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Gender Violence in Argentina:

The role of women in support and prevention mechanisms from civil society to gender policy- making

Giulia Gustavsen Angelini

International Relations

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Signature......................................

Date...

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Abstract

In May 2015, the brutal killing of 14-year-old Chiara Páez by the hand of her boyfriend, horrified Argentina and led to the powerful women's movement #NiUnaMenos' demand for support and prevention solutions. The killing of Chiara Páez was the ultimate act of continuous episodes of violence against women, taking place both in public and private spaces. The purpose of this thesis: "Gender violence in Argentina: The role of women in support and prevention mechanisms from civil society to gender policy-making" is to investigate the role of women as stakeholders in the realization of prevention and support mechanisms to tackle and eradicate violence against women in all its forms. Argentina, because of its high number of femicides and strong female activism, serves as an example to explain the issue of femicide as a grave social phenomenon and the changes women may obtain in public policy.

Although, Argentina enjoys great female political representation, women face challenges of structural and cultural violence on daily basis. UN Women has expressed deep concern towards the situation of gender-based violence in Argentina, which endure as well in Latin America and beyond. According to the UN, violence against women affects individuals on a personal level, but also society as a whole, which results "to have a high price in lost progress for each country" (UN Women, 2016).

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List of acronyms

CABA	Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIM	Centros Integrales de la Mujer
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CNM	Consejo Nacional de las Mujeres
CSO	Civil society organizations
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
ELA	Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Género
ELLA	Evidence and Lesson from Latin America
ESI	Educación Sexual Integral
HRC	Human Rights Council
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INAM	Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres
IR	International Relations
NGO	Non-profit Organization
OHCHR	Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
OVD	Oficina de Violencia Doméstica
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PNA	Plan Nacional de Acción
PRO	Propuesta Republicana
SERNAM	Servicio Nacional de la Mujer
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UBA	University of Buenos Aires
UN	United Nations
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WHO	World Health Organizatio

1.0 Introduction: why study gender violence in Argentina

Back in 2013, during a semester at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), the class was very   attentive listening to the professor´s discussion about revolutions in Latin America, when a group of women burst into the classroom, "screaming" for justice for people living in poverty, for women's rights of abortion and accusing societies that encouraged capitalism. The fervour of these female students was very fascinating compared to the absence of devotion and political engagement in Europe. This experience led to the idea of this master thesis, about how women's activism in Argentina could empower women, deprived of their rights, and eventually lead to an effective change in world politics.

On June 3rd, 2015, the feminist movement *Ni Una Menos* filled Plaza Congreso in the heart of Buenos Aires with a multitude of voices and identities determined to seek justice for the latest act of violence against women in Argentina. The notorious NGO, La Casa del Encuentro, reports that every 30th hour a woman is killed in Argentina by the hand of "violencia machista" (= male violence). The phenomenon of violence against women, however, is well known in every corner of the world. The issue often lies in the impunity of not taking action against this kind of violence, which often fails to be recognized as a human right violation by the State. The violence that women experience daily is a possible result not only by cultural norms but also by weak institutions and by-laws often neglected. The Ni Una Menos women's movement in 2015 created, awareness to hundreds if not thousands of women by filling one of the largest squares in the world demanding the government to apply the Law 26.485.

The movement gained in short time media attention all over the world, putting Argentina on the world map, with the popular hashtag #NiUnaMenos.[1] The movement expanded from Argentina to other countries in Latin America, filling the squares of Chile, Peru, Uruguay, and Mexico. Women in Latin America refer to this demonstration as a moment of change signed by the "revolutionary" spirit of women's movements.

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[1] Spanish for "Not One (Woman) Less."

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This movement is not the first action of social protest taking place in Argentina. In the past, activists have been fighting against social injustice, influenced by past events that brought "forced" changes in society: dictatorships, *desaparecidos*, economic crises and continuing inflation that put the country on its knees more than once. These dynamics, according to feminist activists and scholars hit the hardest women, victims of discrimination and structural violence. Activists in Argentina describe women as more vulnerable to financial instability and domestic abuse in the country.

The investigation of this thesis will focus on the active role of civil society in Argentina and whether women's movements influence (or not) the legal as well as the political policy-, decision-making regarding violence against women. Femicides are consequences of long lasting domestic violence cases, dictated by a continuum of violence. Moreover, the dictatorship in Argentina from 1976 to 1981 is still an open wound, which is reminded on a daily basis in public spaces, at the universities as well as in the streets. It is fundamental to understand the importance of civil society and of human rights movements that represent and influence other movements in Argentina. The issue of women's rights will be discussed within the international relations framework of human rights. Finally, the semester at UBA in 2013, gave me the possibility to extend my knowledge concerning the state of terror and its effects especially on women and children.

1.1 Problem statement and research questions

Latin America counts with 14 of 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide worldwide. According to a study made in 2013 by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), it was estimated that in 12 countries in the region of Latin America, between 17% and 53% of women suffered physical or sexual violence from a partner (ELLA, 2015). Women are daily victims of different forms of violence: sexual, domestic, institutional violence, women trafficking and femicide. Despite the international standards of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1997) and the Beijing Platform of Action (1995), the phenomenon seems to be firmly alive in urban as well as in rural environments. By depriving women to exercise their socio-economic and political rights, as well as a life free of violence affect the society as a whole.

The case study of this thesis will focus on how systems of protection and awareness flow can be key instruments to tackle and reduce gender-based violence in Argentina and worldwide.

Argentina serves as an example to the international community, due to its historical background and the role of civil society in tackling social, economic and political issues affecting the population. Women in Argentina have been suffering institutional violence throughout the years, caused by economic crisis, dictatorship, neglect of abortion laws, and inadequate behaviour by officials and police force towards victims of gender violence. Simultaneously, there has been a wave of domestic violence, which has permitted the discussion regarding private and public spheres in the feminist theoretical framework of international relations. Domestic violence is continuously treated as a private issue, which must be treated in a public dimension. Hence, the government is expected to go beyond the "privacy" of the home, where violence occurs and to find resolution to tackle the problem.

To understand in depth the issue of violence against women as a human right violation both on international and national levels it has been necessary to combine gender lenses with the human rights perspective to study gender in global politics. The problem statement surrounds the dilemma of possible resolutions embodied by civil society, especially in evaluating whether women's movements are effective together with the enforcement of laws and policy-making by the governments. Based on UN frameworks, countries in Latin America address violence against women through two procedures. Firstly, the regional commitment is demonstrated by the adhering of the American states to the Convention of Belem do Para; secondly, the national level commitments, through shaping programs and domestic and femicide laws and the establishment of gender observatories (ELLA, 2015).

This study aims to analyse the commitments of civil society and governmental entities that work directly with social and political issues regarding violence against women. Argentina represents the "case study" of this investigation, based on its rooted active civil society in multiple political crises, its ethnic identity, institutional fragmentation and increasing trends of gender-based violence, especially femicide. To summarize, how the role of women in social activism and in support mechanisms is essential to influence and change the institutional environment. This claim will be discussed in the course of the chapters based on the following research questions:

RQ.1 How can the presence of women in support and prevention mechanisms (both informal and formal) help to tackle and reduce gender-based violence?

RQ.2 What can women's position within NGOs bring to the table together with the state in the protection of women, victims of domestic violence in the city of Buenos Aires?

RQ.3 What impacts can feminist social movements have on decision-making and policy-making in Argentina?

RQ.4 How can systems of prevention reach out to women in Buenos Aires that do not owe instruments of information: computer, television, or others?

1.2 Thesis outline

This master thesis includes eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides the reader the motivations and the objectives as well as the problem statement and research questions that will be discussed throughout the thesis. Chapter 2 presents the methodological framework used to investigate the topic of the thesis, including the outlines of the qualitative research method, interviews, sample units and the limitations met in the investigation. In chapter 3 the theoretical and conceptual framework, in particular feminist theory and power relations will be presented as tools to gender analysis. Chapter 4 continues to provide a conceptual framework, in which human rights within the international framework will interlink Argentina as case study to international security regarding women. Chapter 5 introduces the contextual backgrounds, which introduces Argentina and in particular Buenos Aires as study areas and the historical, political, social and economic background as part of the analysis. Chapter 6 outlines the findings from the literature review and the discussion concerning the role of civil society and activism in Argentina. Chapter 7 will continue to display the findings of the qualitative interviews and the literature review in order to discuss the research questions and the limitations of the study. In chapter 8, I will demonstrate the conclusions regarding the study and the research questions.

2.0 Methodological Framework

The following chapter introduces the methodological approach used to study the role of women in the political setting and both the informal and formal prevention mechanisms applied to help tackling and eradicating gender-based violence in Argentina. The research process investigates in particular the functionality of support and prevention mechanisms that work with women victims of violence, especially in CABA. The methodology used to study gender violence within prevention mechanisms in Argentina was through qualitative research, which usually emphasizes words rather than the quantification of the collection of data (Bryman, 2012).

This investigation is based on a gender perspective both within a theoretical and conceptual framework using the feminist theory. Bryman (2012) argues that theory is an essential element to social research in order to provide a framework within social phenomena can be understood and the research findings can be explained. Therefore, I decided to interlink feminist theory to qualitative methods, to obtain the women's perception, experience and thoughts regarding their environment and position.

2.1 Sources and data

The research design applied for this investigation is defined as a case study concerning mainly women involved in the field of gender security and prevention mechanisms in Buenos Aires, Argentina. To complete this study I have used a combination of primary sources obtained through interviews conducted via Skype and email questionnaire, and desk-study that impels the argument through the review of documents: policy briefs from NGOs and governmental entities, reports, academic articles, newspaper articles, books, information offered by websites of International Organizations and the Argentine government. The analysis of policy-briefs has been crucial to this study regarding policy-making for the creation of a gender policy, as a prevention mechanism in the eradication of violence against women. Therefore, I analysed specifically the governmental policy-briefs of Law 26.485 and the National Plan of Action (2017-2019), offered by the Consejo Nacional de las Muejeres (CNM), together with NGOs reports inholding the monitoring of plans and policies. Moreover, I obtained secondary sources based on academic books like Barbara Sutton's book –

Bodies in Crisis in the case study of Argentina. Documents released by the Ni Una Menos movement have also been important to the findings.

According to Bryman, qualitative research is often correlated to feminism, because this type of method acknowledges women's voices (Bryman, 2012).

This investigation has the purpose to recognize the position of women in politics, as stakeholders in policy-making and decision-making, which is why women's point of view is fundamental to this research. Another element of ethnography concerns the roles of "insider" and "outsider", which are found in the relationship between *emic* and *etic* understanding of human behaviour (Madden, 2010). In this investigation, an emic perspective is used to reflect the insider's, or better, the research participant's perspective on issues. Meanwhile, an etic perspective entitles the outsider or researcher to have a point of view. The relationship between the two often becomes blurred. This purpose of this study is to seek an understanding regarding gender issues through the eyes of women.

2.2 Sampling approach: context and units

The idea of sampling in qualitative research involves the selection of units, such as documents, organizations, people, departments, etc., to respond to the research questions relevant to this study. Therefore, the research questions offer an idea of which units need to be sampled (Bryman, 2012).

I used purposive sampling, which is a non-probability form of sampling (Bryman, 2012). The aim of purposive sampling – "is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed" (Bryman, 2010, p.418). The purposive sampling is identified by two kinds of sampling: criterion sampling which is the sampling of participants or cases that meet a particular criterion; and a critical case sampling, defined as "sampling a crucial case that permits a logical inference about the phenomenon of interest – for example, a case might be chosen precisely because it is anticipated that it might allow a theory to be tested" (Bryman, 2012, p.419). The sampling of context is the city of Buenos Aires residential areas including: the city centre and provinces, where there is a majority of femicide cases. The sampling of context includes the fact that cases/individuals sampling counts with governmental entities, major CSOs, and the Ni Una Menos movement that reside in the capital city of Buenos Aires.

Nevertheless, throughout the investigation process other regions in Argentina have been mentioned regarding various forms of structural violence based on ethnic considerations important to the case study.[2]

2.3 Interviews in qualitative research

The main tool in this qualitative research has been the use of interviews, due to my difficulty to conduct the research through observation and participation *in loco*. The interview is the most common source of data and it is a method used in qualitative research to reach to people in a flexible way, enabling the collection of data. I used Skype as a technological tool of communication, through videoconferencing with the participants. Although, this method is not a direct way of contact (which would result easier to get a deeper perspective) it still gives the opportunity to create a dialogue between individuals geographically set in different countries. Due to a restricted time frame, the interviews were conducted within a long-distance framework, by establishing contacts between Norway and the stakeholders in Argentina, through email as the first step to obtain an interview.

The technological development in the last decades has given a new form of communication over distance, which results as an easier and more convenient alternative to the face-to-face method (Sullivan, 2012). During the interviewing process, I used a digital recorder. I found the recording device a suitable tool to avoid missing precious data, based on the fluency of conversation, and especially the experience of technical problems that may arise along the way. Furthermore, it was easier to record the interviews based also on a language facility, since the interviews were conducted in Spanish. Later I translated the interviews to English trying not to lose important key elements.

The use of qualitative research to conduct this investigation has a great deal to do with the flexibility of qualitative interviews in opposition to quantitative research, which is realized through more structured interviews. Consequently, qualitative interviews offer the possibility or even encourage rich and full answers that provide information possibly beyond the question asked.

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[2]The Northern regions of Argentina, like Jujuy, where there are ethnic minorities.

Further, the point of view of the interviewee is essential to qualitative researcher (Madden, 2010). The interviews for this case study have been both unstructured and semi-structured. On the one side, unstructured interviews function as a conversation; on the other, semi-structured interviews are realized according to a list of questions on specific topics to cover, also known as an interview guide. However, both interview methods are flexible and changeable during the process. Hence, I have realized three interviews with four different stakeholders, relevant to the research questions. Two of the interviews have been semi-structured and one unstructured.

All interviews took place between January 2018 and March 2018, due to the late email responses from the participants, which has been a challenge throughout the process of investigation. However, the information provided by the participants was clear and conspicuously detailed. All four informants had a vast knowledge of the political reality in Argentina, specifically concerning gender issues – regarding the involvement of women in all types of prevention mechanisms to eradicate gender-based violence. All the informants work in the fields directly or indirectly related to social support and prevention mechanisms towards gender. In this way, I gained the opportunity to collect information from four different branches of society but strictly interrelated:

1. Governmental – Cornelia Schmidt-Liermann, an Argentinian politician and lawyer. She serves as a Congresswoman for the political party Propuesta Republicana (PRO) since 2011 in Buenos Aires.

2. NGO and Civil Society – Lucia Martelotte, Argentinian sociologist, political scientist and the Deputy Executive Director of the non-profit organization Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Genéro (ELA).

3. NGO and Justice – Zoe Verón is an Argentinian lawyer, responsible for the legal area of the organization ELA. She works with cases of violence.

4. Student and Activist – M. Eugenia Martino, an Argentinian student in Science of Education, with knowledge within the system of Education in Argentina.

The interviews have undoubtedly led to new ways of thinking about the research questions and the case study. Furthermore, I noticed the consistency of the answers given by the interviewee in relation to the literature review. The interviewee although having different backgrounds and affiliations, pointed out the same problematic regarding gender policy in Argentina.

2.4 Ethical considerations

The use of technological tools such as Skype for the interviews turned out to be an optimal way to gather data; however, this method raises a few ethical considerations, such as the difficulty to sign consent forms regarding the participation to the study. According to Sullivan, the research is limited regarding the ethical considerations of Skype and Internet as tools of data collection. Various researchers together with the Institutional Review Board would argue that verbal consent is still appropriate in regard to videoconferencing, of course depending on the subject of the study (Sullivan, 2012). Nonetheless, during the process of contacting the interviewee, I gave the participants an accurate description regarding the purpose of this research, by explaining their role in the study and its content; moreover, this investigation follows the criteria of *not* harming the participants in any way. (Bryman, 2012) Therefore, I pre-warned and asked for permission to record the interviews and to use their names in the transcription. As an advantage I decided to interview only people that work publicly with issues related to gender-based violence; rather than victims of violence, which would have entailed a series of ethical concerns.

2.5 Limitations

During the gathering of data I encountered a few challenges that I would define as limitations to this qualitative investigation. A limited time frame did not grant me the possibility to travel to Argentina and conduct research in *loco*. The establishment of contact has been time consuming and led to few responses. The gathering of data from more sampling units would have been enriching to the investigation, in particular to avoid any kind of generalization. Questions concerning generalization can be raised in qualitative research, when qualitative interviews are conducted with a small number of individuals in a certain organization or community (Bryman, 2012). During the process I tried to establish contact with stakeholders from different branches, so they could provide different perspectives. However, I hoped to obtain an

interview with members of the Ni Una Menos collective, which unfortunately proved to be impossible due to the difficulty of communication. I received answers and appointments for interviews rather late, between January and March 2018, even though the contact was first established in October 2017. Therefore, I was forced to introduce the information later than expected. During the qualitative approach of research I found the lack of a face-to-face method of communication challenging. According to Fontana and Frey (2008), virtual interviews are not comparable to a face-to-face method because they unable to create a "living the moment"- situation or to establish "real" relationships with the interviewee while gathering data (Sullivan, 2012).

Finally, I would argue the impersonal aspect of Skype and email as tools of research, which did not give me the possibility to actively observe and participate in the participants' environment, hence to get a deeper understanding.

3.0 Theoretical background and conceptual framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework, fundamental to understand this study of violence against women based on issues of gender inequality dictated by two central concepts: the continuum of violence and power relations. This chapter holds key concepts of violence and power in order to grasp a deeper understanding of feminist theory. Finally, it provides the necessary theoretical understanding of patriarchal structures that exist in the chosen study area, Argentina; as well as the debate concerning private and public spheres, relevant to the discussion of feminist political activism.

3.1 Gender in IR

Feminist theory was first introduced in the discipline of international relations in the late 1980s and early 1990s. However, political movements headed by women to fight gender inequality were already visible in the United States in the 1970s. Feminist scholars challenged the discipline, to re-evaluate IR theories and to question its understanding of global politics by considering women's experiences (Dunne et al., 2013).

"Feminists claimed that only by introducing gender analysis could the differential impact of the state system and global economy on the lives of women and men be fully understood" (Dunne et al., 2013:205). There are three key concepts in IR feminist theory: sovereignty, the state and security. The first generation of IR feminist theory studied the theories and practices of international politics, based on gendered foundations. Meanwhile, second-generation IR feminists looked above the traditional relation between knowledge and power by developing their own research programs concerning different issues through the use of gender lenses (Dunne et al., 2013). According to feminists, gender is defined as a set of social constructed aspects that portray what men and women ought to be (Dunne et al., 2013).

On the one hand, men are depicted with characteristics, such as: strength, protector, rationality, independence and public; on the other hand, characteristics like: irrationality, weakness, emotional, relational, protected and private are instead attributed to women. Within IR feminist theory and the study of gender, there is a range of feminist theoretical perspectives that argue differently about the reasons of women's subordination; however, they share common grounds on issues of gender equality. Most importantly, IR feminist theories focus on social relations, particularly gender relations; they argue for the existence of an international system defined by gender hierarchies, which enables if not even reinforce gender subordination (Dunne et al., 2013).

