

THESIS SUMMARY

Cibele Silva e Souza

Mapping corruption in Brazil:

An analysis of the news portals and tweets (X)

Supervisors:

Prof. Dr. Vicsek Lilla Mária, PhD

Prof. Dr. Zoltán Szántó, PhD

Budapest, 2024

Department of Sociology

THESIS SUMMARY

Cibele Silva e Souza

Mapping corruption in Brazil:

An analysis of the news portals and tweets (X)

Doctoral Dissertation

Supervisors:

Prof. Dr. Vicsek Lilla Mária, PhD

Prof. Dr. Zoltán Szántó, PhD

@Cibele Silva e Souza

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE	7
2.1 Media Campus and Reality Construction	7
2.1.1 The corruption scandal in the face of media interactions	11
2.2 Multifaceted corruption and its aspects	12
3. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	14
3.2 Search selection: Content Analysis and Computer-Assisted Content Analysis ..	15
4. THE FINDINGS OF THE DISSERTATION	17
4.1 Portals tell stories, while tweets reflect outrage and values	17
4.2 Brazilians have no 'eye' on international corruption	19
4.3 With the focus on 'Lava Jato', the 'CPI of Covid-19' gains space in the discussions	20
CONCLUSIONS	22
REFERENCES	24
Publications	28

1. INTRODUCTION

Brazilian media have played a crucial role in revealing cases of corruption in recent years, significantly impacting the construction of social discourse and public perception. In this media environment, continuous media coverage of corruption not only intensifies the visibility of this collective problem, but also shapes important decisions in society. This constant exposure influences public opinion and the actions of authorities, highlighting the importance of the media in promoting transparency and maintaining democracy.

Thus, it is clear that the media play a crucial role in increasing the visibility of corruption and influencing decisions related to it (Thompson, 2005; Thompson and Guareschi, 2002; Castells, 1997, 2005; Tella and Franceschelli, 2011; De Lima, 2006). However, the wide repercussion of corruption cases tends to generate insecurity among citizens regarding public bodies and institutions. This double effect places the media as a powerful agent in constructing reality, capable of both promoting transparency and intensifying public distrust.

This interaction between the media and corruption intensifies dramatically in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil. Media convergence not only highlights corruption but actively shapes social discourse, profoundly influencing collective perceptions and public trust. Amid the uncertainties generated by the pandemic, the incessant flow of information about corruption not only fuels a widespread feeling of insecurity, but also erodes faith in institutions. This scenario creates a vicious cycle in which public distrust and media coverage feed off each other, further exacerbating the crisis.

Based on this, this research focuses on how corruption is represented by two different media: news portals and Twitter, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of the thesis is to analyze how corruption is portrayed in articles on news portals and in public tweets by Brazilians, in the context of the crisis. Thus, through Content Analysis and Computer-Assisted Content Analysis (CACCA), we seek to explore the differences and similarities in the narratives about corruption between the two media to understand the distinctions that exist in the representation of this phenomenon.

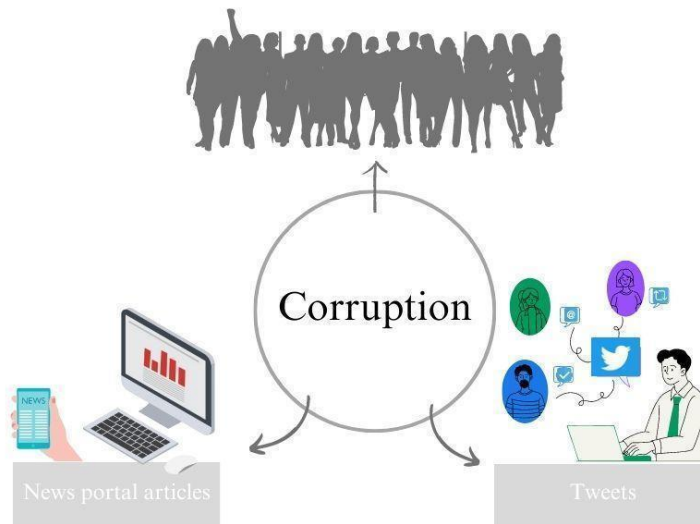
To analyze news articles and tweets, three central questions guide the research: (1) Is there a tendency in the way that the narratives surrounding corruption in articles from news platforms contrast with the discourse on corruption observed in the tweets of

Brazilians? (2) How do recurring themes about corruption differ between journalistic articles on news platforms and tweets by Brazilians on Twitter? (3) How is the trend of the portrayal of corruption delineated across categories, including (1) locations, (2) areas/editorial offices, (3) politicians, (4) political parties, (5) scandals/operations, (6) investigations, and (7) how do these categories interact with the phenomena through recurrent subcategories?"

Therefore, these questions serve as a basis for investigating disparities and similarities in representations of corruption between traditional media and social media, providing a comprehensive understanding of different perspectives. After all, it is in this media environment that integration between social and traditional media occurs simultaneously, highlighting the role of Twitter as a dynamic platform for expression and dissemination of content during the pandemic.

Given this perspective of media interaction, it is understood that news portals offer an interpretation of reality, creating narratives and setting daily themes based on editorial opinion, the target audience, and the newspaper's policies. On the other hand, social platforms, such as Twitter, increase opportunities for discussion and dissemination of news through sharing in organized groups (Feezell, 2018). While news portals shape public perception through a specific editorial lens, social networks democratize the dissemination of information, allowing diverse points of view to be presented and debated (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Media interaction



Created by the author from research data.

This dynamic creates a complex panorama where the representation of corruption can vary significantly between media, influencing the way the phenomenon is understood and discussed in society. Therefore, the research postulates that the representation of corruption on news portals is influenced by the "agenda-setting" theory (Katz e Lazarsfeld, 1955; Feezell, 2018), and the editorial structure, while tweets reflect a more interactive perspective of users. In an environment in which a platform like Twitter has been crucial in amplifying voices and discourses about corruption, reflecting the transformation of public discourse and interaction with traditional journalism.

