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# The Green March Movement: Fighting Political Corruption in the Dominican Republic

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Juan Antonio Rodríguez Caba

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Walden University  
2018

Abstract

The Green March Movement: Fighting Political Corruption in the Dominican Republic

by

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MBA, St. Thomas University, 1992

Juris Doctor, Eugenio María Hostos University, 1985

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

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November 2018

## Abstract

Social movements have increased as a way of supporting groups in their protests. This study addressed what factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement in its fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. The purpose of this case study was to explore the Green March movement's actions by using Meyer's conceptualization of political opportunity theory. The research questions addressed what factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement and what strategies and tactics were used. The research design was a qualitative, instrumental case study and data were collected through interviews with 12 members of the Green March movement. These data were transcribed, inductively coded, and then subjected to Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis procedure. Findings of the study supported the undergoing political opportunities by the Green March movement within the political structure of the Dominican government. There were 3 key themes that emerged from this study indicating the conditions for mobilizations to happen such as tolerance by the government, powerful methods to communicate grievances and concerns, and the lack of a repressive governmental system. Finally, the findings help explain political openness and the curvilinear relationship between political corruption and mobilizations of the Green March movement. If political reforms are achieved because of the movement, the country's political system may transform from treating politics as a business to treating politics as a social service to promote the common good. Therefore, this study's findings can lead to positive social change by providing more information on the Green March movement and what makes it successful for the Dominican people.

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## Dedication

This research paper is in memoriam of my father Dr. Pedro Antonio Rodríguez Acosta, whose aspirations for his descendants were always the enrichment of knowledge through the commitment of a higher education. Of course, this is only the beginning of a journey that will never end. As a result, I also want to extend this “paternal aspiration” to my children Katie and Chris, my granddaughter Leilani, and my yet generations to come.

His efforts for my brothers and sisters to achieve a professional career has been my motivation to become an agent of social change in the Dominican society and yet around the world.

Father, you will be always in my mind!

With love,

Johnny

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

For decades, the fight against political corruption has been the focus of scholars and politicians in the Dominican Republic and other countries supporting anticorruption strategies. However, it was not until Green March demonstrations that Dominican society voiced discontent with the political system and government institutions of the country not addressing corruption. Corruption scandals in the Dominican Republic have been perpetuated by government officials without consequences. The most notable bribery case in the country has been the Odebrecht case (Moliné, 2017). This event marked the closing stages of tolerating nepotism in the Dominican Republic as well as the beginning of the Green March movement working against political corruption and impunity in the country (Marcha Verde, 2017).

The present study was conducted to explore the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement. I examined the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement as well as the strategies and tactics used. The study fills a gap in literature by identifying factors or structural opportunities leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement in the political context of the Dominican government. In addition, little has been said about what strategies and tactics have been used by social movements in the fight against corruption. Therefore, I explored the process of the Green March movement against political corruption in the Dominican Republic and examined the experiences of the civic groups joining the Green March movement.

This study will be the first scientific work produced in the Dominican Republic about the Green March social movement fighting political corruption in the country and the primary research paper to apply political opportunity theory to a social movement in the Dominican Republic. The results of this study will provide insight into the political system and government institutions of the country regarding the application of new concepts and processes relating to the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. Potential social implications for the study include the promotion of the virtue of ethics as well as increased public integrity of government officials.

This chapter includes the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework for the study, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, significance, and a summary of the chapter.

### **Background**

The fight against corruption is important for the political, economic, and social stability of the Dominican Republic and other economies in transition, which is why social movements around the world are active in addressing corruption. For instance, social movements worldwide have emerged with a strong hegemony and resistance different from social movements in the past century. Vanden (2007) stated that “They have left the traditional twentieth-century parties far behind to create a non-authoritarian, participatory political culture; using existing political space to maximum effect, they are substantially strengthening participatory democratic practice and significantly altering political life” (Abstract). This is the case for the anticorruption movement by Hazare in

India for more than 35 years. Hazare also addressed the way the World Bank combats corruption and the need of sacrifice and righteousness for leaders fighting corruption (Chowdhury, Banerjee, & Nagarkoti, 2016). Another example is the case of the Indian Summer in which an unprecedented mass mobilization took place for the ratification of the Jan Lokpal Bill. The document included a set of anticorruption strategies and initiatives for better government corruption controls, and the protests were influenced by the need to reform the image of India and social relations (Krandekar & Reddy, 2013). As a final example, collective beliefs and grievances brought together protesters from the Arab region in the fight against corruption and demands for democracy in the Arab Spring of 2011. Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit and vegetables street vendor in Tunisia was the precursor of this mobilization after being humiliated for refusing to bribe police inspectors (National Public Radio, 2011). Insurrections and protests of millions of citizens from Tunisia, Egypt, Lybia, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Oman supported corruption complaints before government authorities and led to the desertion of major rulers and autocrats in the Middle East (National Public Radio, 2011).

Mobilization of social movements against political corruption is uncommon in communist societies due to power controls exercised by the ruling party. However, research on corruption controls in China with young university students revealed that participants condemned political corruption and agreed with the punishment and demotion of government officials involved in acts of corruption (Jiang, Lo & Li, 2013). The study also uncovered the importance of social censure in the fight against political



corruption. The ruling group uses social censure as a natural and impartial technique to manipulate others about an interest or concern (Jiang et al., 2013). A different perspective on addressing political corruption is shown by a recent study at the institution level in Brazil. Archival data in the “Lava Plato” case (car wash operations) served as main source of information for investigation on the Odebrecht corruption scandal in Brazil. Several factors such as policy changes and institutional commitment on corruption cases led to new development in addressing corruption (Castro & Anzari, 2017). This reflects a means of corruption control in which the state powers, mostly the judiciary, work with extreme independence but collaborate with each other.

Inconsistencies on the political structure of the ruling party of the Dominican Republic have originated opportunities for the Green March movement to express grievances and rejection for corruption acts executed by current and prior government officials. On January 22, 2017, the founding fathers of the movement organized the first protest rally in the capital city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic with around 100,000 protesters in the streets (Marcha Verde, 2017). The Odebrecht corruption scandal in the Dominican Republic was the beginning of the Green March movement to end political corruption and impunity. Participants of the Green March movement include the civil society, civic organizations, members of the business sector, and religious organizations.

More demonstrations of the Green March movement were prearranged across the country with the inclusion of emblematic events such as the Green Day, the Green Book, and the Green Flame (Marcha Verde, 2017). The grassroots social movement expanded

its demonstrations in international cities with large populations of Dominicans. Current demands by the Green March movement include the indictments for all those involved in the Odebrecht case, the recovery of the money stolen through bribes from the ballooned cost of work, the cancelling of all Odebrecht contracts in the country, and the appointment of a commission of independent prosecutors accompanied with the United Nations to investigate Odebrecht corruption scandal during the administration of President Danilo Medina and former presidents Leonel Fernandez and Hipolito Mejia (Dominican Today, 2017). The activities organized by the Green March social movement represent the largest civic mobilization ever formed in modern history of the Dominican Republic (Moliné, 2017).

The fight against political corruption has been a concern not only for economies in transition around the world but also for strong economies like the United States in which corruption is perceived as influence market. The goal for social actors fighting corruption is to build reliable institutions able to measure the abuse of power for the collective interest and to reduce deterrent for social change within government and political institutions (Johnston, 2012). Because fighting political corruption is important, especially for developing countries, this study was conducted to fill a gap in literature by identifying factors or structural opportunities leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement in the political context of the Dominican government as well as the strategies and tactics of the movement. The study also addresses the experiences of the civic groups joining the Green March movement because they have not been heard in published literature.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem this study was focused on is what factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement in addressing political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. This study also addressed gaps in knowledge by including political opportunity theory to examine the factors that led to the Green movement's mobilization as well as the strategies and tactics of the movement. Different factors in the political context of the Dominican Republic influenced the mobilization of the Green March movement.

First, the Odebrecht corruption scandal was the most important factor leading the Green March movement to mobilize into the largest mass demonstration in modern history of the Dominican Republic (Moliné, 2017). Between 2001 and 2014, Odebrecht was the beneficiary of nearly 17 contracts for major infrastructure works in the Dominican Republic, with a profit margin of around \$163 million dollars because of illegal payments of more than \$92 million dollars to government officials in the country (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). During 14 years of operations, Odebrecht made nearly 101 money transfers transactions to its representative in the Dominican Republic who was responsible to interface with the government and paid bribes to government officials to secure public works contracts in the country (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). On December 21, 2016, the U.S. government addressed the company's ability to engage in bid riggings through a group of affiliated companies to the Brazilian giant. Further investigation revealed that Odebrecht intermediary in the Dominican Republic used to bribe public officials and politicians for manipulation of government budgets and

financing endorsement for public works in the country (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016).

The Odebrecht corruption scandal led to much protest against political corruption because the scandal led to the arrest of important government officials and politicians of Latin America. Some examples included the case of Brazil with the imprisonment of former president Lula Da Silva, the removal from office of recent President Dilma Rousseff, and further investigation for government corruption to actual President Michel Temer. There was also the arrest for corruption charges of former President of Peru Alejandro Toledo; investigation on improper donations for the 2014 presidential campaign for Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos; demands for resignation of Guatemala President Jimmy Morales Cabrera for government corruption; and investigations on corruption scandals for the daughter in law of Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and former Argentinean President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner (Transparency International, 2016). Currently, the Green March movement has organized and executed nine mobilizations across the country against political corruption and impunity.

Second, the mobilization of the Green March movement was influenced by the escalated concern about political corruption in the Dominican Republic, cited by local surveys as the most important problem for the Dominican population (Moliné, 2017). Such concerns were not only about current corruption scandals but also for corrupt acts executed in previous administrations. Most notable corruption cases awaiting trial in the Dominican Republic are Odebrecht, Super Tucanos (Bribery on Airplane Purchase

Order), embezzlement of INAPA ex-director (Water Department), embezzlement of San Cristobal Mayor Raul Mondesi, bribery and kickbacks on OISOE (Public Works Department), CORDE embezzlement (State Enterprises Corporation), CEA bribery and embezzlement (Sugar State Council), judges bribery, and prosecutors bribery (El Dia, 2017). These cases led the Dominican Republic to be tagged as one of the most corrupt countries in the globe. The Corruption Perceptions Index 2016 ranked the Dominican Republic in the 120th place out of 176 polled countries, and on a scale of 0 (very corrupt) to 100 (very clean) the country score was 31, meaning that the perceived level of corruption in the public sector was high (Transparency International, 2016). In addition, a worldwide study by the World Economic Forum found that corruption was largely responsible for the inability of doing business in the Dominican Republic, affecting the overall economic performance of the nation (Schwab, 2016).

Third, the mobilization of the Green March movement took place because of the declining popularity of the ruling party after intensive debates for presidential reelection and a turbulent electoral process despite a high percentage of votes for President Danilo Medina (Moliné, 2017). Moreover, the political structure of the PLD (Partido de la Liberacion Dominicana) was deteriorating due to the natural political erosion of the party after being in power for more than 16 years.

The last factor leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement was the debilitated state and lack of capacity to demand and evaluate results by the opposition party PRM (Partido Revolucionario Moderno). Annoyed people with the PLD joined forces with the Green March social movement to express their discontent with

government officials involved in corruption acts. The success of mass demonstrations across the country has motivated the continued integration and participation of citizens into the Green March movement (Moliné, 2017).

These factors describe the vulnerability of the ruling party and the entire political system of the Dominican Republic, which led to the Green March Social Movement mobilizing against political corruption and impunity in the country. This “political openness” is a core element of the political process approach instituted by Eisinger (1973). There is also a curvilinear relationship between the incidence of mobilizations of the Green March movement and political openness (Meyer, 2004). Lastly, the conditions for the mobilization of the Green March movement can be explained by Tilly’s (1978) statement that mobilizations happen when activists do not need to use powerful means to voice their concerns nor are they repressed to prevent them from manifestation.

By examining the factors that led to the Green movement’s mobilization with the political opportunity theory to understand social movement mobilization in the Dominican Republic, this study addresses a gap in the literature. In addition, this study addresses a gap in knowledge regarding the strategies and tactics used by social movements to address corruption. Therefore, I explored the process of the Green March movement against political corruption in the Dominican Republic and examined the experiences of the civic groups joining the Green March movement because they have not been heard in published literature.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to explore the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement. Thus, I examined the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement as well as the strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. The fight was defined as the agenda of social revindications demanded by the Green March movement to the Dominican government.

### **Research Questions**

Research Question 1: What factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?

Research Question 2: What strategies and tactics were used by the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?

### **Theoretical Foundation**

The theoretical foundation of the study is the political opportunity theory of social theorists Peter Eisinger, Sidney Tarrow, David Meyer, and Doug McAdam. In the 1960s, sociologists and political scientists began to analyze political protest and movements in the context of a diverse political system (Meyer, 2004). They determined that leaders of activist groups were emotionally more stable than organizers of static social groups (Kenistan, 1968), and that activists were able to participate in social groups and political organizations at the same time (Parkin, 1968). Contrary to the value-added theory

movement, scholars examined the influence of political protest for reforms and enactment of new public policies and suggested that activists can produce social change (Meyer, 2004). Later, research was conducted to evaluate the process of how mobilizations and activists interact in civic organizations. This examination led analysts to focus on the nature of the political context and activist grievances, leading to the political opportunity theory (Meyer, 2004).

The political opportunity theory emphasizes the importance of the interaction of protesters and institutional politics and can be used to identify opportunities in the political structure of states to create social change (Meyer, 2004). Eisinger (1973) was the first analyst to use the political opportunity approach to examine race and poverty demonstrations in American cities at the middle of the last century. Eisinger underlined “political openness” as a core element of the political process approach and stated that the more receptive a state structure was the more chances for activists to prompt riots (Eisinger, 1973). Tilly worked toward the development of a more extensive theory based on the findings of Eisinger, addressing variation in political opportunities through different instances and optimizing strategic opportunities over time for a social vindication. Eisinger and Tilly argued that there is a curvilinear relationship between the incidence of protests and political openness. Tilly pointed out that protests take place when members of a disadvantaged group use powerful methods to communicate their grievances and concerns, and that mobilizations occur as a result of the lack of a repressive system that allows activist to protest (Tilly, 1978).



In addition to Eisinger's and Tilly's research on political opportunity, Tarrow's McAdam's, and Meyer's research contributed to the theoretical foundation for this study. Tarrow (1989) studied protest and politics in Italy, focusing on mobilization of numerous social movements and outlining phases of protest with the interplay of institutional politics, social protest, and disorder. Additionally, McAdam (1982) examined the political process and the development of Black insurgency from 1930-1970, looking at the different factors such as policy changes and political environment influencing the mobilization of social movements. McAdam contributed to the development of a more comprehensive approach by offering political opportunity theory as an option for collective behavior theory and resource mobilization approach (Meyer, 2004). Activists choose goals and strategies based on grievances with the political structure. The political structure of states, along with the location of different social actors, influences the selection of the most appropriate approach for the mobilization of the group (Meyer, 2004).

The political opportunity theory relates to the present case study by addressing the structural opportunities leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement in the political context of the Dominican Republic. Activists of the Green March movement have taken advantage of the political openness in the political structure of the Dominican ruling party to express their grievances about acts of corruption by government officials and mobilize the group. The political process approach allowed me to answer Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 and examine the factors leading

to mobilization and to identify strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Nature of the Study**

The nature of this study is qualitative method with an instrumental case study as the strategy of inquiry. The qualitative research is consistent with exploring the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement in its fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic, which is the center of this research paper. The interpretation of the qualitative study is based on the observations and understandings of the researcher in the natural setting where participants experience the process under study (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative method was appropriate with the phenomenon under study because of the active role of examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants. Because this case study was conducted in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, it is bounded by place. The target population for this study was members of the Green March social movement.

The approach in this study involves the philosophical assumption of epistemology where the researcher seeks full interaction with participants in the study. Further, biased data is gathered based on participant views (Creswell, 2013). The collection of subjective data uncovered the meaning for participant's actions and behavior for the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic, which helped produce conclusions for the study.

### **Definitions**

This section provides definitions of key concepts and terms used in the study.

*Influence market:* This term is used to describe American corruption through the influence of lobby groups to U.S. Congress. Johnston (2012) points out “In many ways Influence Market corruption undermines the vigorous political participation and robust framework of values that democratic corruption control require” (Abstract).

