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## **Anti-Corruption Revolutions: When Civil Society Steps In**

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### List of Acronyms

AAP	Aam Aadmi Party
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CDSA	Center for Democracy and Social Action
CMS	Center for Media Studies
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CVC	Central Vigilance Commission
ERCAS	European Center for Anti-Corruption and State Building
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GCB	Global Corruption Barometer
IACM	India Against Corruption Movement
ICRG	International Country Risk Guide
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IPC	Indian Penal Code
NCPRI	National Campaign for People's Right to Information
PCA	Prevention of Corruption Act
RTI	Right to Information Act
RTIM	Right to Information Movement

UNDP United Nations Development Program

WB World Bank

WGI World Governance Indicators

## 1. Introduction

Citizens' uprisings have increasingly caught the attention of international media and have become a widespread topic on social media networks. Beyond showing the international scope and the rapid growth of this recent phenomenon, the coverage of citizens protesting on the streets seems to reflect a general dissatisfaction with the performance of governments across the globe. Regardless of particular contextual factors, movements such as the Arab Spring (Egypt, Tunisia), the One Million People March (Philippines), the March of Justice (Bulgaria), the *Jornadas de Junho* (Brazil), or India Against Corruption (India) are expressions of public discontent that go beyond indignation regarding illegal appropriation of public funds, reaching wider issues of social justice and demands for state reforms to guarantee political transparency.

Conventionally this phenomenon has been interpreted as a manifestation of citizens' exhaustion with the continuously particularistic allocation of public goods. This particularistic behavior has been proven to impair rule of law, disturb democratic institutions, and harm economic development, while catering to individual rent-seeking behaviors of the few (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi 2009; Inglehart & Welzel 2009; Norris 2012).

In trying to overcome this situation, governments and international donors have designed and invested in policies focused on shaping formal institutional frameworks, with interventions ranging from integral legislative adjustments to the creation of public agencies solely focused on fighting corruption, such as ombudsman offices. Whilst these measures purport a disposition from governments to be held accountable, the scope of top-down approaches has rendered limited results in the absence of an empowered civil society that progressively demands accountability from the state (Mungiu-Pippidi 2013b).

Given the early stage of these so-called revolutions, it may be difficult to identify tangible impacts. These mass mobilizations can, however, still be understood as processes of citizen empowerment and as channels through which collective action problems are being overcome. Therefore, closer investigation of these uprisings in combination with deeper exploration of access to public information mechanisms allows the formulation of nontraditional policy tools that help in the fight against corruption.

The primary motive of this working paper is to further explore the reach of access to information and strong civil societies in fighting corruption. In addition, it seeks to explore if and how collective action problems are overcome and determine whether revolutions are manifestations of this process. For this purpose, a mixed-method research design combining quantitative econometric modeling with qualitative process tracing information is applied. The quantitative model builds upon previous work that has found separate effects for both factors (access to information and civil society), introducing

an interaction term between the two of them. In addition, the quantitative analysis explores the effects of perceived levels of corruption in a given period in subsequently controlling corruption.

**Table 1. Anticorruption Revolutions**

Country	Year	Place	Who Rallies?	Demands
<b>Philippines</b>	2013	Manila: One Million People March; Lunta protest countrywide	No political affiliation, crosscutting support	Abolishing discretionary MP funds that ended in "pork barrel" projects
<b>India</b>	2011	Delhi: Hunger strike – Anna Hazare; protest countrywide	Middle class, students, India Against Corruption Movement	Introduction of an law: Jan Lokpal Bill
		Delhi (Ramlila Maidan): Protest against "black money"	Several NGOs and some political parties	Repatriation of black money
<b>Bulgaria</b>	2013	Sofia: March of Justice	Students, academics, crosscutting support	Protest against the so-called Bulgarian oligarchy in politics; resignation of PM
<b>Brazil</b>	2012 2013	Brasilia, Sao Pablo, Rio de Janeiro, countrywide reach	Initiated by students, supported by the College of Lawyers, the Brazilian Press Association, and National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (Catholic)	Decrease public transportation fares; increase investment in social services and limit overspending on sporting events; decrease taxes; end generalized corruption and embezzlement
<b>Egypt</b>	2011 2013	Cairo and Alexandria, countrywide reach	Protesters from a variety of socioeconomic and religious backgrounds	Increase employment opportunities for young people; end generalized nepotism and corruption; end repressive regime; improve economic performance; halt food price inflation

The qualitative model, in turn, inquires more deeply into the interaction of these two variables using India as case study. Here, access to information legislation has been in place for almost a decade and civil society has shown itself outstandingly active. This case is particularly interesting given that the mobilization against corruption initiated in 2011 managed to achieve the introduction of a federal

law creating an ombudsman. Altogether, this paper aims to shed light on the factors and processes shaping a sustained demand for accountability.

The document continues as follows. First, an overview of the state of the art is introduced. The second part of the paper presents the methodology applied. The third part introduces the research question, hypothesis, operationalization, estimation, and results of the quantitative study. The fourth section presents the qualitative frame of the methodology, with the introduction of India as a case study. Finally, the fifth section concludes with an overlap of both the quantitative and case study findings and the main lessons learned.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Modeling Corruption**

In order to understand both the potential and limitations of civil society in the fight against corruption, this paper explores the combination of two relevant theoretical models exploring the logic behind the underlying incentives for corrupt behavior and the main factors influencing citizens' decision-making processes, namely the Principal Agent Framework (Besely 2006) and Rational Choice Theory (Nye 1967; Rose-Ackerman 1999, Klitgaard 1998, Mungiu-Pippidi et al. 2011).

Both models suggest that corrupt behavior occurs given the existence of 1) asymmetries of information that do not allow citizens to punish bad rulers, 2) the lack of an empowered civil society able to make use of the available information, and 3) the lack of legal or normative constraints that effectively prevent individuals from acting unlawfully. If citizens have no information about the wrongdoings of those governing them, they cannot punish them by either dismissal or imprisonment, i.e., the higher the opacity, the lower the cost of being corrupt. Likewise, if society has access to information to monitor public officials but is not interested in doing so or does not know how to use such information, the cost of being corrupt remains low.

### **2.2 Social Accountability**

The Social Accountability Framework (World Bank 2006: 5; Malena & McNeil 2010) explains how an active and empowered civil society is an essential condition for the successful implementation of policy tools aiming at controlling corruption. Social accountability is thus a two-sided concept of supply and demand. The supply side consists of the mechanisms needed to hold government officials to account, while the demand side entails a dynamic civil society that is socially and politically active. Greater policy efforts have been made so far on the supply side of this balance. For the purposes of this paper, however, an emphasis is placed on the demand side of accountability, in order to understand how normative constraints are developed in a way that effectively modifies the incentive structure for corruption.

## **2.3 Collective Action**

Broadly, an active and empowered civil society is recognized as an important condition for the successful implementation of different policy tools in controlling corruption. Nonetheless, in societies where particularism is a generalized behavior, an empowered and informed civil society rarely occurs if the costs of articulating its demands are higher than the benefits it will accrue, even when mechanisms of the supply side of social accountability are in place (Mungiu-Pippidi 2013c). In this case, individuals in a society refrain from organizing; this is the so-called collective action problem (Ostrom 1998). Ultimately, the challenge is in finding ways of overcoming collective action problems and in developing a high degree of trust and interaction among different sectors of society in order to transform norms and rules into ones allowing joint pursuit of collective interests (Sen 2011, Fukuyama 2012).

## **3. Research Model – Methodology**

Building on the theoretical framework outlined above, a mixed method design is applied with the aim of understanding *how corruption levels are affected by the combination of accessibility of information and participatory engagement within civil society*. Furthermore, the paper aims to identify the triggering factors that lead civil society into mobilization against corruption.

The availability of channels of accessing information should have a positive effect on control of corruption, provided that civil society is engaged and able to successfully participate as an actor. That is to say, access to information can only lower corruption levels if civil society is able to overcome collective action problems, increasing the potential for constant disclosure of information, uncovering of potential wrongdoings, and sustained pressure on the government. Despite the fact that the literature has acknowledged the importance of civil society in the fight against corruption (the demand side of social accountability), the overall effect on corruption and the process through which that effect is achieved remain understudied, and thus constitute the theoretical void that this research intends to fill.

### **3.1 Mixed Method Research Design –Two-Dimensional Approach**

The methodology of the research is composed of a two dimensional approach that combines quantitative and qualitative methods. While the former presents a sound basis for empirically testing the assertion of the main hypothesis, the latter provides explanatory evidence and an interpretive framework to explore potential causal linkages between the main variables.

The qualitative component of the research follows a process tracing-like design that explores the process leading toward a confluence of both factors. In turn, it questions whether or not such a process is a materialization of a collective action problem being overcome and which associative factors can be identified in revolutions through a case study.



The usage of both techniques aims at maximizing the knowledge yield of the research (McCall & Bobko 1990). The qualitative part of the research will be composed of semi-structured interviews with the most relevant stakeholders (Lobe 2008) with the purpose of, as Patton (1990: 132) puts it, “[putting] flesh on the bones of quantitative results, and bringing results to life through in-depth case elaboration.”

#### 4. First Dimension: Quantitative Approach

##### 4.1 Theoretical Model

The *main hypothesis* tested by this research and following the theoretical models mentioned previously is as follows:

H1a: The availability of channels of accessing information has a positive effect on control of corruption, provided that civil society successfully participates as an active actor.

H1b: Civil society activism has a positive effect on control of corruption, provided that there is an availability of channels for accessing information.

In other words, an enlightened citizenry will not be able to sustain pressure if they have no information to base their actions on, and, conversely, high availability of information will not matter if there is not an active civil society to make use of it.