In view of this, it is worth endorsing that this study offers valuable insights into how corruption is represented and perceived in the Brazilian media, exploring its social, political, and cultural implications. The analysis contributes to understanding the dynamics of corruption in the media, informing public policies and promoting a more in-depth democratic analysis in the Brazilian context. By examining the differences between coverage on news portals and discussions on social media via Twitter, this work sheds light on how media narratives influence public opinion and trust in institutions, providing a basis for future research and policy interventions aimed at transparency and accountability.

2. THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

The bibliographic analysis carried out with the help of Bibliometrix reveals that the most recent studies have delved considerably into the field of corruption, highlighting not only its complexity, but also its broad ramifications. The work of this group of researchers has directed substantial efforts in recent years to a thorough investigation of the various facets of this phenomenon, aiming to understand its underlying mechanisms and resulting impacts.

Within this vast spectrum of investigation, particular attention has been devoted to the analysis of the interaction between corruption and the media, which is the central focus of this theoretical review chapter. Furthermore, the communication paradigm, as outlined by Castells (2015), is characterized by the complex interaction between technologies that facilitate the transmission of information between interconnected agents. In this context, the meaning and relevance of information are constructed within the sociocultural references that guide information processing.

This academic approach highlights the fundamental role of media platforms in shaping public perceptions, disseminating information, and potentially influencing the prevalence and dynamics of corruption in social structures. Finally, it is important to highlight that the relationship between media and corruption will be discussed in detail throughout this chapter, exploring the nuances of this interaction and its impact on social dynamics.

2.1 Media1 Campus and Reality Construction

The media play an essential role in the construction and dissemination of symbols that shape the interpretation of social events and phenomena. Pierre Bourdieu (1989) proposed the theory of symbolic power that reflects on the interaction between the media and social

¹ When we discuss media, we use broad phrases. However, the study finds that social media and traditional media differ in numerous ways, including the nature of content generation, reach and audience, interaction, and the pace of information diffusion. While traditional media involves professional journalism, which involves journalistic practices (Berglez, 2013), companies with a large reach and audience, social media allows individual individuals or groups to post and distribute material in a decentralized, interactive manner that has the potential to go viral. In this case, redefining civic engagement and the public sphere (Sinha, 2019). These variations are taken into account in this work since they have a substantial impact on how information is produced, distributed, and consumed in current society, as well as the findings of this thesis study.

contexts, highlighting aspects of journalistic narratives that allow individuals to adopt interpretative lenses to understand events, acting as "news creators" while defining the significance of these events (Park, 2012).

In dialogue, Carvalho Jr. (2003) explores the idea that the media generate knowledge and recognition, influencing electoral processes by shaping the speech of political representatives. Similarly, Breit (2010) emphasized the power of the media in determining what captures public attention, while Hindman (2012) highlighted how media coverage can contribute to ideological polarization.

These ideas consider that the creation of meanings through the media and the interpretation of activities within a context of instantaneous and conflicting information are important research topics (Breit, 2010). In dialogue, Park (2012) stated that "framing" allows the public to implicitly identify problems and formulate judgments, highlighting the role of the media in guiding public perception and forming opinions.

It is worth mentioning that Gamson et al. (1992) highlighted that the media can transmit ideas and images in different ways, reinforcing the media conglomerate, and criticized it for promoting cynicism and passivity instead of civic engagement. A few years later, Rubim (2000) argued that communication shapes contemporary sociability, with social movements offering alternative constructions that challenge the prevailing reality.

In line with this, previous studies from Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) to Feezell (2018) highlighted that information flows through networks of opinion leaders who shape the agenda by disseminating mass messages, amplified by social exchange. Castells e Cardoso (2005) and Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) emphasized the contemporary dynamics of interaction characterized by the flow of information in complex and interconnected networks.

In this sense, these authors observe that there is a constant tension between those who shape public opinion and the recipients of these messages. Therefore, understanding the processes of distribution and assimilation of information through the media, news portals, and social platforms, as well as their contributions to the social agenda and news coverage, is central to understanding how underlying power structures influence public opinion and social reality.

- Traditional Media and corruption

When dealing with the relationship between traditional media and corruption, Mancini et al. (2017) examine the relationship between the spread of corruption, press freedom, and the development of democratic institutions, noting that countries with different levels of press freedom exhibit diverse cultural, religious, historical, and developmental dimensions. The authors identify several factors that deserve consideration: the influence of the media system and market segmentation on the coverage of corruption.

Thus, Mancini et al. (2017) point out that the interaction between media and politics also becomes an influential factor in corruption and political parallelism, affecting the work of journalists, including the importance of the absence of political and ideological links to guarantee impartial coverage. From another perspective, in relation to social media, the synthesis between traditional media and the expansive reach of social media platforms has ushered in a new era in the fight against corruption.

In this sense, transparency provided by social media empowers individuals to expose cases of corruption and scrutinize narratives, reinforcing accountability mechanisms (Hedman, 2016). This transparency, combined with the immediacy of media technology, facilitates real-time monitoring of events and decision-making processes, improving detection efforts and promoting transparency in public administration (Bruns and Himmler, 2016).

Despite these challenges, mainstream media sources remain crucial in the fight against corruption. Their ability to conduct detailed investigations, assess complex situations, and publish information to the public contributes to increased accountability and transparency in society. Furthermore, the historical role of the media as guardians of democracy highlights the need for press freedom as a fundamental component of democratic governance. Thus, Mancini et al. (2017) highlight that the complexity of the relationship between media and corruption requires a comprehensive and contextualized analysis.