3.2 The Concept of Violence

According to scholars, feminist theories and peace theories have a great extent in common. Both theories have an understanding of global issues that can be described as "new thinking", giving to issues of security, power, and violence a new understanding through gender perspective. These theories evaluate issues that are not often discussed in the discipline of international relations, concerning human needs and identity rather than power politics. According to feminists, during the 1970s and 1980s, women were identified as more peaceful and "morally superior" than man by nature. However, according to feminist Ann Tickner, this definition can be troubling regarding the correlation between femininity and peace that – "lead to an idealized masculinity that depends on constructing women as passive victims in need of protection" (Confortini, 2006). However, the two theories have common grounds.

Both feminism and peace studies, on the contrary to other disciplines within social science have a normative agenda in which their goals are peace for peace studies and gender equality for feminist scholars. The definition of violence is crucial to understand gender violence, its meaning and its context. Johan Galtung is considered the pioneer on the definitions of violence and peace within the discipline of peace studies. Galtung's definitions of violence and peace are the following:

"Violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1969, p.168). Meanwhile, peace means – "peace with nature, peace between genders, generations, and races, where the excluded are included not by force, and where classes, nations, and states serve neither direct nor structural violence" (Galtung, 1969, p.168).

Galtung offers a three "pronged" typology of violence: direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. Direct violence represents the harm and violence perpetrated on individuals that diminish their basic human needs, in form of: killings, sexual assault, emotional manipulation, etc. Structural violence represents the systematic way in which certain groups of people are neglected of their basic human needs, as in: equal access to opportunities, goods, services (Galtung, 1969). Finally, cultural violence is strictly related to both structural and direct violence, since it represents the existence of norms and social behaviours as "natural" and acceptable. These forms of violence are interlinked and reinforce each other (Galtung, 1969). In fact, Galtung discusses violence against individuals in form of direct violence. On one hand, violence against women falls in the category of *crime of passion*, caused by relations of dominance and violence between the two sexes, in which usually victims are women; on the other hand, this relation is described as a "depersonalized, a-human relation typical of our social formation". Further, "violence produces and defines gender identities and, in turn, is produced and defined by them" (Confortini, 2006).

In 1969, Galtung introduced the concepts of personal violence and structural violence as different categories of abuse. According to his definition, personal violence is violence *with* a subject; meanwhile, structural violence is violence *without* a subject, where power is exercised unequally, concerning the unequal distribution of resources, such as health, education as well as economic wealth. Confortini offers an example on how to understand Galtung's theory of structural violence as impersonal towards the subject suffering violence – when one husband beats his wife it is assumed to be personal violence; "when one million husbands keep one million wives in ignorance there is structural violence" (Confortini, 2006). Feminists define gender as an essential factor to explain violence and vice versa, denouncing Galtung's lack of gender perspective on violence and not recognizing gender as a category of analysis on its own. Violence is not a static entity, it is in continuous change, adapting to new society's requirements. Most feminists problematize the lack of gender as a preliminary element to understand violence in interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, to understand more in-depth the mechanisms that spring violence in relationships between men and women, gender cannot be a simple variable but an essential element to the understanding of it. According to feminists, power is perceived to be a fundamental aspect of society that maintains relations of domination and subordination between groups of people (Confortini, 2006).

The equation "men: women = war: peace", is especially contested by feminists as a problematic issue in Galtung's work because the perception of men as biologically violent and women as peaceful is not a sustainable conclusion for either women or peace studies. These concepts build on social constructions of gender relations based on sexuality, where there is a link between men's sexuality and male aggression. Although, feminists in the discipline of international relations note how IR scholars investigate peace not including the "war" that occurs within the private sphere, in form of domestic violence. Non-feminist IR scholars think about gender as categorized by public and private spheres. Therefore, the discipline has focused on the public domain, treating the issues of domestic violence as a private matter belonging to the private sphere. Meanwhile, feminists argue how violence against women is far from being private since it is linked to international relations in many ways. For instance, the cases of war in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda drew international attention since rape was being used as a warfare tool. These cases expose power

relations of gender, where women served as a symbol of conquest and power over the enemy's national and cultural identity. Within non-gender oriented studies, it is possible to find a critical conceptualization of women referred to as merely victims, rather than agents, which underlines the dichotomization of gender: victimizer/victim and subject/object.

Direct violence together with structural and cultural violence, is a method of social control for men over women. In situations of domestic violence, battering enables a structure of domination within and outside the home, which influences and prevents women to live a life free of violence and fear. For instance, feminist scholars argue how violence in all its forms is used as a tool for social control over women. Therefore, Confortini stresses the case of domestic violence where– "abusive men use direct force to control and prevent women's access to education, work and social relations." (Confortini, 2006, p. 350).

3.2.1 Feminism and Violence

This paragraph introduces the definition of violence and the conceptualization of the concept concerning gender, sexuality and social control. These definitions somehow entail what violence represent in feminist theory. Liz Kelly offers particular insights on the argument of sexual violence and the continuum of violence, as well as Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* about patriarchy. According to Kelly, there are two crucial aspects of feminist theory that link the analyses of sexuality to male violence. The first, suggests that male control of women's sexuality is a key factor enabling women's oppression; and second, that sexuality is constructed by men's experiences, which justify the use of force within sexual encounters (Kelly, 1988). Among radical feminist, MacKinnon defines male control over female sexuality as the foundation of patriarchal societies suggesting a condition of sex colonization (Kelly, 1988). Sex colonization is understood in all its forms, as a mechanism of social control, guided by the "sex-is-power ethic". Moreover, Jill Radford argues that sexual violence functions as a method of social control, which she defines as a form of policing; in her analysis she argues how men's interactions with women includes routine behaviours similar to police work: supervising, watching, segregating and finally changing women's behaviour (Kelly, 1988). Sexual violence is interpreted as a method for men to get power though sex as a tool of "conquest".

"Feminist analysis sees all forms of sexual violence as involving the exercise of power, functioning as a form of social control by denying women freedom and autonomy" (Kelly, 1988, p.41). Kelly stresses the complicated task of creating a feminist definition of sexual violence attempted to women's experience and perceptions, as well as complying with all schools of thoughts within feminist theory; therefore, the definition of sexual violence consists of – "any physical, visual, verbal or sexual act that is experienced by the woman or girl, at the time or later, as a threat, invasion or assault, that has the effect of hurting her or degrading her and/or takes away her ability to control intimate contact" (Kelly,1988, p. 41). In feminism, sexuality represents the primary social sphere of male power. In this case sexuality plays a central role in the debate of male power over women in a variety of issues, such as: abortion, domestic battery, incest, sexual harassment, birth control, rape, etc. According to Kelly, the consequences developed by sexual violence may result in women creating strategies for self-protection, which concludes in voluntary limitations of mobility, territory and encounters (Kelly, 1988).

Sexual violence as a continuum can be defined as a spectrum of violence, as Kelly puts it – "sexual violence ranges from extensions of the myriad forms of sexism women encounter everyday through to the all too frequent murder of women and girls by men" (Kelly, 1988, p. 97). Sexual forms of harassment in public spaces are experienced daily by multitude of women. These encounters are perceived as intrusions into women's personal space, which turn routines or pleasurable activities, as in the case of a simple walk in the park, into unpleasant and even threating setting.

To conclude, resuming definitions and theoretical points concerning male domination and violence, sexual violence seems to be more accessible in patriarchal structures, in which male dominance take possession of the right to sexual access with women, through the use of force and abuse as natural practices. The continuum of violence discusses the phenomenon of violence, which applies to the case of Argentina; a spectrum of violence is present in the country, in which violence has taken form in a variety of ways, among which: sexual harassment in the streets, cultural violence that enables ideologies of violent practices in the private as well as in the public space, and economic violence lived by mothers which couldn't grant their children's basic

bodily needs. Further, unemployment as a consequence of economic crisis altered traditional gender norms, by locating women in the public sphere as in the labour market and in social movements, boosting conflicts at home and increasing the risk of domestic violence (Sutton, 2010, p. 193).

3.2.2 The Continuum of Violence

This paragraph offers the definition and analyses of the concept of "continuum of violence" in both public and private spheres, in different contexts and experiences by women that have experienced abuse. The concept of a continuum of violence will be applied later in Chapter 5, as it is relevant to the vast experiences of many women in Argentina. Several scholars investigating rape have discussed the theoretical analysis of a continuum of violence. However, Kelly provides a reasonable explanation, suitable for many socio-political contexts. The word "continuum" describes the extent and range of sexual violence: "employed descriptively, the analysis underlying its use is often implicit, and its relevance across forms of sexual violence is never specified" (Kelly, 1988, p.75).

The concept of a continuum of violence creates a condition for women to report their own experiences by showing how common and "typical" male behaviours "shade into one another" (Kelly, 1988). According to L. Kelly, the definition of a continuum of sexual violence includes two meanings: first, it shows a common character that is present in many different events; second, it takes form as a continuous series of events and experiences that flow into one another, that are difficult to distinguish (Kelly, 1988). In the first definition, the basic common character stands for various forms of violence, such as abuse, coercion, intimidation, intrusion, and threat as well as the force used by men to control women. The second definition creates a possibility to name the abuse, intimidation, in addition to other men's behaviours that are not calculated as such in legal codes and analytic categories (Kelly, 1988).

Nevertheless, the idea of a continuum of violence is not implying a categorization of the seriousness of acts of violence, neither a generalization of violence experienced by women. Therefore, a "continuum" is not a linear timeline of different violent experiences. Kelly stresses in *Surviving Sexual Violence*, how all forms of violence are grave, blaming the hierarchical meaning of violence in the discipline (Kelly,

1988). A continuity of violent acts profoundly affects women's daily lives. Violence is present in both public and private spaces, in both cases, women sense sexual violence as an essential violation of privacy by male individuals and groups, known or unknown.

Further, an interesting aspect that surface by the research conducted by Kelly regarding the continuum violence in domestic space is the way physical violence blend with other forms of control. The concept of a continuum of violence suggests a phenomenon of multiple and interlinked experiences of abuse, assault, violation, harassment, and all forms of violence in the lives of women.

3.3 The concept of Power in IR

Power is a concept well known within the discipline of international relations as well as in other theoretical fields. In the study of international relations, power is usually discussed regarding state security and military power or capabilities. Among famous theorists, K. Waltz describes power from a realist perspective, where gaining more power is to protect the state from a continuous threat of war; he stresses the importance of self-help rather than seeking help from outside. Meanwhile, classical realists believe in a selfish and evil human nature, which reflects the states. According to realists, the world lives on the existing system of "balance of power", in which only significant powers pull strings in world politics. According to Robert Dahl, it is somewhat complicated to attribute specific definitions to the concept of power, since power, as violence is not a static variable and it often depends on context and actors? However, Dahl offers an intuitive idea of power– which he defines as "*A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do*" (Dahl, 1957, p.203). Actors establish relationships of power that Dahl identifies as individuals, groups, roles, nation-states, offices, governments, or other human aggregates (Dahl, 1957). Actors in power relationship are named A and B, where A, holds power over B, and they usually form an equation (Dahl, 1957). The dilemma represented by power is traceable in the quantity of it rather than the same existence. Therefore, power becomes "power" between two individuals regarding "more power than", "less power than" and "equal power". However, feminists have studied power about public and private space (…).

Undoubtedly, Michel Foucault is considered the pioneer on the theory of power. However, according to the definition of power offered by Foucault, power is permanent, repetitious and self-reproducing. First, he argues that individuals are always in the position of undergoing and exercising power; second, power should not be perceived as a single person dominating others, neither as one group or class dominating others. In this way, Foucault makes the concept of domination blurred and difficult to capture and locate in gender relations; nullifying the existence of relations of domination between individuals, such as women, men and workers. Nonetheless, feminists argue the lack of a theory of power for women in his studies (Deveaux, 1994).

3.3.1 Feminism and Power Relations

Feminists have studied power as the predominant factor causing gender subordination that affects all women from different contexts. This kind of power is not exclusively identified by the state and bureaucratic entities. Nevertheless, power plays multiple forms and takes place in different social contexts. Therefore, power is not only present in authority, but as well in the context of intimacy and sentiment (De Barbieri, 2010). Feminists in the discipline of international relations suggest a new way of thinking about political and security issues through the introduction of fresh insights on gender and power. Power is a central concept for feminists as well as it is for other theoretical studies concerning race, class oppression, and other forms of subordination whether they are individual or collective. Nonetheless, according to feminist scholars, there are different perspectives to conceptualize power: as a resource to be distributed, as domination, and finally as empowerment. Among feminists, there are different schools of thought. For instance, J. Baker Miller (1992) refuses the definition of power as domination; instead, she argues the "capacity to produce a change – that is, to move anything from point A or state A to point B or state B" (Allen, 2016).

L. Kelly defines power in feminist analysis not as a property but as a – "relation, which structures interactions between men and women in all areas of social life" (Kelly, 1988, p.26). Feminist author, Nancy Hartsock argues for power as a form of empowerment that moves from "other" to oneself. Therefore, Hartsock challenges the social order in which class, race, and gender are categorized as fixed idioms. She stresses the importance to change the world rather than reinterpret or re-describe it (Hartsock, 1989).

According to feminists, the concept of power in gender relations is often linked to notions of male and masculinity. Therefore, to change the status of subordination lived by women; there is a demand to look at the nature of power.

To understand the relations of power between women and men based on elements of subordination and inequality, the anecdote of *The Colonizer and the Coloniz*ed written by Albert Memmi could be insightful. The story describes the relationship between the two figures, the colonizer and the colonized, linked by a destructive path. *The colonizer and colonized* represents the perfect metaphor to understand power relations between women and men, based on the depiction of the colonized as the "Other". Meanwhile, the term "other" has already been used to describe women subordination, first introduced by feminist Simone de Beauvoir. Albert Memmi describes the colonized through the eyes of the colonizer, as an entity that is the total opposite of the colonizer. The colonized is presented as less valuable, at times "lazy", "wicked" and "backward" (Hartsock, 1989). The "other" is often considered less human in comparison to the colonizer and is often associated with "not". Whatever the context may be, the colonized seems to be inadequate for society. Therefore, the colonizer's only purpose is to reduce the colonized to an object, where she or he needs to function exclusively for the colonizer.

3.3.2 Power relations in patriarchal societies

Indeed, in the discourse of power relations regarding gender, patriarchy is placed as a highlighted concept to consider concerning power relations in politics. However, the relationship between sexes is at times questioned in its political relevance. As Millett puts it: "the term "politics" shall refer to power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another" (Millett, 1970, p.23). Traditional conceptualization of politics fails to provide a representation of classes, castes, and sexes. However, there is a need for a mandatory and relevant philosophy as well as psychology of power relationships that challenges the conceptual framework offered by traditional formal politics (Millett, 1970). An example is provided by the American experience about the relationship of races as a political issue, based on the domination and social control of one group over another, defined by birth.

An analogous phenomenon is the one concerning the relationship between sexes, named by Max Weber as *Herrschaft*, a relationship of dominance and subordination (Millett, 1970).

According to Millett, patriarchy determines a social order in which males rule women. In relation to this concept our society along with all other historical civilizations is determined as a patriarchy.

These patriarchal attitudes can be recognized in many different branches of society such as in the military, finance, political office, universities, and science and in every venue of power, including the police force (Millett, 1970). Patriarchy follows two principles: first, male shall dominate female; second, elder male shall dominate younger. Nevertheless, patriarchy functions as an institution and a universal constant deeply rooted in political, social, or economic fields, running through caste and class, as in all religions. The family embodies the chief of this institution; there is an indispensable co-operation between the family and the larger society for both to be alive. Millett argues that there exists a link between three patriarchal institutions: the family, society and the state (Millett, 1970). Religious statements have also supported this system of order as well as it grants the role as head of the family to the father. Hence, traditional patriarchy gives the man control over the wife and children, using physical abuse.

The existence of patriarchy as a "natural" system has often been excused with biological explanations, by using the scientific argument of differences between sexes based on the notions of male superiority and strength. Nevertheless, this deduction fails to explain power relations, considering that male dominance as well as other political "creeds" is not based on physical strength (Millett, 1970). The biological assumption has little to do with sexual politics in terms of relations between sexes; for example, race and class within political relations are not determined by any physical characteristic of strength (Millett, 1970). Therefore, feminist scholars attribute to gender relations a psychological and cultural meaning rather than biological. The same understanding of gender in political relations is detectable in the experiences of women in Argentina; in which a patriarchal society serves as a social order defined by cultural norms, where inequality is present in different branches of society, through class and race and within public and private spaces.

3.4 The dichotomy of private and public

This section focuses on the dilemma between public and private spheres concerning the issue of violence against women. The division between public and private has its roots in Aristotle's social and political philosophy of *polis* and *oikos*, as well as in the natural rights theories of John Locke (Rose, 1987). Various poststructuralist feminists within the IR discipline are in particular concerned with knowledge and power. In this discourse, they focus on dichotomized linguistic.

Feminist scholars argue that – "gender is a set of socially constructed characteristics describing what men and women ought to be" (Dunne et.al 2013, p.206). In this context, notions such as protector and public are designed to men; aspects such as protected and private are associated with women. Constructed dichotomies are important to understand how the world has been constructed in various fields by linguistics, as the following categorizations: developed/underdeveloped, order/anarchy, rational/emotional and finally public/private, which help to empower the masculine over the feminine (Dunne et al., 2013).

Feminist lawyers and critical legal scholars discuss the boundaries of public powers and private freedoms in regard to these issues; the question that usually arises is to what extent should the state intervene into private matters. According to critical legal scholars in the US, the division between public and private is one that reflects dichotomies that constitute the social world. These distinctions are: state/society, public/private, right/power, property/sovereignty, law/policy, objective/subjective, etc. (Rose, 1987). Rose, suggests there are enduring social arrangements that are perceived as natural, inevitable and legitimate; hence, these mechanisms prevent from creating new forms of social relations and especially from challenging the existing forms of domination (Rose, 1987). On the one hand, the distinction between public and private seems to be serving to preserve social and economic life, regarding – business, education, community and family as outside of government and law. In this way, it explains the absence of political processes in managing these issues (Rose, 1987). On the other hand, the distinction between private and public is widely used to rationalize female subordination, and omitting human rights abuses (within the home) from the eye of the public (Peters et al., 1995).

In conclusion, the distinction made between sexes in so-called public and private spheres enables to marginalize the one group (women) from the other (men), where

women become a secondary and generalized group in the ample discourse of politics and human rights. Hence, the question to pose is what and who makes human rights issues legitimate. This will be further clarified in Chapter 4.0.

4.0 International Relations and Women's Security

The chapter, International Relations and women's security provide to the reader the conceptual framework, in which gender is discussed within the framework of international politics and security. This chapter will help to explain the relevance of the topic within the discipline of international relations, studying violence against women from a human rights perspective, in which global actors are essential as well as national and local actors.