*Mobilization:* Mobilization is defined as the process of having people and resources ready for mass demonstration (Your Dictionary, 2017). In the present case study, members of the Green March movement organized the first protest rally on January 22, 2017 to claim a series of social revindications for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

*Political corruption and impunity:* These terms are main constructs of the study. Political corruption is used to describe bribes and kickbacks within the public sector of the Dominican Republic. The term *impunity* refers to the privilege of public officials of not being brought to justice for further punishments by corruption crimes. Impunity is also associated to the trait or characteristic of some public officials considered “untouchables” due to their political and economic contributions to the ruling party. The end of political corruption and impunity throughout the country is the goal of the Green March movement.

*Political opportunities:* The term is used to describe current opportunities or chances for reform due to failures of the political system. After the Odebrecht corruption scandal, the Green March movement noted the opportunity for social change against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

*Political system:* This term is used to describe the current ruling party PLD (Partido de la Liberacion Dominicana) along with traditional political parties PRSC (Partido Reformista Social Cristiano) and PRD (Partido Revolucionario Dominicano). The political system is also composed of prominent business leaders, the Catholic Church, and nontraditional parties, the most notable the PRM (Partido Revolucionario Moderno).

*Social movement:* This term is defined as a group of individuals sharing the same principles and values in regard to a social or political issue and with a predetermined purpose or cause.

*Social revindications:* The term is defined as demands or complaints filed against the Dominican government and the political system of the country by the Green March social movement. The current petitions from the Green Movement are: (a) The indictments of public officials involved in the Odebrecht case, (b) The recovery of the money stolen through bribes and from the ballooned cost of work, (c) The cancellation of all contracts assigned to Odebrecht in the country, and (d) The appointment of a commission of independent prosecutors accompanied with the United Nations to investigate Odebrecht corruption scandal during the administration of President Danilo Medina and former presidents Leonel Fernandez and Hipolito Mejia (Dominican Today, 2017).

*Structural opportunities:* Kurzman (1996) defines *structural opportunities* as the vulnerability of the state to popular political pressure (p. 153).

*The Green Book:* The Green Book is a volume of signatures collected all through the country by the Green March. On February 22, 2017 members of the Green March delivered to the National Palace a set of green books with 312,415 notarized signatures requesting President Danilo Medina to appoint a commission of independent prosecutors along with the United Nations to investigate Odebrecht corruption scandal in the country (Dominican Today, 2017). Currently, the book is open for more citizens to sign.

*The Green Day:* The Green Day was established on February 22, 2017 to celebrate the first month of achievement of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic (El Caribe, 2017). The Green Day celebration initiated with a national mobilization journey using the green color of hope for garments, flags, or others objects in vehicles, businesses, homes, educational centers, and at the workplace.

*The Green Flame:* The Green Flame was a promotional event of the Green March social movement from March 12 and March 20 of 2017. Members of the movement carried candles and torches across the country until its destination of Independence Park in the city of Santo Domingo. The event culminated with the lighting of the main torch among cultural activities and social manifestations (Listin Diario, 2017).

*The Green March:* The Green March is a grassroots social movement that came into light on January 22, 2017. It is considered the first nonpartisan group composed of the civil society, civic organizations, members of the business sector, and religious organizations among others. The Green March movement has representation in cities in

which there are great populations of Dominicans such as New York, Miami, Boston, Philadelphia, Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, and others.

### **Assumptions**

This study includes significant philosophical assumptions to the meaningfulness of the study. One significant assumption is that corruption networks stimulate economies in developing countries. Many development communities are not adhered to practices operating on equality and ethical behavior like in modern Western societies. These communities assure the functioning of their institutions by establishing a modern legal-rational form of authority with legit power to expedite any public affair (Sharma, 2013). Therefore, corruption networks contribute to a rapid turnaround of goods and services, which then stimulate the economies of such corrupt countries. This assumption is important to the study because (a) actual statements contradict principles and practices of modern states, and (b) this assertion is in disagreement with the purpose of the Green March movement.

Another important assumption relates to this study's social implications for positive change: Contributions of the Green March case study against political corruption and impunity may be significant to the Dominican society as well as to other countries fighting corruption. Long before the emergence of the Green March movement, community leaders and other important figures of the civic society had expressed grievances of political corruption and impunity in the country. Many protests were made for public transparency and other social revindications, but change was not achieved at that time. This means that considerations for social change in the public sector of the

Dominican Republic will depend on the willingness of the ruling party for changes in policy and political structure. Therefore, the present assumption is significant to the study because of the Dominican government competency for promoting and supporting social change in the country.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

Attention is given to the Odebrecht corruption scandal in this study because it is the main factor leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement. The Green March movement has increased after the Odebrecht corruption scheme was dismantled by the U.S. government in which the Brazilian construction company admitted to bribing public officials in the Dominican Republic with approximately \$92 million from 2001 to 2014 to win multi-million dollar contracts in the country (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). This study was also focused on social revindications of the Green March movement, such as indictments for all those involved in the Odebrecht case, the recovery of the money stolen through bribes from the ballooned cost of work, and the cancelling of all Odebrecht contracts in the country (Dominican Today, 2017), are seen as strategic plans of the movement that fall under the precepts of the political opportunity theory. The Green March has been a grassroots social movement capable to organize people like entrepreneurs, religious organizations, community leaders, democratic and human rights organizations among others.

Boundaries of the study were defined by purposeful sampling, which allows researchers to choose participants for the study that conveys firm information related to the appreciation of the research problem and main event in the study (Creswell, 2013).

The population in the present study was composed of individuals who have participated actively in demonstrations of the Green March movement in the country. In contrast, individuals who have not participated in activities of the Green March were excluded from the research study.

### **Limitations**

One methodological weakness is the narrow range of the study. I chose the Green March movement as the only social movement for this case study on fighting political corruption in the Dominican Republic, which limits the extent of the study and the chance to include new perspectives and insights. Another weakness of the approach is associated with the boundaries of the case study in terms of time, event, and processes. Though Green March movement has begun, it is uncertain when the process will end and if new developments will appear, which affects the effectiveness of the boundaries surrounding the case. There were no issues related to limitations of transferability and dependability of the study.

Another limitation is researcher bias, which could have influenced the study outcomes. The philosophical assumption of epistemology, which is a fundamental notion of this study, denotes the active role of researchers seeking full interaction with participants in the study (Creswell, 2013). However, my involvement attending Green March demonstrations may jeopardize the credibility of the study because government officials and members of the ruling party may see me as an insider or interested party. Therefore, adjustment on the role of the researcher was necessary to counter bias during the study.



Measures were taken to address limitations in this study. For example, selecting more than one case can dilute the overall analysis of the study (Creswell, 2013). To counteract this limitation, I selected one case: the Green March movement. Additionally, a measure to address my role as the researcher was having a more conservative role in the Green March demonstrations or assuming no role in the demonstrations while conducting personal interviews of Green March movement members.

### **Significance**

For decades, the fight against political corruption has been the topic of discussion among scholars and politicians in the Dominican Republic and other countries supporting anticorruption strategies. However, it is not until Green March demonstrations that the Dominican society expressed discontent with the political system and government institutions of the country not addressing political corruption. This case study of the Green March movement fighting against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic may be the first scientific work about this social movement. A great number of corruption reports have been prepared by international organizations in the country, the most relevant being Transparency International, the World Economic Forum, the United Nations, the U.S. Department of Commerce and its affiliations. However, what remains to be explored is the process of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. This study addresses a gap regarding the examination of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic and the effects of the process.

The present study also fill a gap in literature through the use of political opportunity theory to identify factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement and the strategies and tactics used in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. Insights from this study may help government institutions in all countries to succeed in their fight against political corruption, thus promoting ethics among elected officials within the public sector.

Additionally, the results of this study provide needed insight into the political system and government institutions of the Dominican Republic regarding the application of new concepts and processes in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the country. Collective revindications have been the milestone for social change by addressing inequalities in society. A typical scenario of this process is the case of the Moroccan Green March on November 1975 to compel Spain to hand over the territory of Spanish Sahara to Morocco (Mundy, 2006). Since mass demonstrations are presented all over the country, supporting the successful attainment of the Green March movement toward having a less corrupt society allows for increased standards of living in the nation and a more equitable allocation of public funds.

### **Summary**

This chapter included reasons for the study as well as the potential social implications of the study for positive change in the Dominican Republic. The research literature related to the scope of the study topic was also summarized, indicating a gap in knowledge in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. Evidence of consensus on the problem statement was also provided,

highlighting the significance and relevance. The purpose statement was presented as a statement to connect the corruption phenomenon and the Green March movement.

A research question and a sub-question have been established for alignment with research standards. The theoretical foundation of the study is the political opportunity theory of social theorists Eisinger, Tarrow, Meyer and McAdam. A concise rationale for the nature of the study has been provided with a brief description of the corruption phenomenon, the use of the qualitative methodology in this research paper, and how data will be collected and analyzed. Definitions of the most important terms in the study have been offered including the terms *mobilization* and *political corruption and impunity* which are the main constructs of the study.

The research paper has included three assumptions critical to the meaningfulness of the dissertation with the rationale for the inclusion in the context of the study. The scope and delimitation section has described specific aspects of the research problem that are addressed in the study and the reasons for choosing the corruption phenomenon. In addition, the segment has defined the boundaries of the study by identifying populations included and excluded as well as conceptual frameworks most related to the area of study that were not investigated. The limitation section has described the methodological weakness of the design and reasonable measures to address the constraint. The study has identified potential contributions for social change that are consistent with the scope of the study and that also advance knowledge to the discipline.

New concepts and propositions are discussed next in Chapter 2. The chapter will provide a broad description of the literature search strategy to be used, the theoretical

foundation appropriate to the paper, and the literature review related to key variables of the study.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

This study was focused on what factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement's fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. In this case study, I examined factors such as the Odebrecht corruption scandal, the escalated concern about political corruption in the Dominican Republic, the declining popularity of the ruling party leader, the deteriorating political structure of the ruling party (PLD), and the political inability of the opposition party (PRM).

The combination of structural conduciveness, structural strain, generalized beliefs, and precipitating factors trigger the mobilization of participants for control of social issues (Flynn, 2013). Mobilization is the key for social movements to grow and consolidate their objectives for social change. Mobilizations of contemporary, postindustrial social movements have distinguished from traditional social movements by having coverage of territory in their rallies. A typical example of this phenomenon is the Arab Spring of 2011 where mobilizations of the group covered the entire Middle East including countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Lybia, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Oman (National Public Radio, 2011). Another case with similar proportions is the anticorruption movement of Anna Hazare in India in which an unprecedented mass mobilization took place in the entire country for the ratification of the Jan Lokpal Bill (Krandekar & Reddy, 2013). Social movements around the world have established a no authoritarian, participatory political culture, using political space to intensify mass participation for social reforms (Vanden, 2007).

In the Dominican Republic, the Green March social movement is the result of continuing irregularities in the country's administration as well as inconsistencies of social actors on corruption controls. The ability of the Green March movement to recognize their strength and take advantage of political opportunities for mobilization is an integral part of the causal factors of the political process theory. This concept is also known as the *cognitive liberation factor* of McAdam (1982). In addition, the vulnerability of the Dominican government allowed the Green March movement to mobilize against political corruption and impunity in the country. This event of political openness is another core element of the political process approach by Eisinger (1973) that was used in the theoretical foundation for this study. The curvilinear relationship between the incidence of mobilizations of the Green March movement and political openness assumes that the more susceptible the political structure of the Dominican government was the more chances had the Green March movement for mobilization (Eisinger, 1973; Tilly, 1978). Additionally, the Green March movement encountered no obstacles or constraints by the Dominican government for mobilization, relating to how mobilizations can occur in political structures where they are not repressed (Tilly, 1978).

This chapter includes a comprehensive synthesis of the current literature that established the relevance of the problem. The chapter also addresses major themes in the literature and how the present study fills the gap in literature and extends knowledge in the discipline. The chapter also contains a description of literature search strategy, the theoretical foundation of the study, literature review related to key variables including political corruption, international allies in the fight against corruption, approaches to fight

corruption, mobilization of social movements, related studies on the fight against corruption, and a summary of the chapter and conclusions.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

Through Walden library, I conducted a literature search for the study. I searched around 100 articles by topics, found articles, and used Google Scholar. For instance, by selecting the policy, administration, and security as a topic, I was able to search policy and administration databases such as Political Science Complete and SAGE Journals. In addition, I searched multiple databases as well as multidisciplinary databases such as Thoreau Multi-Database Search, Expanded Academic ASAP, ProQuest Central, and Academic Search Complete with EBSCOhost. I also searched articles and books related to the scope of the study recommended by my chair. Lastly, Google Scholar played a significant role for definitions and translations of concepts from Spanish to English. Keywords and concepts used in the literature search include *mobilization*, *social movements*, *political opportunity*, *political corruption*, *anti-corruption strategies*, *fight against corruption*, and *political structure*.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

The theoretical foundation of the study was the political opportunity theory of social theorists Eisinger, Tarrow, Meyer, and McAdam. In the 1960s, sociologists and political scientists began to analyze political protest and movements in the context of a diverse political system (Meyer, 2004), determining that activists were able to produce social change by being in social groups and political organizations at the same time (Parkin, 1968). Later research on the process of how mobilizations and activists interact

in civic organizations led analysts to focus on political context and activist grievances, leading to the political opportunity theory (Meyer, 2004). The political opportunity theory emphasizes the interaction of protesters toward institutional politics and helps identify opportunities in political structure to create social change (Meyer, 2004).

Eisinger (1973) was the first analyst to use the political opportunity approach, outlining political openness as a core element and stating that the more receptive a state structure was, the more chances there were for activists to prompt riots. Tilly (1978) developed a more extensive theory based on the findings of Eisinger, addressing variation in political opportunities and strategic opportunities for social vindication. Eisinger and Tilly argued that there is a curvilinear relationship between the incidence of protests and political openness. Tilly also claimed that mobilizations happened because governments were tolerant of them, and protests took place when members of a disadvantaged group used powerful methods to communicate their grievances and concerns. Additionally, Tarrow (1989) outlined phases of protest with the interplay of institutional politics, social protest, and disorder. McAdam (1982) also contributed to the development of a more comprehensive approach by offering political opportunity theory as an option for collective behavior theory and resource mobilization approach (Meyer, 2004). The theory explains that mobilization is the result of activist grievances and the political structure of states, along with the location of different social actors, influences the selection of the most appropriate approach for the mobilization of the group (Meyer, 2004).

Political opportunity theory has been used by many scholars and practitioners in the study of social movements influenced by political context. For example, Kurzman



(1996) found the concept of structural opportunity in social movement theory useful to analyze the Iranian Revolution of 1979. McCammon et al. (2001) used political opportunity theory to analyze gendered opportunities structures and U.S. women's suffrage movements. Goodwin (2002) used political process approach to study political opportunities and the emergence of political contention to analyze different types of social movements. Van Dyke (2003) applied the political process approach to determine factors that facilitate coalition protest among American college students. Strown (2006) conducted a quantitative critique of political process theory and found economic indicators as factors of protest in the Mexico's market reform aftermath of 1999-2000. Finally, a more recent by Caruso (2015) included analysis of local mobilizations and addressed the evolution of relationships between collective protest and the political system. The social and political considerations on cases such as Italy, the Iranian Revolution of 1979, and protest in Mexico indicate that political opportunity theory is the most appropriate approach to use for the examination of the Green March Movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic

Political opportunity theory is an approach of social movements that facilitated the understanding of the process, strategies, and opportunities leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement. In addition, the political process approach has been used in the examinations of social protest and civil riots over time. The political opportunity theory relates to the present case study by addressing the structural opportunities leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement in the political context of the Dominican political structure. The political process approach

allowed me to answer Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 and examine the factors leading to mobilization and to identify strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Variables**

This section includes a discussion on political corruption, international allies in the fight against corruption, approaches to fight corruption, mobilization of social movements, and studies related to the fight against political corruption. Next, the applied methodology and methods consistent with the scope of the study will be presented. The section will also include a description of the ways researchers in the discipline have approached the problem. Moreover, the rationale for the selection of key variables will be justified from the study literature. Furthermore, studies related to the key concepts and/or phenomena under investigation will be reviewed and synthesized to produce a description of what is known about them, what is controversial, and what remains to be studied. Studies related to the research question and why the approach selected is meaningful will be examined and integrated at the end of the section.