Given that freedom of the press not only reflects but also shapes democratic values in society (Huntington, 1991), societies with free media are more likely to develop political systems that promote civic responsibility and participation (Robinson and Acemoglu, 2012). Thus, the press plays a tangible role in exposing corruption and carrying out public investigations, often surpassing the efforts of anti-corruption institutions (Berti et al., 2020).

In this perspective, there is a tendency for the Western model of journalism to attribute a "monitoring role" to the press, making it responsible for clarifying ethical guidelines and

public behavior (Mancini et al., 2016). In this way, press freedom acts as a barrier against corruption (Berti et al., 2020). Thus, journalism often serves as the primary vehicle for exposing corruption, navigating power dynamics, and occasionally challenging established sources of authority (Amaral, 2016; Bourdieu, 1989).

In addition to these aspects, various framings of news about corruption are linked to the reporting methodologies employed by journalists (Berti et al., 2020). When anti-corruption investigations or trials are ongoing, the media often operates in conjunction with the judicial system, with reports potentially serving as investigative material (or vice versa) (Berti et al., 2020). As the vanguard of social watchdogs, journalism promotes ethical standards and raises public awareness. Therefore, in summary, a discussion opens between media and corruption, in which press freedom plays a vital role in promoting openness and accountability in society, reflecting and shaping democratic norms and often surpassing institutional efforts in the fight against corruption.

Social Media and corruption

From another perspective, in relation to social media, the synthesis between traditional media and the expansive reach of social media platforms has ushered in a new era in the fight against corruption. In certain cases, transparency on social media gives people the ability to question stories and even reveal cases of corruption, which tends to strengthen accountability systems (Hedman, 2016). This transparency, combined with the immediacy of media technology, facilitates real-time monitoring of events and decision-making processes, improving detection efforts and promoting transparency in public administration (Bruns and Himmler, 2016).

In fact, in recent years, it has been recognized that individuals who consume information via social media tend to have a greater awareness of corruption compared to those who rely on traditional sources (Charron et al., 2019). This highlights how social media, characterized by relatively unregulated content, can influence perceptions of corruption in political institutions and trust dynamics (Charron and Annoni, 2021).

Additionally, activists with technological skills use online platforms to articulate public discontent, especially in relation to corruption (Salge and Karahanna, 2018). Platforms such as Twitter stand out as essential channels for reporting and exposing corruption in a viral, instant, and global way, allowing the dissemination of content and promoting an

environment conducive to social surveillance (Tufekci, 2014; 2017; 2018), thus highlighting the importance of these platforms.

Therefore, traditional media and the freedom provided by social media collaborate synergistically to empower citizens through social participation and to supervise and combat corruption in various sectors. Furthermore, due to the instrumentalization of the media, communication channels play a significant role in shaping and reshaping political reputations (Thompson and Guareschi, 2002; Mancini et al., 2001).

2.1.1 The corruption scandal in the face of media interactions

In the contemporary scenario, the diversity of opinions and content in the media allows citizens to engage in dialogue with the news and interpret it according to their beliefs (Charron and Annoni, 2021). This occurs in an environment in which the media often extensively covers scandals and news related to corruption, perpetuating its presence in society and reinforcing individual perceptions (Rizzica, 2015). Thus, scandals become events constructed and propagated by the media (Berti et al., 2020), and simplified media coverage aims to facilitate understanding by the general public (Mancini et al., 2017).

The media has a significant impact on public perceptions and responses to scandals, triggering a chain of reactions involving accusations, defenses, and legal proceedings (Tumber and Waisbord, 2019). Technological advances, such as the introduction of new communication tools, have increased the visibility and impact of scandals on the media landscape (Tumber and Waisbord, 2004).

Thus, media coverage of scandals is closely linked to democratic crises, highlighting a complex interaction between political dynamics and media influence (Tumber, 2004). Taking into account that political scandals often arise from the inherent contention between politics and the media (Castells, 1997), intensified by technological innovations that facilitate the incessant flow of information (Tumber and Waisbord, 2004).

Portanto, os escândalos funcionam como lentes restritas para entender a dinâmica das notícias na comunicação, considerando os amplos fluxos de informação que compõem as especificações, desde respostas públicas até feedback institucional (Tumber e Waisbord, 2019). É importante a partir desse ponto de vista, considerar dois fatores principais nos escândalos políticos: a transgressão de normas sociais ou morais e a atenção pública,

geralmente canalizada pela mídia, e suas consequentes reações (Thompson, 2000; McDermott et al., 2015).

In a context where the media fosters a culture of exposure, making politicians susceptible to scandals (Tumber, 2004), it is common for those involved in corruption cases to prioritize defending their interests, whether in terms of social status or reputation. The proliferation of news related to political scandals has driven the development of communication strategies to mitigate negative repercussions (Tumber, 2004).

Thus, in this media environment, political scandals, which cross the social and political spheres, generate debates about ethics, morality and institutional inequalities, revealing deeper issues beyond cases of corruption due to their wide-ranging implications (Tumber and Waisbord, 2019). Whereas escalations occur in an environment where political marketing is crucial for political actors. Added to the fact that scandals provoke reflections on how society deals with norms of behavior and ethics (Thompson and Guareschi, 2002; Tumber and Waisbord, 2019).

Therefore, given these reflections, the comprehensive analysis of the interaction between media and political scandals reveals the critical importance of the media in exposing and amplifying politicians' actions to public scrutiny. The construction of corruption and scandals is deeply influenced by the processes of production of meaning within social and political spheres, highlighting the essential role played by the media in this process.

2.2 Multifaceted corruption and its aspects

Highlighting the need for a comprehensive understanding based on diverse disciplinary perspectives, authors such as Magnagnagno et al. (2022) and Barros et al. (2019) argue that the analysis of corruption must incorporate legal, economic and cultural lenses to identify its vulnerabilities and propose effective mitigation strategies. Thus, the concept of "umbrella" corruption, developed by Varraich (2014) and Rothstein and Varraich (2017) encompasses a wide range of unethical, illegal or abusive practices, involving the misuse of power for one's own benefit or that of third parties.