4.1 Women's security in global politics

Security has been a key concept in IR discipline together with more conventional concepts of state and sovereignty. IR scholars, among which, the neo-realists argue on the presence of an anarchic structure of the international system, in which there is no power to control state behaviour. "A secure state is one that can protect its physical and moral boundaries against an "anarchic" international system" (Dunne et al., 2013, p.212). Nevertheless, the theoretical debate of state and security, reminds the existence of power and military capabilities as measures to promote security in lifelong situations of threat. However, challenging perspectives on the definition of security did not appear before the 1980s, when certain IR scholars, especially critical security scholars proposed the study of security in terms of individuals and their well-being, along with state security (Dunne et al., 2013). Together with critical theorists, feminist IR scholars defined security - " in multidimensional and multilevel ways – as the diminution of all forms of violence, including physical, structural, and ecological" (Dunne et al., 2013, p.213). IR feminists includes in the definition of security: domestic violence, rape, poverty, gender subordination, and war; therefore, feminists challenged the definition of security as well as "who is guaranteed security" (Dunne et al., 2013).

According to feminists, the security of individuals and communities is linked to national and international politics, suggesting that international politics affects the security of the individual at the local level. Among the issues concerning gender in global politics issues such as economic insecurity, rape in wartime and sanction policy have given a clear example on how women have been depicted as "protected" and "belonging to the private", as marginalized actors in the international framework; rather than show their true experiences as protagonists during crisis and conflicts.

Feminist studies, concerning UN sanctions on Iraq during the 1990s' First Gulf War show the devastating effects caused by the sanctions to civilians in Iraq, which led to additional side effects to the most vulnerable citizens. The sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council deprived Iraqi citizens of their civil rights to basic goods and services: women, children, poor people, and elderly suffered most from the economic sanctions that led to physical and structural violence, through food insecurity and starvation, as well as the destruction of the economic and medical infrastructure (Dunne et al., 2013). This case study offers a feminist perspective on issues regarding gender within global politics. Another example relevant to the case study of this thesis is how according to feminist journalists and Ni Una Menos activists of the newspaper LATFEM, women suffered particularly from structural violence caused by the economic crisis that hit Argentina in 2001. The economic "default" and wage gap framed women with financial instability, which facilitated domestic violence. It was a vicious circle that prevented women to escape from intimate violence, due to their economic vulnerability (Remezcla, 2017).

4.1.2 Human Rights: Introduction
The definition of human rights by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) outlines – "human rights are inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status" (OHCHR, 2018). These rights are usually all interrelated, independent and indivisible. Universal human rights are often guaranteed by law, in forms of treaties, customary international law and other sources of international law (OHCHR). One of the most important principles of international human rights law is universality, which was first introduced in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, to be approved later in other

conventions, declarations and resolutions. International human rights have played an essential role in global politics, having the influence to require State agents to respect and fulfil human rights standards, settled at the international, regional and national levels. If on the one hand, Freeman defines human rights as a concept, used to tackle and analyse situations of violence and massacres against all individuals; on the other hand, human rights go beyond analysing and tackling violations, since human rights are norms within international law. Therefore, human rights are norms and standards that hold governments accountable for the practice and attitudes of violence in both public and private spaces (UNIFEM, 2003). The abuse or violence against an individual perpetrated by the government is defined as a human right violation. Human rights entered the international agenda by the United Nations Charter in 1945, declaring the aim to recover fundamental human rights and equal rights to all men and women, as well as to large and small states (Freeman, 2011).

Legal scholars, rather than social science and political studies, have dominated the discipline of human rights. However, it has gained a politicized character due to major historical events such as the massive disappearances in Argentina in the late 1970s, the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 as well as the genocide by state terrorism known as *La Violencia* in Guatemala during the 1980s (UNIFEM, 2003). The discipline of International Relations neglected for many years the concept of human rights. It was first pioneered by Forsythe in the US and Vincent in the UK (Freeman, 2011). Scepticism towards human rights was set by the traditionalist view of IR on state-security and state-interest as primary issues of concern. Nevertheless, the concept of human rights has grown into global law and morality. The Vienna Declaration focused on the promotion of human rights of most marginalized groups such as: disabled persons, migrant workers and refugees. The 1993 Vienna Declaration draws attention also to women's rights, particularly to issues of equality and the eradication of violence against women in all of its forms, both in private and public life.

4.1.3 Women's rights are human rights

The analysis of human rights from a feminist perspective is crucial in order to understand and tackle global challenges in the twentieth-first century. The previous section concerning human rights in international law and global politics offered an explanation on the concept of universalism, which according to the UN is an essential element to the definition of human rights. However, in feminist analysis regarding the nature of human rights there is a dilemma about universalism. The concept of natural rights and human rights – ought to be universal, has been disputed by feminist criticism, on the existence of rights for man instead of rights for humans. According to MacKinnon, human rights foundations are based on experience, unfortunately not that of women (Woods, 2014). Furthermore, there has been a debate about the conflict between women's human rights and culture, in regard to which Woods argues - " to invoke cultural defences as grounds for denying the validity of human rights standards that would protect women's equality itself offends feminist principles of gender equality" (Woods, 2014, p.119). Therefore, it is understandable to find ambivalence on the concept of human rights as a universal norm.

According to the UN agency OHCHR, analysing international law and international human rights from a gender perspective is fundamental to understand how women and men experience human rights violations in different ways along with other elements of distinction such as: age, religion, class and location (OHCHR, 2014).
The concept of gender is important to consider in the discourse of women's rights as human rights, in which gender refers to socially constructed identities, attributes and roles for women and men. As the OHCHR puts it - "society's social and cultural meaning for these biological differences results in hierarchical relationships between women and men, and in the distribution of power and rights favouring men and disadvantaging women" (OHCHR, 2014). However gender constructions are dynamic and fluid, they change over time and can be different in different cultures. Therefore, by introducing women into the global agenda changed the way human rights framework law was intended. The first dilemma, feminist scholars addressed was the idea surrounding "women's issues", as a marginalized concept, merely separated by the traditional human rights concept. As Bunch argues, women's issues were treated as a "ghetto" or separate sphere, discussed at the margins of society, rather than it moving from the margins to the centre by rethinking social order (Peters et al. 1995).

Women's human rights activists observed how the power maintained by the international human rights framework, granted legitimacy to political demands, since all government were committed to it, and with it established protocols. (Peters et al. 1995)

Traditionally, as mentioned, human rights has been a tool to call for attention to government responsibility for abuses, in requirement of a remedy. Even though human rights are an abstract concept, it is not static, nor the property of any group; by this meaning feminists challenged the concept by expanding the meaning of "rights". If on one hand, the international law perspective considers, women's rights are human rights; on the other hand, feminist scholars argue that the lack of visibility of gender in human rights constitute a lack of gender-specific focus within the discourse. Nancy Fraser argues the issue of *representation* in feminist agenda as of particular importance within the transnational frame. As Fraser states: "(…) many transnational feminists rejects the state-territorial frame. They note that decisions taken in one territorial state often impact the lives of women outside it, as do the actions of supranational and international organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental" (Fraser, 2008, p.2012). Feminists try to challenge state-territorial framing of political claim-making, which they perceive as the major tool of injustice, since it prevent women from confronting the forces that oppress them. (Fraser, 2008) Redistribution and recognition are principles closely tied to the struggles to change this frame. According to Fraser, under the slogan "women's rights are human rights" feminists creates a union between the fight against patriarchal systems and the campaign to reform international law (Fraser, 2008). However, feminism faces a challenge called *misframing* as a form of injustice as well; from which, Fraser argues derives a three-dimensional problem in "reconstruct" gender justice, in which: recognition, redistribution and representation must be integrated in a balanced way (Fraser, 2008).

The transformation of the human rights agenda is recent and deeply rooted in women's activism in different regions globally. Latin America provides an example on the perpetration of human rights abuses under the many dictatorships of the twentieth century that hit the continent; and that resulted in the organization of women's movements.

Among the most well-known, there are the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, a group of mothers united during Argentina's *guerra sucia*, demanding the return of their children, husbands and other beloved, "disappeared" by the regime (Peters et al., 1995).

4.1.4 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

Article 1. VAW	Article 2. VAW
Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.	**a.** Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
	b. Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
	c. Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

Table 1. (CEDAW)

4.2 Gender violence as a global security issue

The discussion of violence against women as a human right violation was first discussed in the 1980s with the introduction of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 as an international bill of rights for women, but it gained more visibility during the 1990s with the 1993 World Convention on Human Rights held in Vienna and later the 1994 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (VAW) adopted by the UN General Assembly. According to Sally Engle Merry, the definition of gender violence has expanded over the years, starting as men's violence against their partners in form of assault, rape and murder, to female genital mutilation, gender-based violence against women by military and police forces in conflicts or war zones, to violence against refugee women, trafficking, prostitution, etc. (Merry, 2006).

Later, in 1992, a UN statement settled violence against women on the human rights and freedom rubric that expressed the obligation of states to eliminate violence committed by public authorities or by private persons (Merry, 2006).

Nevertheless, it has been challenging to map violence against women as a human right violation, since it includes different forms of violence, among which: domestic violence and sexual assault; these forms of violence are usually perpetrated by private persons rather than the state. However, the lack of state's action to the protection of women as a human right in itself has been a subject of discussion for many activists during the 1990s. Although tackling gender violence present a difficult task, massive acts by NGOs and activists have affected the view on violence against women within the UN system. As Merry states – "global development human rights declarations and concerns build on extensive national and local social movements beginning in the 1970s" (Merry, 2006). Furthermore, she argues the way feminists' movements in Europe, the United States, Australia, Argentina, Brazil, as well as in other countries, managed to develop strategies to protect women from violence in their home, by introducing support groups for victims, shelters and by creating awareness towards the issue of battering in domestic space (Merry, 2006).

Moreover, Merry discusses the variable of culture in the discussion of violence against women. Culture seems to be a problematic factor in the discourse of gender-based violence since violence also happens in culture-free zones. According to Merry, gender-based violence is embedded in cultural understandings of gender and sexuality, as well as in institutions like marriage and community, and the regulations of them: marriage, divorce and child care (Merry, 2006). Cultural beliefs and institutions enable violence against women, where the protection of women is uniquely possible by changes of beliefs and institutions ruling women's life concerning marriage, divorce, education and work opportunities. The author emphasizes the incongruent connection between preserving marriages and protecting women, which she explains as "reducing violence and rape demands changes in ideas and practices about sexuality, marriage, and the family" (Merry, 2006, p.26). Cases of traditional practices embedded in culture are easy to find in various countries or communities. However, in this particular study, this concept for understanding violence will be excluded due to a different social context

4.3 The United Nations: gender equality

"Gender-based violence is considered to be any harmful act directed against individuals or groups of individuals by their gender. It may include sexual violence, domestic violence, trafficking, forced early marriage, and harmful traditional practices"

(OHCHR, 2014)

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life." (OHCHR). Violence against women is a topic often discussed in various fields; one of them is usually the area of global politics and human rights. As defined by the United Nations Population Fund, violence against women is one of the most frequent human rights violations in the world. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is one of the agencies of United Nations, working with gender equality issues and women's empowerment. Issues concerning gender violence affect multiple levels of society, especially in fields of socio-political, economic and health matters.

The UN plays a significant role in gender operations in Latin America as well as in Africa and Asia. Moreover, the UN and its specialized agencies play a major role in the implementation of projects, in addition to promoting the participation of governments and civil societies in global conferences during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. As De Barbieri (1993) emphasizes, these events have led to the creation of legal initiatives and issues of public political agenda. One step forward was represented by the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) established in 1979 by the General Assembly and approved later by all representatives of member states. Later, the Convention of Belem do Para, also known as the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women was created in 1995 for the countries of the Americas. The Convention of Belem do Para consist of 25 articles, designed to tackle violence against women considered as a: "(…) violation of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and impairs or nullifies the observance, enjoyment, and exercise of such rights and freedoms."

Argentina has been subject of an investigation and reporting by the UN regarding the problem of gender violence, discussed in Chapter 5. Through the report about Argentina, emerging concerns about the lack of proper systems of prevention offered to women in crisis situations together with the difficulty in the implementation of a gender policy.

The UN human rights system tackles gender-based violence in three different ways: the first is through policy setting, along with an investigation of complaints, and finally – " it regulates compliance with treaties" (Merry 2006, p. 48). Policies are usually set at global conferences, as at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 and in the following General Assembly Special Session in 2000, known as Beijing Plus Five. Moreover, documents including policy on violence against women are generated by UN permanent commissions, like the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York and the High Commission on Human Rights (CHR) in Geneva (Merry, 2006). These policies are created for governments for them to commit and follow them. Complaints are presented to the CHR, which work directly with these through experts and social rapporteur, whose task is to investigate patterns about the complaints by also visiting particular countries (Merry, 2006). Finally, regulation of treaties compliance, are handled through hearings on state reports. Further, some conventions are approved by singular states and are monitored by ad hoc committees, also called treaty bodies. CEDAW represent the major convention tackling violence against women.

4.3.1 CEDAW

The UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979. This agreement includes 30 articles, and it defines what constitutes violence against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination (CEDAW).

The Convention offers the definition of discrimination against women as the following "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field" (CEDAW).

The CEDAW is undoubtedly necessary to influence states to fulfil the principles and all measures to end discrimination and violence against women. Therefore, states have to promote equality of men and women into their legal systems, to abolish all discriminatory laws, and delivering bills to the prevention of all discrimination against women. Moreover, states need to establish tribunals and public institutions to protect women from discrimination; finally, states have to assure the elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by organizations, enterprises, and persons. In this way, the convention establishes the basis for equality between women and men to ensure women's equal access to, equal opportunities in political and public life.

These opportunities include the rights to vote and to attend elections, as well as education, health, and employment. CEDAW works on reducing disparities between women and men, in all fields, also by calling for cultural changes in the perceptions of gender roles, which is why it is necessary for states to take measurements towards the issue of stereotyping sex roles. However, in the terms of culture and traditional practices, CEDAW has met some challenges, based on the UN principle of universalism, which leave limited space for culture to enter the discourse of violence against women, since all states need to fulfil the requirements set by the international community regardless cultural understandings of gender.

4.4 NGOs and Human Rights

NGOs are crucial stakeholder in the international framework, regarding human rights issues and its fulfilment by states. In this master thesis NGOs and its work towards the prevention and the eradication of gender violence in Argentina play an important role as political actors in relation to the international community, the civil society and the government. Non-governmental organizations cover important roles in the UN meetings, they usually keep debates, panels, workshops and discussions surrounding issues of human security and they illustrate their work and indicate the problems their countries are facing by interventions. According to Merry, NGOs find UN meetings valuable spaces to approach other organizations, by comparing notes on fund raising, developing shelters for battered women and promoting economic equality for women, in this way by learning from each other (Merry, 2006). The exchange of ideas and knowledge between international NGOs creates greater possibilities to develop new projects and resolutions on the national level.

Among various tasks they work with, NGOs representatives have as a duty to work with lobbying governments regarding the text of documents (Merry, 2006). The dissemination of the documents is another important task held by NGOs to create pressure on governments to pursue them. Further, these documents are granted by international consensus, which make possible their implementation.

5.0 Study Area: Argentina

This chapter will introduce Argentina and the capital of Buenos Aires as the case study for this thesis. The last decade the country has encountered an increased phenomenon of violence against women and femicides. In 2016 the major women's movement Ni Una Menos took place in Argentina and spread subsequently to other countries. The fight against the eradication of gender-based violence is a global issue, in which Latin America shows to be among the first continent to suffer the highest rates of crimes based on gender. The purpose of this chapter is to set the scene, by introducing Argentina geographically, historically, and politically. Show the social and political setbacks experienced by the country, its historical background marked by colonization and how the ethnic cleansing and state of terror have influenced the livelihood of many women and provoked their activism.

5.1 Argentina: introduction

Argentina is a federal state located in the southern cone of Latin America. It counts with an estimated population of 43.847 million inhabitants (UN, 2016) with 23 provinces and the capital of Buenos Aires. The country is classified as an upper middle-income economy with a GDP of more than US$600 billion (World Bank, 2017). Argentina is one of the largest economies in Latin America and enjoys from industrial activities as well as agriculture and vast natural resources in energy. Furthermore, Argentina has been the top performer in the region in reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity between 2004 and 2008 (World Bank, 2017).

Presidential elections at the end of 2015 changed the economic policy with a visible role of Argentina on the international stage. Although agriculture is one of the major economic fields, the country is primarily urbanized and less than 10% of the population live in rural areas.

The Republic of Argentina is considered to be a country of a melting pot, influenced by its long history from colonialism to immigration, mainly of European descendent. Argentina has a low number of *mestizo* populations in comparison to other Latin American countries.

5.1.2 Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires is the capital city of Argentina and counts with 2.890.151 inhabitants and amounts to 10 million counting the metropolitan area of the city. The city is located in the northeast of the province of Buenos Aires and confines at east with Rio de la Plata; in the south with el Riachuelo; and in the northwest to Av. General Paz (Casarosada).

5.1.3 The Argentinian context: history and setbacks

Argentina has known a long history of setbacks, passing through colonialism, various waves of democratization, dictatorships and economic default; experiences, widely known by the international community, that shook the country to the core, hence continuously changed the identity of the people. The history of this country is crucial to understand the dynamics that exist today, especially the phenomenon of increased violence as well as the origins of resistance and activism. The country experienced a history of colonization by Spain for almost three centuries. The colonial occupation influenced Argentina on various aspects, among which the current language (Spanish), the valorisation of white European characteristics and the dominance of the Catholic Church (Sutton, 2010). Argentina gained independence from Spain in 1816 and endorsed the passage from colonialism to nation building, mainly during the nineteenth century. The process towards a "new" and modern state included the making of Argentina more similar to Europe and less like the rest of Latin America; this meant that Argentina was supposed to become white, modern and economically powerful. The plan of modernization developed by Argentina implied the drastic reduction of indigenous population and the promotion of massive immigration from Europe (Sutton, 2010).

The twentieth-century in Argentina was signed by the alteration of democratic governments, the rise of dictatorships and economic crisis.

Sutton describes the first decade of the century with continuous European immigration that boosted urbanization. Further, during the same period, the Great Depression followed by the Second World War had negative effects on the economy in Argentina. These events introduced during the 1940s the labour movements into the political spectre, led by populist Juan Domingo Perón, who became with his wife Eva Perón, also known as "Evita" an important leader in Argentinian politics. The constant fluctuation between Peronism and dictatorship reached its peak in 1973 when the country experienced one of the most impacting breakdowns. Political chaos together with economic problems made it possible for the right-wing paramilitary forces to gain power, which ended with a coup in 1976 (Hagopian et al., 2005). The dictatorship with its leader Jorge R. Videla lasted from 1976 to 1983, encouraging Argentina's national interest along with conservative values represented by the Church. The military dictatorship endorsed neoliberal economics, by promoting the business of finance capital, wealth concentration of big-business groups and by eliminating the protection of local production (Sutton, 2010). During this time significant authoritarianism waves have left indelible signs throughout Latin America. Moreover, the dictatorship in Argentina together with other military regimes participated in the perpetration of atrocities promoted by Plan Condor.[3] The military dictatorship in Argentina is also known as "dirty war", known on the one hand, to be anti-communism and anti-leftist; and on the other hand, as the dictatorship of kidnappings, torture and the murder of people – "desaparecidos" (Sutton, 2010). Thousands of people disappeared based on the suspicion of being leftist or a member of a guerrilla, with an estimated number going from 9.000 to 30.000, according to the human rights organization of Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (Sutton, 2010). The people who disappeared embraced leftist ideologies, such as students, teachers, and relatives of activists, journalists, artists, nuns and labour organizers (Sutton, 2010).