### **Political Corruption**

Corruption exists in every type of governance structure around the world and it is responsible for the collective discomfort and dysfunctional states. Corruption cannot be functional because of moral decay (Friedrich, 1972). However, Sharma (2013) suggests that corruption needs to be understood as a type of currency used to control dealings in a circle of authority and that consequently the primary problem is not administration but political authority in a state.

Cross-national studies of corruption included GNP per capita, federal state structure and historical and cultural heritage as significant factors for predicting levels of perceived corruption around the world (Triesman, 2000). The Corruption Perceptions Index for 2016 showed that 54 countries scored above average on the scale instrument of 176 countries around the world, whereas the rest of the nations failed in the efforts to reduce and/or eradicate corruption. The United States index score for 2016 is 74 and it is ranked in the position 18 among the countries with lower perception of corruption (Transparency International, 2016). Nations with higher scores tend to have a lower perception of corruption, which allows for an increased economic activity, political stability, and fair citizen treatment. The top 10 countries with higher scores for 2016 are Denmark, New Zealand, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Singapore, Netherlands, and Canada. Germany, Luxembourg and United Kingdom are tied in the 10th place. In contrast, the top 10 countries with the highest perception of corruption for 2016 are Venezuela, Guinea Bissau, Afghanistan, Libya, Sudan, Yemen, Syria, North Korea, South Sudan, and Somalia in first place (Transparency International, 2016).

The Dominican Republic is distant from being a “clean” country as far as corruption is concerned. The corruption perception index score for the Dominican Republic during the period of 2012-2017 has maintained a similar pattern, with just a slightly differential percentage point each year. The average corruption perception index for the country is 31, which explains the need of improvement in the areas of bribery of public officials, kickbacks in public procurement, embezzlement of state funds, and effectiveness of governments’ anticorruption efforts (Statista, 2018). Corruption scandals

in the country have been perpetuated by government officials without a trustworthy regimen of consequences (Metro, 2017). Political corruption in the country is considered as a breach of trust from government officials who seem to be more motivated for a personal benefit rather than servicing the population (Vasquez, 2017).

Researchers have found different motives for corruption behavior in public administration. For example, Xin & Rudel (2004) identified macro scale causes of political corruption like poverty, large populations, and small public sectors through an analysis of perceived levels of corruption among nations around the world. Desta (2006) also argued that the primary causes of corruption for developing countries include small salary for government officials, lack of transparent political process, lack of meritocratic personnel policy, challenging corruption reporting system, and self-serving behavior of elected officials. These elements represent the most common causes for the corruption behavior of government officials in public offices. However, the root of the corruption phenomenon is better explained with the distinction of six theories concerning to the causes of corruption in the public sector: public choice theory, bad apple theories, organizational culture theory, clashing moral values theories, the ethos of public administration theories, and correlation theories (de Graaf, 2007).

Public choice theory proposes the development of corruption based on the cost-benefit analysis of officials in connection with the fraudulent activity to be executed (de Graaf, 2007). Rose-Ackerman (1978) explained that if the benefit of the corruption transaction outweighs the risks of being caught, then the official commits the corruption

act. Other elements such as the lack of organizational controls trigger corruption to be more appealing (Gambetta, 1993).

Bad apple theories are focused on the lack of faulty character that influences individual behavior towards corruption (de Graaf, 2007). However, there is the doubt about the influence of moral values on acts of corruption (de Graaf, 2003). Theorists in this category have found interests other than the material gains for government officials to commit corruption acts such as pleasure, achieving a higher social status, or satisfying personal ego (Nelen & Nieuwendijk, 2003).

Organizational culture theory emphasizes the culture and structure of the working place as the leading factors for public officials to act corruptly (de Graaf, 2007). Because the premise relates to the collective behavior of individuals rooting for illegal practices, corruption discourse should focus on the tradition and composition of the institution (Punch, 2000). Other scholars perceive this type of corruption as a contagious behavior (Caiden & Duivedi, 2001; Hulten, 2002; Klitgaard, 1988), and corruption discussion should emphasize changes in the organizational culture (Huberts et al., 2004; Trevino et al., 1999; Trevino et al., 2000). Interaction of the group in certain workplace assumes corruption collaboration with each other; otherwise it is considered betraying the group (Jackall, 1988; Punch, 2000).

The final three theories include clashing moral values theories, the ethos of public administration theories, and correlation theories. Clashing moral values theories highlights the societal influence for corrupt behavior over beliefs and principles of individuals (de Graaf, 2007). The concepts of micro morality and macro morality

describe the circumstances and relationships impelling individuals to look for a personal benefit. Micro morality explains that people's connections with their social circles create a moral obligation where family members and friends are favored with bribes and kickbacks while in the macro morality, rights and duties rule the primary mode of social ties for corruption (Hoffling, 2002). The major concern for ethos of public administration theories is the influence of the public-sector culture over public servants (de Graaf, 2007). The implementation of a structural approach in public institution is suggested to address ethical considerations as well as support virtues of the public service to undermine political corruption (Heywood, 1997). The last model is correlation theories. This notion identifies organizations, individuals, and societal variables as main causes of corruption on all levels (de Graaf, 2007). The application of these theories can be found in the work of William (1995) on campaign finance practices in the United States, Heywood (1997) on longevity in power by elected officials, and Treisman (2000) on economic development and being a former British colony.

Worldwide economic growth cannot be achieved at expense of political corruption. This scourge destabilizes government capacity to collect anticipated revenues for goods and services to citizens, and alter expenditures decisions, given priority to fraudulent activities and projects that do not represent economic and social values (Lagarde, 2017). Curbing corruption is a major challenge for political and financial systems of the world, mostly for economies in transition. Bribes and kickbacks represent around \$1.5 Trillion for payments of commercial transactions every year, causing a negative impact on the poor and economic growth (World Bank, 2017).

### **International Allies in the Fight Against Corruption**

The Dominican Republic is having a great deal of support by the international community in the fight against corruption. The United States and Brazil are monitoring the process of how the Dominican government is handling corruption cases in the country. The United States has maintained an active role against corruption by adopting a federal decision that restricts the application of the honest service doctrine for bribes and kickbacks (Roberts, 2012).

Officials of the U.S. Justice Department and the FBI director met with the Dominican Republic Attorney General with the purpose to combat corruption and prosecute organized crime affecting both countries (PGR, 2017). In addition, an executive order on corruption matters signed by President Donald Trump has alerted countries and governments around the world, including the Dominican Republic, about the political, social, and economics implications of being involved in acts of corruption (White House, 2017). In 2017, independent prosecutors from Brazil invited the Attorney General of the Dominican Republic to travel to the country in order to carry out a joint investigation along with ten other countries on Odebrecht bribery across Latin America (Field, 2017).

The World Bank Group is a critical ally in the fight against corruption for many countries. They are committed to anticipate possibilities of frauds within projects financed by the Group overseas. The Dominican Republic has been selected by the Group and together they have formed the Participatory Anti-Corruption Initiative, a coalition

that gives private sector leaders and public officials an exceptional opportunity to tackle corruption (World Bank, 2017).

### **Approaches to Fight Corruption**

The main focus for social movements fighting corruption around the world is to modify the political structure of governments for more efficient corruption controls. However, many scholars and practitioners differ in the ways to address the corruption phenomenon. For instance, Johnston (2012) points out measures to control corruption for all four syndromes of corruption in society (Oligarchs and Clans, Official Moguls, Elite Cartels, and Influence Markets) are achieved by the implementation of gradual reforms. Carr (2007) highlights the need of a unified approach, robust enforcement mechanisms in place, and the engagement in the process of re-socialization as further measures for fighting corruption through regional and international conventions. Likewise, Everett & Rahaman (2006) extend the discussion of ethics by adopting a Foucaultian theoretical framing and by integrating understanding from the virtue of ethics writings about the global fight against corruption. Laver (2010) brings good news in the fight against corruption by suggesting evangelical church to engage through advocacy and develop its members with the truth of scripture in the areas of ethics and public integrity in order to help minimize the gap between law and practice. Moreover, Dahlström & Lapuente (2012) describe the need for the implementation of meritocratic recruitment in the public sector in order to eradicate political corruption. Last, Moroff & Schmidt-Pfister (2010) make a distinction of anticorruption efforts between social movements, governments, and the international community, and conclude that unstructured developments prevail over



methodical implementation of anticorruption strategies and stressed the importance of collective support towards such initiatives.

Bribes, kick backs, conflict of interest, and misuse of public funds are the main cause for social inequities around the world and the milestone for mobilizations of social movements fighting corruption. In recent time, social movements fighting political corruption have taken a more aggressive approach by intensifying cross-border mobilizations to produce social changes.

### **Mobilization of Social Movements**

The concept of political efficacy explains the sociological factors leading to the mobilizations of social movements. Internal and external political efficacies are vital components to the political efficacy notion. The difference between the two elements is that internal political efficacy precludes the consideration of individual competence for participation in politics while external political efficacy refers to how the political system responds to the needs of citizens (Balch, 1974; McPherson, Miller, Welch, & Clark, 1977). This formula was later utilized to develop Gamson's Theory of Political Discontent and Mobilization of People, suggesting that high perception of individual skills and low perceptions of system awareness is the most favorable recipe for people's mobilization (Craig, 1980; Craig & Maggiotto, 1981).

The single consideration of low system awareness over demands of individuals was not enough to explain the posture of the political system towards mobilization of the group, therefore, a third component was introduced for study to the political efficacy construct denominated Collective Political Efficacy (Yeich & Levine, 1994). The study

suggested that internal political efficacy was related to individual's self-esteem and self-efficacy in political participation. The construct of external political efficacy proposed a political awareness approach in which individuals realize the political system as unfair and recognize that changes in society can be accomplished only through collective participation while the collective political efficacy was more inclined to the ability of achieving goals (Yeich & Levine, 1994). Consequently, mobilizations of social movements require first that members of the group declare themselves capable for political participation; secondly that they recognize the political structure as an unjust system and be aware of the needed actions for change; and third that they perceive collective action as a fundamental means for producing social change (Yeich & Levine, 1994).

Scholars in the discipline have found other determinants for the mobilization of social movements. For instance, resource mobilization theory explains that mobilization of the group is achieved when social movements have possession of key resources and opportunities for collective action (Gamson, 1990; Jenkins, 1983; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Oberschall, 1973). Five categories of assets are incorporated into social movement organizations. Moral Resources include solidarity support, legitimacy and sympathetic support. Cultural Resources refers to ways for enacting a protest event, holding a news conference, running a meeting, forming an organization, initiating a festival, or surfing the web. Social-Organizational Resources might include spreading flyers, holding community meetings and recruiting volunteers. Material Resources includes financial and physical capital, such as office space, money, equipment and supplies. Human Resources

consist of labor, experience, skills and expertise in a certain field (McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

Further research on Resource Mobilization Theory has found the components of this model to be unsupportive to mobilizations of movements integrated by disadvantaged people (Kerbo, 1982; Piven & Cloward, 1992). Theorists of poor people's movements have indicated that certain sociological factors including substantial changes in economy of scales and failures in the regulatory power of social institutions have been the main cause for protest movements of poor people (Piven & Cloward, 1977).

In the particular case of the Green March Social Movement, mobilizations against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic have taken place primarily because of the unreceptive position of the Dominican government towards social vindications demanded by the group (Diario Libre, 2018). Mass demonstrations have been carried out across the country without any success demanding the end of political, military and business mafias operating from government institutions including the presidency of the Republic (Telesur, 2017). Far from government support on social reforms, corruption scandals on public offices have been increasing steadily (Dominican Today, 2017).

Over centralization of the public service in the Dominican Republic has been the result of institutional malpractice inherited from colonial times (Minto & Berman, 2015). This scenario has deinstitutionalized public offices in the country given prerogatives to the executive to centralize decisions corresponding to the judiciary power, mainly for the protection of government officials involved in corruption acts (Romero A., 2015;

Participacion Ciudadana, 2015). Mobilizations of the Green March movement for the independence of the judiciary power has been among other claims a leading cause for protest rallies in the Dominican Republic (Diario Libre, 2018).

The last matter concerning to mobilizations of the Green March movement is the state's vacillating responses to the protest movement. The Dominican polity remains insensitive to the claims of the Green March social movement releasing in the first instance of investigation most of the suspects of the Odebrecht case (María, 2017). Major government officials involved in the Odebrecht corruption scandal are political leaders of the ruling party PLD which explains the way of behaving of the Dominican Justice Department (El Nacional, 2017).

### **Studies Related to the Fight Against Corruption**

This section includes prominent studies on the fight against political corruption. For example, Jiang et al. (2013) conducted research on corruption controls in China with the participation of young university students, revealing that participants condemned political corruption and were in agreement with the punishment and demotion of government officials involved in acts of corruption (Jiang et al., 2013). The research also uncovered the importance of social censure in fighting corruption, which is a technique used by the ruling party to manipulate others (Jiang et al., 2013).

Another study described the unprecedented mass mobilization for the ratification of the Jan Lokpal Bill by the Indian Parliament (Krandekar & Reddy, 2013). The document included a set of anticorruption strategies and initiatives for better government corruption controls, and the protests were structured to make changes in social relations

(Krandekar & Reddy, 2013). Another study on anticorruption was by Chowdhury et al. (2016), which addressed Hazare's fight against corruption for more than 35 years and the way the World Bank combats corruption and the need of sacrifice and righteousness for leaders fighting corruption (Chowdhury et al., 2016). Additionally, Castro & Anzari (2017) explained several factors such as policy changes and institutional commitment on corruption cases lead to new development in the fight against corruption, reflecting how corruption control can include judiciary powers working with independence but collaborating. Johnston (2012) also pointed out that in moderate democracies like the United States corruption is perceived as an influence market. The goal for social actors fighting corruption is to build reliable institutions able to measure the abuse of power for the collective interest and to reduce deterrent for social change within government and political institutions (Johnston, 2012).

The last research study on corruption literature offered a contemporary view of appropriate mechanism to evade unprecedented events such as the Arab Spring of 2011 in which collective actions of social movements fighting political corruption in the Middle East, dethroned major corrupt rulers and autocrats of the region. Western countries are supporting Middle East ruler pretending autocratic stability in the region without considering the ideals of democracy (Hamzawy & McFaul, 2016). Any support to current autocrats may jeopardize the long term political and economic strength of the region. Turmoil in the Middle East could be only prevented through gradual, political changes (Hamzawy & McFaul, 2016). This article is qualitative in nature and the authors used data analysis as research method.

### **Techniques to Approach the Problem**

Extensive corruption literature led by private, nongovernmental, and governmental institutions, provides an opportunity for researchers in the discipline to approach the problem in different ways. They use secondary data for data analysis and further data interpretation, or data collection for specific cases. For instances, Johnston (2012) used data analysis for index reports instrumented by Transparency International; Castro & Anzari (2017) used documents and archival data from the “Lava Jato” case in Brazil; Krandekar & Reddy (2013) used documentary evidences and reports from the Lokpal protest in India; Jiang, Lo, & Li (2013) used survey questionnaires for young university students in China; and Hamzawy & McFaul (2016) used data analysis for their narrative. A less practical approach in corruption literature is the interview process, as research method, where the appearance of a group leader or notorious character is required like in the case of the Indian activist Anna Hazare.

### **Rationale for the Selection of Key Variables**

The rationale for the selection of the concepts previously described obeys to the diversification of views related to the fight against political corruption around the world. Thus, the inclusion of different perspectives and analysis from seminal scholars on corruption controls will enrich the study and it will help to determine the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **What is known, Controversial, and Remains to be Studied**

Much has been said about social movements fighting political corruption; however, contributions to the discipline of study or to the professional field can only be achieved by the distinction of what is known about social movements fighting corruption, what is controversial, and what remains to be studied.

It is widespread the notion that when corruption perception is linked to the political order of a society, then mechanisms for corruption controls are inoperative (Johnston, 2012). In the same order, it is established that the inclusion of corrupt behaviors in the common law is inadequate since authorities have the power to reclassify certain type of behavior as corruption (Jiang, Lo, & Li, 2013). In addition, it is recognized that the influx of several factors such as policy changes and institutional commitment on corruption cases lead to new development in the fight against corruption (Castro & Anzari, 2017). Also, it is acceptable the assertion that an appropriate strategy to prevent violent and radical conversion is through political changes (Hamzawy & McFaul, 2016). The last well known statement about social movements is that fighting corruption strengthens the political and ideological power of those expressing severe disapproval (Jiang, Lo, & Li, 2013).