The discourse on corruption is ancestral and complex, lacking a universally accepted definition (Heywood, 2007; Damgaard, 2015). From Machiavelli's reflections, on virtue to current discussions on governance and public administration (Waisbord, 2000), among

others, corruption has been a central theme in political analyses. Remember that in the 1990s, the intensification of debates on corruption was driven by recurring political scandals and public outrage, resulting in the erosion of trust in political institutions (Heywood, 2007).

The variety of academic interpretations of corruption results in multiple definitions, influenced by historical and social contexts (Varraich, 2014; Rose-Ackerman, 2005). These perspectives shape individual and collective behaviors, affecting electoral decisions, investments and government allocations (Rizzica, 2015). Inequality, particularly in democracies, is seen as a factor that catalyzes high levels of corruption, harming economic growth (Rose-Ackerman, 2008).

Added to the issues of cultural and institutional diversity between countries, it is difficult to uniformly assess corruption (Cunha and Araujo, 2018). Furthermore, corruption not only undermines the perception of justice and trust in public institutions (Teremetskyi et al., 2021), but also compromises the legitimacy of democratic governance, influencing decision-making processes (Gray and Kaufmann, 1998).

Therefore, it is evident that due to several factors, corruption is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the complexities of societies and political systems, demanding a holistic approach to understanding and tackling it (Von Alemann, 2004). When it comes to corruption, it is necessary to take a multifaceted approach, informed by different disciplines and sociocultural contexts, it is essential to promote a better understanding of its concept and its different aspects throughout the world.

3. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The methodological choices for this case study are based on the ability to draw conclusions, identify trends, and gain insights through textual analysis, aiming to address relevant issues related to corruption. The main objective is to contribute to theoretical and academic research in this field, unveiling the interaction between corruption and the media and advancing the understanding of the complexities of public discourse in Brazilian social dynamics.

The research categorizes the analyses to identify convergences, divergences, and repetitions in each means of communication in a pedagogical way. Considering that the network society is structured around communication and information technologies, which generate, process, and disseminate information through these networks (Castells and Cardoso, 2005).

Based on this, the study carries out a quantitative and qualitative analysis of 6.780 articles and 2.036 tweets published by Brazilians throughout 2021. The objective is to understand the complexity surrounding the phenomenon of corruption, exploring the implications in different social and media contexts. The articles were collected from the online news portals *Brasil de Fato*, *Carta Capital*, *G1*, and *Veja*, as well as public tweets on the Twitter pages of these media outlets, using the *SentiOne* software to quantify and document the frequency and occurrence of corruption in Brazil.

This choice is based on the idea that in the context of convergent media, in which news portals are linked to Twitter pages, promoting a continuous dissemination of information between these platforms and fostering a dynamic exchange between them. Posts by Brazilians on news portals' Twitter accounts are accessible to the public, allowing individuals with Twitter accounts to interact and comment, increasing the participatory nature of information dissemination.

In essence, there is a dynamic exchange between these two media platforms, fostering the active engagement of the population. This symbiosis is in line with agenda-setting theory, which postulates that media outlets influence public attention. Furthermore, this highlights how Twitter has, to some extent, reshaped this flow of attention (Hrenechen and Gandini, 2018).

To provide a structural basis for the work, the research raises three main questions:

- Is there a tendency in the way in which the narratives surrounding corruption in journalistic articles from news platforms contrast with the discourse on corruption observed in the tweets of Brazilians?
- How do recurring themes about corruption differ between journalistic articles on news platforms and tweets by Brazilians on Twitter?
- How is the trend of the portrayal of corruption outlined across categories, including (1) locations, (2) areas/editorial offices, (3) politicians, (4) political parties, (5) scandals/operations, (6) investigations, and (7) how do these categories interact with the phenomena through recurrent subcategories?

Based on these questions, the study is dedicated to a detailed investigation of the recurrences, convergences, and divergences between news articles and tweets as sources of information about corruption in Brazil, providing a comprehensive and critical view of the media representations of this complex phenomenon.

3.1 Search selection: Content Analysis and Computer-Assisted Content Analysis

The research used the Content Analysis approach to support this case study, complemented by *Computer-Assisted Content Analysis (CACA)*. These methods were essential for compiling and organizing qualitative and quantitative data coming from tweets and news articles. Taking into account that, in the case study, establishing clear limits allows you to explore a research unit in various ways, both qualitatively and quantitatively (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Given the detailed and unique approach to corruption and the media, the present study fits perfectly into the case study format.

In this sense, the analyses uses *Computer-Assisted Content Analysis (CACA)* to segment data collection on news portals and Twitter, focusing specifically on content related to corruption. The SentiOne software was used to automatically search for content that included keywords associated with the phenomenon of corruption in Portuguese over a period of one year (Table 2).

The selection of these keywords follows the framework proposed by Rothstein and Varraich (2017), who highlight the importance of framing concepts related to corruption

under a comprehensive term, as advocated in the "umbrella concept" approach (Rothstein and Varrach, 2017 ; Varrach, 2017). Therefore, the specific search for journalistic articles and tweets from Brazilians focused on seven keywords based on the translation into Portuguese: Clientelism, Collusion, Corruption, “Money Laundering”, Nepotism, Embezzlement, Kickback, Bribery (Table 2).

Table 1 - Search keywords linked to the concept of corruption

Clientelismo (Clientelism)	Conluio (Collusion)	Corrupção (Corruption)	“Lavagem de dinheiro” (“Money Laundering”)
Nepotismo (Nepotism)	Peculato (Embezzlement)	Propina (Kickback /bribe)	Suborno (Bribery)

Created by the author from research data.