The 1980s and 1990s were marked by the beginning of a severe economic crisis, starting with hyperinflation during the 1980s, followed by the implementation of

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[3] *Plan Condor* - was a political operation of repression and state terror against the opponents, introduced during the Dirty War by the governments of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia, and with the participation and support by the government of the United States.

neoliberal measures during the 1990s, especially under the leadership of Menem-Cavallo (Sutton, 2010).

Argentina, during this time, adopted structural adjustment measures following the advice of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, the implementation of a neoliberal economic model led the country to another major setback, the economic default of 2001. According to Sutton, unemployment increased to 21.5 percent in May 2002 and poverty reached the highest level, going from 37 per cent in 2001 to 58 per cent by the end of 2002. The World Bank emphasis in a report, how few countries in the world has experienced such a quick rise in poverty (Sutton, 2010). Moreover, the economic crisis changed the standard of living, from which all social classes were affected. These events, dictatorship, and bankruptcy were decisive to the transformation of the Argentine society that made possible, if not necessarily the creation of diverse forms of community organization, such as communal kitchens, communal healthcare provision, alternative economic arrangements, etc. (Sutton, 2010). Furthermore, these circumstances enabled the formation of social movements and an active civil society, in addition to the demand for a profound social change.

5.1.4 Framing gender violence in Argentina

In 2016 Argentina occupied a dominant place on the world map, drawing attention to the issue of gender violence against women, as a result of the massive women's demonstration *Ni Una Menos*. Issues concerning intimate violence that often ends in "femicidio" have been on the agenda since 2008, when the Oficina de Violencia Doméstica (OVD) and the non-governmental organization Casa del Encuentro made public the statistics of victims suffering gender violence, through the Observatory of Femicides in Argentina. Later, on 15th of November 2012, the chamber of deputies approved a law that defined femicide as the aggravating factor of homicide. In 2011, the 52 % of homicides perpetrated against women in the city of Buenos Aires were cases referred to as femicides within the intimate mark of a familiar environment. Meanwhile, there were registered some 119 cases for the first trimester of 2012, meaning that a case of femicide was happening every 30th hour in the country (DerGhougassian et. al, 2015).

Statistics from the human rights NGO – Casa del Encuentro shows how femicides increased in the last decade in Argentina, starting with an amount of 208 cases in

2008; 231 in 2009; 260 in 2010; 282 in 2011; 255 in 2012; 295 in 2013; 277 in 2014 and 286 in 2015. In conclusion, in 2016 the cases of femicides amounted to 290 femicides (Casa del Encuentro, 2016).

According to La Casa del Encuentro, between 2008 and 2016, 2384 crimes of femicides were committed. Moreover, the consequences of violence against women include collateral damages to their children who also become victims during this process. More than 2.919 children lost their mother between nine years from 2008 to 2016.
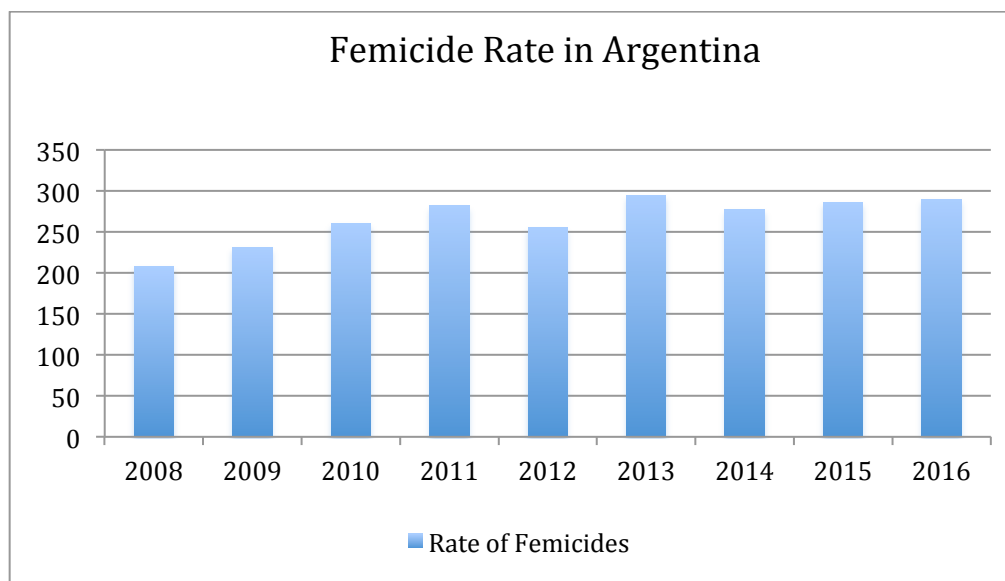
Figure 1. *(Casa del Encuentro)*

Despite an increasing number of femicides cases, Argentina shows an important degree of normative advance in the eradication of gender violence, through its presence and cooperation within international instruments, such as the Convention of Belem do Para (1994), and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the UN in 1993. Furthermore, alongside the international commitment, Argentina works on a national level for resolutions against gender violence, which are visible through the law 24.417 – "Protección contra la Violencia Familiar" approved in 1994, and the law N° 26.485, published in 2009 – "Protección Integral para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia contra las Mujeres en Los Ámbitos en que Desarrollan sus Relaciones Interpersonales"- ("Comprehensive Protection to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women in the Areas in which they Develop their Interpersonal Relationships").

Even though Argentina takes part in the international cooperation and the promulgation of particular laws, the country fails to implement laws and initiatives. As a result, organizations and members of the civil society carried out on June 3rd of July 2015 a multitudinous mobilization known for the hashtag #Niunamenos – demanding for the implementation of laws for the prevention of women's security[4] (DerGhougassian et al., 2015).

The movement turned out to be successful to the point of creating by the government, two days after the mobilization, the "Unidad de Registro, Sistematización y Seguimiento de Femicidios y Homicidios Agravados por el Género", a resolution under the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights together with the Secretaría de Derechos Humanos y Pluralismo Cultural[5], intended to follow and tackle homicide based on gender violence (DerGhougassian et al., 2015).

The change brought by the movement, made possible the monitoring of the cases by the Oficina de Violencia Doméstica[6] (OVD) established in 2006 by the Supreme Court of Justice that compiled the data of the femicides. The results in 2014 showed how the 57% of femicides were perpetrated by couples, ex-couples, spouses, cohabitants and the 75% with relatives and acquaintances included. On November 5th, 2015 a law was approved, creating a body of professionals to provide free legal patronage to victims of gender-based violence, in compliance with the law N°26.485, which purpose is to ensure access to justice for people victims of gender-based violence.

5.1.5 Struggles of race and class

The concept of race and class is widely known in Latin American countries, regarding social and identity issues. However, Argentina presents a space regarding "race" and "ethnicity". According to Barbara Sutton in *Bodies in Crisis*, the study of women in Argentina is shaped by these elements regarding "nation" as well. Argentina is a country with substantial White-European immigration that consequently created the

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[4] The movement of Ni Una Menos is involved in a variety of issues concerning women's security in form of protection and rights. Among the requests, they ask for a solid monitoring of the National Plan of Action together with the free juridical patronage and protection of women and children; and to create a homogeneous register of the vicitims of femicides in the country. However,they demand for other acts that will be examined in section: 6.3.1.
[5] The Secretariat of Human Rights
[6] Office of Domestic Violence (Argentina)

concept of *crisol de raza* (= racial melting pot) (Sutton, 2010). Nevertheless, the definition of melting pot fails to include populations that have experienced conquest and slavery, such as indigenous and Afro-descendants. Therefore, the intention for those that did not comply with the white European model was to disappear, blend in with the dominant population, or as Sutton puts it, to be integrated in exchange for rejecting their language, culture, and lifestyle (Sutton, 2010).

As Sutton states: "the dominant culture in Argentina promotes a deracialized "common sense" that obscures the racial hierarchies that permeate everyday life, the history of the nation, and its institutions" (Sutton, 2010:26). Hence, race matters in the Argentinian context in which analysis conducted by Enrique Garguin (2007), of middle-class identity formation, shows how racialization was essential to class differentiation processes, introduced during the Peronist "dynasty" (Sutton, 2010). According to Sutton, the class was and remains racially coded, embedded in the image of "cabecita negra" that symbolized the poor and working class population (Sutton, 2010). Institutions in Argentina play an important role in the discourse of race, for which Sutton criticizes the flawed system of the National Census to provide information regarding the ethno-racial composition of the population (Sutton, 2010).

In 2001, adjustments were made to the ethno-racial system by introducing the question about how many people identify or belong to an indigenous group. Many Argentines have the perception of – "race is not an issue" followed by the belief of the country's homogeneity. According to the author, that makes it even more difficult to explain how the dark skin and indigenous phenotypes have been classified as class inferiority together with the predomination of positions of power among white European descendants. Further, the issue of beauty and bodies among women is also related to race, in which idealized models of beauty has been mainly white (Sutton, 2010).

As Sutton puts it – "Argentine culture does not provide sufficient conceptual tools to make sense of social problems concerning racist dynamics in the country (…). Racial dynamics are difficult to tease out or identify as such in Argentina since they remain hidden under other sorts of conflicts and social differences" (Sutton, 2010, p. 27).

Even though women from all social classes and race suffer various forms of violence from sexual harassment to physical harm, the level of discrimination regarding women suffering gender violence depends on social class and race.

In Argentina, women belonging to a lower social class together with indigenous women have often been neglected in the systems of prevention, and discriminated and disbelieved by the police.

5.1.6 Women in neoliberal economics

Another crucial element in addition to race and class is the neoliberal adjustment that brought some implications to the lifestyle of many Argentineans, especially women. The neoliberal economic model was first introduced during the dictatorship, and endorsed in the 1990s, under the government of Menem and consequently of Fernando de la Rúa. However, the implementation of structural adjustments influenced by the IMF and the World Bank affected in particular lower-class women and impoverished middle sectors (Sutton, 2010). Furthermore, neoliberalism in Argentina altered the public sectors, by considerable reductions in the areas of health and education; and through the privatization of many essential services, among which the privatization of social security and most state-owned companies (Sutton, 2010).

According to Sutton, the application of neoliberalism in Argentina had some consequences concerning gender, based on the expectations that various women experienced during the economic crisis of 2001-2002. During her fieldwork in Buenos Aires, Sutton interviewed various women, from lower class, poverty and middle-class that were affected by neoliberal adjustments. Neoliberalism in Argentina enabled poverty to grow even deeper, especially for women that already lived in precarious social and economic conditions. As Sutton puts it – "class was a major axis differentiating how women's bodies were affected by economic decline" (Sutton, 2010, p.43). The author describes the different economic situations lived among women in Argentina, where middle-class women had to adjust to certain habits, like buying cheaper food, less expensive beauty products and likewise; meanwhile, for women from lower social classes, the adjustment could mean fundamental life changes as the access to basic needs such as food (Sutton, 2010).

Working-class and poor women mentioned issues such as poor diets, physical overwork, contraceptive needs, inadequate medical attention and more, as a general situation in the country. Food insecurity was also a frequent issue for many families, which led to a drastic decrease in the consumption of milk and meat.

The traditional Argentinian meal *asado* (which consists of meat) represents a cultural and family ritual of great importance that became to be a luxury for many Argentines. According to Sutton – "with the crisis, this important source of bodily and cultural nourishment was curtailed" (Sutton, 2010, p.51).

Women living in poverty had to find strategies against food insecurity, which included: begging at supermarkets and private homes and looking for leftovers in the garbage. This section explained the kind of structural violence women suffered in the political and economic context of grave change that framed Argentina in the 1990s and 2000s. Sutton considers women's bodily experiences to the political economy and cultural norms of femininity and beauty as structural violence.

5.2 Power, Violence and the Body

"Social aggression directed at women's bodies is expressed not only through social structures and institutions but also through micro-interactions" (Sutton, 2010, p.129). Argentine political, economic and cultural norms of femininity have an enormous impact on women's experience of violence and power relations in Argentina; as each of these areas show a high level of structural violence that affects women's experiences both physically, as well as psychologically. Feminist, Liz Kelly defines violence against women, as a continuum of violence, consisting of a stream of events and elements that connected with one another, often is difficult to separate (Kelly, 1970). The continuum of violence do not suggest a scale of severity or seriousness about the kind of violence suffered by women; but it puts in relation experiences of abuse, harassment, assault, and violation in lives of women and children. Through the cases and stories of women participating in the Ni Una Menos movement, a pattern based on the concept of a continuum of violence it is visible in Argentina. The majority of women experience a long stage of violence that range from mental to physical harm, and that even kills. Therefore, femicides are not casual acts of violence that takes place sporadically, but they are the result of protracted, lasting violence.

In Argentina, violence represents a multidimensional structure embedded in society. On the one hand, women suffer violence in their homes; and on the other hand, women suffer direct structural violence in the context of economic crisis, where the bodies have been affected by market-oriented systems including the poor access to needed food and health care, lacking health measurements, as in the case of prevent

damages committed by clandestine abortions (Sutton, 2010). Moreover, during the economic crisis, women suffered unemployment, exhaustive workloads, wage cuts, and community disintegration (Sutton, 2010). Structural violence and interpersonal violence are often interwoven. Therefore, interpersonal violence cannot be understood as an individual phenomenon, but as a system of "sexual terrorism" that shape the relationship between men and women, based on fear, psychical violence and coercion. Sutton states: "the violence experienced by different groups of women can be best understood in connection to systems of power that mutually constitute and reinforce each other" (Sutton, 2010, p.130). In other words, the author suggests that gender violence is not exclusively rooted in patriarchal structures but is also constructed by the intersection of various inequalities (Sutton, 2010).

The debate about an imbalance of power between sexes opens an opportunity to mention the experiences of women that became politically active in Argentina. These experiences show the way strong women were discriminated for challenging the system of power imbalance among gender (Sutton, 2010). Furthermore, the connection between structural violence and intimate violence is visible within the system of justice to which women turn. The most common experience has been the search for visible scars on the body of women by the police to ensure the truth of the story. In Argentina, it has been historically difficult for women to demonstrate before courts and police that "they did not consent to a sexual assault if their bodies seem to be "intact" after a violent event (…)" (Sutton, 2010, p.148). In this way, women relived a sense of condemnation in a context where cultural norms deduce that women secretly want to be assaulted or, somehow provoke sexual violence.

5.3 Domestic Violence
Argentina has experienced different forms of violence belonging to Galtung's categories of structural, cultural and direct violence. Domestic violence is a form of direct violence, which usually takes place inside the private space of the home and family. This type of violence has often been treated as a private matter set in the private sphere. However, feminist scholars within the human rights framework have raised questions about the state's unethical attitudes towards this issue by demanding to take responsibility towards women, victims of intimate violence.

Domestic violence is central in the debate of sexual violence in patriarchal structures present in Argentina, because it has an ambiguous position in politics, where it belongs to both the private and public sphere. Considering the most emblematic cases of femicides in Argentina, the perpetrator will often be found in the private sphere; a partner, a husband, a father, or an ex-partner. The UN argues the repercussions this kind of violence has on women`s daily livelihood, since they don't live a secure life free of violence, which is a basic human right. According to feminist L. Kelly, the term "domestic violence" came into use in the mid-1970s; nevertheless, studies about violence within the marriage has been conducted previously in studies of homicides and divorce (Kelly, 1988).

In Skoloffs' *Domestic Violence at the Margins,* structural factors are defined as significant in relation to domestic violence, among which, socioeconomic factors enable to reinforce and maintain domestic violence. The lack of shelters or appropriate housings represents another structural issue that affects directly women, victims of domestic violence, since they are unable to escape their abusive relationship. Furthermore, stereotyped images of battered women constitute an important issue for women who try to access legal and social services. Skoloff offers an example of how certain groups of women have been negatively depicted in homophobic and xenophobic ways (Skoloff, 2005). These structural issues documented by several scholars of domestic violence, are attributable to the case of Argentina, which struggles with stereotyping women, especially based on ethnicity, sexual orientation/and identity. Furthermore, the inappropriate behaviour towards certain victims by security entities (such as the police and other justice embodiments) also represents the lack of efficient prevention, based on abuse of power. In conclusion, domestic violence is given as a form of oppression and social control, which is according to Crenshaw developed by the intersections of systems of power such as: race, class, gender and sexual orientation; and oppression, as in prejudice, gender inequality and class stratification (Skoloff, 2005). This prospect shows the complexion of the issue of domestic violence in the dimension of "intersectionality" that indicates the individuality of the problem based on social context and location.

5.4 Femicidio

The term "femicidio" has often been challenged in Latin America. The Argentinian NGO Casa del Encuentro defines the word femicidio as the following: "the term "femicidio" is political, it is the denunciation of the naturalization of society towards sexist violence. Femicidio is one of the most extreme forms of violence towards women; it is the murder committed by a man towards a woman whom he considers to be his property" (La Casa del Encuentro).

The concept of femicidio was developed by the American author Carol Orlock in 1974 and used publicly later in 1976 by feminist Diana Russell in front of the International Tribunal of Crimes against Women in Brussels. The definition written by Orlock describes femicide as the homicide of women for the simple fact of being a woman. Russell describes femicide as "on the end of a continuum of anti-female terror that includes a wide variety of verbal and physical abuse, such as rape, torture, sexual slavery (…), cosmetic surgery (…)" (Radford & Russell, 1992, p.15). The authors emphasize an existing dissonance between men and women's perceptions of the social world and sexual violence. (Radford et al., 1992) According to the definition of sexual violence offered by Radford and Russell in the book *Femicide –* the term sexual violence includes on man's desire to seek power, domination, and control (Radford et al., 1992).

The use of the terminology femicide has experienced incongruences in the region of Latin America. According to the Mexican feminist politician Marcela Lagarde, the term *femicide* should be translated into Spanish as *feminicidio* instead of *femicidio*. The author emphasis how the term "femicidio" can be interpreted as the simple act of homicide of female; meanwhile, the term contains a more complex meaning of homicide as a form of violence against women perpetrated by men, based on their social, sexual, juridical, political, economic and ideological supremacy over women that live in conditions of inequality and subordination (DerGhougassian, 2015).

Moreover, Lagarde defines "feminicidio" also as a form of institutional violence, which leads to impunity. This concept of femicide denounces the presence of omission, negligence, and corruption by the state unable to create security conditions within work and public environments, as well as in private ones for women.

In conclusion, the state fails to eradicate and prevent violence against women (DerGhougassian, 2015). However, the term "femicidio" is recognized by the law and is used by non-governmental organizations in Argentina.

Other authors classified "feminicidio" in different ways, as in the case of Mexican author Julia Monárrez that distinguishes between three types of feminicidio: "intimate feminicide", usually perpetrated in the intimate sphere by a partner or ex-partner; the "feminicide by stigmatized occupation", in case of prostitution or similar occupations; and finally "systematic sexual feminicide" where the body of the victim is mutilated (DerGhougassian, 2015).