A statement presenting point of controversy about social movements fighting corruption include the narrative of Anna Hazare in which he alluded that his social movement was mobilized every instance they saw corruption (Chowdhury, Banerjee & Nagarkoti, 2016). This statement is controversial since structured social movements operate in different ways. Mobilizations of the group need to be planned in advance in

order to achieve desirable results. In addition, proper management of resources is crucial for mobilizations to be effective in major corruption issues. A different statement containing a point of controversy is the assertion about the institutional credibility of the United States. Johnston (2012) argues that in the United States is very common to see the removal of some restrictions that in other countries are categorized as corruption. The rationale for this argument is based on the legitimacy of the United States and any country in the world to introduce social reforms for the benefit of their citizens. In effect, it could be a concern if particular groups or political elite will infringe deliberately the rule of law for their own benefit. An additional controversial statement is in regards to corruption controls where state officials could reprimand the corrupt and revoke their status (Jiang, Lo, & Li, 2013). This scenario is twofold controversial. First, government officials have no legal authority to punish anyone involved in corruption activities. Second, the problem is aggravated when corruption activities are performed by top government officials receiving bribes and kickbacks. It appears like there is not answer for such occurrence. The final statement of controversy is related to the dialogue with Anna Hazare, stating that equality in society is maintained when salaries of government employees are not increased and their wages are calculated based on their needs (Chowdhury, Banerjee & Nagarkoti, 2016). The goal of this savvy anti-corruption leader is far from being feasible. Structured salary for government employees including minimum wages and salary increases based on job performance or years of service on public institutions is essential part of Democratic systems and they cannot be ignore overnight.



The last analysis of this section is related to what remains to be studied for social movements fighting corruption. Anna Hazare states in his dialogue that preferential treatment of particular groups is the main cause for corruption and in order to eradicate bribery and fraud it is mandatory first to remove favoritism from public office (Chowdhury, Banerjee & Nagarkoti, 2016). This statement is essentially unknown and future research is needed in order to demonstrate the relationship between those variables. Studies in this discipline may contribute to the implementation of anti-corruption strategies in public institutions. It is also questionable the statement related to the recognition of important resources and cultural aspects critical for the fight against corruption and how corruption is managed in different settings worldwide (Castro and Anzari, 2017). This statement is also subjected for future research. Studies conducted under this premise may bring tangible results for the continuing fight against corruption. The final statement of what remains to be studied is in regards to the need of scholars for research on the concepts of sacrifice and righteousness in order to contribute with new corruption literature (Chowdhury, Banerjee & Nagarkoti, 2016). It is uncertain should further research on the concepts of sacrifice and righteousness will be determinants for the fight against corruption.

### **Meaningfulness of the Approach**

The cases presented in literature review for the analysis of the fight against political corruption have all a common denominator. Political structures of ruling parties have been vulnerable to social pressure, allowing social movements to mobilize and express their discontent and grievances. The context of social movements in the fight

against political corruption is meaningful to the research question since it reveals factors leading to mobilizations of the groups fighting political corruption. In addition, the approach is consistent with the theoretical foundation of the study since it allows the researcher to analyze the phenomenon through the lens of the political opportunity theory.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Themes presented in previous literature discourse relates in many ways to our topic of study of the Green March Movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. The censure to political corruption by participants of the study “Youths’ Views on Corruption Control in China” and their agreement for punishment and demotion of government officials involved in corruption acts are similar to the demands of the Green March Social Movement in the Dominican Republic. Initial demands by the movement included the indictments for all those involved in the Odebrecht case, the recovery of the money stolen through bribes, from the ballooned cost of work, the cancelling of all Odebrecht contracts in the country, and the appointment of a commission of independent prosecutors accompanied with the United Nations to investigate Odebrecht corruption scandal during the administration of President Danilo Medina and former presidents Leonel Fernandez and Hipolito Mejia (Dominican Today, 2017). Currently, the Green March movement has elaborated a more ambitious petition with the inclusion of new elements for social change. Among the most important claims, the Green March movement is demanding a political trial to the Dominican President Danilo Medina for the alleged involvement in the Odebrecht corruption scandal; the

destitution of the Attorney General of the Dominican Republic for performing against the interest of the Dominican people on the Odebrecht case, in order to favor the Dominican president and the ruling party (PLD); and the independence of the judiciary power (Diario Libre, 2018).

The unprecedented mass mobilization for the ratification of the Jan Lokpal Bill by the Indian Parliament resemble in great part the notorious mass demonstration of the Green March movement for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. On July 16, 2017, the Green March movement showed its collective power for social change with more than one hundred thousand supporters in the streets of Santo Domingo, demanding the prosecution of President Danilo Medina for the interference with the application of the rule of law in the Odebrecht case (El Puerto, 2017).

The journey of the activist Anna Hazare fighting corruption with his social movement for more than thirty five years may inspire leaders and members of the Green March movement to continue efforts towards the end of political corruption in the country. His discussions with the World Bank on ways to tackle corruption may be an alternative for leaders of the Green March movements to approach the phenomenon.

The uncovered data archival in the “Lava Plato” case served as main source of information for investigations on the Odebrecht corruption scandal in Brazil (Castro & Anzari, 2017). Such institutional collaboration sets an important precedent in the fight against corruption, mainly in developing countries where there is a lack of institutional

shyness and virtues of the public service. Again, the Green March movement may incorporate in their portfolio of demands anti-corruption measures of this nature.

The literature on Corruption Control in the United States: law, values, and the political foundations of reform, provides an understanding of the vital signs for public institutions in order to work efficiently. The goal for social actors fighting corruption is to build reliable institutions able to measure the abuse of power for the collective interest and to reduce deterrent for social change within government and political institutions (Johnston, 2012). The present paper reiterates the role of the Green March movement as a social actor fighting for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. It is in the best interest of the Green March movement and the Dominican society to elaborate sound proposals for corruption controls in public institutions of the country. Despite the fact transformation of societies requires the implementation of gradual policy reforms (Johnston, 2012); public institutions may begin abandoning unscrupulous practices and traditions through firm anti-corruption provisions.

The study of Ghosts of Arab Spring offers a contemporary view of appropriate mechanism to evade unprecedented events such as the Arab Spring of 2011 where collective actions of social movements fighting political corruption dethroned major corrupt rulers and autocrats of the Middle East (Hamzawy & McFaul, 2016). This literature is appropriate for both the Green March Social Movement and the actors for corruption control of the Dominican Republic. The Arab Spring of 2011 is a typical example of the proportion of mobilizations accomplished by particular groups hungry for justice and social reforms. Similarly, members of the Green March movement have a

unique opportunity to mobilize for the collective benefit and create a hostile environment capable to transform the culture and structure of the Dominican political system. In the same way, the Arab Spring of 2011 provides to the actors of corruption control and the ruling party of the Dominican Republic an opportunity for reflection to prevent turmoil and chaos able to destabilize the political and economic composition of the country.

This section intends to summarize the literature related to the topic of study. Also, a distinction is made of what is known and what is not known about the mobilizations of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

It is widespread the censure to political corruption in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement and the agreement for punishment and demotion of government officials involved in the Odebrecht corruption scandal. In addition, the unprecedented mass demonstration of the Green March movement attests the collective power of the movement for social change. In the same order, founding fathers of the Green March movement are aware of the countless effort needed for achieving their goals. Moreover, there is a profound understanding about the need for institutional collaboration among agents of corruption controls in the Dominican Republic. Furthermore, the Green March movement along with other sectors of the Dominican society is in agreement to build reliable institutions capable to measure the abuse of power for the collective interest and to reduce deterrent for social change within government and political institutions. Lastly, it is generally accepted the claims for justice and social reforms on corruption matters for the people of the Dominican Republic.

It is not known if the Green March movement demands will be fully executed, mainly the request of a political trial to the Dominican President Danilo Medina. Also, it is questionable should the collective power of the Green March movement has reached the ceiling of supporters for mobilizations. Additionally, there is doubt about the life expectancy of the Green March movement fighting political corruption in the country. Moreover, it is uncertain how effective will be the institutional collaboration among agents of corruption controls. Furthermore, there are not a time frame to determine how soon public institutions may begin abandoning unscrupulous practices and traditions in the Dominican Republic. Last, uncertainties arise about the possibility of transforming the political system's culture and structure if a hostile environment is in effect by the Green March movement.

The present study will address a gap in literature since it will be the first time that the political opportunity theory will be utilized to understand social movement mobilization in the Dominican Republic. In addition, little has been said about what strategies and tactics have been used by social movements in the fight against corruption. Therefore, the study will explore the process of the Green March movement against political corruption in the Dominican Republic and examine the experiences of the civic groups joining the Green March movement since they have not been heard in published literature. Conversely, the study may extend knowledge in the discipline by uncovering Green March movement strategies to prevent violent and radical changes during the process of the fight against political corruption, paving the way for purposeful actors to produce outcomes on the fight against political corruption, undermining ineffective

corruption controls in the Dominican Republic, acknowledging the political and ideological dominance of the Green March movement through the fight against political corruption, and describing and including specific corruption behaviors in the category of law.

In order to explore the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption in the Dominican Republic it is necessary to select an appropriate research design. The qualitative research design along with the instrumental case study as strategy of inquiry will be discussed next in Chapter 3.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to explore the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement. In this study, I examined the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement as well as the strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement, which included the agenda of social revindications demanded by the Green March social movement to the Dominican government.

The phenomenon of the study was addressed by using a qualitative, instrumental case study. The target population for the study was members of the Green March movement. Purposeful sampling was used, focusing on members of the Green March movement located in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Assessments of the activities of the Green March movement were used in conjunction with interviews and questionnaires to determine the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

The chapter includes the research design for the study as well as the rationale for the chosen approach. Other elements of discussion include the role of the researcher and applicable ethical issues during the research process, the methodology, population, sampling strategy, and procedures to identify, contact, and recruit participants. Moreover, this chapter includes a description of each data collection instrument and source, data analysis plan, and strategies to address credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study. Last, the chapter will cover ethical procedures to gain access



to participants with special attention to the treatment of human participants, the treatment of data whether will be anonymous or confidential, and the protections for confidential data.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

To determine the research tradition of the study, I examined the major research designs of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. The selection of the research design was based on the nature of the problem, strategy of inquiry, and how data were collected and analyzed for further interpretation. The quantitative research method or mixed methods approach was not appropriate to the study because quantitative findings are centered on standardized measurement of scales and questionnaires that prevent the researcher to understand and capture the factual point of view of participants (Denzin, 1978). In addition, the focus of the study was not to test a hypothesis or examine a relationship between variables (Creswell, 2009). Instead, I have selected the qualitative research design because it is consistent with exploring the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. Additionally, the fluctuation of information, experiences, and perceptions by the members of the Green March movement allowed me to learn more about their categories, which is the first principle of qualitative analysis (Lofland, 1971).

An instrumental case study was used because the approach represented an analysis of a critical incident in which researchers collect, organize, and analyze data in a particular manner (Patton, 2002; Stake, 2000). I also considered the phenomenological

research as a viable research methodology (Mertens, 1998). However, this approach was not selected because the model is more directed to understand the implications and fundamental nature of a phenomenon by the lived experience of one or more individuals (Patton, 2002). The interpretation of the qualitative study is based on the observations and process under study (Creswell, 2009). The appropriateness of the qualitative method with the phenomenon under study is sustained by the active role of the inquirer which will be explained in more details in the next section.

### **Role of the Researcher**

My role as the researcher was dynamic by playing a double role as observer and participant. I recruited and selected members of the Green March movement who were interested in participating in the survey research. Recruitment flyers were posted in the local office of the Green March Movement as well as outside of the organization (see Appendix A).

The interaction with members of the Green March movement allowed me to connect with the group and become familiar with the social and cultural aspects of each participant. I intended to meet in advance with organizers and leaders of civic groups to get the program of activities and mobilizations of the Green March movement. For the participation of protest rallies, I planned to arrive early and wear a distinctive feature related to the group if necessary. I also planned to establish an informal approach with members of the Green March movement willing to participate in the study.

Researcher biases and/or power relationship were managed by being objective in the research study. During the research process, I carried a reflective journal to record

observations about the study. The journal also contained a short checklist of my expected conduct for a future personal evaluation. Therefore, I was compelled to maintain an adequate behavior while conducting interviews by not being biased against participants' point of view or using power relationships to influence outcomes of the study. There were no ethical issues related with work environment, conflict of interest, or power differentials.

### **Methodology**

Researchers have tried to determine the sample size needed in qualitative research (Dworkin, 2012). However, sample size is not an issue in qualitative research because statistical generalization is not a core principle of this model, thus the concept is not always addressed in the literature (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Individual sample size can be informative and contribute to the body of literature the same way large sample size does (Boddy, 2016). In contrast, large sample size limits the ability to provide a case-oriented analysis in constructivist or in-depth approaches, which is the main purpose of qualitative inquiry (Sandelowski, 1995). Single case studies can also provide understanding and fine distinction of previously unexplored phenomena (Boddy, 2016), which applies to the current study as the first scientific work about the Green March social movement fighting political corruption in the country and the study to apply political opportunity theory to a social movement in the Dominican Republic. The notion that individual case studies are not able to produce theoretical generalizations (Tsang, 2014) is not accurate, because one case study can generate an in-depth knowledge applied across many fields (Boddy, 2016). For instance, the discovery of penicillin and the

longitudinal examination of an individual CEO who was psychopathic are patterns of single cases approach that are undisputed and instructive (Boddy, 2015).

The purpose of recruiting participants in qualitative research is to find good sources of information that will lead toward a systematic point rather than generalize to another group of similar demographics (Sandelowski, 1995). The convenience sampling technique was most appropriate because the number of participants for the present study were accommodated according to the quantity of applicants who responded to the recruitment flyer. Convenience sampling is a popular approach where researchers have easy access to participants (Patton, 2002). This technique was also the least severe and a reasonable sampling method (Sandelowski, 1995).

### **Participant Selection Logic**

Many authors differ in the required number of participants for qualitative research. Braun & Clarke (2013) suggested accepting a quantity of applicants or everyone who has responded to the advertisement for participation in the study. Other researchers have recommended a range of 15 to 30 interviews for case studies (Marshall et al., 2013). In studies investigating actual theoretical saturation, some authors have indicated that saturation of data is conceived at six in-depth interviews and more apparent at 12 in-depth interviews among a sample of women in two countries (Guest et al., 2006).

The criterion for participant selection was based on the character and roles of members of the Green March movement. Participants were known to meet the criterion by their established relationship with the Green March movement. The inclusion criteria for selected participants was: Participants must be at least 18 years of age or older, male

or female, members or supporters of the Green March Social Movement, and residents of the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. After the examination of sample size approaches, a single organization sample size was chosen, which the Green March Social Movement is. However, for the number of participants to be interviewed in the study, I planned to accept 12 participants who responded to the recruitment flyer for participation.

### **Data Saturation Process**

The rationale for the number of participants in the study is based on getting enough information from the interview process to saturate the model (Creswell, 2013). Theorists argue data saturation is achieved once there are not more chances to identify codes in the data account and when researchers have attempted all possible ways to get further information (Fusch & Ness, 2015). In case data saturation is not reached after interviewing 12 participants, I planned to recruit additional applicants until the data dissemination was complete. The interview process of 12 participants in the study was decided because it would permit me to obtain a rich variety of information while saturation would be accomplished by the collection of additional data, other than interview responses, such as observation, documents, and archival data (Patton, 2002).

### **Instrumentation**

Data collection instruments included an interview protocol to answer both research questions as well as archival data (see Creswell, 2013). The interview protocol outlined the procedures and methods for conducting the interview. In contrast, archival data provided information for critical events of the Green March movement in recent years. Archival documents are available at the website of the Green March movement as

well as in local newspapers online. I used two audio-recording devices during all interviews to make sure that if one device fails to record, there would be a backup. These data collection instruments were sufficient to answer the study research questions. A sample of the interview protocol for the study can be found in Appendix B.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

Most organizers and activists of the Green March movement are well-known public figures in Dominican society. However, the procedure to identify, contact, and recruit participants was based on their self-selection once they contacted me. I listened to any concern from applicants responding to the recruitment flyer. During recruitment, I asked to determine whether potential participants met inclusion criteria. After I confirmed applicants met the criterion for participant selection in the study, I scheduled a face-to-face interview with each participant and provided a consent form for approval, detailing the intent of the study.