The innovation lies in the fact that the econometric model is designed to prove the hypothesis through the introduction of an interaction between both terms, in addition to their inclusion as separate independent variables, as can be seen in the following equation:

$$corruption = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Info. + \beta_2 civ. soc + \beta_3 info.* civ. soc + \sum_{i=1}^n \beta_i x_i + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

If there were no interactions included, the coefficient for information would be interpreted as the unique effect of information on corruption, but the interaction term means that the effect of the strength of civil society varies for different values of access to information, and vice versa.

##### 4.1.1 Corruption Perception Modeling

Given the complexity of a phenomenon such as corruption, victimization and perception surveys are commonly used as a proxy for the levels of actual corruption. Several critiques notwithstanding,<sup>1</sup> perception indices have been progressively used to determine the effectiveness of several policy tools in decreasing corruption. This nonetheless has the potential of entailing biases, since perception does not necessarily reflect the true state of the world at a determined point in time.

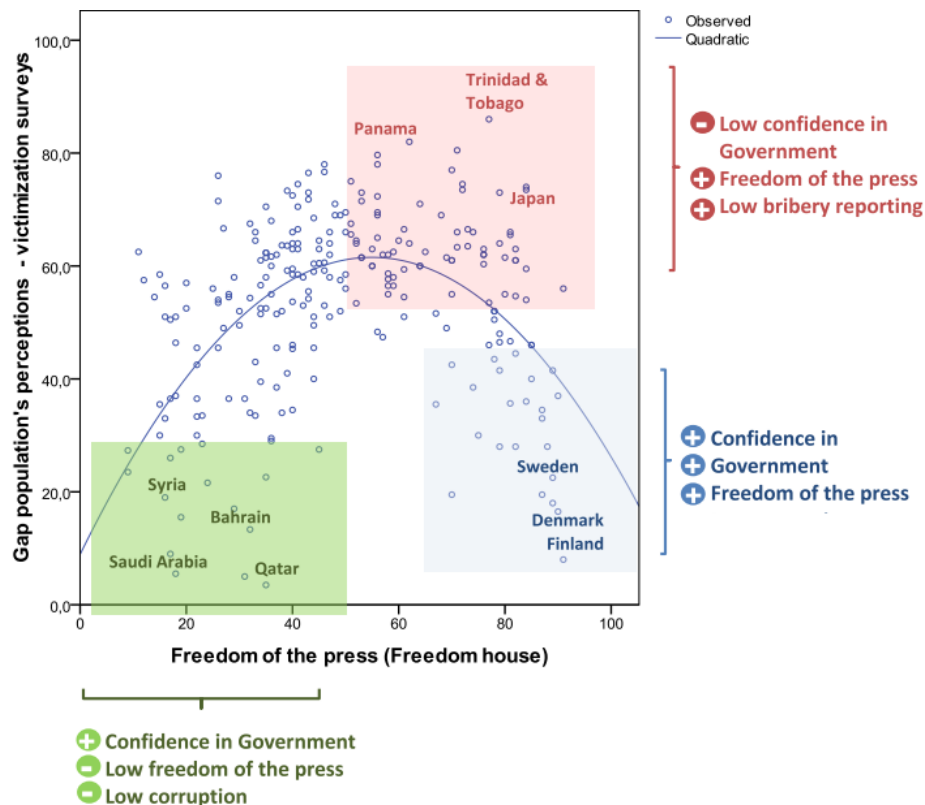
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<sup>1</sup> The most common criticism is based on the measurement errors and subjectivity of the answers (Choo & Martínez 2012: 11). For instance, people that have not had any direct experience with corruption will give attitudinal answers based on individual factors. In addition, perceptions of corruption are highly influenced by the availability of information, which is completely different in urban and rural contexts (Donchev 2007: 4).

Perceptions also matter because they affect the choices made by individuals. According to Heidenheimer, “citizens’ perceptions about corruption are likely to affect how they behave themselves – whether they will offer bribes or will abide by the requirements of the law” (2006: 33).

In an attempt to estimate the extent of the gap between perception and victimization under different contexts, Rocca (2011) used a quadratic prediction of the relationship between corruption and freedom of the press.

**Graph 1. Gap between Perception and Victimization of Corruption**



Source: Rocca 2011

The author proves that in countries with full freedom of the press and in countries under highly restrictive regimes, the gap between perception and victimization numbers is lower. In other words, perception seems to reflect reality accurately, regardless of contextual differences between these two scenarios. On the other hand, countries that are undergoing transition toward a freer press tend to have a higher gap between perceptions and actual victimization, as can be seen in graph 1.<sup>2</sup> Rocca (2011) interprets this as a result of a higher availability of information regarding particularly big corruption scandals that can result in individuals perceiving a more generalized problem than actually exists. Following this logic, increases in perception do not necessarily reflect a worsening of the problem in a society, but actually show that citizens are being made aware of the current status

<sup>2</sup> “In countries suffering from a challenged freedom of the press, perceptions are mainly the consequence of experience, whereas in accountable democracies, corruption perceptions are mostly the fact of media reporting” (Rocca 2011: 23).

quo through newly available information. This, in turn, might lead to protests and mobilization from individuals that realize for the first time how widespread the problem is.

An additional subhypothesis of this research project is thus:

*H2: An increase in perception of corruption in a period caused by an increase in the available information can have a reductive effect on corruption levels in subsequent periods.*

The decrease in corruption can be due either to politicians adapting their behavior to the demands of their constituencies or to the fact that acting in corrupt ways has become more costly in electoral terms. In any case, corruption perception increases are not necessarily a sign of poor governance.

In order to assess the effects of perception on actual corruption levels, two additional regressions are included. This, on the one hand, serves as a robustness test for equation (1) and, on the other hand, allows for testing whether or not perception follows a different dynamic than actual corruption level.

$$corrup_t = \beta_{t0} + \beta_{t1}Info.t + \beta_{2t}civ.soc_t + \beta_{3t}percept_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^n \beta_{it}x_{it} + \varepsilon_t \quad (2)$$

$$corrup_t = \beta_{t0} + \beta_{t1}Info.t + \beta_{2t}civ.soc_t + \beta_{3t}\Delta percept_t + \sum_{i=1}^n \beta_{it}x_{it} + \varepsilon_t \quad (3)$$

Equations (2) and (3) explore whether or not increases in perception of corruption imply higher levels of actual corruption levels. If perception has the expected effect on corruption, then it may be the case that society actively oversees corrupt behaviors, thus altering the incentive structure for corruption, ultimately leading to a decrease of the problem in subsequent periods.<sup>3</sup>

## 4.2 Operationalization

### 4.2.1 Data

This research is based on a combination of data sets which include corruption related variables that have yielded results in previous research. With countries as the main unit of analysis, it was possible to compile cross sectional<sup>4</sup> information for over 193 countries<sup>5</sup> – the largest sample size

<sup>3</sup> The underlying assumption here is that the decreasing effect will only be sustained as long as information continues to be provided and pressure is maintained.

<sup>4</sup> Ideally, the main hypothesis should be explored using a panel data set, with the aim of testing the robustness of the results on a dynamic scenario.

<sup>5</sup> The number of countries included in each of the regressions depends on the availability of data for each variable included in the econometric model. Robustness test for outliers were also performed.

available – for the year 2010. Additionally, in order to test the effects of perception on corruption levels, lagged variables<sup>6</sup> and change variables were included.

The data set contains variables from several sources, including ICRG risk of corruption indicator, World Bank's control of corruption indicator, country averages for the Global corruption barometer of TI on perception levels, the ANTICORRP<sup>7</sup> data set, and the fifth wave of the World Value survey. ICT indicators on internet access and usage constructed by the World Bank were also included.

#### **4.2.2. Dependent Variable: Corruption**

In order to measure corruption, this study uses predominantly the WGI control of corruption indicator from the World Bank. Nonetheless, robustness checks were carried out through the ICRG risk of corruption indicator. Corruption perception levels, on the other hand, are based on the Global Corruption Barometer of Transparency International, a public opinion survey that offers views of the general public on corruption and its impact on their lives.

#### **4.2.3. Main Independent Variables**

Taking into account the hypothesis proposed previously, this research takes as its main independent variables the measurements of access to information and participatory engagement within civil society found in the literature.

The operationalization of these variables is done with indices for ICT usage, diversification of means of access to information, years since FOIA was implemented, and freedom of the press.

The diversification of means indicator is calculated through the principal component methodology.<sup>8</sup>

The second main independent variable – participatory engagement within civil society – is measured by the number of civil society organizations as provided by Quality of Government Institute. Given that the aim of the research is not only to determine the effects of the independent variables on their own but also to identify their joint effect, an interaction between the mentioned indicators is included.

#### **4.2.4. Controls**

The following control variables are included: a disaggregate HDI, years since the implementation of Freedom of Information Act, Gini coefficient, and political stability.

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<sup>6</sup> Corruption perception indicators for different institutions, measured by Transparency International.

<sup>7</sup> The ANTICORRP data set includes a compilation of variables from the World Bank, UNDP, Human Rights Watch, Freedom House, and QoG, among others. All the variables have been theoretically associated with corruption and/or state building.

<sup>8</sup> For this purpose, questions regarding the type of media by which respondents accessed the news were used. The percentage of people responding affirmatively to each of the channels – TV, newspaper, radio, and internet – was calculated, and the overall measurement was combined through principal components. Principal component analysis is a statistical procedure that uses orthogonal transformation to convert a set of observations of possibly correlated variables into a set of values of linearly uncorrelated variables called principal components that can be weighted into a single index.

A control for development (disaggregate HDI) is included in order to capture all possible variation across countries that may have an effect in the stages of corruption (Mungiu-Pippidi 2013b).

Years since FOIA passage is included in the regression to account for the fact that despite efforts to increase flows of open information to the public in particular countries, some governments still have low levels of diversification or internet access (Mungiu-Pippidi 2013b). This also applies for the indicator of freedom of the press.