5.5 Machismo vs. Marianismo as cultural norms

The concept of women and men as social constructions has been a focal point for the feminist analysis, where adjectives such as virility, rationality, strength, and public are related to men; meanwhile, different adjectives, such as: irrational, sensitive and private are attributed to women. In Latin America, the gender discourse has included the concept of *machismo*, used to define man's control and domination over women. The definition of "machismo" also includes its origins in cultural roots, ought to be the reality embedded in Latin American society. According to Skidmore – " a central cultural norm has consisted of the notion of machismo, a celebration of sexual and social expressions of masculine power and virility" (Skidmore et al., 2005, p.62). Furthermore, the definition has been used for centuries to provide a justification for male aggressiveness and assertiveness, often related to the protection of honour (Skidmore, 2005). However, the notion of machismo was followed by another concept of male-oriented stereotype for women, known as *Marianismo*, named after the Virgin Mary. The definition of "marianismo" underlines virtues linked to womanhood such as moral superiority and semi-divinity. (Skidmore et al., 2005) According to Sutton, the conservative concept of marianismo ascends from the Catholic Church, which represents one of the strongest institutions in Latin America; marianismo is defined within patriarchal schemes as an ideal of womanhood, motherhood, and chastity (Sutton, 2010).

Members of both sexes have used the conceptualization of *machismo* and *marianismo* in Latin America to pursue their objectives. Nevertheless, as Skidmore states, these notions are not the representation of reality but mythologies that are an essential part of the Latin American society. The role of women has often been categorized as private, which belonged to the private sphere of the family. Women's situation changed gradually with its peak in the 1990s. The symbol of female political ambition was incarnated by Eva Perón in Argentina, described as the most powerful women in the history of the Western Hemisphere (Skidmore, 2005).

From the 1950s to the 1980s, women strengthened their position in Latin American society, overshadowing stereotypes of *machismo* and *marianismo*, through revolutionary movements and public protests. Nevertheless, Sutton argues how the Church uses power to prevent a cultural and social change in Argentina, since this institution has already minimized feminist movements as well as its protest against sexist oppression.

5.6 International Framework – The UN in Argentina

This section offers an insight of the Argentinian situation concerning gender-based violence, resulting in gender-based killings, within the international framework of the United Nations. The report conducted by the UN, precisely by the Human Rights Council and CEDAW, has been conducted between the 14th and 21st of November 2016 and was later published in 2017. The report defines the causes and consequences of violence against women, based on a visit from the UN Special Rapporteur Dubravka Šimonović. The UN shows concerns towards particular issues related to state obligations and rooted cultural discrimination, among the reasons for concern (OHCHR, 2017).

"Violence against women is rooted in inequalities and discrimination against women, and its prevention and eradication must be grounded in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women through prevention, protection and prosecution of violence against women done holistically throughout the State and its provinces (…)" (Šimonović, 2016, p. 2).

The UN rapporteur expresses, on the one hand, the increasing phenomenon of violence against women in the country; on the other hand the precarious way the state manages and tackles the issues of gender violence. During the eight-day mission, the Rapporteur met with various stakeholders, from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Domestic Violence Office of the Supreme Court of Justice and the President and representatives of the National Women's Council, among others (OHCHR, 2017).

During her visit to Argentina, Šimonović stayed in the city of Buenos Aires and the provinces of Buenos Aires, Tucumán, and Corrientes. The Special Rapporteur also met with over 100 non-governmental organizations and representatives of academic institutions in Buenos Aires. According to the stakeholders, the presence of active "machismo" culture still creates an environment that tolerates discrimination and violence against women (OHCHR, 2017). Therefore, patriarchal notions together with gender stereotypes, followed by the lacking implementation of international and national protocols have resulted in violence against women (OHCHR, 2017). In November 2016, the UN organization CEDAW blamed the persistence of gendered stereotypes with the responsibilities and roles of women within the family and society.

Šimonović underlines the complex governmental structure and division of competencies that exist in Argentina, by which the 23 provinces owe individual constitutions, laws and executive, legislative and judicial authorities. The "institutional maze" makes difficult the implementation of state obligation together with international human rights instruments to eradicate violence against women and protect their rights. (OHCHR, 2017) As the UN states, women victims of violence face serious uncertainty at the moment they seek protection from violent situations. Nonetheless, in 2015 the Domestic Violence Office received 11,348 reports of intimate violence, only representing a fraction of the total number of cases. Moreover, only 1 out of 10 requested help from a public institution in 2015 (OHCHR, 2017). In this case, Argentina should create an efficient system of prevention both on the provincial and federal level, as well as closer collaboration between the government and NGOs (OHCHR, 2016). For instance, Šimonović during the 2016 visit observed a discrepancy from the collection of data on femicides.

She states – " (…) femicide data included only cases for which judicial proceedings had been initiated and left out a significant number of other cases, such as when the perpetrator committed suicide", which shows how the data fails to provide the actual (higher) number of femicides perpetrated in the country (Šimonović, 2017).

According to the Human Rights Council, the causes that are visible in the case of domestic violence in Argentina are the inadequate prevention systems together with untimely reconciliation mechanisms. The ideology of "saving" the family or the relationship between the victim and the aggressor, is embedded in family proceedings handled by the police officers and judges. Further, Šimonović noticed the inappropriate attitudes by officials to face situations of crisis, where police officers refuse to take reports from victims of domestic violence (OHCHR, 2017). In the discourse of prevention and protection, the UN rapporteur also emphasizes the lack of shelters that are until today 25 in operation; by advising on establishing 36 shelters more, available to all women, both in rural and urban areas being in this way accessible to every individual.

Furthermore, the question of economic disadvantage and inequality among women in Argentina covers an important topic in the country, by which the rapporteur expresses the need to provide free legal aid services as well as free legal counselling to victims of gender-based violence. According to the UN the accessibility to services from both non-governmental and governmental bodies is fundamental, especially in a country like Argentina, in which one third of the country's population lives below the poverty line; women that live in poor communities are most likely the first to become victims, as well as the one, which cannot afford legal assistance. (OHCHR, 2016) According to the report, women that suffer the most discrimination in Argentina are indigenous women, who live mainly in the Northern region of the country, migrant women, transvestites and transgender women, women deprived of their liberty and women with disabilities. These women are often deprived of vital human rights and from mechanisms of assistance. The report provided by the UN helps to observe the role of the state and various stakeholders in the delicate process of tackling and eradicating domestic violence as well as other forms of gender-based violence that exist in Argentina. Policy-making covers an important function in the process of eradication of gender-violence, not only in Argentina but also worldwide.

However, the report makes also clear the fundamental role that non-governmental bodies perform in tackling and monitoring; as well as the lively activism that exist in Argentina to create awareness, which is crucial in this thesis.

5.6.1 Legislative framework: the State

In gender discourse, the state plays an important role in matters of legislative change and policy-making. In addition to the state, social movements together with NGOs work efficiently to create a space for women suffering from violence, as well as creating awareness with the aim of legislative changes. According to Sutton, the legislative framework has notably changed during the twentieth century, during which women gained the right to vote, higher legal authority within the family, higher political representation and more legal protection against gender violence (Sutton, 2010). Argentina has a significant position in the regional framework as well, attributing to the Belem do Para convention, along with other Latin American countries. Nevertheless, the efforts shown by Argentina are not sustainable on the legislative level, where the laws are not always applied in concordance with the international standards. On the one hand, article 75. of the Constitution gives priority to international treaties over national laws; on the other hand, the same article (75) – "gives Congress the power to legislate and promote positive measures guaranteeing true equal opportunities and treatment, the full benefit and exercise of the rights recognized by the Constitution and by the International treaties on human rights (…)" (HRC, 2016, p.13). Among the articles of the Constitution, there are two important to mention in the battle of prevention and eradication of violence against women in Argentina: Article 1 of law No. 24.417 (1994) and the other Law No. 26.485 (2009). In concordance with these laws another important step towards a gender policy has undoubtedly been the creation of "Plan Nacional de Acción" – for the Prevention, Assistance and Eradication of Violence against Women (2017-2019), which was required by the activist community and the civil society all together.

6.0 Findings and discussion: The Way To Awareness In Argentina

This chapter will provide the background and findings to female social movements as social actors in Argentina, which enable through participation to raise awareness regionally as well as globally. In the context of activism, especially in the form of social movements, empowerment is an important topic to discuss and conceptualize global activism, as well as local activism in Buenos Aires.

I would like to understand the movements as a form of power to and for women, resumed in the definition of empowerment. Movements addressed to women and often led by women are a way to link politics with gender, through the spread of knowledge and awareness, which are also key words for this study. This chapter will be closely related to chapter seven as it analyses the mechanisms of prevention in Argentina, both formal and informal.

6.1 Civil society: bringing awareness in Latin America

The social movements in Latin America started in the tumult of the 1970s and 1980s, years marked on one hand by authoritarian governments and diminished conditions of livelihood; on the other hand, by the fight for human rights, especially in Argentina and Chile; for indigenous organizations in Guatemala, Ecuador and Bolivia, and finally the Zapatista movement in Mexico (Di Marco, 2010). Women's movements emerging in Latin America were mainly concerned with women's rights regarding gender-based violence, discrimination in the working environment and finally in reproductive health. Women's movements in Argentina, as well as in the other Latin-American countries, have been categorized into three aspects: participation in human rights movements (the mothers and grandmothers), collective actions of women from popular sectors (planted during the adjustment), and the feminist movements with its strong origins and stabilization of middle-class women (Di Marco, 2010).

Women's movements in Latin America are united by common elements, as well it is important to specify that the nature and degree of activism and women's movements is different throughout Latin America. Stephen defines that economic and political conditions influenced the creation of a grassroots organization, together with the limits imposed on women's political activism by dominant ideologies, which indicate the role of women within the family.

Further, among other factors, there was a merging of gender and class-based issues, such as working class conditions and domestic violence, on the agenda of the organizations (Stephen, 1997).

According to Stephen, it is necessary to take a closer look to what political, economic and cultural restraints are on women's political mobilization, in order to understand how women see themselves and how they experience and define the structural context; as well as they join together into the political process of social movements to fight structural conditions of inequalities (Stephen, 1997).

6.2 Social Movements in Argentina

The active soul of Argentina sprang due to the political and economic setbacks suffered by the country. Firstly, at the end of 1970s and early 1980s, with the dictatorship known as *guerra sucia,* during which thousands of people disappeared. Secondly, by the economic crisis set in 2001 that prompted insurgency by vast sectors of the population. In Argentina, social movements took form through bodily expressions such as the notion of *poner el cuerpo*, meaning, "to put the body", which invokes to "put the body on the line" and "to give the body" (Sutton, 2010).

Factors of social worsening, such as: poverty, unemployment, lack of access to health care, and social insecurity called for political resistance, in demand of institutional and economic change. Both men and women were actively participating in social movements in the streets, plazas and collective gatherings that increased during the crisis, and afterwards. However, the social movements differ from each other based on the variety of thematic and issues.

Between January and mid-August 2002, there were estimated about 12,766 protests in the country, which included blockades, marches, and occupations of public and private buildings (Sutton, 2010). The negative effects of the neoliberal model in the 1990s, defined by privatization and structural adjustment, provoked the formation of social movements, such as the movement of *piqueteros* and *piqueteras*, as consequence of poverty conditions as well as unemployment; the movement used blockade roads forming chains with their bodies and burning objects as tools of protest (Sutton, 2010). These massive piqueteros movements aimed to pressure the government through visibility and effectiveness. Women made up 65 percent of the members of the movement and they were active in projects and other protests as well.

Moreover, another important movement known as *cacerolazos* in which pots and pans were banged was introduced by the middle-class in Buenos Aires as protest to the economic measures applied by former president Fernando de la Rúa.

According to Sutton, Argentina owns a history of military forces trying to suppress leftist organizations, students and activists, since 1976. However, many activists survived the atrocities of the state's terror, and shared their experiences, creating awareness within the country. One of the most influential movements has been undoubtedly the human rights movement, which grew while the military was still in power. During this dark period, the movement of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (still active today), created awareness about human rights in Argentina. As Sutton states: "They have influenced activist frames as they politicized motherhood, made organized claims to the state, confronted the police and military repression, and shaped human rights agendas" (Sutton, 2010, p.164).

6.3 Women's resistance in Argentina

In the discourse of gender-based violence, there is another concept important to take into consideration in regard to women's activism, which is resistance. Kelly defines resistance as a particular form of coping strategy – " to resist is to oppose actively, to fight, to refuse to co-operate with or submit. It implies a sense of a force, a power or a person which is actively opposed" (Kelly, 1988, p.161). Women resist in situations of threat, by refusing to be frightened or to show fear in front of the abusive man. According to Kelly, in situations where men are violent to women, they attempt to gain control over their behaviour. Therefore, resistance works as a tool for women to activate an opposition to abusive men's way to seek control; but also as a coping strategy to deny abusive men to achieve power in all its forms over women (Kelly, 1988). Resistance as a coping mechanism consolidate into political action, where individuals or groups recognize their suffering caused by social factors, where the solution is through social change. As Kelly states: "to resist requires feeling strong enough to take the risk that the incident might escalate; in some situations resistance may prevent or limit violence, whilst in others it may result in greater levels of violence" (Kelly, 1988, p.162).

According to the data displayed by the National Plan of Action 2017-2019 by the Argentine government, the highest flow of calls to denounce violence was recorded on the day of the march "Ni Una Menos" (June 3rd 2015) and the days following this massive mobilization. Specifically, in the month of June there was registered about 4,600 calls concerning cases of gender violence (Consejo Nacional de Mujeres, 2016). Women's activism in Argentina, put the notion of resistance in practice through *poner el cuerpo* (to put the body), which became common to women as a way to cope with, resist, or fight oppressive social relations (Sutton, 2010). Moreover, the body expresses emotions, important elements in social movement's emergence, maintenance and outcomes; therefore, emotions of fear, anger, rage and joy were often voiced through the body during women's movements. The body plays also an important role in terms of numbers, which is particularly important to political resistance. Hence, "massed bodies" characterize a significant source of power during the protests. As Sutton states, there is an important difference where the crowd is made of 200.000 instead of 200 people, which is why the multitude results more empowering to create pressure (Sutton, 2010). Argentina provides various examples on the use of the body to fight injustice, as well as the multitude of women (and men) that participate in the movements. Ni Una Menos has shown the collective nature of mobilization, which will be introduced in the next section.

6.3.1 Ni Una Menos – the movement against gender violence
Emblematic cases of femicides in Argentina triggered the creation of a collective feminist movement against gender-based violence, known as Ni Una Menos. The movement became a collective cry against patriarchal violence, introduced by activists, journalists and artists that reached to multitudes of women from institutes, universities, political parties and hundreds of organizations. The case of a 14-year old girl Chiara Páez killed by her boyfriend in May 2015 in the region of Santa Fe set in motion the feminist movement (La Nación, 2018). The notorious case of Wanda Tadei is difficult to forget for Argentines, a young woman burned and killed by her husband. The discussion that takes place hence – is to what extent a private matter becomes a public issue, in which the state is responsible for acting and, ending what has become a frequent and even "accepted" phenomenon.

In both cases, the methods of violence used to kill, also entails high levels of cruelty, an argument of concern sustained by feminists in Argentina (Lucia Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018). According to the movement Ni Una Menos – "violencia machista" includes all acts, or omission towards unequal power relations, which directly or indirectly affects, in both public and private spheres, women's life, dignity, liberty, physical integrity as well as, economic, psychological and sexual integrity and finally just for the simple fact of being a woman" (Ni Una Menos, 2015).

The feminist movement argues that there are different types of violence that women encounter in everyday life. The first one is physical violence, which causes pain and damage, or any other forms of abuse to the body that affects physical integrity; psychological violence, causes emotional damages by diminishing the person and its self-esteem, by taking control over their actions, beliefs and decisions through harassment, threats, manipulation and humiliation; Sexual violence represents violation in all its forms, with or without genital access, through taking away the right to decide over reproductive and sexual life, with the use of force or intimidation; economic violence is also common, by denying economic or patrimonial resources through the control or limitation of income. The last form of violence presented by Ni Una Menos is the symbolic one that represents the subordination of women in society as naturalized, through the transmission and reproduction of trends that stereotypes gender roles and by attitudes expressed through inequality, discrimination and domination (Ni Una Menos, 2015).

The distinctive character of this movement is certainly the revolutionary element that it carries, transforming a national action to a regional (Latin America) and even international (United Nations) movement. What began as a major collective gathering in Buenos Aires has expanded to a global appeal for awareness on the issue of gender-based violence, especially in the region of Latin America. The movement by attracting attention of international media and global politics has thus obtained greater support in asking the government to implement their requirements, being under the scrutiny of the international community.

The UN agency OHCHR in a report of 2016 defines Ni Una Menos "ahead of the problem", demanding the state to protect and prevent femicide and all the forms of gender-based violence happening in the country (OHCHR, 2016).

Meanwhile, the movement demanded the government to comply with the implementation of law 26. 485 - in accordance with the National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Assistance and Eradication of violence against women. Further, activists demanded the government to grant access to justice and trained staff available to women victims of violence, as well as free legal patronage during the legal process (Ni Una Menos, 2016). Among the principles, the movement requested the establishment of a unique national record of victims of gender violence, together with official statistics regarding femicides; permitting to make a picture of the actual situation of violence against women in Argentina. In conclusion, the need to develop and deepen a comprehensive sexual education at all educational levels on violence against women is also key to reduce discrimination caused by gender violence (Ni Una Menos). Perhaps, Argentina is not considered a country of grave human rights violations, however it still lives in the shadow of open wounds that results in political and social life, defined by structural and cultural violence.

6.4 Lack of political unity as a limitation

This section aims to show how certain diversity in the women's movements and lack of gender-perspective as main objective may create limitations on activism in Argentina. A. Risley indicates two forms of structural violence that Argentina's popular sectors have particularly at heart: police brutality and the neoliberal economic model. Firstly, the neoliberal adjustment shows levels of violence, due to the consequences brought by the high rates of unemployment and increasing poverty on the one side; on the other side, Argentina was destabilized by the economic and social crisis that shook the country. Secondly, several factors enabled the predominance of class-perspective instead of gender, causing under-gendered discourses (Risley, 2006). Risley defines that - "class-based interpretations of violence often eclipse gendered understandings" influenced by issues concerning national security, which entails police force and law enforcement, and the neoliberal economic model that is interpreted as a global and national system of domination (Risley, 2006, p.582).

According to Risley, members of human rights organizations have shown solidarity to victims of violence in Argentina. Nonetheless, they have focused on specific categories of "victims", such as the poor and the marginalized (Risley, 2006). Deep-rooted, historical reasons are undoubtedly challenging the perspective social movements should have, and its role to raise awareness in society. According to various actors of civil society the state remains a central target for socio-economic demands. As Risley states: "discourses on economic and social rights – to work, education, housing and health – are deeply ingrained in Argentina's history" (Risley, 2006, p.592). Hence, Risley's interpretation has credibility in how class-related issues linked to the economic situation and the experience of police brutality rooted in the dictatorship influenced the creation of social movements in Argentina. However, only recently the movements gained strong gendered perspective, and more specifically gender became a subject of discussion following the 2015 movement of Ni Una Menos. Therefore, activism shows the non-static character of politics in Argentina in continuous change and expansion.