To respond to the study research question, I personally collected data from members of the Green March Social movement. The frequency for data collection event took approximately 6 weeks to recruit, interview, and transcribe the interviews for all participants. The study plan was to recruit participants during the first 2 weeks, conduct all 12 meetings over a period of 2 weeks with six participants each week, which would leave 2 more weeks to transcribe all 12 interviews. If 12 participants were not recruited during the first 2 weeks, I planned to continue providing and posting flyers at the Green March movement main office in Santo Domingo until 12 participants were recruited. I estimated that it would take between 45 to 60 minutes to conduct each interview, not

counting the time needed to review the informed consent form and answer any questions. This process can take as little as 10 to as much as 15 minutes, so in total, the data collection process can last between 55 to 75 minutes per participant.

Data were recorded through a CD (Compact Disc) or an external USB (Universal Serial Bus) after interview information was translated from Spanish into English language and typed in a Word document. In case few participants drop from the study, the follow-up plan was to recruit other members of the Green March movement. Debriefing procedures were implemented for participants to exit the study. In the recruitment process, I had the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion with the interviewees about every aspect of the research study. Interviews were set for a specific day, place, and time, and they could be rescheduled by the request of each party.

I thanked personally every participant for his/her commitment to the study once the interview process had finished. In addition, I asked for e-mail addresses of participants who were interested to receive a brief of the research findings. In case both audio recording devices failed, I planned to communicate with each participant for a follow-up interview. I also planned on contacting participants for additional questions not covered during the interview process.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Researchers using thematic analysis are compelled to handle data more effectively, which helps them to produce final report in an understandable and methodical manner (King, 2004). When examining the point of views of research participants, thematic analysis can provide unexpected insights, useful for the identification of data

(Braun & Clarke, 2006; King, 2004). Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun (2017) described thematic analysis in a sequential 6-phased method: familiarizing with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining & naming themes, and producing the report.

The researcher will begin reviewing the data set completely and become familiar with all the recollection of data once the coding process initiate, as new thoughts and insights take place for the recognition of potential patterns (Terry et al., 2017). The researcher will use triangulation technique to ensure reasonable research findings and a more credible interpretation of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Scholars and practitioners agree that the analysis and interpretation of data can be properly audited once the record of all raw data is stored in a conspicuous place (Halpren, 1983; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The second phase will be initiated when the researcher had become familiar with the collected data and he had conceptualized the meaning and purpose of the data account as well (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). Nowell and others argue that this phase is characterized by a dynamic interrelation of data where the first production of codes is elaborated (2017). Qualitative coding required critical thinking and direct interaction with the data account (Savage, 2000). The main purpose of the coding process is to synthesize collected data for the determination of specific traits (Nowell at. el., 2017). During this phase the researcher will analyze raw data very carefully to develop new insights and to determine the true object of the data (Morse & Richards, 2002). Throughout the coding process, the researcher will identify important patterns of information for further classification and index of data (King, 2004).



In the third phase the researcher will seek for themes throughout the entire coded data that has been developed (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). In order to maintain a methodological rigor, DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000) define the concept of theme as “An abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations”. The flexibility of thematic analysis will allow the researcher to determine themes in a number of ways; however, it is important that the researcher be consistent in how this is done within any particular analysis (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017).

The fourth phase is about reviewing themes. In this stage the researcher will refine the set of themes previously selected and he will determine if the themes are a true reflection of the meaning of the data account (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). During this process the researcher will evaluate the selection of initial coding and themes and make changes accordingly (King, 2004). A new code and the corresponding theme may be added should the researcher realize that an important issue has not been covered in the text (Nowell et al., 2017). On the contrary, the researcher may delete an existing code that does not validate the data set or it is not needed (King, 2004). The researcher will be aware of any circumstance that may require recoding from the data set (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017).

During the fifth phase, the researcher will validate themes and recognize the interest and rationale for every single theme, composing a detailed analysis and the story behind the data set (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). Theorists in the field recommend the elaboration of themes with powerful names to call the attention of readers

(Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). Many scholars suggest the inclusion of segments of data in several themes with partial coverage among themes (Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000). At this stage, the researcher will take into consideration the role of every theme in regards to the entire data set and research questions of the study (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017).

In the final phase the researcher will confirm themes of the collected data for the analysis and conclusion of the report which should contain a succinct and rational account of data (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). The researcher will provide information about the ongoing logical processes including the approach for the data set findings so the information will be accessible to a critical reader, in a reliable and convincing fashion (Thorne, 2000). For accomplishing a simple reporting process, the researcher will use methodological, trustworthiness, and audit trail annotations documented in the research journal (Halpren, 1983). Direct quotes from participants are an essential aspect of thematic report since they contribute to a better interpretation of results and confirm the validity of themes (King, 2004). The final report should summarize all aspects of the data set, mainly the diverse range of themes that reveal the perspectives and insights of participants (Nowell et al. 2017).

The present study will prepare a data set for proper analysis and interpretation of results. The researcher will compose code names that best describe the information about factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March Movement against political corruption in the Dominican Republic. Type of codes will include terms such as factors, mobilization, political corruption, and impunity.

The researcher will implement NVivo 11 as the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) for the study. A peculiarity of this software system is the capacity to adjust to the needs of contemporary research projects. Few years ago, coding was the primary focus of qualitative data analysis software. Today, technology has revolutionized the way qualitative research is conducted by introducing provisions of tools that increase the spectrum for thinking, linking, writing, modeling, and graphing (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). NVivo presents distinctive features that excel for the analysis of qualitative data and facilitate the researcher on handling data, managing ideas, querying data, visualizing data, and reporting from data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

NVivo will allow the researcher to manage data in a more efficient manner. The researcher will organize and keep track of raw data files from interviews and questionnaires. In addition, the software will permit researcher to have access to published research, web pages, and other documentary sources according to circumstances (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Through NVivo, the researcher will be capable to organize and have immediate access to conceptual and theoretical knowledge, and to retain information from the original data account (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Another characteristic of NVivo is about asking simple or complicated questions of the data and have the program searching for information related to the answer of such inquiries (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). An exclusive element of NVivo is the visualization of data. The researcher will be able to envision the content and structure of ideas and concepts at different phases of the data interpretation process (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The last aspect of NVivo is the ability to report from the data. The researcher will be able

to produce a final report by using ideas and information from the qualitative database, including the development that originates such outcomes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Discrepancies on data collection will be treated as outlier in the study. That means, discrepant cases will be mentioned in data interpretation but they will not be counted for the purpose of answering the study research questions (Patton, 2002).

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

A great number of researchers have been satisfied presenting extensive and flexible indicators of attribute in qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). However, Lincoln and Guba are the proponents that the concept of trustworthiness needs to embrace a more rigorous criterion through the screening principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in order to yield commendable research findings (1985). These qualitative strategies are well known by scholars that depend on methodological arguments and techniques and who differ with others in epistemology and ontology (Green, 2000). The researcher will stick to those qualitative principles in order to provide a worthy research study.

### **Credibility**

Credibility is an internal validity that will be established by analyzing the research question from multiples perspectives such as triangulation, saturation, reflexivity, and peer review (Creswell, 2013). The main objective here is to obtain consistency across data sources (Patton, 2002). The study will use data triangulation in the form of in-depth interviews of participants, documents and archival data, and photographs of Green March movement demonstrations. Alternative triangulation approaches like investigator,

theoretical, methodological, and environmental techniques will not be used for being very tedious and time consuming (Patton, 2002). Not only will they be a tiresome process in the field of study but also in the data interpretation process.

Saturation will be accomplished by the collection of additional data such as observation and reflective journals. Reflexivity technique will be applied by emphasizing the importance of self-awareness about the political, cultural and social perspectives of participants and audience in the study. Peer review will be implemented throughout the examination of current dissertation committees.

### **Transferability**

The study will also implement appropriate strategies to establish transferability. The researcher will determine external validity by adding thick description technique and variation in participant selection (Patton, 2002). For the implementation of thick description, the inquirer will provide cultural context and meaning of events and expressions set by participants. Meanwhile, the variation in the integral selection of participants will be accomplished by the selection of additional members of the Green March movement in case a participant withdraws from the study.

### **Dependability**

Dependability is the qualitative counterpart to reliability (Patton, 2002). Researchers can attain dependability by making sure that the study follows a reasonable process and it is clearly documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Dependability also occurs when different audiences are able to better understand and evaluate the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, the major test for dependability comes when the

research process is audited (Koch, 1994). Sandelowski explains that research findings are auditable once another researcher can pursue a clear rationale for the decisions concerning to theoretical and methodological issues (1986). Therefore, dependability of the current research process will be reviewed by the dissertation committee and the school IRB. The researcher will establish dependability by using data triangulation technique in the form of in-depth interviews of participants. Additional documents such as archival data and photographs of Green March movement demonstrations will complete the process.

### **Confirmability**

The last strategy used to address issues of trustworthiness is confirmability. Guba and Lincoln (1989) point out that confirmability is proven once others qualitative principles such as credibility, transferability, and dependability have been revealed. However, other scholars argue that confirmability is established when researchers are able to demonstrate the basis of their conclusions and interpretations (Tobin & Begley, 2004). In order to provide knowledge about the origin of research findings, Koch (1994) suggests the inclusion of indicators such as the rationale for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices of the entire study. The present research paper will establish confirmability by using reflexivity technique, as described previously in the chapter.

### **Ethical Procedures**

The agreement to gain access to participants was in a consent form. The document was submitted in advance to the university Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval (approval no. 07-17-18-0261553). Documents will be in a locked cabinet in the

researcher's home office where only he will have access to. Archival data will be stored for a minimum period of five years. After that time, archival documents will be shredded and destroyed. The consent form will allow participants to understand in advance the purpose of the research study. In addition, the document will describe the duration and place of the meeting, emphasizing that participants are not required to do anything they do not feel comfortable doing. Specifically, the consent form will ensure participants that this is a voluntary study where they can withdraw at any time without further questions, and that all information provided during the meeting will be strictly confidential.

Training for human subjects is endorsed by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. I obtained a Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative certification for the completion of the training on human subjects, during the course of the academic program at Walden University. Consequently, the modules and references material of the certification have been approved by the IRB. In addition, the Office for Human Research Protections describes various international agreements in order to further understand the provisions of research for protection of human participants, including The Nuremberg Code (1947), The Council of Europe (1949), and The Declaration of Helsinki (1964). The Nuremberg Code addressed responsible research for human subjects including the disclosure of an informed consent, appropriate preparation for meetings and interviews, and beneficent actions to help prevent or remove harms to participants. The Council of Europe was established to embrace topics on human rights. The purpose of the Declaration of Helsinki was to develop supplementary ethical principles on informed consent (Office for Human Research Protections, 2016). Although participants of the

study are located in the Dominican Republic, compliance of the current research study will be subjected to the protocol required for research in the United States as well as at Walden University.

All materials and information from interviews, annotated observations, and related archival data will be strictly confidential. Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details that might identify participants, such as the location of the study, also will not be shared. Personal information will not be used for any purpose outside of this research project. Data will be kept secure by password protection and it will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by Walden University.

Other ethical issues are in reference to proper procedures for research ethics and compliance on international research. Descriptions of such requirements are found in the Center for Research Quality at Walden University. The Center defines international research as any study that is intentionally designed to target individuals outside the United States in its stated procedures for participant recruitment, data collection, data analysis, or results dissemination. The Center suggests further consultation with the U.S. federal Office of Human Research Protections for the international compilation of regulations, including government infrastructures and guidelines relevant to human subjects' research. Since the IRB only approves protocols in the language that participants are fluent, the informed consent will be written in Spanish, and the interview data will be collected also in Spanish. For written translations of documents and other research materials, the IRB requires (a) that back translation procedures confirm the



accuracy of the translation, (b) that the qualifications of the translator(s) and back translator(s) are documented, (c) that translation and back translation procedures are documented (Walden University, 2018).

### **Summary**

The focus of the study is to answer two research questions about what factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement and the strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement while the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic is the central phenomenon. The research tradition for the study is the qualitative research design with an instrumental case study as the strategy of inquiry. The qualitative research is consistent with exploring the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

The researcher's role intends to be dynamic by playing a double role as observer and as participant. During the research process, the researcher will carry a reflective journal to record observations about the study. The journal also will contain a short checklist of the researcher's expected desirable conduct for a future personal evaluation. Therefore, the researcher will be compelled to maintain an adequate behavior while conducting interviews by not being biased against participant's point of view or using power relationships to influence outcomes of the study.

The study does not foresee ethical issues related with work environment, conflict of interest, or power differentials. The population of the study will be composed of approximately twelve members of the Green March social movement and the identified

sampling strategy will be convenience sampling technique. The criterion for participant selection will be based on the character and roles of members and supporters of the Green March social movement. In order to respond to the study research question, the researcher will personally collect data from participants of the Green March movement. The frequency for data collection events will be of one time by each participant during a period of approximately six weeks.

The examiner will compose code names that best describe the information about factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March Movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. The researcher will implement appropriate strategies for the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study. The agreement to gain access to participants will be outlined in a consent form. The researcher has obtained a NIH certificate for the completion of the training on human subjects. The researcher has followed proper procedures for research ethics and compliance on international research.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to explore the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement. The research questions were “What factors led to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?” and “What strategies and tactics were used by the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?” The fight against political corruption and impunity was defined as the social revindications demanded by the Green March movement to the Dominican government. The phenomenon was addressed with a qualitative, instrumental case study. The target population for the study was members of the Green March movement, who were recruited through purposeful sampling focused on Green March members located in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Assessments of the Green March movement were used in conjunction with in-depth personal interviews to understand their process of addressing political corruption in the Dominican Republic.

The chapter includes the organizational conditions that influenced participants’ experiences at the time of study as well as participant demographics and characteristics relevant to the study. The chapter also includes descriptions of the location, frequency, and duration of data collection, how data were recorded, and variations in data collection from the plan. Last, the chapter will include data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary of the chapter.

### **Setting**

The interviews were conducted in the Public Policy Observatory. This is a small building where the Green March movement meets for the organization of activities. The building was located around the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. This area is peaceful and has many places where people sit and relax.

On August 12, 2018, the Green March movement organized the most ambitious mass demonstration in the Dominican Republic called “The One Million People March.” This organizational condition influenced the experience of members of the Green March movement interested in participating in the study. Prior to that event, most of the members of the Green March movement were occupied in the organization of the activity. Therefore, most of the collected information was influenced by activities and roles of participants before and after the event. All participants stated they were busy attending meetings and managing the logistics of the event.

### **Demographics**

The Green March movement is supported by a diverse group of people. The movement includes civic groups from distinctive sectors of Dominican society as well as individuals from different backgrounds and social status. All participants were members of the Green March movement, 18 years of age or older, and they resided in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The interview participants included seven males (Participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9) and five females (Participants 2, 6, 10, 11, and 12). They have been active members of the movement for 18 months.

### **Data Collection**

The total number of participants was 12 members of the Green March movement. Data were collected for each member in the city of Santo Domingo, with a frequency of 5 weeks for recruiting, interviewing, and transcribing the collected data. The duration of data collection for the interview of each member was around 45 minutes.

A recruitment flyer was posted on the bulletin board of the Green March movement office. The working commission of the movement was composed by 12 appointed members whose responsibilities included the design of the movement's strategies for the fight against political corruption and impunity and representation of the movement on demonstrations and other events. All members of the commission showed interest to participate in the study. Therefore, they contacted me by phone and began to exchange information for interview arrangements. The recruitment process started on July 17, 2018 and ended on July 23, 2018. Data collection occurred in the Public Policy Observatory building. This facility was in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Prior to the interview, participants were given a verbal explanation about the interview process which included the signature of the consent agreement form. One audiotape device was used for data recording and another one was available in case of malfunctioning. Participant checking occurred to ensure their availability for scheduled days and times. However, because the Green March movement had scheduled a mass demonstration for August 12, 2018, some interviews were postponed until after the event. But this situation did not affect the overall result of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The themes derived from the codes in the raw data were:

- The beginning of the fight against corruption in Dominican Republic
- Ready to fight political corruption in Dominican Republic
- Promoting consciousness about corruption in Dominican Republic
- Growing interest for defending the movement cause
- Strategic direction of the Green March movement
- Transnational corruption
- Government fear of media confrontation
- Ignoring Green March Movement claims
- Pleasant environment for citizen participation
- Hope of social change
- Plan of action of the Green March Movement
- Working together against corruption
- Government disarticulation
- Intolerance to corruption acts
- Improving the process of decision-making for the Green March movement

The use of NVivo helped to organize raw data files from interviews and helped to retain access to the context where data originated. The program facilitated the responses to the questions of data collection for establishing codes and themes. The report from the data was obtained using context of the qualitative database by which outcomes were reached.