The Gini coefficient is also introduced as a measurement of inequality, whereby societies with higher levels of inequality have less incentive to disclose information (Diamond 1999). Finally, the Political Stability indicator from WGI is incorporated, reflecting perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism (Treisman 2000).

### **4.3 Estimations and Main Findings**

The first estimation of equation (1), using all the mentioned controls and including number of civil society organization as a proxy for civil society, as well as percentage of internet usage per 100,000 inhabitants (ICT) and the PCA index for diversification as proxy for access to information, is presented in Table 2. It is important to clarify that columns (3) and (4) were carried out as a robustness measurement of the results found in columns (1) and (2). The overall findings hold for these two additional models, nonetheless caution is recommended in their interpretation, since they were run on a smaller sample of countries.

Additional robustness measurements were also run for this regression, including ICRG as the dependent variable, years since FOIA passage instead of Freedom of the Press, and the percentage of rural population in a determined country instead of the Gini coefficient. Finally, Hausman tests and variance inflation ratio were applied to control for endogeneity and multicollinearity correspondingly, none of which turned out to be positive.

**Table 2. Estimation of Interaction Effect on WGI**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	WGI	WGI	WGI	WGI
HDI	-0.667 (0.414)	-0.616 (0.409)	2.112*** (0.669)	2.134*** (0.627)
GINI	0.009* (0.005)	0.001* (0.005)	0.014 (0.008)	0.017* (0.009)
Freedom of the Press	0.011*** (0.002)	0.011*** (0.002)	0.011** (0.004)	0.010** (0.004)
Political Stability	0.282*** (0.055)	0.294*** (0.057)	0.412** (0.158)	0.445*** (0.158)
CSO per population	0.001* (0.006)	0.039* (0.021)	0.207** (0.089)	0.209*** (0.066)
ICT	0.019*** (0.003)	0.08*** (0.004)		
Interaction CSO*ICT		<b>0.001**</b> <b>(0.001)</b>		
Diversification Index			-0.00759 (0.064)	-0.085 (0.069)
Interaction Diver.*CSO				<b>0.060**</b> <b>(0.024)</b>
Constant	-0.127 (0.303)	-0.114 (0.294)	-1.614** (0.639)	-1.76*** (0.575)
Observations	125	125	35	35
R-squared	0.735	0.739	0.734	0.752

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

As can be seen in Table 2, the significance obtained for the control variables is similar to the one predicted in the theory. Freedom of the press and political stability have a positive, statistically significant effect on control of corruption across all four models. In comparison, HDI shows no significance using a larger sample and strong significance on the smaller sample.

In terms of the independent variables, as expected, citizens' engagement and ICT have a significant and positive effect on control of corruption on their own (models 1 and 3). This supports previous research done by Mungiu-Pippidi (2013c) among other authors, who claims that strengthening civil society has potential in the fight against corruption, one indifferent to the existence of a strong social accountability supply side (such as FOIA, which shows no significance in this research and weak significance for the case of CSO). In the case of the models 3 and 4, the diversification index presents no significance in either of the models. The only effect that diversification has on control of corruption is through a strong civil society. Thus, having a high supply of different means of access to information should make no difference in the absence of a strong civil society.

The most relevant finding of the first four econometric models is that the interaction always seems to be statistically significant and positive. These first results show evidence to support the hypothesis that **the effect of the strength of civil society varies for different values of information access, and vice versa**. The overall effect of civil society on corruption depends on whether or not there is access to information. In the case of column 2, an increase in one unit of civil society organization per 100,000 inhabitants returns an increase of 0.04 units in control of corruption when Internet usage rates are high. An increase in one unit in Internet usage in turn, will cause an increase of 0.081 in control of corruption, provided that the number of civil society organizations is also high.<sup>9</sup> The overall effect of model 4 is also interesting because the interaction is significant and positive, while the diversification index remains insignificant.

In order to test if perception has an effect on actual corruption levels, two additional exercises were performed. First, the corruption perception levels per institution for 2009 were added. With these lagged variables, the changes in perception indicators for 2010 were calculated and both were included as independent variables to test whether or not they were determinants of control of corruption on 2010 as explained in equations (2) and (3). Both models were tested for both endogeneity and multicollinearity.

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<sup>9</sup> There are some limitations to the interpretation of interactions between two continuous variables. Mathematically, an interaction term between two continuous variables means that the slope of one continuous variable on the response variable changes as the values on a second continuous change. As Jaccard, Turrisi, & Wan (1990) and Aiken & West (1991) note, models with interaction effects should also include the main effects of the variables that were used to compute the interaction terms, even if these main effects are not significant. The interpretations made in this research have aimed at understanding the logic behind these coefficients. The increases stated in the paragraph above thus correspond not only to high levels of the opposite variable, but to any level superior to zero (following changes in the zero point theory).

**Table 3. Estimation of Effects of Perception on Corruption**

	(1)	(2)
	WGI	WGI
HDI	-0.170 (0.777)	-0.104 (0.584)
Political Stability	0.200*** (0.061)	0.168** (0.073)
ICT	0.0146*** (0.004)	0.0118*** (0.004)
Gini	-0.00465 (0.004)	-0.00825* (0.004)
Freedom of the Press	0.0149*** (0.004)	0.0213*** (0.004)
CSO	0.138*** (0.043)	0.0495* (0.039)
Interaction CSO*FE	0.00381*** (0.001)	0.00213** (0.001)
<b>Change in GCB</b>	<b>0.562**</b> <b>(0.215)</b>	
<b>GCB t-1</b>		<b>-1.301***</b> <b>(0.317)</b>
Constant	0.353 (0.622)	1.692*** (0.559)
Observations	70	64
R-squared	0.868	0.874

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1



As can be seen in Table 3, the effects of the interaction as well as of information and civil society organizations remain, and the R-square reaches a maximum of 87 percent. *The results under this version of the model are not only robust for all other applications, but also show that perception indicators have actual effects on corruption levels.* The model 2 shows that a higher perception of corruption on t-1 (2009) is negatively correlated with the control of corruption on t (2010). There are several limitations to the interpretation of these results, since they are being estimated with a cross-sectional dataset. The results of model 2 in Table 6 seem to imply that countries with a high perception of corruption in 2009 tend to have low control of corruption in 2010. Most predominantly, once the change in perception is introduced in the regression as it was in 1, a positive correlation between this variable and the control in corruption is found. This means that *increases in corruption perception have a positive effect on control of corruption for the subsequent period. In other words, an increase in perception of corruption in a period can have a reductive effect on corruption levels in subsequent periods.* These results confirm the first hypotheses of this research. First, they prove that it is only through the simultaneous presence of information access and an engaged civil society that there can be a decrease in corruption. On the other hand, *it shows that increases in the freedom of the press without a strong civil society can cause an initial increase in corruption perception levels that can be decreased through the empowerment of civil society.* Public opinion changes over time, and scandals by definition increase public awareness of corruption issues, at least for a short time increasing public outrage at violations and corrupt behaviors. What is especially important is that public awareness and concern can be increased (Gardiner 2007:37).

### **4.3. Implications**

The results of the econometric exercise showed evidence that normative constraints, access to information, and their joint effect on corruption are robust in all variants of the model. Through the application of diverse formulations of the main hypothesis, it was possible to show that the overall effect of empowering civil society is dependent upon the existence and amount of channels available for accessing information. Consequently, the effects of increases in availability of information on corruption depend on the level of engagement of civil society. In addition, it was possible to show that perception not only follows a different dynamic than actual corruption indicators, but also that increases in corruption perception levels are not necessarily a sign of poor governance. Given that a positive change in corruption perception is associated with a higher level of control of corruption in a subsequent period, it is possible to assume that the increase in perception is a result of the availability of information and awareness raising. This result suggests that an increase in perception reflects an increase in awareness that in turn changes the incentive structure for corruption and has subsequent positive effects on control of corruption.

#### **4.4. Limitations**

It is important to point out that although these results seem promising, the models face some limitations and thus should be tested further. Ideally, all the regressions mentioned above should be assessed through a panel data set, testing whether or not the estimations and their significance hold in a dynamic setting. Furthermore, given that the final models included lagged and change variables, it would be preferable to check whether or not the conclusions hold over several periods of time. A suggestion would be to combine the effects of perception on corruption levels with Rocca's (2011) theory. By sorting countries by their level of governance freedom, it would be possible to check if there are differences in the coefficients between the three groups of countries. Given the results of this paper, it seems more plausible that the results would depend on the level of press freedom in a given country. We recommend exploring these relations further. Finally, another limitation of the econometric model is the possibility of endogeneity due to correlation with unobservable factors. The lack of a suitable instrument within the available data was the main reason why such an exercise was not performed in this research.