7.0 Findings and discussion: Systems Of Protection Beyond Activism

This chapter provides the discussion based on the findings from the literature review together with the interviews conducted with members of non-governmental organizations, governmental entities and activists of women's movements in order to interpret the research questions. The discussion encompasses fundamental policies and resolutions prompted to fight gender-based violence, and its outcomes. However, activism is an important key concept throughout this master thesis, the following sections will start focusing on policy-making, especially regarding the Law 26.485 and the National Plan of Action (PNA). Following the implementation of gender policies the focus will shift to the impact of feminist movements has on decision-making and policy-making in Argentina.

7.1 Female representation in formal politics in Argentina

This section offers a study of women's position within political and public spaces, especially in the area of decision-making, which are fundamental to the research questions of this thesis.

Nonetheless, Argentina is considered to be the first country in the world to have adopted legislation with a quota system to guarantee female participation to political representation, known as "Ley de Cupo"[7] (Plan Nacional de Acción, 2016). In the mid-1990s other Latin American countries such as Peru, Brazil and Bolivia followed the example of Argentina by implementing a law that granted access to high rank positions to women. Moreover, the quota system imposed by the legislation is now starting to be a regional goal to achieve gender equality; which is acknowledged as well by UN Women for "peer democracy" (Plan Nacional de Acción, 2016). Congresswoman Cornelia Schmidt-Liermann advocates for gender and quota equality on different levels and institutions in Argentina, by mentioning the need of more women in mainly masculinised environments as the one represented by the Argentine Football Association (AFA):

"I ask for equality and that means increasing the amount of representation of women in governmental areas and other entities such as the AFA (C. Schmidt-Liermann, March 12, 2018).

As UN Women states – "Women face several obstacles to participating in political life. Structural barriers through discriminatory laws and institutions still limit women's options to run for office. Capacity gaps mean women are less likely than men to have the education, contacts and resources needed to become effective leaders" (UN Women). Indeed, the legislation (1991) in Argentina pushed for a change in gender gaps, where five per cent of female legislators in 1983 increased to 40 per cent of National Congress today. In statistics Argentina has the greatest presence of women in legislative power, outranking Germany, Canada and England.

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[7] Ley 24.012, 1991

As figure 2 shows underneath, the results of female representation as senator and deputies changed drastically from 1991 to now, after the promulgation of Law de Cupo (Plan Nacional de Acción, 2016, p. 62).
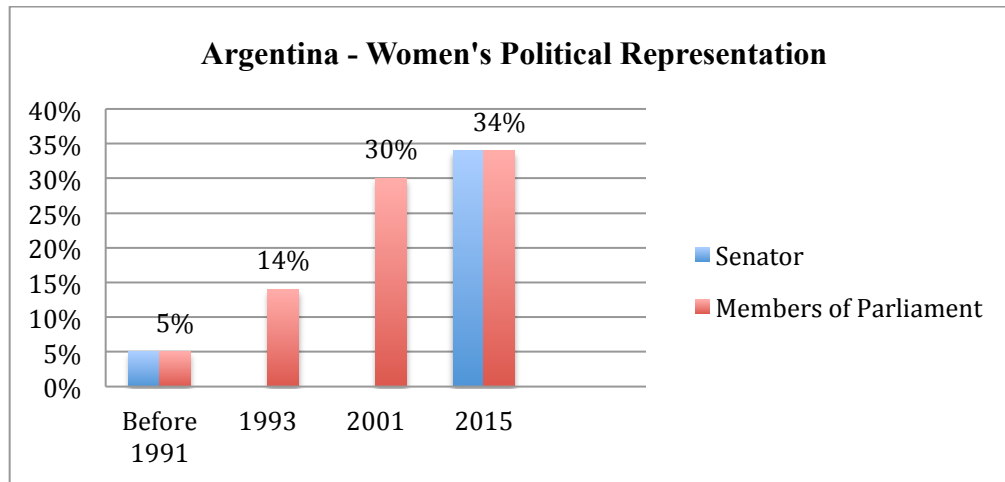

Figure 2. (Argentina - Trends after the law -Ley de Cupo Femenino 1991, PNA 2016)

However, until 2011 women in Argentina had never served in the presidencies of the National Congress chambers. According to a study conducted by the non-governmental organization ELA, the explanation of this is a lacking number of women in the presidency of political parties. The percentage of women in charge of a legislative block is of 33 % in National Congress; meanwhile, it is only 20% at the provincial level. Furthermore, it is interesting to note the existence of gendered division of labour within the legislative sphere, where it is possible to find on the one hand, a great number of men, responsible for the departments of: Economy, Trade, Transport and Industry; on the other hand, women are mostly represented in the departments responsible for: Family, Health, Education, Social Policies and Childhood (PNA, 2016). On the other hand, the lowest number of women in high hierarchical positions is identified in the judicial sector, which is the lowest in comparison to other public administrations. Despite women represent the 54% of the Argentine judicial system, only 15% enjoy a position of maximum responsibility.

7.1.2 Domestic violence policy-making in Argentina

This section offers an overview on gender policy-making, specifically on tackling domestic violence in Argentina, together with a comparison with Chile in terms of regional similarities and differences as well as the countries' policy outcomes. Susan Franceschet argues the way Chile has "outperformed" Argentina in policy-making towards domestic violence, mainly depending on state capacity and centralization, and the role of women's agencies in the implementation of such policies. Surprisingly, Chile has been classified as a conservative country, especially in regard to women's rights policies (abortion and divorce laws). On the contrary, Argentina is considered to be a pioneer in gender policy, being the first country in the world that induced political parties to nominate a minimum percentage of female candidates (1991). This analysis will give an interesting perspective of how countries such as Chile and Argentina, although their historic and political similarities, have its differences in the political agenda regarding gender. On the one side, Chile continues to be conservative in relation to Argentina; on the other side the vast difference of policy-making influenced by centralization, weakens Argentina's clarity on what gender politics should look like. I use Chile as a referent insofar as the country serves as an example of real implementation and improvement of gender perspective through policy-making and strong agents (Franceschet, 2010).

Both countries adopted domestic violence legislation in 1994; however, the laws were reformed later in Chile in 2005 and in Argentina in 2009. Chile developed a greater understanding of gender policy, by improving the law on domestic violence, through the gathering of data on domestic violence, public awareness campaigns, training for police and judges and by establishing support services for victims. The same outcomes were not reached by Argentina, which may be explained by Chile's strong and centralized state and its effective bureaucracy; meanwhile, Argentina is a federal state and complies with a fragmented and decentralized system that hinders an effective and unitary implementation of policy reform in the country (Franceschet, 2010). According to Franceschet the difference between two important women's agencies: Chile's National Women's Service (SERNAM) and Argentina's National Women's Council (CNM) outlines the differences in domestic violence policy-making between the two countries.

On one hand, SERNAM represents a centralized state agency that works with policy research, coordination, and monitoring; on the other hand, Argentina's CNM indicates some shortcomings due to the absence of resources and institutional weakness affected by the shift of governments, economic crises and ideological conflicts (Franceschet, 2010).

Most importantly, policy-making concerning domestic violence experienced diverse challenges in the whole region of Latin America; regardless of the success of feminist movements fighting the idea of domestic violence as a "private" matter, the family plays a crucial role in Latin American societies. As a consequence, many laws are based on the notion of "keeping the family together" rather than prevent the abuse within the home (Franceschet, 2010). As Franceschet argues – "As historical creations, institutions embody a set of power relations present at the time of their creation. In this way institutions "structure politics" and reproduce or reinforce those same power relations" (Franceschet, 2010, p.6).

The implementation of gender policies constitutes one of the greatest challenges in Argentina, caused by the multitude of actors involved in the policy process. If on the one hand, policy issues are handled by various departments instead of being managed by a single ministry hence, generating confusion in the organization and lack of clarity on levels of responsibility; on the other hand, there cannot be a department alone to address issues of domestic violence (Franceschet, 2010). Therefore, domestic violence policy-making should provide the victim counselling and shelters as support services, implying the involvement of various departments, such as: health, education, justice, social services and the police. Argentina by being a federal state grants its provinces to establish their own legislation, producing in this way decentralized institutions. Thus, women that live in different provinces also benefit from different "systems" of justice (Franceschet, 2010). Finally, Argentina's lack of unitary data registry on violence against women, as a direct result of the #NiUnaMenos movement shows another weak issue in comparison to the case of Chile.

7.1.3 Formal Justice Mechanisms

"Formal mechanisms derive their structure and power from the laws, policies, and regulations made by the government. They operate as a part of the government and are funded by the state" (UN Women, 2012). The principal functions of formal justice mechanisms are to resolve conflicts about the law, as well as determine the responsibility for the violations of the laws (UN Women, 2012). The main actors are judges, defence attorneys, civil attorneys and prosecutors and the staff that support the courts. In addition to these actors, there are also law enforcement officers that are usually involved in this process, such as the police force, which also interacts with both informal and formal sectors. According to the OHCHR, the police in Argentina lack adequate training to handle cases of violence against women. Further, women suffering violence distrust the police body, based on various acts of discrimination or mishandling of sensible cases, through mediation. UN Women illustrates the reasons why the justice sector is important in dealing with cases of VAW: "Research shows that violence against women continues to be a severely underreported crime globally (…). Violence by perpetrators who are known to the victim is much less likely to be reported than violence perpetrated by strangers" (UN Women, 2012). Moreover – "women often do not see the violence as a crime. When asked about whether intimate partner violence they had experienced was a crime, most women participants in the International Violence Against Women Survey from around the world viewed the violence as wrong but not as a crime" (UN Women, 2012). María Eugenia Martino, a student of Science of Education from Buenos Aires I had the pleasure to interview, which resembled more to a friendly "chat", argues in a similar way as the UN.

As Eugenia puts it: *"I think it is more difficult to understand to what extent women with few resources "realize" that they are suffering for intimate violence, in a society that naturalizes this. A woman of few resources does not suffer only one type of violence but various kinds of violence, like: the deprivation of education, food, water, etc. How can she realize that she is suffering for domestic abuse by her husband when violence is already part of her life"* (M.E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018).

According to UN Women the justice sector reform, in relation to violence against women works towards the following goals:

- The formation of laws, policies, and practices to remove the perpetrators from situations in which they use violence and by holding offenders accountable for violence by imposing other penalties.
- The constitution of laws based on international human rights standards.
- Introducing legislative and enforcement mechanisms to promote and protect human rights (…).
- Developing a judiciary with expertise on violence against women.
- Strengthening links and cooperation between and among state and non-state institutions to ensure victim safety and offender accountability.
- Ensuring that states meet their responsibilities under international and regional laws.
- Building trust in the justice sector and ensuring a representative and credible justice sector.
- Strengthening oversight and monitoring of the justice sector.
- Providing survivors with civil remedies and/or reparations.

(UN Women, 2012)

Argentina struggles to fulfil more than one of the resolutions listed above by UN Women. From the findings, I realize how accurate certain issues highlighted by the UN fits the situation in Argentina, as in the case of the strengthening of cooperation between non-state and state institutions; and specifically regarding the principle of "building trust in the justice sector and ensuring a representative and credible justice sector" (UN Women, 2012). According to Eugenia, when a woman in Argentina denounces an experience of violence, normally perpetrated by a partner, the outcome depends mainly on who attends the victim at the police station or the official or the judge in court. She mentions the existence of a women's commissary as a "very nice" mechanism of support for women on the one side; however, on the other she explains how they are not exactly trusting and ensuring towards women, based on the amounts of hours they have to wait to be attended or by the approach to the victims, which is not ideal.

As she puts it *"the last thing a battered or abused woman needs, is to spend hours in a police station"* (M. E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018).

7.1.4 Informal Justice Mechanisms

"Informal mechanisms derive their power from social groups or community structures and are not a part of the government" (UN Women, 2012).

"Social groups and structures can include specific ethnic or faith communities, rituals or traditions, indigenous governance systems, or local community organization" (UN Women, 2017). According to UN Women, informal justice mechanisms create some risks to many girls and women victims of violence, based on the one hand, on mechanisms lacking public education and awareness. On the other hand, the presence of restorative justice practices; however, these practices are used in both formal and informal justice sectors worldwide (UN Women, 2017).

The concern towards restorative justice practices is embedded in the process of *mediation* between the survivor and perpetrator. As the UN says – "these processes can minimize the effect that violence has had in women's lives, can perpetuate discrimination against women, and can risk women giving up their rights to preserve harmony within a social group" (UN Women, 2017). Furthermore, there is an imbalance of power between the victim of violence and the perpetrator of the act, which is why it would be harmful, the reconciliation of the two, through negotiation and dialogue (UN Women). In case of violence against women, mediation is used as a practice in both justice mechanisms. A process of reconciliation enables dangerous tendencies, in situations where the relationship is based on acts of assault, violent intimidation and controlling and humiliating behaviours. According to the UN reports on violence against women in Argentina, the issue of mediation and dialogue as practice to "save" the family or the relationship was listed among the major problems in the country's evaluation.

Eugenia claims that the existence of a conservative mentality in Argentina, leads the police as formal mechanism to resolve cases of interpersonal violence by responding "sir, don't hit your wife anymore", which is intended as a form of mediation (E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018). The notion of interpersonal violence as a private matter is still profoundly embedded in the Argentinian society.

The 2011 Council of Europe Convention expressed discontent with dispute resolution processes, such as mediation and conciliation, documented in the Art. 48, of the convention (UN Women). In Canada, the use of mediation in cases of violence against women has been incorporated in the formal court system. However, there have been debates about the safety of these practices. Moreover, a recommendation was established in case of mediation in spousal abuse, among which: the full information of the restorative justice process to the victim; and a great measure of protection by the restorative justice process as the criminal justice process.

7.1.5 Lack of shelters and training

The UN (2016) considers the lack of shelters and appropriate training to officials, within the judiciary system and the police force as an important issue that needs to be addressed. Along the same lines, Mexico provides a case regarding state institutions as more masculinised, within the judiciary and the police; these entities are depicted as "less sympathetic" towards victims of gender violence, in particular of domestic violence; however, these state institutions have the responsibility to provide assistance to abused women (ELLA, 2015). Therefore, Argentina together with other Latin American countries shows police tendencies of mistreatment and power exploitation over women. The inadequate training of officials is an important outcome that surface not only by the literature review but also by the qualitative interviews carried out for this study. M. Eugenia mentions that there is a lack of shelters in the city of Buenos Aires, and hence the spaces that exist to attend women are dysfunctional. Moreover, she argues for the absence of a procedure towards cases of violence against women – *"In theory they should give a restraining order, but in practice they do not, then it depends a lot to which official/person that attends you"* (M.E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018). Hence, I perceive that women find it difficult to trust state's entities that have the responsibility to provide security.

The raising of awareness concerning gender violence has definitely brought a clearer way of looking at the existence of patriarchal structures embedded in state's institutions such as the police and judiciary bodies. Nonetheless, there are elements that hinder women from reporting experiences of domestic violence as well as other forms of violence. These factors are: deficient services, poor knowledge of rights, the

lack of shelters, legal advice, privacy, medical services, and counselling (ELLA, 2015).

According to Pereiro J. the mechanisms and systems of protection can be understood, through the meaning that the police attribute to *violence against women* and *gende*r. By categorizing gender, the police has decided to attribute cases of gender violence to female police personnel, based on their understanding of values that are usually considered to be "feminine" such as "female sensibility" and "maternal instinct" (Pereiro, 2014). This perspective implies that by the mere fact of being a woman, female agents would have "tools" that allow them to approach victims and become sensitive to their problems (Pereiro, 2014). This is an interesting insight pointing out how lacking training of officials is perhaps excused, where both male and female police officers and judges should complete training programs on women's rights and gender violence, regardless biological aspects.

7.2 Prevention mechanisms to tackle VAW in Argentina

The Latin American region, has throughout the 1990's adopted various measures to tackle domestic violence. Although, the law against gender violence in Argentina was first introduced in 2009, relatively late in comparison to other countries in Latin America; the passing of the law has been a step towards a better understanding of gender politics. In *Tackling Gender Violence in Latin America,* ELLA explains the essential role of policy-making to address domestic violence, according to international standards. Firstly, the passing of a law that acknowledges the existence of the issue. Secondly, it denounces domestic violence as a public matter rather than private, in which the state takes direct responsibility together with the different branches of the government. Most importantly, the laws enable the creation of specialized agencies, protocols and policies to address gender-based violence (ELLA, 2016).

Argentina has been present in the realization of a whole range of prevention and treatment measures in Latin America. Together with Chile, Mexico, Ecuador, Bolivia, Costa Rica and Colombia, Argentina has implemented education and awareness-raising initiatives. There has undoubtedly been a regional cooperation resulting among others in the Belem do Para Convention that oblige states to provide legal

counselling, health care, emergency lines and psychological counselling to women victims of violence.

On a regional level, Argentina has been present for a long time, having established an emergency line (144) for women victims of gender violence and by providing psychological assistance to women. Further, in 2011 free specialized legal counselling and aid were provided to women victims of domestic violence (ELLA, 2016). I conducted an interview with members of the non-profit organization ELA as well as participants of the project Cerrando Brechas, a feminist organization established in 2003, by an interdisciplinary team composed by lawyers, anthropologists, and sociologist. The sociologist and the Deputy Executive Director of the organization ELA Lucía Martelotte states: *"this is an organization that springs in a country with a solid women's movement but that lacks a legal approach to the gender discourse. As a matter of fact, ELA as an organization works to provide legal perspective to the interrelation between gender perspective and human rights in Argentina"* (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018).[8]

The organization ELA together with other women's movements in Argentina, embrace a feminism that is not vindictive (punitive) since not always a severe criminal law is the answer to complicated issues such as violence against women. Furthermore, she believes in protection systems that focus on prevention and thus avoid the violence against women and femicides (L. Martelotte, personal communication, Janurary 22, 2018).

"It is not hard-handed provision that will decrease the number of femicides, but the consistent work of prevention, through systems that are comprehensive as well as coordinated and well-articulated" (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018).

However, the lack of shelters and conclusive prevention mechanisms remain an unresolved question mark, which will be discussed and analysed in the following sections. If on the one hand, Argentina scores high results among the countries that

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[8] ELA works with legal and political research. The organization manages to build a bridge between women's activism and decision makers.

work for eradicating gender-based violence; on the other hand, the lack of a uniform gender policy makes the fight against gender violence difficult.

Only recently, CSOs and women's movements have influenced a change within policy decision-making, where women occupy an essential place. The most important mechanisms of protection to mention here are: the Ley 26.485 and the Plan Nacional de Acción (2016).