The process to move from coded units to larger representations including categories and themes was as follows: First, I got familiar with the collected data from the 12 participants of the Green March movement, reading the interviews transcripts and recognizing potential patterns. Second, I conceptualized the meaning and purpose of the data with an interrelation of data where the first production of coded units was selected (see Nowell et al., 2017). I also synthesized collected data for the determination of specific traits that responded Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 (see Nowell et al., 2017). Third, I looked for themes throughout the coded data (see Terry et al., 2017), bringing meaning to the experiences of the members of the Green March movement. Fourth, I reviewed themes and refined the set of themes so that the themes were a true reflection of the meaning of the data account, and I was aware that recoding might have been necessary (see Terry et al., 2017). Fifth, I validated themes and recognized the interest and rationale for every single theme, composing a detailed analysis and the story behind the data set (see Terry et al., 2017). Last, I confirmed themes of the collected data for the analysis and conclusion of the report, which contained an account of data (see Terry et al., 2017). Direct quotes from participants were included for a better interpretation of results and confirmation of the validity of themes (see King, 2004). The final report summarized all aspects of the data set, mainly the diverse range of themes that revealed the perspectives and insights of members of the Green March movement (see Nowell et al., 2017).

The final themes and subthemes from data collection were:

- The beginning of the fight against corruption in Dominican Republic

- Initial commitment of members of the Green March movement
- Ready to fight political corruption in Dominican Republic
  - Preparation for the fight against political corruption in Dominican Republic
- Promoting consciousness about corruption in Dominican Republic
  - Population effect about corruption in Dominican Republic
- Growing interest for defending the movement cause
  - Compromise for the end of corruption in Dominican Republic
- Strategic direction of the movement
  - Operation for mass mobilizations
- Transnational corruption
  - Corruption scandal in the region
- Fear of media confrontation
  - Discredit of the Dominican government
- Ignoring Green March Movement claims
  - Ways to acknowledge social reforms
- Pleasant environment for citizen participation
  - Movement social and cultural activities
- Hope of social change
  - Implementation of corruption controls
- Plan of action of the Green March movement
  - Steps to accomplish movement's goals



- Working together against corruption
  - Synergy among civic organizations
- Government disarticulation
  - Government inability to control Green March movement operations
- Intolerance to corruption acts
  - Integrity of the Dominican society
- Improving the process of decision-making for the Green March Movement
  - Effective ways for the movement development

The audio-taped interviews were transcribed in a word document immediately after each interview was completed. There were 24 pages of raw data for identification of coding units. The total number of codes was 32 signs. The interview protocol was composed of 15 open-questions, which were presented to each participant during the interview process.

### **Themes**

#### **Beginning of the Fight Against Corruption in the Dominican Republic**

The beginning of the fight against political corruption marks a new era in the Dominican Republic with the Green March movement as the main social actor and protagonist. The movement was able to connect with the Dominican people and start addressing corruption with mobilizations of people across the country. This initial commitment of members of the Green March movement was responsible for bringing justice and social reforms among citizens of the nation. For example, P2 stated that “After the news of the Odebrecht corruption scandal in December, 2016, a group of civic

organizations got together and decided to take action in the fight against corruption.” This development contributed to the success of the first mass demonstration on January 22, 2017 by the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Ready to Fight Political Corruption in Dominican Republic**

Because the Green March movement was composed of a group of civic organizations in the country, activists were already enlisted in fighting for the social cause of their organizations. By the time of the Odebrecht corruption scandal, members of the Green March movement were ready to end of political corruption and impunity in the country. This means that psychological and emotional preparation were essential for members of the movement to be ready to fight corruption in the Dominican Republic. All participants stated they were ready to fight corruption in the Dominican Republic. For instance, P4, P6, P9, and P11 pointed out “We became active members of the movement since the beginning.” This statement suggests that members of the Green March movement were ready to fight political corruption in the Dominican Republic since the foundation of the Movement.

### **Promoting Consciousness about Corruption in Dominican Republic**

Promoting consciousness about corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic is one of the most important tasks for members of the Green March movement. They extended awareness about corruption and its consequences by talking to individuals, families, and organizations in communities. Members of the Green March movement considered that political corruption was not only an issue on the political

structure of the party in power but about the political system of the Dominican Republic. For instance, all participants in the study agreed that political corruption contributes to the deterioration of basic public services for the population. Participants 3, 5, 6 and 8 explained that

When you don't have a reliable water, and power systems, competent schools, or roads are not repaired properly, it means the monies to improve the country's infrastructure are in the pockets of government officials and/or members of the political party in power.

The degradation of the living standards of the Dominican people is the rationale for members of the Green March movement to promote consciousness about corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Growing Interest for Defending the Movement Cause**

Since the inception to the movement, members of the Green March movement showed enthusiasm and dedication to their assigned roles. The growing interest of members of the Green March movement for defending the movement cause allowed them to integrate in different commissions of the organization and to assume a more challenging role for the tasks to be executed. For example, P3 stated that "I have fallen in love with the process of organizing activities for the Green March movement." Members of the Green March movement were excited and pleased to belong to the organization and were motivated to defend the cause of the movement.

### **Strategic Direction of the Movement**

Most of the roles assumed by members of the Green March movement were for the implementation of strategic direction of the movement. Four important commissions composed the strategic direction of the moment: (a) The Communication Commission. This group was in charge to design strategic communication channels for the Movement; (b) The Content Commission. This committee was responsible to produce the social and political content for mobilizations of the Movement; (c) The Working Commission. This board was the maximum authority for the Green March movement and also responsible for the execution of plans and proposals; and (d) The Organization Commission. This commission was accountable for the preparation and logistics of events.

The strategic direction of the movement had to deal with the internal organization of activities of the Green March movement. For example, P7 argued that he was engaged in the logistic of mobilizations. P1 stated he was in-charge of the communication commission, and he was also responsible for the strategic digital marketing. Aspects such as the rotation of members of the working commission every 6 months and empowering a diverse group of people with different backgrounds were essential tasks for the success of mobilizations of the Green March movement.

### **Transnational Corruption**

One of the most important factors that influenced the mobilization of the Green March movement was the Odebrecht corruption scandal. Other elements included political deception of the Dominican people, overwhelming accumulation of popular claims by civic organizations, government unwillingness to respond to corruption cases,

and international jurisdiction for the Odebrecht case. Because the Odebrecht corruption scandal involved several countries in the region, the Green March movement considered the situation as a transnational corruption case. The international jurisdiction for the Odebrecht corruption scandal eliminated the chances for the government to manipulate evidences of the case and having institutional control in their favor. As P4 stated, “The international dimension of the Odebrecht case contributed to the Green March movement to initiate the fight against corruption since this element couldn’t be covered and/or handled by the Dominican government.” Therefore, members of the Green March movement took advantage about this political opportunity to mobilize the group for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Government Fear of Media Confrontation**

The Dominican government responses to the activities of the Green March movement were pretty conservative. The Dominican government was afraid to confront the media because they knew that by responding to the movement activities, the situation could be worse and the population could be incited to chaos. Participant 2 expressed that the Dominican government had been indifferent to the claims of the Green March movement and thus, they stayed silent with a passive position in that regard.

### **Ignoring Green March Movement Claims**

The Dominican government ignored the Green March movement demands since they were aware of their involvement in the Odebrecht corruption scandal and also knew the magnitude of the problem. For them it was very convenient to avoid ways towards the acknowledgment of social reforms in the country. As P10 pointed out “The Dominican

government was not stupid; they were very intelligent by keeping silence and ignoring the situation.” In addition, P12 stated that “The Dominican government had not answers to the claims of the Green March movement associated with high political content, solid and irrefutable evidences about political corruption.” Therefore, the easier way to handle the problem was by ignoring the movement social vindications.

### **Pleasant Environment for Citizen Participation**

Peaceful demonstrations were executed by the Green March movement across the country. The movement intent was to assure the participation of most citizens by providing a secure and pleasant environment. For instance, P9 addressed that the participation of important actors of the civil society such as politicians, community leaders, businessmen, and others, promote a secure and happy atmosphere for the protests. Also P3 stated that the main concern for the members of the Green March movement was to avoid incidents and confrontations with police officers in charge to maintain the order during manifestations because the addition of new citizens into the movement, like the middle class, needed security in the surroundings of demonstrations. All activities of the Green March movement were in compliance having the required documentation before corresponding authorities. Therefore, members of the Green March movement felt very secure during demonstrations.

### **Hope of Social Change**

Prior to the Green March movement, the Dominican people had a vague idea about the corruption phenomenon. They knew political corruption was a social and political issue but they didn't expect much in that regard from political parties and civic

organizations. However, after the first demonstration of the Green March movement on January 22, 2017, a hope of social change appeared in the mind of the Dominican people. The population was more conscious about the corruption problem and they participated energetically in all the movement activities. Consequently, there was a high public support to the Green March movement among citizens of the nation. As P8 discussed, “Even some public officials that were not able to participate in the protest, supported the Green March movement with monies and other donations”. This means that the hope of social change was a strong sentiment that contributed to the success of the Green March movement mobilizations across the country.

### **Plan of Action of the Green March Movement**

The plan of action of the Green March movement for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic was pretty aggressive and fundamentally sound. The movement used ten strategies and tactics for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. They included: Plural, civic, and non-partisan convenes, Keeping corruption and impunity as topics in public debate, Maintaining a diverse and rotary image, Knowledgeable in corruption matters, Permanent and public incidence of social movements, Empowering young men and women, Exclusion of social topics other than corruption in public agenda, Great communication support team, Promoting civic values, and Singing the national anthem of the Dominican Republic before the start of Green March activities. However, P8 and P11 argued that the best strategy for the Green March movement was to fight political corruption from different perspectives. This means while the Green March movement

was carrying out mass mobilizations they were also following institutional process for their social demands. This course of action ensured the Green March movement took advantage of the weak political structure by the party in power (PLD) for the fight against corruption in the country.

### **Working Together Against Corruption**

Linking with civic organizations, community, sectoral, and unions was the milestone for the success of the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. Activists of different backgrounds and social status represented the working force of the Green March movement. Collectively, they produced a series of important projects such as the Green Book, the Green Flame, and the Green Day. P1 stated that “The group had motivated people not only to participate in rally protests but also donating resources that support the cause of the Green March movement”. In addition, P3 explained that the movement had inspired the Dominican people to be more conscious about corruption and to ponder what the scourge had taken from them. However, P5, and P7 expressed that pacific street fights of the group had really terrified the Dominican government and had changed the political spectrum for the government party (PLD) and the opposition. Therefore, working together against political corruption has been the key for the achievement of the Green March movement.

### **Government Disarticulation**

Government disarticulation was one of the main objectives of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. There



were some ineffective strategies and tactics that did not contribute to the disarticulations of the government. For example, a) The lack of follow up to the Green Book signatures. Due to the excess of activities, the Green March movement was not able to continue collecting signatures. P3 argued that the population was eager to have their names and signatures in the Green Book but the movement could not complete the entire process of the Green Book. b) A fierce demonstration in front of the Dominican National Palace which is similar to the White House in the United States. This event did not fulfill the expectation of the Green March movement. Since most of the participants were members of the Green March movement, the activity looked very poor with a reduced audience. P9 claimed that despite the number of participants were reduced it was the first time in democratic history that a social movement was allowed to mobilize inside the National Palace of the Dominican Republic. c) The political trial of the Dominican President. This strategy was very controversial because there were a lot of people who wished for the end of political corruption and impunity in the country, but they were not against the Dominican President. In addition, part of the population was not sure about possible institutional changes if the trial was executed against the president. As P4 stated “All actions directed to confront the institutional order had a negative impact on the movement popular perception”. P5 also explained that the desire by most Dominicans was to tackle down corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic, but they were opposed to the ungovernability of the country. d) Poor support of the movement in inner cities of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The Green March movement was unable to proceed with their programs in vicinity cities of Santo Domingo for consciousness of

the population about corruption matters. P12 explained that the lack of economic resources limited the movement to expand their operations to other cities.

### **Intolerance to Corruption Acts**

Corruption and impunity were the priority topics among the Dominican people. Dominicans understood that corruption not only was an issue that affected political and economic projects, but also the well being of the Dominican family. This concern motivated a great number of citizens to participate in public debates, and exercise their civil rights. This action allowed all segments of the Dominican society to be interested to debate the corruption phenomenon at all levels and to find new alternatives for the corruption phenomenon. As participants 1, 3, 7 and 10 established “The intolerance of corruption acts was a reflection of the accumulation of corruption cases in the Dominican Republic under the impunity coverage”. Therefore, the intolerance of corruption acts made possible the Dominican population to wake up and support the fight against corruption by working in commissions with a diverse group and organizing massive mobilizations of people.

### **Improving the process of decision making for the Green March movement**

The process of decision making was pretty challenging for the Green March movement. The movement was experiencing “growing pain” as they tried to elaborate an agenda that incorporated all aspects of a mature social movement. In order to improve that process the Green March movement created four national commissions –Working, Communication, Content, and Organization– which purpose was the mobilization of people as well as expanding the scope of the Movement’s public image through the social

media and other communications channels. Unpopular decisions were a scenario for controversy despite the fact that the voice of each member had to be heard for proposals' approval. As P2, P5, and P12 reflected "One effective way to improve the decision making of the movement was by changing the strategic direction of the group". P3 and P4 argued that the decision making process was very tedious and time consuming for the group. Therefore, by improving the decision making process, the Green March movement promised to continue working in a timely fashion for the end of political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

A last important aspect of the current research paper was that the researcher did not observe discrepant cases in the study. All twelve participants were founding members of the Green March movement and they provided an actual and coherent description of their social, political, and cultural experiences with the movement.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

#### **Credibility**

In qualitative studies, credibility is measured according to how congruent are the results in relation to reality. The adoptions of well established research methods is important, particularly the line of questioning used to obtain data and the methods of analysis (Shenton, 2006). Our study presented a well structured questionnaire in which each question was related to the other in order to cover the entire study. Also, the methodology of data analysis departed from the inductively logical process to the general approach.

The researcher was pretty familiar with the social and cultural aspects of members of the Green March movement. For instance, the researcher participated in diverse mass mobilizations and other activities of the movement in the City of Santo Domingo. Different methods for triangulation were used, mainly observation and individual interviews which were the major source of data collection.

A critical aspect in establishing credibility was the process of the informed consent. The researcher discussed with participants of the study all aspects associated with the interview process and gave opportunities to participants to withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, the researcher encouraged participants to be frank with their responses and to feel free to ask any question.

The qualifications, background, and experience of the researcher also played an important role since the investigator was the main instrument of data collection and analysis (Payton, 1990). A final provision for establishing credibility was the thick description of the phenomenon under study. The research paper provided a detailed description of the factors that led to mobilizations of the Green March movement and also the strategies and tactics used by the movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Transferability**

The work of Cole and Gardner (1979), Marchionini and Teague (1987) and Pitts (1994) addressed the importance of turning over to the reader the boundaries of the study. In order to determine transferability the researcher established that: a) the Green March movement was the only organization taking part in the study in the city of Santo

Domingo; b) there was not any restrictions in the type of people who contributed data; c) the number of participants were twelve members of the Green March movement; d) the researcher used thematic analysis to handle data collection more effectively; e) the number of the data collection sessions were 12 and the length each the session was about 45 minutes; and f) the time period for data collection was about 2 weeks.

The researcher established transferability by adding thick description technique. In this strategy the researcher provided cultural context and meaning of events and expressions set by the members of the Green March movement. The events described by participants included the Green Flame, the Green Book, and the Green Day. The strategy of variation in the integral selection of participants was not implemented since the selection of additional members of the Green March movement was not necessary. None of the participants retreated from the study.