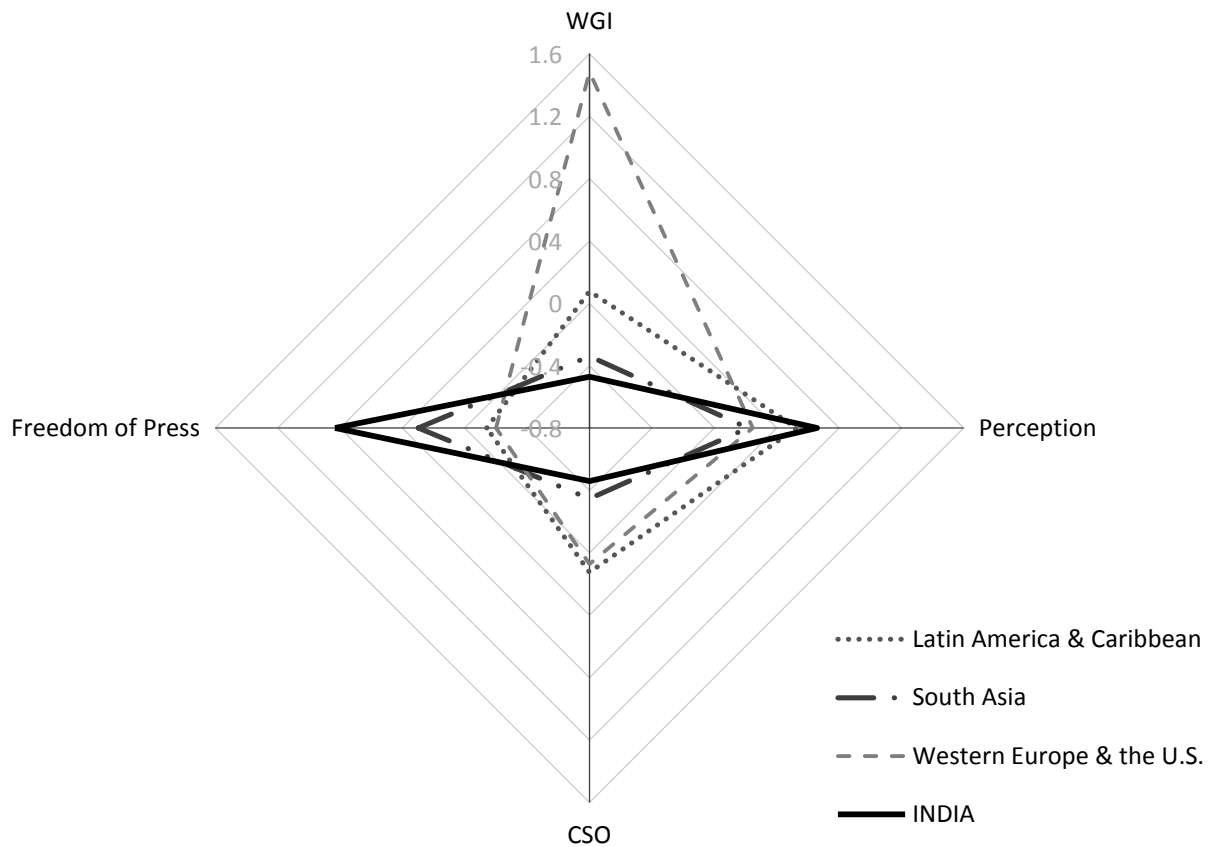
#### **5. Second Dimension: Qualitative Approach**

The qualitative dimension of this research will focus on the analysis of the process undergone in India. The case is relevant since mechanisms aimed at reducing informational asymmetries have been in place for almost a decade, yet corruption is still present. This country is also well known for having a fairly independent media and for having major investments in ICT development. Graph 2 presents the Indian score in the context of scores for three world regions for the four most relevant indices of this research.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The values were normalized (and averaged for the regions) in order to compare the status of India to the rest of the world.

**Graph 2. Main Dimensions – India vs. Global Regions**



India presents a high freedom of the press score and a low index of civil society organizations per 100.000 inhabitants. India’s perception of corruption is also quite high, which seems to support the findings of this paper that countries transitioning toward greater freedom of the press with low civil society engagement will tend to have high corruption perception (but not necessarily high corruption). It is also interesting to note that countries with high engagement of civil society tend to have higher control of corruption rankings.

The India Against Corruption Movement (IACM) initiated in 2011, on the other hand, shows a process of massive citizen mobilization with the sole purpose of fighting corruption through strengthening the powers and scope of an ombudsman, or “Lokpal.” These mobilizations can be seen as a process of civil society empowerment through the usage of tools that allow access to public information, which ultimately leads to a collective oversight function. The case is further significant since the IACM gained sufficient support to 1) place the issue of corruption at the center of the political agenda, 2) generate new legislation, and 3) create a political party with the primary goal of fighting corruption.

In order to identify the main factors involved in the emergence, articulation, potential impacts,

and challenges of the anticorruption movement in India, 15 semi-structured interviews were carried out with members of civil society organizations, independent journalists, members, volunteers, and supporters of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), and international cooperation agencies.

## **5.1 India: An Overview**

The Republic of India is 3.1 million sq. km and is inhabited by 1.3 billion people (UN 2012). Within its territory, India is highly diverse in its languages (Hindi, English, and more than 20 other official languages), cultures, and religions (Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, and Buddhism, among others). Such diversity is also reflected in its federal political system as power is shared between the central government, 28 states, and seven union territories. Nevertheless, Indian politics are fraught with communal, caste, and regional tensions. A constitutional republic since 1950, it is a representative democracy governed under a parliamentary system. The party configuration has traditionally included six recognized national parties and more than 20 state parties (Election Commission of India 2014).

Following a decades-long, state-led industrialization and import substituting strategy, in 1985 India began a process of economic liberalization. After a short crisis during the early 1990s, it emerged as a vibrant and dynamic market economy. Nevertheless, some sectors are considered closed to private enterprise and international investment. Economic progress has meant the development of a prosperous urban middle class and a large, skilled workforce. However, some factors constraining economic growth are inadequate infrastructure, excessive bureaucracy, labor market rigidities, and regulatory and foreign investment controls (BIT 2014).

Likewise, poverty and inequality prevail as the major socioeconomic barriers. India has the largest absolute number of poor worldwide (68.7 percent of its population, according to the 2010 Census), and, with an HDI score of 0.554 in 2013, India ranks 136th out of 186 countries worldwide in terms of human development (UNDP Human Development Report 2013).

Over 200,000 NGOs are registered, dealing with issues including environmental problems, human rights abuses and gender inequality, among others (Lathaa & Prabhakar 2011: 1150). Huge nationwide demonstrations have shown the mobilization potential of civil society groups, although unions and employer associations remain relatively fragmented and are often affiliated with political parties (BIT 2013).

## **5.2 Why and How India Is Against Corruption**

### **5.2.1 The Scope of Corruption**

India ranked 94th out of 176 countries in Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index. High levels of corruption affect every citizen in India, from bribes that must

be paid in order to access public services (i.e., identity cards, passports, building permits) to an undermined rule of law and fraudulent election processes. According to Goswami and Bandyopadhyay, corruption practices are widespread in India to the extent that it “has taken the shape of a fundamental problem affecting the social fabric as well as the political framework of Indian society” (2011: 8). Thus, it is not surprising that about 40 percent of Indians reported firsthand experience of paying bribes or using a contact to get a job done in public office (India Corruption Study 2008). Recently, Indians were outraged after a series of scams and other scandals of large-scale government corruption became public.

Corruption is present even in rural areas, as villagers are forced to pay bribes for accessing social programs. According to the Center for Media Studies, there is not much difference in the extent of corruption that households below the poverty line experience in urban and rural areas (India Corruption Study 2008).

### **5.2.2 Indian Anticorruption Legislation and Institutions**

Legislation to prevent misconduct in the public sector has existed in India since colonial times. Moreover, various governments formed since independence attempted to eradicate corruption. In 1947 the Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA) was introduced as India's first Anti-corruption Law. More recent efforts include the 1988 enactment of the Benami Transactions Prevention Act, prohibiting the purchase of property in name of another person, and the 2002 Prevention of Money Laundering Act. This legal framework includes three main authorities that investigate and prosecute corruption cases: the state Anticorruption Bureau (1961), the Central Bureau of Investigation (1963), and the Central Vigilance Commission (1964). Finally, the Directorate of Enforcement and the Financial Intelligence Unit (2004) was established to investigate cases related to money laundering by public servants.

### **5.2.3 India Against Corruption Movement (IACM)**

The movement was launched in 2010 by a group of social activists led by Kisan Babulal Hazare (better known as Anna or Anna Hazare), an octogenarian follower of Gandhian principles. It was formed after several corruption-related scams revealed that politicians and bureaucrats had methods to hide information and block requests made through the Right to Information Act (RTI). The IACM decided to take up the cause of fighting for stronger anticorruption laws and enforcement.

By the end of October 2010 members of the IACM demanded the formation of a joint committee comprised of representatives of the government and civil society to draft a rigorous anticorruption initiative, the Jan Lokpal Bill, which entails penal actions and gives more independence to the Lokpal and Lokayuktas (anti-corruption ombudsman and ombudsman organization in the Indian states) (Singh 2014: 19). The movement gained strength after

Hazare began an indefinite fast on April 5, 2011, after the Indian government rejected the Jan Lokpal initiative. At this point, an important number of social activists and spiritual leaders declared their support for the movement, which attracted attention in social and mass media and millions of supporters inside and outside of India, especially after Hazare was arrested. Due to the pressure of the movement, the government tabled the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill in December 2012, approving it one year later.

In November 2012, a large group of members of the IACM created a political party, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), focused on fighting corruption in Indian politics. This group, led by Arvind Kejriwal, managed to achieve the second-largest majority in the Delhi Assembly, winning 28 out of the 70 seats in the 2013 elections.

The IACM is considered to be a “milestone in the constitutional history of India, forcing the government to accept civil society’s demand to have a say in drafting the stringent anticorruption law” (Goswami & Bandyopadhyay 2011:1). Furthermore, the movement can be seen as part of a continuous record of Indian civil society activism demanding transparency and accountability from the government. It has built upon the work and achievements of the RTI movement, since many of its main leaders also participated in the latter and consequently brought their experience to the IACM. This is in line with Della Porta’s argument that a social movement’s resources increase over time and therefore become institutionalized as future activists inherit structures and models from their predecessors (2006: 248).

### **5.3 Insights from the Field**

The main insights derived from the interviews are presented in four sections. First, the specific context in which the movement emerged is analyzed in order to identify its main triggering factors. The second section presents elements contributing to the evolution and intensification of the IACM. In this section, the role of the mechanisms contributing to informational asymmetry reduction between government and citizens is explored, including some of the specific features and strategies used by the IACM. Thirdly, the main outputs of the movement identified by the interviewees are presented. The fourth and final section describes the main challenges of the movement.

