.* which shows us another sample of tweets from the dataset. A tweet dating back to 15/09/15 holds the message “We are uniting young people from around the world to fight corruption. Join us here.)

The terms co-occurring with the term 'corruption' shows us that the organization uses the term 'corruption' on the social media platform of Twitter not only to broadcast information towards and encourage for social interaction (communication, the act of tweeting) with its targeted group, a young, international audience – a function made possible by Twitter's affordances, it also shows that simultaneously to using the term 'corruption', it can for instance make calls for action (i.e. as understood by the co-occurring term 'join'), either by joining the organization, or joining its campaigns etc. The term 'anti' used with the term 'corruption' can be seen as to re-produce the organization as an entity, in which it by using both terms is constructing its identity as an anti-corruption organization, in addition to making a call for the eradication of corruption. Arguably, these are just a few ways in which the organization uses the term 'corruption' on Twitter, and at large a few ways in which the organization uses the new technologies of social medias.



## Chapter 6: Conclusion

Throughout the course of this study we understood that social media technologies today play a central part in our societies at large, but also within organizations. As such, it is both of relevance and importance to look at how organizations use social media technologies. Not only is it relevant on a structural macro level to understand how organizations use this technology, but also on a micro level – it is relevant and important for the individual organization to analyze its use of social media technologies.

Within this larger topic, this paper was presented as a case of an international NGO startup's use of social media technologies, namely that of Anti Corruption International. The research question of this paper concerned itself on doing a discursive analysis on the organizational use of the term 'corruption' on Twitter. The background as to why this particular research topic was chosen had mainly to do with this particular topic being regarded as valuable to the organization, seeing as no prior research had been done concerning the organization's use of social media technologies broadly, or the organization's use of the significant term 'corruption' more specifically. Thus, the aim of this research was to provide some insights that the organization could apply in order to start filling the slightly innocent, yet oblivious void that the organization finds itself within due to a deficiency of knowledge and insight concerning its current use of social media technologies, and as was seen, unawareness concerning organizations' use of social media technologies was not exactly beneficial to the organization, especially not a dynamic, fledgling international NGO startup.

The approach chosen in which to address this research question, was conditioned by the research question itself, seeing as an analysis would be conducted on the Twitter discourse collected for the dataset, thus conditioning for a qualitative research approach. It was mentioned that when doing a discursive analysis, context is of importance, seeing as this will help the researcher arrive at reflective interpretations of the data that would be analyzed. Through *Chapter 2: A Global Backdrop* and *Chapter 3: Social Media Technology*, a thematical context was provided, in which we firstly in Chapter 2 took a closer look at the featured organization, Anti Corruption International, before placing it in a larger global context in which it operates, namely that of a globalizing world. The type of organization that Anti Corruption International can be defined as to be was then looked at, thus contributing to an understanding of which features are thought to characterize international NGO startups.

The term that would be analysed was then introduced by way of presenting it as the global problem that the organization is working towards eradicating, namely that of corruption. Moving on to Chapter 3, this left us to introduce some perspectives on reasons as to why organizations might use social media technologies.

With the aforementioned context set, it was thus time for the discursive analysis to be conducted. Assisting in this analysis, was the social media capturing tool, Chorus, which first collected the social media data through its programme, TweetCatcher, before running the collected, organizational dataset through its second programme, TweetVis. Provided with a visual analysis of some structural patterns that TweetVis could observe within the dataset through the option *Related Words*, the computable software listed some terms that were found to have a high local probability of co-occurring with the term ‘corruption’ in both *same interval* tweets and *same tweet*. What could be interpreted by the terms co-occurring with ‘corruption’ was that the organization not only used the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter as a way in which to broadcast information towards and encourage for social interaction with its targeted group – a young, international audience – it could also be interpreted that the organization used the term ‘corruption’ in order to call for action either by joining the organization, or joining its campaigns, etc. Furthermore, co-occurring terms could also make for an interpretation of the organization using the term ‘corruption’ as a way of re-producing itself as an entity, by constructing its identity as an anti-corruption organization. Arguably, these are just a few ways in which the organization uses the term ‘corruption’ on Twitter, and at large, a few ways in which the organization uses social media technologies.

Although this paper is a case study of a single organization, arguably, the importance of understanding the use of social media technologies on a micro level by an international NGO in its early stages of development cannot be overstated. As globalization has experienced a rapid expansion in the post World War II period, only recently have social media technologies allowed for global solidarity and unified approaches for activists around the world to tackle global problems. Therefore, to understand the practices of such social media technologies within organizations such as international NGO startups, even just a small segment of their use, serves to identify trends in usage, which further serves to provide a comprehension of how new technologies such as these can be leveraged to fulfill the global objectives of an international NGO startup, and at large, provides a deeper understanding of the purpose of using social media technologies within organizations.

Potentially, an analysis such as this could also create the basis for further studies to be carried out by the organization itself on this particular topic. On the grander scale of things, so to speak, significant interpretations could be used by the given organization in its plans for a better future – perhaps by affecting the organization’s current communications- and social media strategies, or its current strategies on how to reach its global objectives and mission as an international NGO startup, which ideally and ultimately would lead to the organization seeing its vision of a world free of corruption turn into a reality.





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