### **Dependability**

The researcher established dependability by making sure that the study followed a reasonable process and it was clearly documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004). The researcher complied with the provisions inserted in the consent form as well as in the recruitment process, data collection, data analysis and interpretation. Also, the researcher used data triangulation technique to established dependability in the form of in-depth interviews of twelve members of the Green March movement. Additional documents such as archival data and photographs of Green March movement demonstrations completed the process. The issue of dependability was also addressed by making a detail

report of the processes within the study, thereby enabling future researchers to repeat the work, instead of obtain similar results (Shenton, 2004).

### **Confirmability**

In order to establish confirmability, the study ensured that findings were the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants in the study, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). The researcher established confirmability since others qualitative principles, such as credibility, transferability, and dependability, were revealed in the study (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). In addition, the researcher established confirmability by using reflexivity technique as described previously.

### **Results**

Table 1 presents associated interview questions that helped to answer Research Question 1 and Research Question 2.

Table 1

#### *Research Questions and Associated Interview Questions*

Research question	Interview questions
Research Question 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When and how did you first become active with the Movement?</li> <li>2. Describe how you view your current role as a member of the Green March movement.</li> <li>3. How has your role changed or evolved over time?</li> <li>4. What factors do you think led to the mobilizations of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?</li> <li>5. How have government and elected officials in the Dominican Republic responded to the activities of the Green March movement?</li> <li>6. Explain why you believe they have responded in this way.</li> <li>7. When participating in Movement activities such as protests, how safe do you feel from possible governmental intervention or repression?</li> <li>8. What is the level of public support for the Green March movement in the Dominican Republic?</li> </ol>
Research Question 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What strategies and tactics are used by the Green March movement to fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?</li> </ol>

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2. Which of these strategies and tactics are most effective and why?
  3. Which of these strategies and tactics are least effective and why?
  4. What has been the Green March movement's greatest success to date?
  5. What would you change about the Green March movement if you could?
- 

### **Findings for Research Question 1**

Results for Research Question 1 are supported by data collection on the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. The first outcome to be described is Political Deception of the Dominican People. Deception has been responsible for the construction of a democratic life among the Dominican people. Since the civil war of 1965, Dominicans have been dreaming about the construction of democratic and political projects but they have been disappointed by political parties and social organizations within the country. Participants 1, 3, and 4 established that Dominican people have been upset because the political parties in perspective have not produced the expected results, not only at the economic level but also the deception has taken place in terms of justice and liberties. The deception of the Dominican people has been unmasked with a high level of corruption never seen before. This situation has provoked indignation among the Dominican society and it is the main reason for people to go to the streets and support the Green March movement with mass mobilizations across the country.

The second result to be addressed is the Odebrecht Corruption Scandal. The topic was relevant since it was addressed in the regional agenda as the U.S. Department of Justice announced that the Brazilian giant Odebrecht pleaded guilty on corruption acts involving more than ten Latin America countries, mainly the Dominican Republic with

bribes and kickbacks to public officials exceeding \$92 Million dollars (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). Participants 2, 5, 8, 9 and 12 stated that the Odebrecht case was the main reason for the Green March movement to organize the first mobilization against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic on January 22, 2017.

The third factor is the Overwhelming Accumulation of Popular Claims by Civic Organizations. In different instances, civic organizations were defenders of issues related to the labor sector, fiscal covenant, electoral process of 2016, migration matters with Haitian-descendants, housekeeping workers, and the LGBT movement in the country. Environmentalist organizations were also part of the package since they brought topics of national interest to the public agenda such as Loma Miranda, and Barrick Gold. P6 stated that “The Green March movement was the product of the accumulation of experiences with other movements and civic organizations in the country”. Therefore, immediately after the Odebrecht corruption scandal took place, the groups made a coalition and decided to fight together for the end of impunity and corruption in the Dominican Republic. Perhaps the last project with a significant audience for social change was the fight for the 4% increase in the national budget of the country for education.

The fourth result is Government Unwillingness to Respond to Corruption Cases. A great number of corruption cases have been stored for years in the file cabinet of the Dominican General Attorney. Most notable corruption cases awaiting trial in the Dominican Republic are Odebrecht, Super Tucanos (Bribery on Airplane Purchase Order), Embezzlement of INAPA ex-director (Water Department), Embezzlement of San Cristobal Mayor Raul Mondesi, Bribery and kickbacks on OISOE (Public Works



Department), CORDE Embezzlement (State Enterprises Corporation), CEA Bribery and Embezzlement (Sugar State Council), Judges Bribery, and Prosecutors Bribery among others (El Dia, 2017). Since all corruption cases involve both government officials and members of the political party on power (PLD), the Dominican government has showed no interest to resolve the situation. Participant 3, 7 and 11 explained that the interference of the State Power by the Dominican President, mainly the judiciary power, has provoked those corruption cases to stay dormant without execution of due process. Therefore, government unwillingness to respond to corruption cases has been a critical factor for the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the country.

The last finding is International Jurisdiction for the Odebrecht Case. Since the main evidence of the Odebrecht corruption scandal came from the United States and Brazil, there were not chances for the Dominican government to have institutional control and to manipulate the case at their convenience. This factor influenced activists of the Dominican Republic to unify themselves and organize the first mass mobilization on January 22, 2017 which Dominicans called “La Marcha Verde” (The Green March, translation to English) in allusion to the color of hope “Green” for the end of political corruption and impunity in the country. P4 and P8 considered that the involvement of the international community, mainly the United States and Brazil, have contributed to the political pressure on the Dominican government in the fight against corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

## **Findings for Research Question 2**

This section details the strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

Findings reveal ten strategies and tactics. The first is *Plural, Civic, and Non-Partisan Convenes*. This strategy was important for the mobilization of the Green March movement. P5 indicated that the purpose of the Green March movement was to widespread the message of hope and peace in order to motivate people to participate in mass mobilizations and pursue not only the position of whistleblowers and victims but also the stance of active actors and protagonists.

*Having the topic of corruption and impunity in the public debate.* This strategy was used to keep corruption and impunity awareness in the minds of the Dominican people. The Green March movement strived to have political and social content pertaining to their claims and allegations during key instances in the national agenda. P3 stated “This approach canceled out the traditional media scheme of the government as well as their public opinion control”.

*Having a Diverse and Rotary Image.* Another success of the Green March movement was to maintain a rotational and plural representation of members of the movement with different backgrounds and social status. The movement intentionally rotated the concentration of power every six months within the members of the National Operative Commission, thus, avoiding the continuity of power by just a single individual. P8 discussed that this strategy disrupted the traditional ways for mobilizations and also dismantled the means for government intelligence.

*Being knowledgeable in Corruption Matters.* A critical strategy of the Green March movement was to have on board qualified and competent individuals to talk with authority about the corruption phenomenon and its social, political and economic implications. The spokesman of the Green March movement was able to connect with the population in terms of providing accurate and solid information on corruption studies and statistics. P11 stated “These individuals provided materials of incidence useful for the education and awareness of members and followers of the movement”. Ultimately, they were responsible for the public positioning of the organization in society.

*Having a Permanent and Public Influence.* One important achievement of the Green March movement was the direct and enduring influence over public institutions of the country. This strategy allowed the Green March movement to constantly be involved in institutional processes with the objective to keep alive the spirit of the movement. P6 expressed “The Green March movement was always challenging the Dominican government for public debates; however, the government used to refuse the challenge”.

*Empowering Young Men and Women.* This tactic was very successful for the growth and mobilization of the Green March movement. Young men and women didn't compound the majority of members in the national assembly but they were the main actors in convenes for mobilizations and at the scene of the movement. P1 concluded that this tactic generated confidence over the population and attracted people of different sectors to the movement.

*Exclusion of Other Social Topics from Public Agenda.* This strategy was pretty effective since the Green March movement focused only in debating the topics of

political corruption and impunity in the country. Despite the fact there were other topics involving political corruption, for instance the Haitian migration, the Green March movement was consistent with maintaining the core values and goals that gave birth to the movement. P10 discussed that the inclusion of a different topic in the public agenda could rest confidence to the movement and could divide the organization as well.

*Great Communication Support Team.* The members of the Green March movement had an outstanding vision about how to display news. The communication team was innovative and they programmed high scale coverage of mobilizations across the country. Also, they were responsible for the digital marketing of the group, positioning the movement into every segment of the Dominican society. P4 stated that the communication team was also responsible for gaining market share in all social media spot.

*Promoting Civic Values.* This strategy called the attention to the entire population in the country. After mass demonstration, members of the Green March movement used to clean up every street and place utilized for the mobilization. This civic example was in consonant with the message of hope for a better country. P12 mentioned that such action generated trust and confidence from the movement to citizens of the nation.

*Singing the National Anthem of the Dominican Republic.* This was an excellent tactic for the Green March movement since it showed a high degree of patriotism among the members of the movement. Again, this type of action elevated the population's awareness about respect and dignity for all Dominicans. P9 argued that "when singing the national anthem of the country, members and supporters of the Green March movement

honored the hymn and felt very proud of being Dominicans”. The dissemination of these concepts provided an easier transition for the population to engage in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

No discrepant cases or nonconforming data was applicable to the study. Tables to illustrate results were appropriate to the study and are included throughout the chapter.

### **Summary**

Data collection derived five important factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic. The first outcome was Political Deception of the Dominican People. Deception was responsible for the construction of a democratic life among Dominicans. They had been dreaming about the construction of democratic and political projects but they were disappointed by political parties and social organizations within the country because of the lack of results at the economic level as well as in terms of justice and liberties.

The Odebrecht Corruption Scandal also played a relevant role since the topic was addressed in the regional agenda. The U.S. Department of Justice announced that the Brazilian giant Odebrecht pleaded guilty on corruption acts involving more than ten Latin America countries, mainly the Dominican Republic with bribes and kickbacks to public officials exceeding \$92 Million dollars (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). As a result, the Green March movement organized the first mobilization against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic on January 22, 2017.

The third factor was the Overwhelming Accumulation of Popular Claims by Civic Organizations. The Green March movement was the product of the accumulation of

experiences with other movements and civic organizations in the country. In different instances, they were defenders of issues related to the labor sector, fiscal covenant, electoral process of 2016, migration matters with Haitian descendents, housekeeping workers, and the LGBT movement in the country. Environmentalist organizations were also part of the package since they brought topics of national interest to the public agenda such as Loma Miranda, and Barrick Gold.

In addition, a great number of corruption cases had been stored for years in the file cabinet of the Dominican General Attorney. Government Unwillingness to Respond to Corruption Cases was due mostly to the involvement of both government officials and members of the political party on power (PLD). The interference of the State Power by the Dominican President, mainly the judiciary power, had provoked corruption cases to stay dormant without execution of the due process.

The last finding was International Jurisdiction for the Odebrecht Case. Since main evidence of the Odebrecht corruption scandal came from the United States and Brazil, there were not chances for the Dominican government to have institutional control and to manipulate the case at their convenience. This factor influenced activists of the Dominican Republic to unify themselves and organize the first mass mobilization which Dominicans called “La Marcha Verde” (The Green March, translation to English) in allusion to the color of hope “Green” for the end of political corruption and impunity in the country.

The study uncovered ten strategies and tactics that were used by the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican

Republic. Plural, civic, and non-partisan convenes was an important strategy for the mobilization of the Green March movement because of the widespread message of hope and peace that motivated people to join the group. Having the topic of corruption and impunity in the public debate was another strategy used to keep corruption and impunity awareness in the minds of the Dominican people. The Green March movement strived to have political and social content pertaining to their claims and allegations during key instances in the national agenda. Also, having a diverse and rotary image was a successful tactic of the Green March movement since the Movement maintained a rotational and plural representation of members with different backgrounds and social status. The concentration power of members of the National Working Commission was rotated every six months, thus, avoiding the continuity of power by just a single individual.

Being knowledgeable about corruption matters was another critical strategy of the Green March movement for the inherent social and political content of the mobilizations. The Movement had on board qualified and competent individuals able to talk about the corruption phenomenon and its social, political, and economic implications. The spokesman of the Green March movement was able to connect with the population in terms of providing accurate and solid information on corruption studies and statistics. Ultimately, they were responsible for the public positioning of the organization in society.

One important achievement of the Green March movement was the direct and enduring influence over public institutions of the country. Therefore, having a permanent

and public influence allowed the Movement to constantly be involved in institutional processes with the objective to keep alive their cause. Empowering young men and women was a significant strategy for the growth and mobilization of the Green March movement. Young men and women didn't compound the majority of members in the national assembly, but they were the main actors in convenes for mobilizations and at the scene of the movement.

Exclusion of other social topics from the public agenda was also an effective strategy since the Green March movement focused only in debating the topics of political corruption and impunity in the country. Despite the fact there were other topics involving political corruption, for instance the Haitian migration, the Green March movement was consistent with maintaining the core values and goals that gave birth to the Movement. The involvement of other topics in the public agenda could have diminished confidence in the Movement and could have also divided the organization.

A great communication support team contributed to the Movement's outstanding vision about how to display news. The team was innovative, and they programmed high scale coverage of mobilizations across the country. Also, they were responsible for the digital marketing of the group, positioning the Movement into every segment of the Dominican society. The strategy of promoting civic values gained the attention of the entire population of the country. After mass demonstrations, members of the Green March movement used to clean up every street and place utilized for the mobilization. This civic example was in consonant with the message of hope for a better country.



Lastly, singing the national anthem of the Dominican Republic was an excellent tactic for the Green March movement since it showed a high degree of patriotism among the members of the Movement. This type of action elevated the population's awareness about respect and dignity for all Dominicans. The dissemination of these concepts provided an easier transition for the population to engage in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

The next chapter will address interpretation of the findings, recommendations, implications, and conclusion of the study.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to explore the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement. I examined the factors leading to mobilization and strategies of the Green March movement. The fight against political corruption and impunity was generally defined as the agenda of social revindications demanded by the Green March movement to the Dominican government. The target population for the study was members of the Green March movement using purposeful sampling, focusing on Green March members located in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Assessments of the activities of the Green March movement were used in conjunction with participant interviews to understand the process of fighting against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

A qualitative, instrumental case study was consistent with exploring the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March social movement. Interpretation was based on my observations and understandings in the natural setting where participants experienced the process under study (see Creswell, 2009). The qualitative method was also appropriate because it allowed me to examine documents, observe behavior, and interview participants. This case study was bounded by place, as it was conducted exclusively in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The approach provided the philosophical assumption of epistemology where I had full interaction with participants in the study. Further, data were gathered based on participant views (Creswell, 2013). The collection of subjective data uncovered the meaning for

participants' actions and behavior for the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic, helping to produce conclusions from the data.

The study was conducted to address a gap in the literature because it was the first time the political opportunity theory was used to understand social movement mobilizations in the Dominican Republic. In addition, little has been said about what strategies and tactics were used by social movements in the fight against corruption. Therefore, I explored the process of the Green March movement against political corruption in the Dominican Republic and examined the experiences of the civic groups joining the Green March movement since they had not been heard in published literature.

Key findings for Research Question 1 were political deception of the Dominican people, the Odebrecht corruption scandal, overwhelming accumulation of popular claims by civic organizations in the country, government unwillingness to respond to corruption cases, and the international jurisdiction for the Odebrecht case. However, key findings for Research Question 2 included plural, civic, and nonpartisan convenes, keeping corruption and impunity as topics in public debate, maintaining a diverse and rotary image, being knowledgeable in corruption matters, permanent and public influence of social movements, empowering young men and women, exclusion of social topics other than corruption in public agenda, great communication support team, promoting civic values, and singing the national anthem of the Dominican Republic before the beginning of the movement's activities.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

Findings for Research Question 1 support the existing literature. For instance, factors leading to mobilizations of the Green March movement such as deception of citizens, overwhelming accumulation of popular claims by civic organizations, and government unwillingness to respond to demands for corruption cases played an important role in the fight against corruption because they were perceived as opportunities for mobilization of the Green March movement against political corruption in the country. This is supported in the literature by the cases of the Arab Spring of 2011, the Indian Summer, and the Anna Hazare movement, which are typical examples of angry masses of people with a history of aggravations and disappointments with their political parties in power, demanding the end of political corruption. Likewise, large masses of people in the Green March movement demand an end to political corruption in the Dominican Republic.