Keywords were selected based on a framework that emphasizes the importance of framing concepts under broad terms. This choice facilitated an efficient search in the data mining software. We used N-vivo and T-Lab software to structure the analysis and develop categories from an empirical perspective.

From this, the data collected went through a rigorous process of reading, interpretation, contextualization and categorization, following the methodological guidelines outlined by Krippendorff (2018). Through this process, the data was fragmented into smaller units, allowing a detailed understanding of its content. The findings were then defined and categorized using qualitative and quantitative approaches to identify patterns, which is covered in the next chapter.

4. THE FINDINGS OF THE DISSERTATION

This chapter summarizes the case study with a focus on the outline of the representation of corruption in communication channels, integrating traditional journalism and social networks, in this case, Twitter, that surround corruption. From this perspective, by analyzing journalistic articles and public tweets from Brazilians, the study seeks to identify disparities and similarities in the narratives surrounding corruption.

Thus, the chapter covers detailed sample analysis through case studies, aiming to provide insights and trends from a broad perspective. Its structure consists of several sections. The analysis also addresses the national and international corruption scenarios as well as specific regional issues, such as the case of Rio de Janeiro. Scandals, investigations, and recurring operations, such as 'Lava Jato' and 'CPI da Covid-19', are addressed to illustrate the panorama of corruption. In addition, reflections on the political actors involved and the role of parties such as PT and MDB are also discussed.

The results highlight a nuanced understanding of how corruption is portrayed and perceived across different media platforms, reflecting varying audience perspectives and agendas. Although there is a discernible trend in narratives about corruption, it is clear that these trends interact in distinct ways, with notable differences in several aspects.

4.1 Portals tell stories, while tweets reflect outrage and values

Disparity in Media Narratives: It was observed that while news portals explore the details of corruption, outlining the complexities of corrupt acts, actions, or processes, in a gradual manner, tweets tend to reflect public sentiment, expressing outrage and frustration towards the phenomenon, often attributing the country's crises to corrupt practices.

Journalistic Narrative and its Chronological Structure: There is a tendency for journalistic articles to follow a chronological narrative structure, detailing the cause and effect trajectory of corruption cases, often revisiting and resuming old scandals such as

'Mensalão'², 'Petrolão'³ and the "Lava Jato"⁴. The journalistic coverage unfolds as a narrative that elucidates the complexities of corrupt activities, tracing the story from its beginning, ranging from the repercussions of convictions and prisons to its consequences in the aftermath of scandals and investigations.

Focus on Justice on News Portals: When discussing corruption, newspaper stories mostly (58%) concentrate on the word justice as the primary means of addressing problems related to the occurrence. In this instance, the judiciary is urged to settle corrupt cases by penalty and investigation, putting aside morality, honesty, and impunity as non-counterarguments.

Emphasis on Social Values in Tweets: In contrast, tweets demonstrate a dedication to subjects like ethics (23%), honesty (46%), social values in the face of corruption. In fact, these terms are most frequently used when associated with the word corruption. This distinction emphasizes how articles typically steer clear of conversations on fighting societal corruption with an emphasis on the viewpoint of justice, punishment, whereas tweets might embrace these ideals as expressions of complaint and displeasure.

Discrepancy in Conceptual Keywords: While an analysis of the terms used in stories about corruption in the two media reveals differences in the terms associated with the concept of corruption. However, both media deal with corruption as the main keyword, articles on news portals (56.7%) and tweets (83.9%). In this case, the distinct points of view and objectives are shown by the keywords and their correlated words that choose and emphasize the narrative. Consequently, a more thorough examination revealed that this disparity indicates not only the distinctions between journalistic pieces and tweets, but also the various ways that corruption is presented and understood on these platforms.

² It is one of the biggest corruption scandals in Brazil between 2005 and 2012 in which several high-ranking members of the Brazilian government were involved, including the Workers' Party (PT) and its allies, who were accused of operating a scheme to bribe members of Congress in exchange for political support. 'Mensalão' means monthly payment.

³ Corruption scandal in the Brazilian state oil company - Petrobras that had great repercussions in 2014, a massive bribery scheme of oil company executives, politicians, and contractors. This ladder is one of the membranes of 'Operation 'Lava Jato'.

⁴ The investigation into the scandal, known as Operation 'Lava Jato', was carried out between 2014 and 2021 by the Brazilian Federal Police and the Federal Ministry of State and led to the arrest of politicians and leaders, including current President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who was sentenced to prison in 2018 and released in 2019. In recent years, the operation has been criticized for the partisanship of those involved.

4.2 Brazilians have no 'eye' on international corruption

Limited View of International Corruption: The discrepancy between coverage of national (94.1% of articles and 99.9% of tweets) and international (5.9% of articles and 0.10% of tweets) corruption highlights the importance attributed to corruption as a central issue for Brazilians, while corruption problems in other countries may not arouse the same level of interest or concern.

While national media coverage amplifies scandals within Brazilian borders, international corruption receives less attention in Brazilian tweets. This reflects a prioritization of combating corruption at the domestic level as a step towards national improvement, especially amid the pandemic crisis and public disenchantment with corruption scandals and mismanagement of funds.

Local Media and Wide Dissemination of Scandals: The divergence between the national and international scenes, observed in both modes of communication, reflects the local media agenda and the vast territorial extension of Brazil, contributing to the amplification of scandals and the phenomenon of the "cascade of information" (Demagaard, 2018a). Although corruption scandals receive widespread coverage, corruption abroad does not stand out as significantly as in the domestic environment.

Rio de Janeiro as a Corruption Epicenter: In the context of the country, news items about corruption in both media channels place the state of Rio de Janeiro in the center. In the news articles, the state of Rio emerges with 53.7%, closely followed by São Paulo (43.9%). In tweets, the state appears at 20.3% and São Paulo at 19.4%, indicating Brazilians' increased concern about this issue on Twitter. This pattern emphasizes how crucial Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo are to the nation's economy and politics, influencing the political agenda at large.