#### **5.3.1 The Right Timing: Mobilizing Public Opinion against Corruption**

The fieldwork revealed that the movement did not result in the wake of a particular event, but rather emerged out of individual and societal outrage. The most prominent issues influencing this outrage were 1) corruption-related scams, 2) high inflation rates, and 3) the inability of the government to translate economic growth brought by economic liberalization into a better quality of life for its citizens.

### **a) Scams**

There was agreement among interviewees that the unveiling of large-scale corruption scandals was directly related to the emergence of the IACM. News coverage on scams involving high level government officials began to proliferate in 2010. The 2G spectrum scam (2010), for instance, involved politicians undercharging telecommunication companies for frequency allocations with an estimated loss of about \$29-32 billion for the state (Goswami & Bandyopadhyay 2011; BTI 2014: 25). The Commonwealth Games 2010 scam involved around \$8 billion, and the Organizing Committee was proven to be responsible for the fiasco (Goswami & Bandyopadhyay 2011: 8). Regarding this specific case, Jeelani reports that "India's middle classes, who already saw the event as a tremendous waste of money, were further enraged when the Games delivered nothing but international embarrassment and a multi-million rupee scam" (2011).

### **b) High Inflation**

The fieldwork revealed that the outrage of Indians and their discontent with the government was exacerbated by the high inflation experienced between 2010 and 2011. When interviewed, Professor Sanjay Kumar noted that the IACM managed to associate the huge price rise with corrupt practices. Indeed, prices of primary articles rose 17.7 percent in this period and another 9.8 percent between 2011 and 2012. Even as late as November 2013, inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index was as high as 11.2 percent (Mishra 2014). Thus, the joint presence of the scams and high prices allowed the movement to relate inflation to corruption, thereby expanding the support base of the movement.

### **c) Frustration after Liberation**

The economic reforms of the 1990s meant the liberalization of the Indian economy and marked the emergence of the modern middle class. Interviewees pointed to the high expectations that opening up the economy would recreate India as a world power. The exaggeration of or euphoria over the results brought by liberalization contrasted starkly with the reality faced by most of the population. Additionally, a globalized economy triggered "consumerist behavior" that caused disappointment when people realized they were unable to participate due to limited financial means. Professor Chandoke further considers that these unmet expectations also generated "frustration towards democracy" (2014).

Twenty-five years later, people are blaming liberalization for causing crony capitalism in India. Relating the increasing inequality and the poor performance of the Indian economy with corruption allowed the AICM to capture people's frustration and to attract middle class supporters.

### **5.3.2 Factors Contributing to the Escalation of the Movement**

Once the movement was created, what factors made it evolve and grow in size, scope, and relevance? Using the information obtained during fieldwork, we have distilled the following seven points as significant in this process.

#### **a) Right to Information Act (RTI)**

The RTI was a factor indirectly contributing to the escalation of the IACM, because it both made citizens powerful when demanding public information and contributed to the emergence of a new breed of journalists and activists closely reporting on corruption cases.

First of all, it is important to consider that by the time the IACM came out, several campaigns promoting and encouraging citizens to extensively make use of the RTI had been in place. They intended to demonstrate how the information received could be used to call government representatives to the bench, thereby uncovering and exposing corruption cases. Such campaigns gained attention when they began to effectively detect and denounce cases of corruption-related offenses. Within the field findings, it was possible to identify that the existence and use of the RTI contributed to raise awareness on corruption and therefore an indirect support to the movement. Professor Chandoke sharply observed that the IACM portrayed the use of the RTI as an empowerment tool for the common man by referring to it as “an experiment of direct democracy” (2014, March 4).

On the other hand, it was identified that the movement also benefited from the emergence of a “new generation” of independent journalists and analysts. They used the RTI as a tool to get the information to nurture their stories and report corruption-related evidence. Through their reporting activities, this “new breed” of journalists helped the IACM to gain supporters by making evident that 1) politicians were abusing its discretionary power to steal huge amounts of public money, 2) they (corrupt officials) could be detected if public information was scrutinized, and 3) it was in the interest of people to join the fight against corruption, since the stolen money was diverted from public services and social programs.

It is important to note that this kind of new journalism entailed a diversification of sources of information available to the public. This in turn contributed to counter to some extent the power of corporate interest in influencing the content of the information released by the mainstream media. In this sense, the RTI is also contributing to the transformation of the traditional hierarchy among journalists given that anyone is able to express his or her opinion and to question corrupt public officers. Members of the International Cooperation working in Delhi further considered that the RTI contributed to the generation of public debate and press investigation on corruption issues. In a different vein, the political use of the RTI implies that it is also used by antagonistic political parties to uncover and discredit opponents.

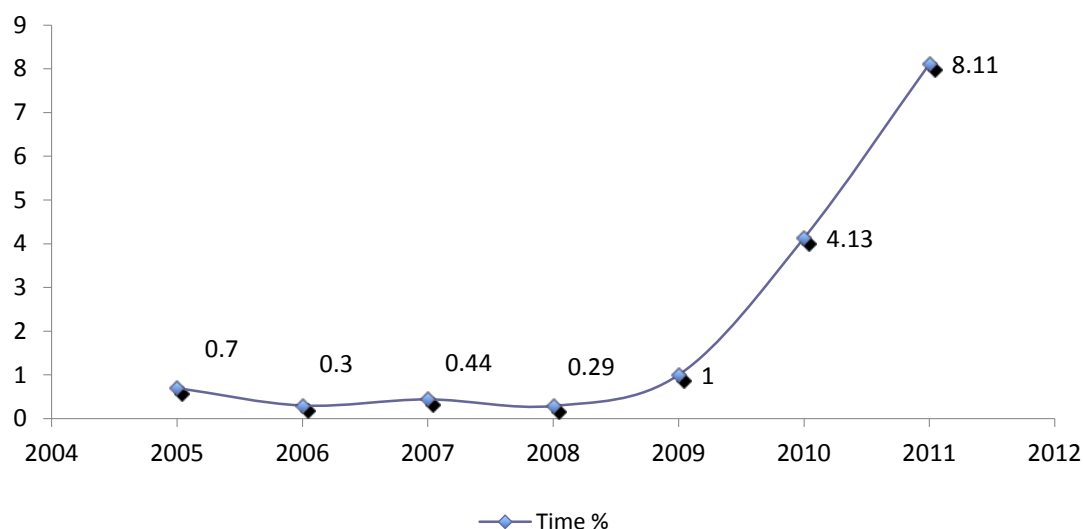


Finally, during fieldwork limitations of the scope of the RTI and areas with room for improvements were identified. One of the main concerns is that the effectiveness of the RTI is impaired by a generalized lack of knowledge on how to use the tools provided by the act. For example, it was mentioned that, so far, the RTI is a tool mainly used by journalists and organizations from the third sector, and not by common citizens who feel threaten by the complexity of the process and fear reprisals. An additional concern is that the RTI usage has been predominantly located in urban areas, and that it has not yet been used for research purposes. This last remark was interpreted as a lack of appropriation from the academy regarding transparency topics.

**b) Mainstream Media**

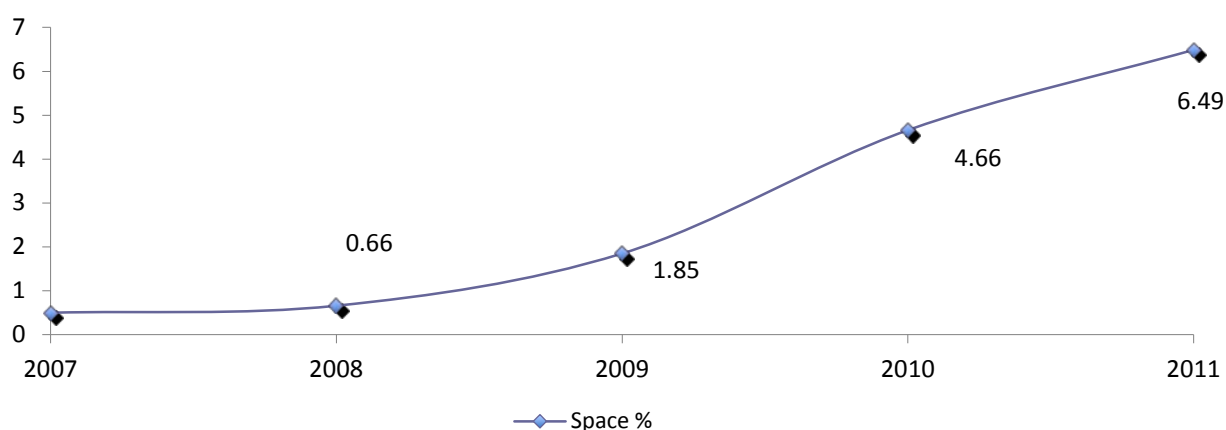
Mainstream media has played a central role in the fight against corruption in India. Before the escalation of the movement, the media was already covering and reporting on big scams giving visibility to corruption. According to the 2011 CMS January report, there is a steep increase in corruption coverage in both television news channels and front pages of news dailies after 2008.

**Graph 3. Trend in Corruption Coverage in Television News Channels 2005-2011**



The scams were mainly associated with cases involving government, bureaucrats and politicians. However, since 2011 an increase in cases involving corporate/private sector corruption has been identified. It is particularly interesting that some of the actors interviewed considered that the sensationalist way in which the big scams were reported, gave the impression of portraying the offenders as heroes. Furthermore, they implied that the detailed way of reporting was almost a display of “new strategies” in how to be corrupt.