7.2.1 Ley N° 26.485

Women's movement Ni Una Menos in 2015 pressured the state to take action against an increasing number of killings of women in Argentina. The law 26.485 was passed only in 2009 with the purpose to protect and prevent violence against women within interpersonal relationships. However, so far the law has failed to tackle the issue of gender-based violence, explicable by the lack of organization through the process and implementation. As discussed in previous sections, and by the interviews conducted for this master thesis, Argentina shows a predisposition to policy-making without any complication; nevertheless, the country has difficulties to implement the legislations, which raises the question whether gender politics actually exists. The law 26.485 was created as a gender policy to tackle VAW by the government of Argentina, through the work of the CNM and the consultation of civil society. This policy is stipulated following the lines of CEDAW (1979) and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of violence against women – "Convention of Belem do Para" (1994), which oblige the Argentine government to end violence against women through norms and policy making.

The law presents in article 2., various objectives with the intention to eliminate any form of discrimination between women and men in all fields; to promote women's right to live a violent-free life. Moreover, the law has the purpose to develop public policies to tackle gender-based violence together with the right to access justice for women victims of violence; and for them to get the comprehensive assistance (Law 26.485, 2010). Among the articles displayed within the law 26.485, articles 4., 5., and 6., particularly interesting to understand the conceptual framework of the law. Article 4., defines the concept of violence as the following:

Table 2 (Ley 26.485)

Article 4.
"Violence against women is understood as any conduct, action or omission, which directly or indirectly, both in the public and private spheres, based on an unequal power relationship, affects their life, liberty, dignity, physical integrity, psychological, sexual, economic or patrimonial, as well as their personal security. Those perpetrated by the State or by its agents are included." (Ley 26.485:10)

Meanwhile, the articles 5 and 6, make a distinction between the forms and modalities of violence against women:

Table 3 (Ley 26.485)

Article 5. Types of violence	Article 6. Modes of violence
• Physical: violence that affects the body	• Domestic violence: all types of violence perpetrated by a family member
• Psychological: emotional abuse in all its forms	• Institutional violence: violence perpetrated by an institutional body or entity (...)
• Sexual: sexual abuse through force, coercion and threats, etc.	• Reproductive and obstetric violence: deprivation to the right of abortion and medical abuse
• Economic and Patrimonial: limitation and deprivation of economic resources, etc.	• Labour violence: discrimination of women in public and private work environments (…)
• Symbolic: stereotypes, messages and values that produce gender inequality	• Media violence: the flow and the release of stereotyped images and messages, direct or indirect, which humiliate or label women

Moreover, Article 8 entitles the Women's National Council (CNM) to designate effective public policies to comply this law. In the meantime, article 9., recognizes the

task of the CNM to guarantee the effective implementation of law 26.485, throughout: elaborating and monitoring a National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Assistance and Eradication of Violence against Women; to articulate and coordinate the actions at the national, provincial and municipal level, and in all fields; to promote and create awareness above the issue of gender violence, and the support services available for the victims, as well as their rights; and to create a free telephone helpline (línea 144) with the purpose to give information and counselling[9]; finally, to create an Advisory Council with the participation of members and specialists of civil society's organizations, to advice during the process[10] (Ley 26.485, 2009).

7.2.2 Plan Nacional de Acción (2017-2019)

The previous section introduced the law 26.485, destined to fight violence against women in Argentina. In the policy-framework, it is indispensible to discuss the National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Assistance and the Eradication of Violence against Women (2017-2019), introduced by the CNM to comply with the law 26.485. The plan was established in 2016 by the "newly" elected government of President Mauricio Macri to fulfil with both national and international requirements on issues of gender-based violence. The need for a National Plan of Action came as result of the increasing amount of femicides committed in 2016, a dramatic reality in the Argentine society. Furthermore, the data shows that 61% of femicides were perpetrated by an acquaintance, affirming a grave issue of domestic violence in the country.

Modality - Nevertheless, in the National Plan of Action (2017-2019) data show trends concerning violence modality. As figure three shows, the most recurrent modality of violence in Argentina is domestic violence that reaches 98.4% of the cases. Meanwhile, other modalities of violence such as: institutional, labour, reproductive and obstetric are perceived to a lesser degree. However, it is necessary to note that the information derives from calls received by the helpline 144, which is based on the experience of women that seek help from support services. Hence, there is probably

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[9] The telephone line 0800-66 Mujer is for women victims of violence living in CABA (Buenos Aires)

[10] Article 9. offers a variety of key points, which will not be discussed in this section

high percentage of cases not reported and hence not available in the information displayed by the National Plan of Action.
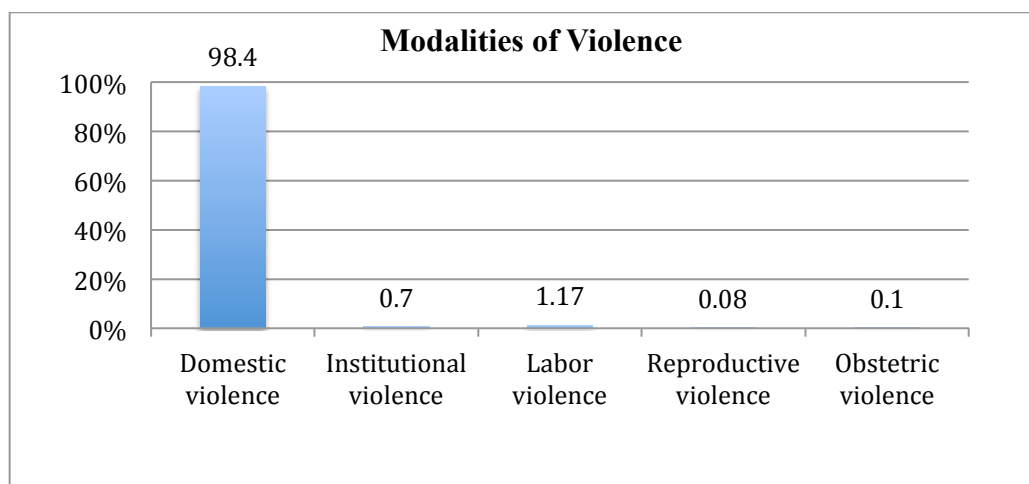
Modalities of Violence

Modality	Percentage
Domestic violence	98.4
Institutional violence	0.7
Labor violence	1.17
Reproductive violence	0.08
Obstetric violence	0.1

Figure 3. *(National Plan of Action 2016)*

Types - Moreover, figure four below, shows data regarding types of violence in Argentina, where in percentage psychological (100%) and symbolic violence (100%) as well as physical violence (91.8%) seem to be prevailing over economic (23.2%) and sexual violence (6.4%) (Plan Nacional de Acción, 2016).

Types of Violence

Type	Percentage
Psychological violence	100%
Symbolic violence	100%
Physical violence	~92%
Economic violence	~23%
Sexual violence	~6%

Figure 4. *(National Plan of Action, 2016)*
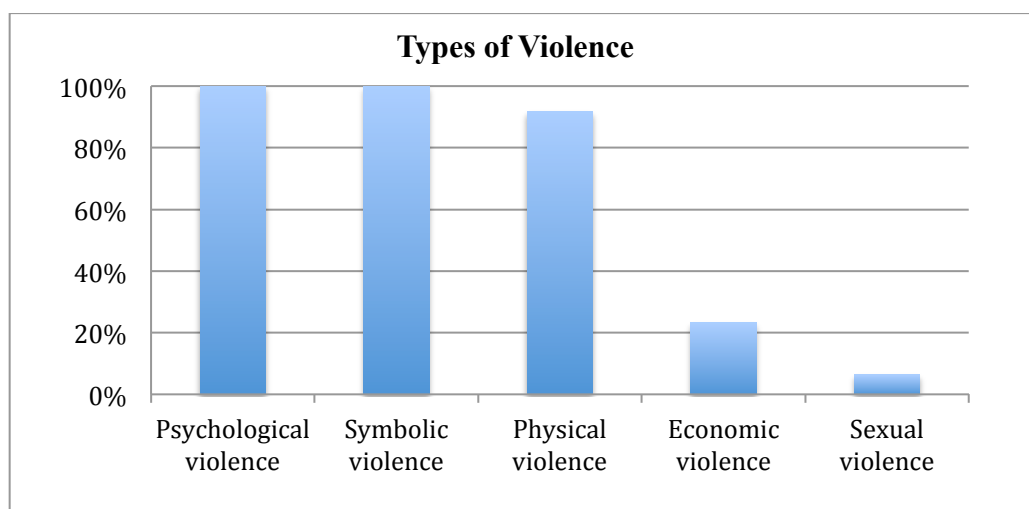
In the document of the National Plan of Action, the 62% of women suffering gender-based violence co-live with the aggressor, which represent a high risk factor for both women and children (direct or indirectly).

If on the one hand, the study of violence against women in Argentina focus on type and modality of violence adopted against women. On the other hand, a crucial point

worthy mentioning is the frequency of violence experienced by women. According to the biannual report (2013-2015) submitted by the National Plan of Action, data reveals that 92% of women are victims of violence more than once in their life. Therefore, a great number of women experience a continuous flow of violence. There are tendencies which according the PNA are concerning the safety and prevention of women, as consequence of factors as in, the majority of women experience violence more than once, for at least a year or even more (one to five years); violence is usually experienced within the domestic space, with the presence of children. All these elements enable somehow the naturalization of violence against women (Plan Nacional de Acción, 2016).
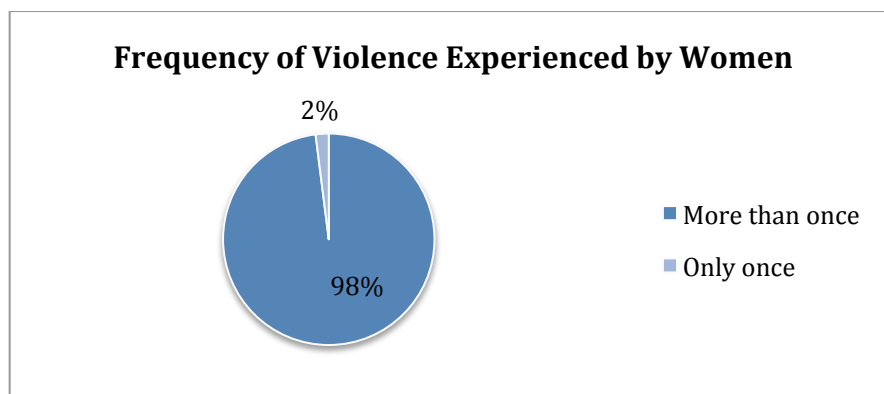

Figure 5. – *(Línea 144 – PNA, 2016)*

The fundamental issues discussed in the PNA are: violence against women, which is defined as the most frequent type of human right's violation in the world; and the issue of public health which is linked directly to the issue of violence against women that depends on the public policy agenda, sustained by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2016).

The plan counts with 69 measures and 137 actions with the aim to address, five to six forms of violence expected by the current normative framework throughout actions as: monitoring, training, evaluation, integral attention, prevention and institutional strengthening (PNA, 2016). According to CNM's President María Fernanda Tuñez, the National Plan of Action was supposed to be a commitment by the government of Argentina to all women already in 2011 (CNM, 2016). However, the plan was created after the tumult of women's movements together with the commitment of civil society, reinstating the law 26.485, first drafted in 2009. Therefore, the National Plan

of Action differs from previous projects, for being the first strategic plan to be established in Argentina to protect women victims of violence.

Nonetheless, the plan is outlined as a federal, transversal and interdisciplinary act that covers, the country in its totality (Instituto Nacional de Mujeres).

The plan identifies among the issues regarding VAW the existence of cultural patterns, described as patriarchal systems that exist in all fields of society, which normalize violence against women. Finally, the most vulnerable groups of women are migrant women due to an increased migrant population in Argentina, especially in the Autonomous city of Buenos Aires (CABA) and the metropolitan areas. This group of women together with women with disabilities and the LGBT community have most difficulties accessing justice. As Lucia Martelotte puts it: *"When different identities overlap the difficulty to access justice increase."* (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018).

7.3 Education as a tool of prevention

Argentina is one of the countries that implements the most education initiatives as well as policies, targeting the prevention of gender-based violence (ELLA, 2016). According to the findings, in particular in qualitative interviews, sexual education represents a powerful tool within the intersectionality between gender violence and other discriminations embedded in society. Therefore, education institutions can play an essential role in the eradication of gender-based violence. The UN agency UNFPA works with governments and non-profit organizations to the implementation of comprehensive sexual education, in school as well as in community-base training and outreach (UNFPA, 2018). The need of policies and programmes in regard to sexual education should meet international agreed standards as well. The Argentinian Congresswoman Cornelia Schmidt-Liermann argues how sexual education as well as social education is essential to the development of social and cultural processes. Moreover, she offers an example of how the German foundation Deutsche Stiftung Welbevölkereng (DSW) demonstrated how important sexual education is in two projects carried out in Kenya and Uganda; where they provide sexual education to children aged 10 to 14 years, including all social actors: teachers, relatives, health agents and politicians of the jurisdiction, including religious entities.

"They were able to confirm that in the schools involved in the projects a considerable reduction of unwanted pregnancies was detected, the rate of abortions and also the dropout rate decreased. Let's recall that unfortunately, teenage pregnancy leads teen mothers to the abandonment of school" (C. Schmidt-Liermann, personal communication, March 12, 2018).

In Argentina the law 26.150 – Programa Nacional de Educación Sexual (ESI), was passed in 2010, as a comprehensive law on sexual education. M. Eugenia Martino, student in Science Education underlines the important role of education towards an understanding of gender in Argentina – *" I think we need a gender perspective not only for children in elementary and secondary education (schools) but for the teaching staff as well".* (M. E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018) Moreover, she argues for the existence of the law on sexual education, but the lack of the implementation of this one as well. The lack of implementation of the law ESI has its roots in the solid relationship between two institutions: the Catholic Church and the state. In many schools the integration of sexual education is still questioned, mainly contested by private and catholic schools.

"The law on sexual education though, has a fairly strong gender perspective, regarding the concept of romantic love that does not entail violence. The law contains not only the issues regarding reproductive health and women's rights, but also an understanding of love as romantic" (M. E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018)

According to the Swedish International and Development Agency (Sida), the impact of education can be visible by the number of years a person spends in school, which is positive in regard to a decrease in future victimization and perpetration of physical and sexual violence (Sida, 2015). Further, education facilitates women's employment opportunities and socio-economic status that enable to reduce unequal power relationships between men and women. Interventions and projects to prevent gender-based violence through education are hence fundamental.

These interventions can be the training for teachers to use gender-perspective in the classroom, which Eugenia Martino also sustained in the interview; integrate sexual education in school curricula for primary and secondary schools, which is also a claim made by the feminist movement #NiUnaMenos among the top five principles of their propaganda. Finally – "to promote the development and implementation of school policies and action-plans on how to address all type of violence, including GBV, to specifically foster a safe and discrimination free school." (Sida, 2015, p.3)

7.3.1 Cultural norms: stereotyping gender

In previous section I displayed findings regarding the importance of education, in particular of sexual education in Argentina. The UN states how gender stereotypes as well as cultural norms are hindering the development of a gendered understanding in Argentina (UN, 2016). According to Eugenia, schools in Argentina experience constant bulling and prejudice regarding gender, which is why education is an important tool to form the children, and hence to form the future society (E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018). Sutton (2010) also discusses the experience of women affected by gender stereotypes such as the constant pressure concerning their role as mothers and women, as well as the image of external beauty they have to live up to. Another interesting form of stereotyping, which is rather different from the others, is the myth concerning the identity of women who suffer from gender-based violence. Lucia Martelotte (ELA) points out how women that seek help in public services are women with fewer resources. This generalization often leads to a distorted reality regarding women victims of violence in Argentina (according to stereotypes). There is a belief that only a certain type of women are victims of gender violence, such as unemployed women or women in reproductive areas. However, she specifies that these women are not the only victims of gender violence, but those that have been registered by using public services of support. She argues the way this idea has been viciously reproduced by creating a "myth": *"that only poor women suffer from violence, as if it was a problem due to poverty"* (L.Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018). Meanwhile, gender-based violence is not a problem caused by poverty, rather by structural and cultural causes entailed in the notion of *machismo* that crosses all social classes and ethnicities.

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This is the reason for why raising awareness and knowledge about the significance of gender violence is still an important work to be done (L.Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018).

7.4 Civil society in pursuit of the National Plan of Action

Women's movement together with organizations from civil society took part in the project, with the ambition to impose a plan of change. The bodies mainly responsible for the implementation of the National Plan of Action are the National Council of Women (CNM), along with the commitment of different organizations, as well as various institutional bodies as the Ministerio de Desarrollo Social (= Ministry of Social Development), which are responsible for the success of the PNA. Various non-governmental organizations: Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Género (ELA), Feministas en Acción Argentina, Amnesty International Argentina, Comisión Argentina para Refugiados y Migrantes (CAREF), Fundación Mujeres en Igualdad (MEI), Observatory of Gender and Justice of CABA, together with others are members of the co-operative project *Cerrando Brechas*, a project introduced to monitor and eradicate violence against women.[11] The organizations gathered for a meeting last November 2017 to discuss the outcomes such as: advances and challenges met by the implementation of the National Plan of Action (2017-2019).

In the document released by *Cerrando Brechas,* the content shows certain outlines, which according to civil society members (activists, NGOs and educational institutions) needs to be addressed more in depth in the future. As discussed in the report, the actions set by the Plan are not pursued within the timeframe equivalent to the PNA, which gives space to uncertainties (…); as well as some resolutions are not uniform to the initial Plan of Action. Moreover, there is lack of information regarding the commitment and "concluded" actions by part of ministries and other sectors of the state (Cerrando Brechas, 2017).

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[11] Cerrando Brechas (=Closing Gaps project) has the financial support of the European Union (EU)

Among the resolutions assumed by the PNA, first there is the elaboration of an app for cell phones with the aim to access more easily the helpline 144; second, the promotion of free legal counselling within the field of gender-based violence, which agrees to the law 27.210.[12] The next two sections will carefully explain the outcomes given by the PNA according to civil society.

7.4.1 Prevention mechanism: progress

The National Plan of Action shows both advances and challenges, which are important to consider in relation to the research questions about the existence of support and prevention mechanisms towards a gender policy. The information is based on the sources and work of the organizations being part of the project "Cerrando Brechas". Among the progress, verified in the monitoring of completed actions, there has been a positive improvement by the local Executive Power to facilitate access to justice for women living in violent circumstances. In the province of San Juan, the Women's Directorate gives an example of how it provides interdisciplinary teams to support women in need of protection through filing lawsuits, protection measures, paying provisional food and excluding the home (Cerrando Brechas, 2017). Moreover, a second improvement was met by the province of Jujuy, for the formation of specialized courts for gender-based violence.

Finally, the existence of Centros Integrales de la Mujer[13] (CIM) in the city of Buenos Aires was highlighted for providing free legal protection in the framework of comprehensive care; however, it is necessary to underline the lack of implementation of CIMs in all the communes of CABA (Cerrando Brechas, 2017). These centres have the function to support women victims of violence with psychological assistance for both, individual or groups of individuals. Moreover, among the services of protection and support offered by governmental institutions in the city of Buenos Aires, there are shelters such as: Hogar Eva Duarte, Casa del Medio Camino Juana Manso y Margarita Barrientas, Refugio Tita Marella and Refugio Mariquita Sanchéz as accommodation, recovery and care facilities for victims of domestic and/or sexual violence (buenosaires.gob,ar).