Findings for Research Question 2 uncovered strategies that contributed to the solidification of the Green March movement like efforts to unify activists defending unrelated social issues other than corruption, which also relate to the example of the Arab Spring of 2011, the Indian Summer case, and the Anna Hazare movement. Another strategy discouraged the continuity of power by a single individual and disarticulated government intelligence as the diversity of representation of Green March leaders was enforced with a constant rotation of power. Additionally, a knowledgeable team in corruption matters positioned the Green March movement in a high public stance. Great communication support teams extended the Green March movement's vision about how

news needed to be displayed. Spreading the message of hope and peace during mobilizations of the Green March movement enabled protesters not only to have the position of whistleblowers and victims but also the stance of active actors and protagonists. In addition, the teaching of civic values during mobilizations of the Green March movement generated trust and confidence among citizens of the Dominican Republic. The tactic of singing the national anthem before movement activities elevated the degree of respect and dignity of the population and generated a spirit of compromise and engagement with the Green March movement.

Another finding was that as the fight against corruption was supported by counterpart countries, the probabilities for implementation of political reforms and social change increased as the Green March movement continued its activities. This activity resembles the actions implemented in the fight against corruption in Brazil. The fight against corruption brought together a considerable number of countries in the region worried about their political and economic stability. The United States and Brazil joined efforts with the Dominican Republic to combat corruption and to increase the possibilities of social change in the country. Similar actions were conducted during the investigation of the “Lava Plato” case where Brazilian independent prosecutors were helped by the international community to uncover a series of corruption scandals including the Odebrecht case. The international jurisdiction for corruption scandals eliminated the chances for government to manipulate evidence as well as having institutional control.

Finally, the empowerment of young men and women in the fight against political corruption by the Green March movement has generated confidence among the population and attracted people from different sectors supporting the cause. This view also supports a study of corruption control in China where young university students condemned political corruption and agreed with the punishment and demotion of government officials involved in acts of corruption (Jiang et al., 2013). Other strategies used by the Green March movement confirmed the mechanisms used for corruption control in the United States. For example, keeping corruption as a topic in the national agenda pressured governments and institutional actors to respond to social demands. Additionally, the permanent and public influence of people promoted constant involvement in institutional processes as well as challenging governments for public debates. Last, excluding topics in the public agenda other than political corruption strengthened people's view in the fight against corruption.

In short, most of the strategies used by the Green March movement in the fight against corruption reflect the mechanisms used by the Arab Spring of 2011, the Indian Summer, and the Anna Hazare movement. Other tactics used by the Green March movement describe similar courses of actions when compared to the cases of corruption control in China, the fight against corruption in Brazil, and corruption control in the United States.

### **Context of the Theoretical Framework**

Findings support the concept of political openness underlined by Eisinger (1973) in the theory of political opportunity. In December 2016, the political structure of the

Dominican Republic was receptive and vulnerable to riots. The announcement by the U.S. State Department of Justice involving public officials of the Dominican Republic on bribes of around \$92 million dollars brought a lot of concern to Dominican society. This situation allowed civic organizations to regroup and mobilize themselves under the Green March movement. Mobilizations of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic were a product of five political opportunities over the structure of the Dominican government, which will be described in the next paragraphs.

The first political opportunity is the political deception of the Dominican people. As a consequence of being deceived, the Dominican people were disappointed with the political system of the country including the political party in power (PLD) because the promise to rebuild the country and to produce shifts in the economic sector was not accomplished. Therefore, this sentiment of frustration fostered the idea of pursuing political reforms and social change through demonstrations of the Green March movement across the country.

The second political opportunity is the Odebrecht corruption scandal. This factor was the main reason for Dominicans to protest political corruption and impunity in the country. Founders of the Green March movement viewed the involvement of Dominican officials in corruption acts as an opportunity to mobilize against the political structure of the party in power. At this point, tolerance to corruption was zero and major civic organizations were already ready to mobilize.

The third political opportunity is the accumulation of popular claims by civic organizations in the country. Most of the organizations that joined the Green March movement had a historical accumulation of complaints and social demands against the current government of the country. Consequently, the Odebrecht corruption scandal led to activists to organize and mobilize against political corruption in the country.

The fourth political opportunity is government's unwillingness to respond to corruption cases. This factor was one of the most obvious reasons for Dominicans to protest corruption. Many government officials of the country had committed acts of corruption without a plan for consequences. Therefore, those corruption cases were in file cabinets waiting for trials while the Dominican government showed no interest to resolve such cases as most of the public officials involved in corruption acts belonged to the political committee of the party in power (PLD).

The fifth political opportunity is the international jurisdiction for the Odebrecht case. This scenario allowed activists of the Green March movement to take advantage of the weak political structure of the government and mobilize for the end of corruption in the country. Participants in the study indicated that the international jurisdiction of the case denied access of evidence to the Dominican government and reduced the chances for institutional control and manipulation of the case at its convenience.

The political opportunity theory also embraces the notion instituted by Eisinger (1973) and Tilly (1978) that explains the curvilinear relationship between the incidence of protests and political openness. Findings from the study address the three conditions for



mobilizations to happen that include tolerance by the government, powerful methods to communicate grievances and concerns, and the lack of a repressive system.

When the Green March movement first announced a mobilization for the end of political corruption in the country, the Dominican government was not concerned about this action. It never imagined the magnitude of this event since most of the civic organizations in the country had failed their social demands. Therefore, the government was tolerant by accepting and approving pacific demonstrations of the Green March movement across the country. The political party in power was more concerned about defending and protecting public officials and members of its political committee from corruption-imputations against them.

The Green March movement used several methods to communicate members' grievances and concerns such as the Green Book, the Green day, and the Green Flame. The Green Book was a volume of signatures collected throughout the country by the Green March movement. On February 22, 2017 members of the Green March delivered to the National Palace a set of green books with 312,415 notarized signatures requesting President Danilo Medina to appoint a commission of independent prosecutors along with the United Nations to investigate the Odebrecht corruption scandal in the country (Dominican Today, 2017). The Green Day was established on February 22, 2017 to celebrate the first month of achievement of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic (El Caribe, 2017). The Green Day celebration initiated with a national mobilization journey using the green color of hope for garments, flags, or others objects in vehicles, businesses, homes, educational centers,

and at the workplace. The Green Flame was a promotional event of the Green March social movement during the dates of March 12 and March 20 of 2017. Members of the Movement carried candles and torches across the country until its final destination on the Independence Park in the city of Santo Domingo. The event culminated with the lighting of the main torch among cultural activities and social manifestations (Listin Diario, 2017). Current demands by the Green March movement include the indictments for all those involved in the Odebrecht case, the recovery of the money stolen through bribes and from the ballooned cost of work, the cancelling of all Odebrecht contracts in the country, and the appointment of a commission of independent prosecutors accompanied with the United Nations to investigate the Odebrecht corruption scandal during the administration of President Danilo Medina and former presidents Leonel Fernandez and Hipolito Mejia (Dominican Today, 2017).

The lack of a repressive system was a critical element for the Green March movement to mobilize against political corruption and impunity in the country. The government tolerance incidence took place when government officials of the Dominican Republic were reported by the U.S. Department of Justice to be involved in corruption transactions with the Brazilian construction firm Odebrecht. At this point, the Green March movement felt pretty confident to mobilize the group because of the international jurisdiction of the Odebrecht case. The Dominican government could not manipulate the corruption file nor have institutional control since evidence came from the international community, mainly the United States and Brazil. Consequently, it was not logical for the Dominican government to have a repressive system against the Green March movement.

The government understood that it was more convenient to be in consonance with a democratic and open system, albeit a flawed one in this case, and allow the Green March movement to mobilize and continue with activities of that nature.

Finally, the Green March movement found no obstacles for the mobilization of the group. Members of the Movement felt very secure and comfortable during manifestation-activities since they received the encouragement of the public, and even the support of governmental authorities and members of the police department. The Dominican population was in agreement with the end of political corruption but against political instability in the country. The Dominican government acted wisely by not intervening or repressing the Green March movement since it was aware of its implication with the Odebrecht corruption scandal and other cases stored with the stamp of impunity. Consequently, by repressing the Movement the government could have been perceived as the aggressor; instead, it provided a secure environment to members and supporters of the Green March movement and avoided further complications.

In short, the context of the theoretical framework is in consonance with the notion of political opportunities by the Green March movement over the political structure of the Dominican government. In addition, the conditions for mobilizations to happen have been addressed as well as the concepts of “political openness” and the “curvilinear relationship” between political corruption and mobilizations of the Green March movement.

### **Limitations of the Study**

No limitations to trustworthiness arose from the study. The investigation was completed in accordance with the provisions stated in chapter three about credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Members of the Green March movement were very enthusiastic and cooperative during the study. As an observer, the researcher had the opportunity to join an impacting demonstration called “The One Million March”. No further actions or inconvenience were presented during the protest.

The methodological weakness related to the narrow range of the study remained the same, as stated in chapter one. The researcher selected the Green March movement as the only social movement for the case study of the fight against political corruption in the Dominican Republic. Therefore, the selection of one case study limited the extent of the study and the chance to include new perspectives and insights.

Another weakness of the approach was associated with the boundaries of the case study in terms of time, event, and processes. The case study of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic had a fresh beginning, but it is uncertain when the process will end as march developments are still in place. Consequently, this limitation affects the effectiveness of the boundaries surrounding the case. This paper presented no issues related to limitations of transferability and dependability of the study as mentioned above.

The bias that could influence the study outcomes was in relation to the role of the researcher in the study. The researcher’s full involvement attending the Green March movement demonstration on August 12, 2018 did not jeopardize the credibility of the

study since government officials and members of the ruling party (PLD) also participated in the protest rally. Therefore, adjustment on the role of the researcher was not necessary to counter bias during the study.

The description of reasonable measures to address limitations was an integral part of this research paper. The study emphasized limitations or constraints that could be controlled. An example of limitations that could be controlled was the one explaining that the election of more than one case will dilute the overall analysis of the study (Creswell, 2013). In order to counteract this limitation, the researcher selected one particular case, the Green March movement.

The bias related to the role of the researcher was also offset to avoid unwanted outcomes. A reasonable measure to address this preconception was having the researcher assume a more conservative role in the Green March demonstrations. However, the implementation of this alternative was not necessary since the researcher presented no limitations or constraints during the study.

### **Recommendations**

Further studies selecting two or more cases may extend the scope of the study by including new perspectives and insights about social movements fighting corruption. In addition, as the Odebrecht corruption scandal is still a topic of debate in the region, researchers may conduct studies associated with the fight against corruption in the countries affected by the corruption scandal.

These recommendations may extend knowledge in the discipline since no studies have been conducted using the case of the Green March movement as a reference point.

Researchers in the Dominican Republic may conduct further studies based on the influence of social movements fighting political corruption and impunity in the country. The current research paper is the first study in the Dominican Republic to utilize the Political Opportunity Theory as the theoretical framework, and future social movement research might expand this study's use of this theoretical framework.

In brief, extended knowledge may be provided to the discipline as scholars and practitioners will examine nations around the world. Since the economic and political status of developing countries are more vulnerable to corruption activities, more data and academic materials may be available to produce knowledge related to corruption controls and the interference of social movements as principal actors.

### **Implications**

The potential impact for positive social change can be described at the individual, family, institutional, and societal levels. For instance, the end of political corruption and impunity may benefit individuals looking for a better place to live, where corruption may be eradicated and the impunity for the corrupt does not exist. Individuals may have better opportunities for work, study, and may have more chances for being successful in their professions and careers.

At the family level, the Green March movement made people aware about the reasons why streets in the Dominican Republic had not been repaired, the existence of poor education and sanitary sewer systems, ineffective health care services, poor public transportation, high unemployment rate, inoperative power system, and a high cost of living with a great number of Dominicans living in extreme poverty conditions. A major

reason for these problems is political corruption. The monies needed to be invested in public services are in the pockets of some government officials and members of the political party in power (PLD). Dominican families understand that the fight against corruption is a necessary step to improve both public services and the standard of living.

At the institutional level, the country's political system may transform from treating politics as a business to treating politics as a social service to promote the common good. Currently, entrepreneurs do not compete with each other; instead, they pursue government protection and deals with bribes and kick backs to government officials. The end of corruption may also change the actual political model and eliminate the toxic relationship between government and entrepreneurs. Last, the end of corruption and impunity may bring democracy for elected offices during the electoral process.

At the societal level, people may enjoy a more equal and just society. The end of corruption and impunity may mean the full implementation of all principles and concepts of social justice. Also, better corruption controls may be implemented for managing resources within public institutions. Moreover, major vindications of the Green March movement may be in effect such as the appointment of independent prosecutors for corruption trials and the political hearing of Dominican President Danilo Medina for allegations in the Odebrecht corruption scandal. This trial may create a political antecedent in the republican history of the Dominican Republic. Last, the current research paper may establish a point of reference for future studies.

## Conclusion

Outcomes from the fight against political corruption and impunity may not be seen in the near future. However, mobilizations of the Green March movement have influenced how the Dominican government is executing public work contracts, mainly the ones involving infrastructure work in the country. The government has been more conservative and aware that inconsistencies in public administration may aggravate the reputation of the government as well as to reduce its political popularity. Despite evidence coming from the international community, the Dominican government resists the idea to prosecute government officials who are involved in the Odebrecht corruption scandals. The administration has utilized strategic methods to dodge corruption allegations against public officials and keep them under the umbrella of impunity. It has been very precocious at the time of doing negotiations and managing public resources. However, in the long run the truth will prevail as more proof and political pressure against the administration are taking place.

It is not certain when the Green March movement will cease operations, but the work the Movement has done against political corruption and impunity in the country has been outstanding. The Movement has been able to regroup civic organizations in the country in order to march in one direction, with a diverse representation of leaders, using tactics and strategies never achieved by any social movement in the Dominican Republic, with the purpose of defeating government intelligence. They also have used social media channels as the main source of communication to spread the message of hope and peace. The Green March movement has created a “trade mark” for mobilizations as they have



been peaceful, civic, organized, and more important, transcending all types of barriers for the agglutination of a diverse group of people from different backgrounds and social status. The Green March has achieved what no other social group has been able to accomplish in the modern history of mobilizations in the country. The “One Million March” was the scenario of the biggest march ever executed in the Dominican Republic, with protesters exceeding more than ten percent of the country’s population. Therefore, given the hostile scenario of the Dominican government versus the Green March movement, the question is not if the Green March movement will stop their social vindications activities but when it is going to happen.

Hopefully, the Dominican society and the entire country as well will benefit from the fight of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity. Social reforms are a slow process to complete but a dynamic course of action to follow. There is no doubt the Dominican population has responded to the call of the Green March movement, but only time and circumstances will determine to what extent the Movement will be able to institutionalize its goals through political and social change.

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## Appendix A: Recruitment Flyer

The Green March Movement: A Case Study of the Fight against Political Corruption and Impunity in the Dominican Republic.

### **Volunteers Wanted for a Research Study**

The purpose of this case study is to explore the process of the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic by the Green March movement. The case study will specifically examine the factors leading to the mobilization of the Green March movement as well as the strategies and tactics used by the Green March movement in the fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age or older, male or female, members or supporters of the Green March social movement, and residents of the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The information obtained from participants in this study will be strictly confidential. The results of this study will provide a needed insight into the political system and government institutions of the Dominican Republic in regard to the application of new concepts and processes relating to the fight against political corruption and impunity in the country.

To learn more about this research you can reach Mr. Juan A. Rodriguez at [REDACTED] or email to [REDACTED]. This research is conducted under the direction of Dr. Susan Baer, Chairperson and Methodologist at Walden University. You can contact Dr. Baer at [REDACTED].



## Appendix B: Interview Protocol

The Green March Movement: A Case Study of the Fight against Political Corruption and  
Impunity in the Dominican Republic.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctoral Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions:

1. When and how did you first learn about the Green March movement in the Dominican Republic?
2. When and how did you first become active with the Movement?
3. Describe how you view your current role as a member of the Green March movement.
4. How has your role changed or evolved over time?
5. What type of activities do you typically engage in with the Green March movement and what do you consider to be your most important participatory activity, and why?
6. What factors do you think led to the mobilizations of the Green March movement against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?

7. How have government and elected officials in the Dominican Republic responded to the activities of the Green March movement?
8. Explain why you believe they have responded in this way.
9. When participating in Movement activities such as protests, how safe do you feel from possible governmental intervention or repression?
10. What is the level of public support for the Green March movement in the Dominican Republic?
11. What strategies and tactics are used by the Green March movement to fight against political corruption and impunity in the Dominican Republic?
12. Which of these strategies and tactics are most effective and why?
13. Which of these strategies and tactics are least effective and why?
14. What has been the Green March movement's greatest success to date?
15. What would you change about the Green March movement if you could?