**Graph 4. Trend in Corruption Coverage in Front Pages of news dailies 2008-2011**



As seen in the graphs, the coverage of corruption-related news increased significantly in 2011. This phenomenon is attributed greatly to the coverage on Hazare's hunger strikes. In fact, mainstream media decided to showcase detailed aspects of Hazare's life covering minute-by-minute the trajectory of the events, despite the fact that it happened in parallel to the Cricket World Cup and Hindi movies. What is more, some newspaper included banners appealing to people to join the protest. A minor difference is found, however, in the way of reporting between English and vernacular media. The first one, despite positively supporting the movement, reported through critical lenses. The second one, in contrast, was mainly covering live events with more superficial analysis (Goswami & Bandyopadhyay 2011: 18).

It is difficult to determine the reasons and interest of the sudden media support for the anti-corruption movement. Social activist Aruna Roy considers that the media has never been keen in reporting issues that affect minorities and tribal mobilizations. She further associates this apathy from the media to their target-group to whom the "loss of democratic rights for a huge chunk of people" is not a concern.

One possible reason for the change of behavior in the media is precisely the widespread support that the middle class had for the movement (Punwani: 2011).

The fasting events lead by Hazare caught the attention and support of the middle class and therefore alerted the media of the great interest of their larger viewership share, making it almost impossible to ignore the agitation (Mohapatra 2013: 49). A related argument is the middle class background of the majority of journalists that work for the mainstream media. Beyond responding to the demand of information, they also identified with the struggle, since they had personal experiences that matched the discourse of the protests. Furthermore, the movement was to some extent related to the scams they previously covered.

Another more contested explanation is that the media started covering the movement due to the massive attention of the topic in social media. The wide support of young people was

condensed in online strategies that spread the information and facilitated the logistics and organization of the protests. The media could not ignore the massive response to this strategy and therefore was “forced” to take over this issue.

Regardless of its motivations, the role of mainstream media on the escalation of the movement is undeniable. They managed not only to keep the urban “consumers” satisfied, but also they were instrumental in informing and raising awareness in other areas besides big cities. Especially TV channels gave the movement visibility in places that would not have been informed otherwise. The positive reporting style regarding the movement, combined with the indifference exhibited by the ruling government to punish those associated with corruption, contributed to shape perceptions among citizens, which were greatly supportive (Goswami & Bandyopadhyay 2011: 18).

The media also had an instrumental role during the transition of the movement into AAP. With the purpose of being transparent, leaders of IACM decided to ask their supporters through TV channels their opinion about the creation of a new political party. After a period of initial support, once AAP entered Delhi’s Assembly and Kejriwal was appointed Chief Minister, the media turned more critical towards the party. They meticulously focused on reporting every minimal mistake and contested decisions taken by Kejriwal.

In a nutshell, despite the close ties that big media companies have with the center of political and economic power, they have not been able to ignore the demands of their target-group. The IACM seems to be contributing, therefore, to the process of transformation of the media into a more independent actor. Equally important, civil society organizations have realized how useful it is to target the media within their campaigning strategies, in order to catch the attention of a broader public and expand the scope of their demands.

### **c) Role of Social Media and Communication Technologies**

Social media also played a fundamental role throughout the whole movement. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Black Berry Messaging Service, and YouTube served to garner support, connect, and spread information on the trajectory of the movement. The phenomenal use of social media was orchestrated by software professionals associated with the movement, who contributed greatly in developing online programs that supported the campaign (Singh 2014:27). By the time of the first hunger strike of Anna Hazare there were more than 150 Facebook pages related to Anna and several online signature campaigns (IBID: 27). According to social media analysts the online support for the movement was around 1.5 million people (Kurup: 2011).

Scholars and stakeholders consider that the scope of social media is limited to urban areas where the middle class and young activist are. Although, online campaigns have included both

English and Hindu versions, the use of online tools remains constrained to a limited group. This is explained by a very low Internet penetration rate of 2.03 percent in 2012 from which 1.23 percent have a broadband subscription (Table 11). Furthermore, there is strong evidence that shows an understandable skew towards English content (Parthasarathi & Srinivas 2012: 18). Notwithstanding, it is important to recognize the role played by independent journalists and bloggers that made use of online tools to generate public discussion. They were vital in giving a deeper analysis of the events, as well as reporting some facts that the mainstream media left aside.

**Table 4. Internet and mobile penetration rates, 2007-2012**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Internet subscribers (% of total population)	0.82	0.97	1.16	1.37	1.64	2.03
– of which broadband subscribers (% of total population)	0.21	0.34	0.53	0.74	0.99	1.23
Mobile subscribers (% of total population)	14.56	22.70	33.59	49.43	67.76	81.60
– of which 3G subscribers (% of total population)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*Notes:* Penetration rates for respective years are based on annual population figures—as per mid-year (July) estimates—by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India. Data provided by the TRAI pertain to the total number of mobile subscribers rather than to the total number of active SIM cards

*Sources:* TRAI, “Annual Report 2011–12,” TRAI, New Delhi, 2012, at [http://www.trai.gov.in/Content/Annual\\_Reports.aspx](http://www.trai.gov.in/Content/Annual_Reports.aspx) (accessed 29 December 2012); Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India

In contrast, the rate of mobile phone penetration is quite high (81.60 percent in 2012). Although mobile phones are not considered part of social media, the movement intelligently developed a strategy making use of these high rates of mobile phones ownership. Comprehensive SMS campaigns were launched across the country and attracted a huge number of responses. A special campaign involving people to ring a particular number to express solidarity with the movement reached millions of calls (Singh 2014:27).

During the days that AAP was in power, Kejriwal incentivized the usage of smart phones or technology gadgets to record evidence of corrupt public servants. Although, this initiative was in place for a very short period of time (less than 50 days), several actors interviewed agree that it had a huge impact on the incentive structure to be corrupt. Civil servants perceived a higher probability of being caught and therefore avoided to incur in corrupt behaviors.

In short, social media and ICT had not only a function of facilitating the search and distribution of information, but played a central role in bringing together different groups of society that supported the movement. Cyber activism contributed to generate new ways of collective action with an online moral appealing towards a public concern, translating this sentiment in real life encounters in the public space. The massive support for Hazare’s hunger strikes brought

together other Indian activists, renowned personalities and the populace. The scope of these inter-sectoral, inter-cast and inter-religion encounters in terms of generating trust and building social capital is yet to be seen. However, social media has proven to be a powerful tool to mobilize public opinion, strengthen civic engagement, invite democratic participation, or even to encourage 'electronic' civil disobedience (Singh 2014:9).

#### **d) Leadership**

The emergence of the anti-corruption movement in India has been deeply influenced by the actions of purposeful actors willing to transform public values. The first identifiable face of the movement is Anna Hazare, a longstanding Gandhian social activist characterized by his austere lifestyle. His strategy of fasting to death had a significant emotional impact among citizens. As one of the volunteers of the AAP campaign in Delhi said, "If one man with no ambitions is willing to stand out and try to change things, how could other citizens do nothing, this definitely triggers interest and support of others". It is important to acknowledge that behind the movement there was a pool of social activists that had worked for long time towards the same goal. The already described context that combined big losses of money due to grand corruption, the anger of society against these big scams and frustration of unrealized expectations after economic liberalization, served as a convergence platform for strengthening the labor of diverse social activist. Hence, the movement is distinguished by the fact that it was led by civil society members, supported by independent minded leaders, neither directly associated to politics.

However, conflict within the movement appeared rather sooner than later. As in every social movement, structures of participation, decision-making, and accountability were highly dependent on motivation, commitment, and voluntary participation of supporters (Ganz 2010:2). This type of relational setting made conflict easy to arise since every supporter has its own particular interests. In the IACM this happened firstly, because some leaders did not agree with the Gandhian strategy of fasting to death as valid mechanism to challenge the government, believing that it was a manipulative tactic. Secondly, there was some dissatisfaction with the authoritarian way of the leaders of the movement who decided which topics to discuss with the government, disregarding claims from a wide spectrum of grassroots initiatives. Thirdly, there were big differences when it came to decide how the movement should evolve, specifically with regards if the creation of a new political party was a good strategy.

A second wave of leadership is connected precisely with the last point. The transition to a new political force responded mainly to the pressure that traditional political parties were making on the movement "if you want to make changes to the political system why don't you do them from

inside". Taking this challenge as main motivation, a group led by Kejriwal decided to create the AAP. Several followers of the movement appreciated this initiative, as they perceived that Kejriwal shaped a feasible strategy on how to take the next step.

After its creation, the AAP was designed with an internal structure based on a bottom-up decision-making model, openness, and transparency without a high party command (Singh 2014: 44). Certainly, the active support of several leaders from diverse strings of society such as scholar, bankers, independent journalists and middle class entrepreneurs reinforces the political support that the party has achieved. Nevertheless, the influence hold by Arvind Kejriwal is still the cohesive force of the AAP.

#### **e) Narrative and Discourse**

The narrative and discourse used by the IACM and the AAP was identified as a key component to the articulation of both, the movement and the political party. The most relevant factors that took part and helped develop the movement's narrative are: 1) its association to Gandhian philosophy and morality, 2) the symbolic use of politics, 3) acting in the name of the common man, 4) taking an anti-politic perspective, and 5) making reference to "glue issues".

During the first wave of Leadership, the Gandhian discourse and the symbolism of Anna Hazare played a central role. He was portrayed as an elderly neighbor fighting for justice for the majority. Besides using Hazare's image as the flag of the initial campaign, using the soubriquet Anna (older brother), implied a strong signifier that the movement had a family-like structure. This is due to the fact that "Anna" is commonly used within the Indian society to refer to any older male relative within a family different to father, grandfather, and uncles. The slogans, "Anna is India", "India is Anna", and "I am Anna" or "Mein Anna Hoon", got to the level of becoming part of advertisement campaigns for clothing brands.