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[12] Established in January 2017
[13] Integral Centers for Women

7.4.2 Prevention mechanism: challenges

Various female members of civil society consider the PNA a well-designed initiative, with the aim to serve as legal support and prevention mechanism for all women in Argentina. The problem lies in the implementation of this program; hence, the effectiveness of the Plan and its outcomes. Cerrando Brechas shows the challenges met by fulfilling the PNA, among which: the lack of articulation between the different branches of the Executive Power and the Judicial Power. More specifically, the judicial power depends on various spaces of attention of the Executive Power (national, provincial and municipal). According to the organizations, there are deficiencies with the creation and application of a gender perspective by decision-makers and members of the Judicial Power. Another challenge that needs to be tackled is the necessity to rely on, and most importantly to access support services available for all women, as the one offered by the helpline 144, accessible on a national level. However, it is not accessible to people with disabilities, in case of deaf women (Cerrando Brechas, 2017). Furthermore, it is unknown if the application designated for cell-phones contemplate with the use of screen, reading applications, motor difficulties that may complicate the interaction and the use of sign language.

Further, the obligation to advance with the implementation of free legal services determined by Law 27.210 has not been fulfilled by the National Ministry of Justice. Although there is a pilot test in the city La Plata (at the end of 2017) according to the NGOs free legal services in the rest of the country remain scarce and "disjointed". The information about the services available for women is also insufficient and unclear, not only for women whom suffer violence but also for members of civil society (Cerrando Brechas, 2017). Moreover, there is neither information regarding the implementation of protection measurements, such as the use of electronic anklets to control the aggressor, nor relevant information about the cases where the anklets were applied and whether they were effective to prevent new episodes of violence. Finally, the NGOs demand for more attention to the purpose of the services, as well as the resources supplied by the state and by the areas of the Judiciary Power. In many cases, the policies concerning gender violence ends up to be restricted to domestic violence – two concepts that are not synonymous; instead of including all kinds of violence in the framework of gender policy-making.

7.4.3 Lack of implementation and accountability

The findings reveal how the implementation of policy and national programs constitutes a difficult challenge in establishing a gender policy in Argentina, which would lead to an effective change to women's human rights. As mentioned in previous sections, the process of policy-making is an important step towards a tangible change; however, women in Argentina have little faith in the government, due to its lack of accountability. A number of laws designed before 2016, lacked purposive planning, before the National Plan of Action (2017-2019) was established to fight gender-based violence; however, the monitoring of the National Plan of Action results in a lack of implementation, which is why women's social movements together with international organizations and 80 organizations in Argentina (among which ELA) demand for the implementation of the Ley 26.485 along with the National Plan of Action since July 2016 (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018). Civil society's request to have a participative role within the project was not taken into consideration and practice by the government; this has been undoubtedly an important deficit of the National Plan of Action as prevention mechanism affecting the co-operation between NGOs, civil society in general and the government.

Nonetheless, Lucía Martelotte points out how the Plan of Action shows interesting outlines: *"The Plan is interesting, it has a fairly comprehensive perspective and it includes many of the claims that were made at this point, but there is not a participatory process, in which civil society is called to be part of the National Plan of Action, which was one of the most important requirements we set"* (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018).

The UN argues also for the need of a close cooperation between the government of Argentina and civil society, which are considered to be fundamental entities to the mechanisms of support and prevention (UN, 2016). The National Plan of Action addresses all issues related to gender violence: domestic violence, access to abortion, comprehensive sexual education and care policies, which recently are at the centre of attention in Argentina. Nonetheless, another limitation surfacing from the findings in relation to the Plan of Action as prevention mechanism is the ambiguity concerning the budget.

According to Lucia Martelotte, it is a common tendency in Argentina as well as in other Latin American countries to have a solid designation of policies and regulatory frameworks without guaranteeing the financial resources to put them into practice (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018). Zoe Verón, a lawyer working within justice and public policies for the NGO ELA, explains that there is a solid framework for policy-making, but the lack of implementation of the laws has been verified through the constant monitoring of the Plan, carried out by INAM and by civil society. Therefore, these actions lack clarity and homogeneity by the state (Z. Verón, personal communication, January 22, 2018).

7.4.4 State's ideological homogeneity

The state is an important actor towards the elimination of gender-based violence, since it is the main decision-maker. On the one side, Argentina shows a strong civil society, which is ahead of the problem; on the other side, the findings indicate the lack of ideological homogeneity by the state. One element of discussion has been the clear lack of implementation of policies and laws concerning gender. Nonetheless, Argentina is an example for the creation of policies, by showing a solid policy framework. The policies mentioned above are comprehensive and well designed. The informants of the interviews argue for the non-clarity or homogeneity of the government, by proclaiming there is "mixed-messages" send to the public. If on the one hand, the government promulgated the policy concerning gender violence through the National Plan of Action; on the other hand, the government established the Ley de Libertad Religiosa, a religious legislation, which would underscore the state's contradictory ideology towards gender and tradition; which remark as well the strong bond between state and religion. Eugenia Martino argues that the family and religion are institutions strongly rooted in Argentina, which limits the political impact on gender policy-making. *When my informants were asked if according to them there is a "politica de género", which I translated as gender policy in Argentina*, they answered consistently that there is not a gender policy in the country, or at least gender is not a priority on the political agenda. Lucia Martelotte and Zoe Verón, both work within a civil society environment, in cooperation with other organizations with the purpose to create a comprehensive gender policy, consistent in a long-term framework.

7.5 Feminism Arising

On the international women's day March 8th 2018, massive movements filled the streets of more than fifty cities in the world. This 2018 women's march reached 200 000 women in Buenos Aires, representing the women's movement #NiUnaMenos. The multitudes of slogans, such as *"The only revolution is the feminist revolution"* and *"We are the voice of those who cannot speak"*, are only a few of the slogans on demonstration posters, displayed in Plaza de Mayo and Plaza de los Dos Congresos. The movement of Ni Una Menos is characterized by a proper scenography, to highlight the issues concerning violence against women through the direct use of body and mind: through painted bodies, green and purple scarves, posters and coloured wigs (Iglesias M., 2018).

The women were parading from Plaza to Plaza through the most important streets between the two governmental buildings, where decision- and policy-making are realized. The demand towards the creation of public policies to tackle and reduce gender-based violence has been at basis of the movement together with the recently discussed Abortion Law. After years of women's repeatedly demonstrations for legalizing abortion they have recently achieved an open and public debate. Already back in 2013, during my studies at the University of Buenos Aires women protested by laying semi-naked on the floor covered by posters with slogans demanding the legalization of abortion.

Lucia Martelotte refers to the role of women in activism as an important tool to obtain changes in Argentina. The recent additions to the outlines of the National Plan of Action, through monitoring and following-up prove the impact of women's activism. Until 2014 a National Registry of Femicides did not exist, something that was long requested by feminist activism. She also states how these movements put a pressure on the government to generate concrete results. Moreover an important element emerging through today's Ni Una Menos movement is the presence of young women, representing the rise of young feminism. The Argentinian newspaper Clarín underlined the presence of many adolescents in the last #8M movement. Young people were defined as *"the engine that drove the march"* (Roffo J., 2018).

In the interview with Lucia Martelotte, she strongly expressed how the emerging of young feminism is marking the change in Argentina as well as worldwide (L. Martelotte, personal communication, January 22, 2018). The young feminists participating in the movement are between 15 and 19 years old. They protest against their daily experience of sexual harassment as well as other forms of violence against women already naturalized in society. Eugenia Martino states as a part of a young female generation, how the movement has been eye opening in regard to her experiences of street harassment (M.E. Martino, personal communications, February 28, 2018). To resume, the movement #8M (2018) as well as the one in 2015 in Argentina was identified by two important factors: one, the vast number of people participating; second, the "intense" form of demonstration, as I defined as a "scenery" that creates an almost automatically pressuring effect on the government.

7.5.1 Feminist movement challenging policy-making

The previous section displayed the revolutionary character of the feminist movement of #NiUnaMenos in Argentina. Among the areas of interests investigated to clarify the research questions there has been the way feminist movements *have* or perhaps *can* influence decision-making and policy-making. The movement in Argentina results as clearly an outstanding phenomenon, which has raised awareness towards domestic violence and femicide as the most frequent cases of violence, through knowledge as empowerment. However, the movement has taken the responsibility to denounce different kinds of violence, in addition to interpersonal violence, such as: abortion which has been recently discussed, women's wages, inequality in its different forms, health and reproductive rights, etc. Eugenia Martino participated in the movement of Ni Una Menos, and she describes the movement as unified in its thoughts and actions as a reaction to a vast number of deaths and abductions of women. She states:

"It came to the point that being a women started to be dangerous (...) in all this situation the state is absent regarding all its policies towards gender. There is a social problem that is massive; moreover, it is undeniable" (M.E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018)

Regarding the issues tackled by the movement, Eugenia mentions the case of the industry PepsiCo in Argentina that closed its plant in Florida, in the province of Buenos Aires in 2017, which led to layoffs of workers and consequently major movements (La Nación, 2017). Among the workers, there were a vast number of women, which involved the movement that highlighted different forms of violence such as low wages for women and labour contingents. Another case that called attention with the help of the movement was the imprisonment of activist Milagro Sala[14] in 2016, where the movement has been fighting against her incarceration ever since (M. E Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018). According to the findings about women's movements in Argentina, the interest to fight for grave social issues that goes beyond a categorization, is essential to Argentina's activism, which includes all types of violence experienced by women, throughout class, ethnicity, and gender. The civil society organization La Casa del Encuentro states: "feminism is an indispensable tool for social transformation because it questions the system, the norms, the oppression and the established order (...) it challenges patriarchal power, and works for the creation of a society based on different ethical, political and cultural values to transform the reality of violence, oppression, marginalization and hunger." (La Casa del Encuentro).

Even though the movement show strong presence and unity in denouncing issues of violations against women, the number of femicides has not shown any sign of decrease. In terms of policy-making, the movement has pressured the state through an agenda of demands of their own, which has been met during the process of the creation of the National Plan of Action. When Congresswoman C. Schmidt-Liermann was asked if according to her there is an effective gender policy in Argentina, she responded that it has become more visible through the collective of Ni Una Menos and the work of other NGOs; which is why the cooperation between non-governmental and governmental entities is essential (C. Schmidt-Liermann, personal communication, March 12, 2018).

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[14] Milagro Sala is the President of Tupac Amaru Neighborhood Association in the region of Jujui in Northern Argentina and a leading figure of the Piquetero Movement in Argentina. She was incarcelated by the government of Argentina in 2016.

7.5.2 Beyond public and private

The feminist movement *#NiUnaMenos* managed to position the issue of gender-based violence on the public political agenda by raising awareness and by explaining in-depth what feminism entails. Changes in awareness reached also to people that usually had never spoken about violence against women openly. Therefore, the movement has been bridge building for issues from the private to the public. In the Argentinian society, it is difficult to find the correlation between femicide as an extreme form of violence and other forms of violence such as street harassment and sexist advertising. The movement is present where conservative notions and various forms of violence are naturalized and applied. Eugenia Martino argues for the existence of two different generations in regard to the feminist rise. On the one hand, there is the younger generation that she calls – "los hijos de la democracia"[15], which challenges these issues with an open mind; on the other hand, there is the older generation that lived through the dictatorship and severe economic crisis, which limit their understanding of gender violence as a state's responsibility (M.E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018).

The movement has broken the silence regarding the existence of public and private spheres in Argentina's social and political environments. As a matter of fact, Lucia Martelotte and Zoe Verón as well as Eugenia Martino argue the way interpersonal violence is perceived in Argentina as a private matter that "belongs" to the private sphere for which the state is not merely responsible. The acknowledgment concerning public and private spheres opens the door to the abortion debate, which has been on the activist agenda for a long time. However, this issue has taken a turn only recently thanks to the influential Ni Una Menos movement. In Argentina, since 2005 the National Campaign for the Right to Free and Secure Legal Abortion, a federal alliance formed by women's movements, tried to take the debate into Congress (Iglesias, 2018). Since then, the Project of Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy (IVE) was presented six times in the Chamber of Deputies. Despite, the project received the signature of 60 legislators of different political parties it never arrived at the venue, caused by pressure from both the Church and the previous government (Iglesias, 2018).

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[15] The children of democracy

In this context there has been an estimated number of 3.000 unsafe abortions since 1983, which is why sexual education can be a powerful tool of prevention as I mentioned previously.

Eugenia Martino states: *"Even the minimal probability to legalize abortion is something for me as an Argentinian woman is a dream come true. This is something I think since I was young and later I gained knowledge about the topic)."* (M.E. Martino, personal communication, February 28, 2018).

The international human rights organization Amnesty International (AI) indicates how decisions concerning reproductive and sexual life are basic human rights. Through campaigns and initiatives, Amnesty International suggests the role of activism as a tool to advocate for human rights, as in the case of the initiative – *It's my Body*, a programme that empower young people aged 13 to 19 in Latin America to promote sexual and reproductive rights (Amnesty International, 2016).

7.6 Limitations and future research

This study presents limitations regarding the fourth research question: *"How can systems of prevention reach out to women in Buenos Aires that do not owe instruments of information: computer, television, or others."* The question specifically wondered how other sources of information, not including technology, could ensure protection and support mechanisms for women with fewer resources. On the one hand, the findings show how both members of civil society as well as women do not have full knowledge or control in regard to governmental initiatives and shelters. Moreover, members of civil society observe how various women have neither knowledge about the existing support mechanisms to seek help, nor what their rights as women and citizens consist of. On the other hand, the findings in relation to the other research questions display the creation of technological devices for women with disabilities or women that need counselling. Perhaps, the use of quantitative data would have given me the possibility to gain more information concerning this issue and in order to reach more areas of Buenos Aires, which is a vastly populated capital city. However, I found limited knowledge in regard to the existence (or not) of support mechanisms for women with fewer capabilities.

This study focuses in particular on the role of women and their perceptions towards the implementation of a gender policy in the eradication of all forms of discrimination towards women. Male perspective could be an interesting element of research in relation to the "new" feminist revolution brought by the movement of Ni Una Menos in Argentina. On the day of the March #8M questions were raised whether men should participate or not in the feminist movement. Research regarding men's perspective on feminist upheavals against patriarchal structures could add a contribution to gender analysis. Finally, further research concerning the implementation of the abortion law in Argentina could be necessary; in particular after the heated discussion regarding abortion, which has been recently in the spotlight. The debate about abortion policy-making could raise important dilemmas in between those who agrees or disagrees about the subject also in correlation to politics and religion.

8.0 Conclusion

The purpose with this study was to grasp how the role of women in different mechanisms of support and prevention as well as in civil society and activism can influence decision-making and policy-making in the eradication of violence against women. The study was conducted based on the findings from the literature review, principally from second sources, articles and books and from primary sources obtained by the qualitative interviews. The interviews were conducted with four women living in Buenos Aires aged mid-20s to 60, working directly (and indirectly) with gender issues in Argentina. The participants of the interviews work in the following areas: governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. In the light of the findings the interviews confirmed the theoretical and conceptual investigation regarding the presence of patriarchal structures and power relations embedded in the Argentinian society, caused mainly by structural and cultural violence.

The first research questions - *How can the presence of women in support and prevention mechanisms (both informal and formal) help to tackle and reduce gender-based violence?* Can be answered by pointing out that prevention mechanisms are a consequence of strong female activism, which demands a gender policy.

The presence of women as active stakeholders in the political field results to be accurate in the case of Argentina based on the conceptual framework; civil society and activism are key actors in the Argentinian society, where various political, social and economic setbacks required the creation of alternative instruments of support such as local community organizations that serve as informal justice mechanisms. Despite, informal justice mechanisms are not considered safe for women and girls' victims of violence; Argentina did not show the existence of many cases of informal mechanisms.

Two elements were particularly evidenced from the interviews and by the literature review such as machismo and religion. The cultural norm of "machismo" enable the stereotyping of gender, which represents a main obstacle to the understanding of gender violence, and hence the effective implementation of the systems of prevention. Women suffer from stereotypes, based on various factors, such as ethnicity, sexual orientation and for the simple notion of "being a woman". The findings have given content regarding emerging formal prevention mechanisms, such as the Ley 26.485 and especially the Plan Nacional de Acción (2017-2019), with the aim to tackle and eradicate gender-based violence. The study shows how formal mechanisms of support and prevention are pursued in Argentina through the creation of laws, policies, and regulations made by the government. The policy-making is comprehensive and the policies are well designed. However, the lack of implementation of the laws nullifies the efforts and efficiency of a gender policy. Furthermore, few adequate shelters and housing reduce the chances for abused women to leave situations of violence.

In the second research question - *What can women's positions within NGOs bring to the table together with the state in the protection of women, victims of gender-based violence (domestic violence) in the city and province of Buenos Aires?* The findings reveal the need of close co-operation between NGOs, which covers an important role together with the state to comply with international agreements towards the effectiveness and realization of prevention mechanisms. The NGO ELA through the monitoring of the implementation of the National Plan of Action shows how civil society organizations are fundamental to raise awareness and impulse initiatives in relation to gender issues.

Moreover, it indicates that Argentina has not implemented a participative co-operation between civil society and the government concerning gender issues through the Plan Nacional de Acción (2017-2019). NGOs are willing to work with the government, by demanding the fulfilment of the Plan, through the integration of civil society in the project and through the flow of information by the state.

In the light of the findings the research questions are interlinked. The third research question: *What impacts can feminist social movements have on decision-making and policy-making in Argentina?* Show an exemplary case of how women have been influential through the feminist movement #NiUnaMenos (2015), which has been capable of pressuring the state to both decision and policy-making. Argentina has experienced a rising feminist movement, which not only raised awareness by putting on the public political agenda issues of both public and private concern, such as domestic violence, femicide, sexual reproduction and most recently abortion. But also by affecting decision-making through the integration of demanded rights in the Plan Nacional de Acción. The last research question led unfortunately to inconclusive results, regarding the *systems of prevention that can reach out to women in Buenos Aires that do not owe instruments of information: computer, television, or others.* This question would imply the introduction of people with fewer resources. However, it was difficult to find through investigation the existence of a problematic concerning this issue, which seems to indicate that among people the lack of a phone is not so common. But the research gave few results regarding this issue, so it would be only speculation. However, the findings points to the existence of poverty as a main cause of structural violence, which is undoubtedly present in Argentina. Moreover, information regarding the existence of mechanisms of support and prevention is not entirely provided by the state according to the findings.

Throughout the study the aim was also to investigate how femicide can be caused by domestic violence, based on the notion that femicide victims' ususally are killed by the hand of an intimate partner. The findings demonstrate how the majority of victims of gender violence know and co-live with their perpetrators. Nevertheless, gender analysis in the case of Argentina shows how it is impossible to centralize just one form of violence. The reason lies in the existence of multitudes of forms of violence mainly structural that are articulated in everyday life of women.

Hence, I found impossible to focus on domestic violence alone since there are heated debates regarding other fundamental rights concerning gender such as the deprivation of food, continuous economic instability, lack of trust in state's institutions and control over reproductive health. In conclusion, Argentina shows positive aspects in regard to the raising of awareness and the active role of women in politics, and they are on the right path to change the normative framework.

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