4.3 With the focus on ‘Lava Jato’, the ‘CPI of Covid-19’ gains space in the discussions

Contrast Between Media: The contrasting approach between these two media becomes evident when comparing the comprehensive coverage of scandals and investigations in news portal articles, which meticulously delve into the complexities of corrupt practices, elucidating cause-and-effect narratives. On Twitter, on the other hand, the focus shifts to assigning blame for the far-reaching ramifications of intra-country corruption scandals and crises.

Despite these divergences in content, a discernible pattern emerges from the analysis, highlighting the recurring prioritization of topics related to scandals that stand out in both media outlets, such as 'Lava-Jato' and the 'Covid-19 CPI'. It is worth highlighting that through these scandals, both articles published on news portals and tweets play a fundamental role in shaping public perceptions about corruption, diligently seeking to uncover underlying causes and hold the individuals involved accountable, in addition to building narratives around social actors, sources, and their respective roles.

Recurring Patterns of Coverage: According to data from the CPI survey, Covid-19 emerges as the most discussed topic both in journalistic articles, representing 29.3% of mentions, and in tweets, with 40.5%. It is worth highlighting that, in a context of crisis and insecurity, this fact reflects the intense coverage and also the public interest surrounding parliamentary investigations into the pandemic in 2021. However, ‘Lava Jato’ continues to dominate journalistic articles, with 54.5%, but it is also a significant topic on Twitter, with 29.7%, highlighting its impact on both traditional media and digital platforms. In relation to older scandals, ‘Mensalão’ remains notable in the digital environment, with 11.3% of mentions in tweets, compared to 2.4% in articles.

Role of Political Parties in Corruption: In addition to addressing scandals, investigations and operations linked to corruption involving several politicians, it is also important to analyze the role of political parties in this context. This and the political actors closes a cycle in the narrative construction about corruption, comprising not only the individuals involved, but also the institutional structures that enable or facilitate such illicit practices. Given that corruption remains a pressing concern in Brazilian politics, in this section it

receives considerable media attention, illuminating the tangle of politicians and political entities across the ideological spectrum.

Portrait of Politicians Implicated in Corruption: The representation of political figures implicated in corruption resonates most prominently on news portals, reflecting the portals' narrative approach to the phenomenon and their analysis of which actors are involved in corruption in Brazil. The analysis reveals a broader spectrum of politicians linked to corruption on news portals, contrasting with tweets, where such mentions are limited, probably due to the polarization of the platform between Lula and Bolsonaro supporters and the context of an upcoming election.

One way to measure Bolsonaro's influence and relevance in the Brazilian political landscape is to look at the fact that he is mentioned in 49.7% of articles and 50.4% of the tweets that were examined. Lula, however, is mentioned in 34.5% of the examined tweets and 17.8% of journalistic publications on the portals. These figures demonstrate a substantial online presence, although traditional media coverage is minuscule in contrast.

Portrait of Political Parties Involved in Corruption: The Workers' Party (PT) stands out in journalistic articles, accounting for 21.2%, as found by an analysis of news portals. Secondly, the articles that address the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB, formerly PMDB). Following the same line of thought, PT leads with 66.6% of tweets published by Brazilians, and MDB follows with 16.7%. Therefore, conclusions suggest that the discussion of corruption is constantly linked to these two parties. This integration between traditional news outlets and social media platforms highlights the network of political dynamics and strategic alliances that shape Brazil's political landscape and emphasizes a shared narrative.

Distrust and Indignation towards Parties: On Twitter, Brazilians express deep distrust and indignation towards the main political parties, especially the PT, PSDB, DEM and MDB, due to numerous corruption scandals involving these parties. The general perception is that these parties have failed to deliver on their promises and ensure ethical integrity in politics, fueling a sense of disgust and an urgent need for change.

CONCLUSIONS

With the analysis of journalistic articles from Brazilian news portals and public tweets during the year 2021, a discernible trend was observed that sheds light on the narratives involving corruption and the media. In this sense, while these two forms of communication tend to interact, repeated occurrences and contrasts were noted within classified subgroups, highlighting both the subtle similarities and differences in the narratives between tweets and articles.

The study examined 6,780 journalistic articles and 2,036 tweets, showcasing the extensive scope of corruption in the media. This supports the idea that corruption is closely tied to social dynamics and media interaction. The trend of this relationship can be seen in earlier research by Thompson (2000), Park (2012), Rubim (2000), among other authors.

This highlights the important role the media plays in influencing public perceptions, particularly when it comes to the conversation about corruption and how it interacts with society in an environment marked by the interaction between technologies that enable and facilitate the transmission of information on a large scale (Castells, 2015).

It is evident from the analysis that news portals often develop corruption narratives following a storytelling structure, emphasizing traditional elements such as the investigation process, the impact of the corruption case, the discovery of scandalous activities, and the subsequent legal proceedings. In contrast, Twitter emerges as a vibrant stage for discussions, portraying the unrest and outrage surrounding corrupt practices, scandals, and implicated political figures.

The analysis indicates a tendency for both journalistic articles and tweets to receive significant attention at the national level, although international corruption is not disregarded. When approaching the national and international context, there is a greater emphasis on the country's internal corruption issues compared to international ones. Within this perspective, there is a greater emphasis on corruption in the states of Rio de Janeiro (RJ) and São Paulo (SP), these states being integral to the southeastern region of the country but also points of decision-making at the national level. This finding draws attention to the fact that cases are recurrent in the country's southeast on Twitter as well as news portals.