In terms of the Gandhian discourse, the mobilizing strategy was appealing to a moral discourse. The movement started questioning political power from a moral position, which the Indian population ultimately associates with Gandhi's struggle. However, as Singh states, "what was different this time was that in this case, each individual subject was acting from her/his own sense of morality rather than as a group sharing common bonds or interest." (Singh, 2014: 35)

Another key component of the discourse was the appealing to the image of a "common man" as the sole constituency, the ordinary man against the political corruption from the traditional elites. Singh (2014) notices, "the 'aam aadmi' has no particular identity or any political allegiance, and comes from different walks of life, class, religion, gender, and political ideology. The 'aam aadmi'/citizen is an individual but does not act for the furtherance of any individual or located interest. The citizen speaks directly and represents no one and yet represents

everyone.” The APP also used a nationalist discourse aiming to overcome social differences. They wanted to signal that APP stood as an open platform, which its only interest was to build a better nation.

On the other hand, they identified a need for change in the political system that could only happen from within, and thus they wanted to be perceived as a viable option to clean the system. Therefore, they presented themselves from an anti-politics perspective to differentiate from traditional parties. According to one of the members of the party, the AAP also adopted a discourse that criticized the representative system and the deficient responsiveness of traditional political parties, while placing emphasis on the need of a new strategy based in citizen’s participation.

Another core element of the discourse of the movement and the political party is their referencing to what has been called “glue issues”. In order to succeed, it was key that the topics addressed were crosscutting. For example, corruption was appealing not only because it was a global issue, but also because everyday citizens could relate to it. As stated before, they also used context relevant factors, such as price raises, electricity, water, women’s safety and scandals, to give more relevance to their struggle. They reinterpreted common problems and integrated them under the corruption umbrella. In a nutshell, given that the protesters that were joining were speaking in disparate voices, the articulation process took place by avoiding controversial topics, and making sure that a broad base of the population could feel represented.

Finally, an important factor in the articulation process has been the symbolic use of politics. Both the IACM and APP made an effort to give symbolism to all their events by carrying them out on special dates related to Indian history. One of the clearest examples was how Ana’s fasting deadline for the passing of the Jan Lokpal Bill was on the 15th of August, same day as the independence of India. Likewise, AAP was officially founded on the same date that the Indian Constitution was approved.

## **f) Targeted Audiences**

### **i. Middle Class**

The anti-corruption movement in India has been recognized worldwide by its citizens-driven character. However, scholars consider that using the concept of civil society to characterize the movement might be misleading<sup>11</sup>. This is because it is difficult to describe and clearly

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<sup>11</sup> As Professor Chandhoke assertively pointed “civil society around the world has been lately dominated by the actions undertaken by NGOs. They are well founded, with a bureaucratic structure and with a professional character, and this is exactly the opposite of what civil society means in the political definition. Although, they might have been articulating important processes, they are definitely not grassroots movements”.

identify who integrates such a group. Professor Sanjay Kumar stated when referring to the uprisings, “the movement in India was purely driven by the people – not by civil society-NGOs”.

Focusing only on the active participation of citizens there are two main groups that were identified as main actors, namely the middle class and the youth. Similar to the concept of civil society, describing middle class in India is a difficult task. However, there are certain commonalities within this heterogeneous group, namely “it predominantly consists of upper castes and dominant religions (...) It is a class that is in large part defined through the language of liberalization and finds its identity not merely in its economic base but through its social and cultural capital (...) Its visibility and its influence, is linked with its social distinction, lifestyle and consumption patterns” (Singh – Venkatesh 2014:24). This middle class, both in urban and rural areas, was fundamental in expanding the scale of the movement. Despite the fact that in many cases they made use of petty corruption practices to get “their way”, the anger triggered by big scams made them realize that corruption was an issue that greatly affected them.

The massive support of the middle class was represented not only through social media activism but also joining the demonstrations on the streets. In a later stage, their support to AAP has been materialized through generalized economic donations, an increased voluntarism and even joining the party as a full time job. These new ways of middle class political engagement are rarely seen towards traditional political parties, therefore, new forms of political participation flourish.

## **ii. Young Activists**

Young activists certainly belong to the middle class group just described, and are characterized by being raised in a completely different environment as the previous generation. They acknowledge that education and language skills are unquestionable means to access the world market and to scale up in the social and economic ladder. Moreover, access to “unlimited” TV channels and Internet, in combination with the ownership and use of technology allow them to easily access information and be able to have local, national and global communication. Furthermore, it is a generation that was socialized under the promises of liberalization and capitalism, with individualistic tendencies and with a lower reliance on the state regarding education, health or public services (Singh 2014: 23).

However, the implications and consequences of crony capitalism have led them to be much more critical of the current system, not only in terms of inequality but also at a deeper philosophical level. This critical eye leads them to analyze and assess their parent’s generation with a hopeful heart of change almost as a biological necessity (Ganz 2010: 5). Young people have seen the last generation reach top position in the private sector, but as one of our



interviewees said “they realize that economic success is not always traduced in happiness, leaving a sensation that there was something missing. Making money for someone else or being part of a job leads to nothing intellectually stimulating. There is a world beyond money that is much more interesting.”

With this purposeful willingness of change, young people joint the movement bringing along their critical thinking and making widespread use of new information and communication technologies –what has given them the name of millennial generation. Because of their “biographical availability”<sup>12</sup> they were able to contribute and participate constantly not only in public demonstrations but also in the online activism and mobilization.

The massive support of youth is signaling a process of change, where young people are increasingly considering social engagement as a humane responsibility and as a new field full of opportunities and challenges. The recent popularity of educational programs related to social and political topics, such as Public Policy, responds to an increasing consciousness of the necessity to acquire specific skills to properly contribute to the process of change. Besides working for novel causes, they perceive that the development work is becoming more exotic and a new way to satisfy their appetite for recognition.

#### **g) Participatory Mechanisms and Democratic Innovations**

Participatory mechanism has been one of the main tools used by both the IACM and the APP throughout their evolution. Through mass and social media, citizens were asked if they thought that becoming a political option was true to the principles of the movement, and if it was a valid strategy to peruse their main goal of passing an anti-corruption law. This exercise can be consider as a type of referendum campaign, which have been used by social movements as “an opportunity to publicize the issues that concern them, as well as the hope of being able to bypass the obstacle represented by governments hostile to their demands” (Della Porta, 2006:234). This strategy was successful and once the decision was taken and AAP decided on a foundation date, volunteer forms became available so that any citizen that wanted to become involved with the moment could do so. These forms ran out hours after they became available.

The spotlight in the movement have always been the “citizens” and the direct mechanisms that will get them involved directly in the decision making process. The justification for this approach lays on the identification of a crisis of representation within the traditional ways of democracy. The movement itself entails a democratic innovation, since it became a platform where any citizen is entitled to express their opinions and engage in deliberative processes. The most recent form of participatory mechanisms that the AAP has been using is engaging

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<sup>12</sup> It is explain by the special condition of young people of not having family of their own and not yet a full time job, giving them complete availability to going social movements (Nepstad & Smith 1999)

with the communities on the local level, to empower and involve them in the process of intervening their communities.

### **5.3.3 Outputs of the Movement**

#### **a) Changes in incentive structure**

The logic behind corrupt behaviors follows a cost-benefit analysis. Individuals assess their opportunities, their cost, and the risks of getting caught. If they find that the cost of acting in corrupt ways is higher than the benefit they might get, or if they are risk-averse and sense that the risk of getting caught is too high, then individuals will not engage in corrupt behaviors. Within the field findings, it was possible to identify three main ways in which the incentive structure for corruption has changed since the emergence of the IACM.

First of all, the movement, particularly the AAP, has been highly successful in placing corruption as one of the most relevant topics in the political arena. This has shifted the incentives for corrupt behaviors, since being corrupt has become increasingly more costly in electoral terms. Corruption has become the prerogative in Indian politics. No politician can expect to get strong support from their electorate base, if they do not address the issue of corruption. As Sighn puts it “In this moral universe, appearing non-corrupt has suddenly become important; winning elections on limited white money has become possible; and, suddenly, horse-trading to form a government in Delhi has become unthinkable“(2014: 48). Hence, a society that is actively condemning the existence of corruption is also willing to give harsher punishments.

On the other hand, citizens are actively engaging in the collection of evidence for corrupt behavior. Arvind Kejriwal has asked followers and supporters of the movement on repeated occasions to be alert and record any situation they might find compromising. Social media has been the main platform to share these experiences and evidence. Organizations supporting the movement, such as, I Paid a Bribe, encourage citizens to share their experiences with corruption through Twitter and to accuse public servants involved in such acts. Consequently, there are new pressures on bureaucratic officials, who now have to think twice before they engaged in corruption. The risk of being caught has exponentially increased, and so have the costs.

Finally, the introduction of the RTI forces public officials into carrying out more transparent procedures of implementation of policies. Given that anybody can ask for information on the process at any time, RTI has changed the structure of incentives in terms of how public information is dealt with. According to think tanks and International Cooperation Agencies consulted, “the government and the contractors are being more careful to make the information available because they know and RTI might be coming their way”.

## **b) Modifying social values**

All interviewees agree that the change in social values is a long-term process and would be premature to assess if the IACM has caused any change in this regard. However, they recognize that putting corruption in the center of the political agenda may have an impact beyond electoral issues. As one of the AAP volunteers said “the movement presented itself as an option for people that wanted to live a legal life but that were never given the option to. It was striving from an emotional position to appeal to the right of morality within citizens”. Hence, the struggle of IACM that initiated with the main purpose of a legal change has shown to have a wider scope in the sense that they also aim to influence society, spreading their own conception of the world, and promoting a cultural change (Gamson 2004:247, Melucci 1982, 1984a, in Della Porta 2006). Some other actors, on the other hand, consider that the engagement in the movement and the outrage against big scandals was not necessarily translated in reducing their behaviors with petty corruption.