In relation to political parties and corruption, it was noted that political parties have faced increasing scrutiny in their approach to corruption-related issues in recent years on Twitter. Discussions around corruption intensified amid the various mobilizations and the prevailing national political climate, especially when it comes to the PT and MDB in a context close to the electoral dispute.

Political actors play a crucial role in representing corruption, standing out as central figures in the scandals, investigations, and operations that took place on the Brazilian scene in 2021. This occurs in a scenario in which technological advances have facilitated the wider dissemination of private conduct among leaders, politicians, and public figures, as media entities have emerged, amplifying the visibility of events.

Based on the analysis of the studies, a tendency towards a gap can be observed in the discussion against corruption in both media, particularly in terms of public political actions and education, leading to a debate on preventing the phenomenon. In this perspective, looking to future studies and in accordance with these conclusions, efforts must be made to prevent and combat corruption by encouraging transparency in government activities, strengthening anti-corruption policies, and mainly increasing public awareness about the value of ethics in society.

REFERENCES

- Amaral, M. F. (2016). Fontes testemunhais, autorizadas e experts na construção jornalística das catástrofes. *LÍBERO*, (36), 43-54. ISSN 1517-3283.
- Barros, A. D. N. F., Rodrigues, R. N., Miranda, L. C., & dos Santos, M. R. L. (2019). Last big corporate scandals in Brazil: Why Investors did not see it in the Annual Reports? *Revista Mineira de Contabilidade*, 20(1), 76-87. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21714/2446-9114RMC2019v20n1t06>.
- Berglez, P. (2013). *Global journalism: Theory and practice*. Peter Lang Publishing Group.
- Berti, C., Bratu, R., & Wickberg, S. (2020). Corruption and the media: A research agenda for studies of corruption, 107-117. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789905007.00015>.
- Bourdieu, P., Curto, D. R., Domingos, N., & Jerónimo, M. B. (1989). *O poder simbólico* (Vol. 6). Lisboa: Difel.
- Bruns, C., & Himmler, O. (2016). Mass media, instrumental information, and electoral accountability. *Journal of Public Economics*, 134, 75-84.
- Castells, M. (1997). An introduction to the information age. *City*, 2(7), 6-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604819708900050>.
- Castells, M. (2015). *A comunicação na era digital. O poder da comunicação*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra.
- Castells, M., & Cardoso, G. (2005). *A sociedade em rede: do conhecimento à ação política*.
- Carvalho Júnior, O. L. D. (2013). Visibilidade midiática e carreiras parlamentares: análise comparativa entre deputados do Brasil e da Alemanha. *Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Comunicação Política*, 1-32.
- Charron, N., Lapuente, V., & Annoni, P. (2019). Measuring quality of government in EU regions across space and time. *Papers in Regional Science*, 98(5), 1925-1953. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pirs.12437>.
- Charron, N., & Annoni, P. (2021). What is the influence of news media on people's perception of corruption? Parametric and non-parametric approaches. *Social Indicators Research*, 153(3), 1139-1165. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-020-02527-0>.
- Cunha, I. F., & Araújo, B. (2018). As notícias sobre corrupção e as redes de sociabilidade: um estudo exploratório em Portugal, Brasil e Angola. *Observatorio (OBS*)*, 12(2), 90-107. ISSN-e 1646-5954.

- Damgaard, M. (2015). Corruption: Multiple margins and mediatized transgression. *Ephemera: theory & politics in organization*, 15(2). ISSN 1473-2866 (Online), ISSN 2052-1499 (Print).
- Feezell, J. T. (2018). Agenda setting through social media: The importance of incidental news exposure and social filtering in the digital era. *Political Research Quarterly*, 71(2), 482-494. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106591291774489>.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2011). Case study. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 4, 301-316.
- Gamson, W. A., Croteau, D., Hoynes, W., & Sasson, T. (1992). Media images and the social construction of reality. *Annual review of sociology*, 18(1), 373-393. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.18.080192.002105>.
- Gray, C.W., & Kaufmann, D. (1998). Corruption and development. *Finance & Development*, 18(1), 7-10.
- Hindman, D. B. (2012). Changes in community power structures. In *Changing the News* (pp. 118-135). Routledge.
- Heywood, P. M. (2007). Corruption in contemporary Spain. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 40(4), 695-699. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096507071119>.
- Hrenechen, V. C. D. A. T., & Gadini, S. L. (2018). O papel do Twitter no agendamento jornalístico em mídia regional no Paraná. *Novos Olhares*, 7(2), 64-77.
- Huntington, S. P. (1991). How countries democratize. *Political Science Quarterly*, 106(4), 579-616.
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- De Lima, V. A. (2006). *Mídia: crise política e poder no Brasil*. Editora Fundação Perseu Abramo.
- Magnagnagno, O. A., Luciano, E. M., & Wiedenhöft, G. (2022). Impact of Information System Institutionalization on Corruption in the Brazilian Public Health System. *Transforming Government: People, Process, and Policy*.
- Mancini, P., Mazzoni, M., & Zoltan, S. (2017). Case studies on corruption involving journalists: Conclusion. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(6), 566-582.
- Mancini, P., Mazzoni, M., Cornia, A., & Marchetti, R. (2001). Representations of corruption in the British, French, and Italian press: Audience segmentation and the lack of universally shared indignation. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 6(1), 44-65.

McDermott, M. L., Schwartz, D., & Vallejo, S. (2015). Talking the talk but not walking the walk: Public reactions to hypocrisy in political scandal. *American Politics Research*, 43(6), 952-974. DOI: 10.1177/1532673X15577830.

Park, C. S. (2012, September). How the media frame political corruption: Episodic and thematic frame stories found in Illinois newspapers. Paper Originally Prepared for the Ethics and Reform Symposium on Illinois Government (September 27-28, 2012). Available in: <https://paulsimoninstitute.siu.edu/common/documents/whats-in-the-water/water-illinois/park.pdf>. Accessed: March 1, 2024.