### **5.3.4 Challenges of the Movement**

Stakeholders associated the challenges of IACM directly to the AAP. One of the prevailing concerns regarding the movement’s survival is related to some of its leaders joining politics and how this may undermine the movement’s existence and legitimacy given that most of its members have little or no expertise in politics. In addition, the dynamics of the political game, that under a parliamentary system requires inter-party coalitions, increases the odds that AAP may be directly or indirectly related to corruption and/or compromise its initial goals. The concerns may be grouped into four categories.

## **c) Governance structure and political agenda**

Scholars and supporters of the AAP consider the governance structure of the AAP as being under-defined. Its main focus on the anti-corruption issue and the addition of broad topics such as energy and water allocation, seem to reflect a lack of a political agenda. This monothematic agenda is dangerous since, without a clear political program, voters cannot identify the policies that the party will pursue in the future, or decide whether or not the party represents their interests. International cooperation agencies in turn, consider especially problematic that even though the anti-corruption cause is well received by large segments of the population, it cannot be considered an ideology and “even when they may be truly working to improve things in India, they have no interest in holding power and playing the game of politics”.

According to Della Porta, the success of a social movement will “depend on the degree they can influence the public agencies responsible for implementing the laws which concern them” (2006:233). In this sense, analysts and journalists see the decision of going into politics as problematic since it changes the nature of a social movement, and make them pass “from

being the opposition to being in power”. This role change may weaken the movement and threaten its existence. Thus, the absence of a clear ideology supporting a political platform can undermine the success of the party in the electoral arena and impair the party’s ability to govern once in power.

#### **d) Coalitions and political compromises**

Some of the AAP members interviewed believe that another greater challenge is how to maintain the ethics of the party when the electoral rules indirectly oblige small and new political parties to make coalitions with bigger parties. AAP candidate for North East Delhi constituency, Professor Anand Kumar, considers that coalitions are inconsistent because they merge different ideologies and tolerate corruption in order to guarantee their own existence (i.e. in order to get votes). Doing alliances with traditional political parties may allow the electorate to associate the party with its coalition partners, which can be very negative for the AAP given that most of the big political parties have proven to be corrupt in the past. Finally, scholars point to the risk of the party adopting populist policies in order to attract and maintain support.

#### **e) Sustainability and projection**

When reflecting on the challenges of the IACM, journalist Ajaz Ashran (2014, March 6), considered that given that movements against the establishment are generally short living, it is important for the movement to define how to transcend its current popularity. He argues that the longevity of the party is not relevant, and “even if (the movement) is short-lived it does bring about certain changes and ideals”. He further comments that some of the movement members are conscious of the short life that the movement may have, and have expressed the idea that “they are here a short while only” and therefore their objective is to contribute to the development of a new governance structure and then to move out. Finally, and related to the previous section, he declares that it is possible that if they become bigger the system will change them. Supporting these declarations, analyst Dr. Rao considers that achieving to some extent a change in peoples’ mindsets is far more relevant than securing the long-term sustainability of the AAP.

#### **f) Rural support**

Thus far, the party’s electoral support has derived mainly from urban centers, where the visibility of the party has been higher and where most of the events and protests have taken place. As many of the interviewees noted, reaching rural population remains a challenge for the AAP. Professor Sanjay Kumar particularly explained that population living in rural areas are rarely concerned about topics such as corruption, since their interactions with public officials is lower.

## **g) 2014 Elections**

Following Aam Aadmi Party impressive poll debut in the 2013, experts predicted it would succeed in getting the seven Lok Sabha seats. However, it was the BJP who got all seven seats. On the other hand, even when the AAPs vote share was increased by 4%, the BJP saw their vote share in 13%. According to Neha Lalchandani (May 17, 2014) the BJP probably took away a large chunk of AAP's middle-class vote. However, it is important to consider that the AAP came out as the second political force in Delhi.

### **6. Findings: How does Theory speak to Reality?**

The quantitative dimension of the research tested the extent to which the hypothesis based on the theoretical framework was accurate. These results were further contrasted with the analysis of the anti-corruption movement in India in the case study. This section briefly presents the overall results of the research associated to the theoretical framework of reference.

#### **6.1 Social Accountability**

Firstly, the econometric model assessed the effect of citizens' engagement and ICT penetration, as elements of the demand-side of accountability on control of corruption. The results show that both have significant and positive effect on control of corruption on their own. *Such results support the theoretical framework in the sense that an active civil society has potential in the fight against corruption indifferent of the existence of mechanisms to oversight the government (supply-side of accountability). In turn, the usage of ICT technologies contributed to spread the indignation feeling regarding scams, and increased the demands for anti-corruption legislation.*

On the other hand the fieldwork also confirmed that the supply-side of accountability cannot control corruption on its own. Even though India had instruments and mechanisms in the supply-side of social accountability before the movement (RTIA, ICT development, legal and institutions design to prevent corruption), they were not sufficient as to ensure a good level of control of corruption. Among these instruments the RTI proved to be an important instrumental mechanism to access public information and raise awareness on corruption. Confirming as well that the introduction of mechanisms to access information has a stronger accountability effect over time. *The oversight function of such mechanisms is being augmented after civil society collectively organized to demand governmental action against corruption.*

Regarding media and independent media, the fieldwork also provided insights on how they contributed to boost the awareness of corruption as a problem by broadly covering related scams and scandals. This is in line with the quantitative results that found that having diverse

sources of information has an effect on control of corruption, only through a strong civil society. *The overall effect of empowering civil society depends on the existence and amount of channels for accessing information.* This implies that these two variables only have an effect on corruption control when they act jointly.

Regarding perceptions and as stated in the theoretical framework, one of the main effects of the availability of means to access information is their role in influencing peoples' perception of corruption levels. In this sense, the results of the econometric model showed that the increase in perception responds to the availability of information sources. The fieldwork shed light into this result by showing that high levels of perception lead to the adoption of anti-corruption legislation and thus, had a role in the adoption of control of corruption measures. *Furthermore, the econometric model shows that perceptions of corruption may have an effect on control of corruption. In particular, they show that an increase in perception of corruption in a period can have a reducing effect on corruption levels in following periods.*

The importance of this finding lays in the fact that, conventionally, increases in perception have been identified as signs of poor governance. However, and as shown by this research, corruption perception levels can be a sign of awareness raising caused by the increased availability of information. This in turn, has a high positive effect on corruption on following periods. Caution is recommended in interpreting increases in perception levels, since they are likely to reflect a society that is being made aware of a longstanding problem, and not necessarily an increase in actual corruption. Perception increases can be a sign of healthy exercises of democracy that causes changes in the incentive structure for corruption.

In the case of India, only two years after the emergence of the IACM, an law was enacted, and a new political party with the main objective of fighting corruption was founded. The actual effect of such changes on control of corruption, brought by an initial increase in the perception of corruption, is yet to be seen. However, the case of India reveals the potential of citizens demanding accountability in helping society as a whole to move away from particularistic behaviors.

## **6.2 Contextual factors and critical junctures**

The leadership style of the heads of the movement was not a sufficient condition for its emergence; however, the role they played was very significant. The case of the IACM may be related to what the Theory of Change identifies as the power of a minority of altruists to force a majority of selfish individuals to cooperate. Leaders of the IACM that stood out with the purpose of changing the status quo, were able to gain widespread support by middle classes who are consider to benefit directly from the current system.

On the other hand, the narrative and discourse used by the movement, appealing to morality

and ethical values, gained the sympathy of broad segments of the population. *By rescuing ethical and moral arguments within political discourses, a society may contribute to strengthen the normative constraints on corruption.*

In addition, the support young people is considered to be a unique feature of the IACM since India is a young nation (75% of its population is underage, and it has 23 million first-time voters between 18 and 19 years old). Middle and middle-high classes, in turn, are able to support through social media activism, by joining the demonstrations on the streets, make economic donations and through voluntarism.

*As a final remark, it is important to highlight the fact that the AICM contributes to broader the conception of democracy by opening up new arenas for public policy that promote inclusive participation and consensus building through deliberation. This goes in line with the argument of Della Porta who affirms “by putting emphasis on participation over representation, social movements enrich the concept of democracy contributing to the adoption of more participatory approaches in representative democracies” (2006:223-249)*

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## Annex 1

### Types of accountability

Source of control	Strength of control	Vertical		Horizontal
		Upward	Downward	
Internal	High	<i>Business</i>	<i>Bureaucratic</i>	<i>Audit</i>
	Low	<i>Client–patron</i>	<i>Patron–client</i>	<i>Peer Professional</i>
External	High	<i>Representative</i>	<i>Fiscal</i>	<i>Legal</i>
	Low	<i>Societal</i>	<i>Political</i>	<i>Reputational</i>

This table is an elaboration and synthesis of typologies found in Gormley and Balla (2004); Grant and Keohane (2005); Mulgan (2003); Radin and Romzek (1996); Schedler (1999); Scott (2000); and Smulovitz and Peruzzotti (2000).

Source (Lindberg, 2013 )

## Annex 2

### Robustness check

	(1)	(2)
	WGI	WGI
HDI	-1.111 (0.445)	-0.691 (0.475)
GINI	0.00798 (0.005)	0.011* (0.005)
Freedom of the Press	0.009*** (0.002)	0.007*** (0.002)
Political Stability	0.336*** (0.060)	0.307*** (0.055)
ICT	0.019*** (0.004)	-0.014 (0.017)
INGO Participation	0.137* (0.079)	-0.104 (0.105)
Interaction INGO*ICT		<b>0.00716**</b> <b>(0.003)</b>
Constant	-0.458 (0.429)	0.0455 (0.456)
Observations	122	122
R-squared	0.739	0.761

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1