Rothstein, B., & Varraich, A. (2017). *Making sense of corruption*. Cambridge University Press.

Rizzica, L., & Tonello, M. (2015). *Exposure to media and corruption perceptions*. Bank of Italy Temi di Discussione (working paper) no. 1043. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2757071>.

Robinson, J. A., & Acemoglu, D. (2012). *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. London: Profile.

Rose-Ackerman, S. (2005). *The challenge of poor governance and corruption*. *Especial 1 DIREITO GV L. Rev.*, 207.

Rose-Ackerman, S. (2008). *Corruption and government*. *International peacekeeping*, 15(3), 328-343. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533310802058802>.

Rothstein, B., & Varraich, A. (2017). *Making sense of corruption*. Cambridge University Press.

Rubim, A. A. C. (2000). *A contemporaneidade como idade mídia*. *Interface-Comunicação, Saúde, Educação*, 4(7), 25-36. Available in: <https://www.scielo.org/pdf/icse/v4n7/03.pdf>. Accessed: March 1, 2024.

Salge, C. A. D. L., & Karahanna, E. (2018). *Protesting corruption on Twitter: Is it a bot or is it a person?*. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 4(1), 32-49. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2015.0121>.

Sinha, A. (2019). *The networked public: how social media is changing democracy*. Rupa Publications India Pvt. Limited.

Tella, R. D., & Franceschelli, I. (2011). Government advertising and media coverage of corruption scandals. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 3(4), 119-151. DOI: 10.1257/app.3.4.119.

Teremetskyi, V., Duliba, Y., Kroitor, V., Korchak, N., & Makarenko, O. (2021). Corruption and strengthening anti-corruption efforts in healthcare during the pandemic of Covid-19. *Medico-Legal Journal*, 89(1), 25-28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0025817220971925>.

Thompson, J. B. (2000). *Political Scandal: Power and Visibility in the Media Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Thompson, J. B. (2005). *The New Visibility. Theory, Culture & Society*, 22(6), 31-51.
DOI: 10.1177/0263276405059413.

Thompson, J. B., & Guareschi, P. A. (2002). *O escândalo político: poder e visibilidade na era da mídia*.

Tufekci, Z. (2014a). Social movements and governments in the digital age: Evaluating a complex landscape. *Journal of International Affairs*, 1-18.

Tufekci, Z. (2017). *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. Yale University Press.

Tufekci, Z. (2018). *How Social Media Took Us from Tahrir Square to Donald Trump*. MIT Technology Review, 14, 18.

Tumber, H. (2004). Scandal and media in the United Kingdom: From major to Blair. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 47(8), 1122-1137.

Tumber, H., & Waisbord, S. (2019). *Media and Scandal*. In *The Routledge Companion to Media and Scandal* (pp. 10-21). Routledge. ISBN 9781351173001.

Varraich, A. (2014). Corruption: An umbrella concept. ISSN1653-8919.

Von Alemann, U. (2004). The unknown depths of political theory: The case for a multidimensional concept of corruption. *Crime L. & Soc. Change*, 42, 25.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/B:CRIS.0000041035.21045.1d>.

Waisbord, S. (2000). *Watchdog Journalism in South America: News, Accountability, and Democracy*. Columbia University Press.

Publications

1. Scientific books, book chapters;

- Overview of communication between corruption and political actors in Brazil: an analysis between news portals and Twitter. Canarias, encrucijada de comunicaciones e informaciones en el Atlántico a lo largo de la Historia. – Güímar (Santa Cruz de Tenerife) : Densura, 2023. ISBN:978-84-09-48243-6
- Souza, C. (2023). Convergencia entre la corrupción y la pandemia de coronavirus en Brasil. In *El periodismo, la covid-19, la " gripe española" y las epidemias históricas* (pp. 219-238). Editorial Fragua. ISBN: 978-84-7074-992-6

2. Articles in scholarly journals;

- e Souza, C. S. (2019). Making sense of corruption by Bo Rothstein and Aiysha Varraich. *Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 10(2), 195-200 .ISSN:2061-5558E-ISSN:2062-087X
- SOUZA, CIBELE SILVA E ; Leal, Paulo Roberto Figueira ; OLIVEIRA, LUIZ ADEMIR DE (2018) . Das eleições de 2014 ao impeachment de 2016: as estratégias de Dilma Rousseff (PT) e de Aécio Neves (PSDB) no contexto de personalização da política. CONEXÃO: COMUNICAÇÃO E CULTURA , v. 18, p. 114-132, 2020. DOI:10.18226/21782687
- Souza, C Silva e. Convergence between Corruption and the Coronavirus Pandemic in Brazil. KKI Policy Brief, Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2020. Available: https://kki.hu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/E-2020_96_brazil.pdf. ISSN 2416-0148
- Souza, C. S. e. The Evidence of Populism in the Narratives of the President of Brazil during the Covid-19 Pandemic. KOME, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.17646/KOME.of.11>

Last conferences:

- V Congreso Hª del Periodismo Canario (ES) Overview of communication between corruption scandals in Brazil: an analysis between news portals and Twitter -Article submitted on: October / 2022 -Status: Presented.
- XVII Congreso Internacional de la Asociación de Historiadores de la Comunicación 9 diciembre, 2021, 9:00 am - 10 diciembre, 2021, (ES) Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y de la Comunicación Campus de Guajara La Laguna, Santa Cruz de Tenerife 38200 España
- Tth Interdisciplinary Doctoral Conference (IDK2020) University of Pécs-Hungary A look at the media in Brazil: the links between Covid-19 and corruption.
- Transparency International Transparency School 2021, 2-7 August 2021 Summer School – Vilnius Transparency School is an annual state-of-the-art anti-corruption and accountability training for future leaders. The school network currently unites more than 1300 future leaders from more than 120 countries.

