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From the Norm to the Form

*An Integrative Ecological Approach for Analyzing Ni Una Menos Activists'
Gender-Based Violence Perceptions in Argentina*

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Abstract

The phenomenon of gender-based violence (GBV) and the magnitude it takes in Argentina is raising great concerns within the country, intergovernmental organisations and women's movements. Since 2015 a women's movement named *Ni Una Menos* was established to create visibility and fight for the eradication of gender-based violence in the country. Building upon the Integrative Ecological Framework, using Feminist and Cultural Approaches this paper seeks to analyse activists' perceptions of GBV phenomenon and the associated factors reproducing GBV in the Argentinian context. Supported by a literature review and theoretical framework, field research was conducted in Argentina. Field data was collected by carrying out eight semi-structured interviews with *Ni Una Menos* activists, followed by a presentation of the findings and analysis through an adopted analytical model. The main findings of this study demonstrate a complex and multidimensional disposition of gender-based violence understood by the activists. Activists hold a contemporary view of the phenomenon by placing emphasis on the culturally accepted social and gender norms and persevering daily behaviours, which are claimed to be a form of violence in itself. Additionally, an ongoing legitimisation of GBV by public structures, activists situate as a foundation and an equal participant of GBV and its reproduction.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, phenomenon, women's movement, *Ni Una Menos*, ecological framework, cultural approach, feminist approach, constructivist approach, Argentina.

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Acronyms

AMMAR – La Asociación de Mujeres Meretrices de Argentina

COHA – Council of Hemispheric Affairs

GBV – gender-based violence

GBVIMS - Gender-Based Violence Information Management System

IWCH - International Women and Children’s Health Conference

VAW – violence against women

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNWOMEN - The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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1 INTRODUCTION

“*Ni Una Menos* is a need, a demand, a call to combine efforts against violence and against the lack of autonomy for our bodies and our lives. It is a denunciation against those who with their words and their institutional roles, their silence and their presumed neutrality, are accomplices of the transvesticides and femicides¹. (*Ni Una Menos*, 2016)

This statement was published days before one of *Ni Una Menos* (translated as Not One Less²) nationwide marches in Argentina, which became a common response to rising gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide instances in the country. Such a declaration not only depicts the notion of women’s struggle to fight against GBV, but it also demonstrates the complexity that the concept holds. Witnessed slogans and references to “*violencia patriarcal*” (patriarchal violence) or “*violencia machista*” (male chauvinist violence) displayed during marches gives an impression that *Ni Una Menos* activists seek to visualise and bring to public attention different forms of GBV, which in Argentinian society has been ignored, silenced or accepted as ordinary behaviours (Vargas, 2015).

Gender-based violence is an immense issue worldwide. It emerges in different forms and types where anyone may become a victim, yet women and girls are the most frequent ones exposed to GBV instance (UNWOMEN, 2019a). There are countries where up to 70% of women experience sexual or physical violence from family members or intimate partners (ibid.). Moreover, continuous concerns are being raised by NGOs, civil societies and intergovernmental actors regarding the ongoing incidence of an extreme form of gender-based violence - a murder of a woman, which is often referred to as femicide (Amnesty International, 2018; EUROSUR, 2018). Here, Latin America is the region with the highest number of countries where such an extreme form of violence arises (UNWOMEN, 2019b). Statistics show that out of 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide, 14 are in Latin America. As such, Argentina belongs to one of the 14 countries where women are frequent victims of femicide (ibid.).

For decades Argentinian civil society and women’s movements have been demanding governance decision makers to take action in addressing gender-based violence and

¹ Femicide or feminicide is a term created by a feminist professor Diana Russell (Russell D. E. H., 2018) who defined the term as an "the intentional killing of females (women or girls) because they are females".

² All translations from Spanish to English language is translated by the author of this thesis, unless stated otherwise.

femicide. However, only in recent years, this problem has escalated within the state's policy, public and academic debates due to troubling empirical realities (HRC, 2017). Argentinian women are victims of femicide every 33 hours, and while this type of violence is an utmost cruel version of gender-based violence, it is a pinnacle in a series of different forms of violence that women are experiencing daily (La Casa del Encuentro, 2018; UNWOMEN, 2019 b). Hence, a growing public voice of women's NGOs and feminist movements in the country have been taking an active role in calling on society and political actors to take corresponding actions to eradicate all kinds of gendered abuses to which particularly women are exposed (AMMAR, 2016; La Casa del Encuentro, 2018; *Ni Una Menos*, 2019).

Women and feminist movements in Argentina are known to be some of the most vibrant and successful in their accomplishments (Abrego, 2017). Owing to feminist movements, Argentina became one of the driving states in Latin America to set a quota of female representation (Allegrone, 2001). Women's movements are also known to be at the front of the fight for justice during the hardship of the states' dictatorship when thousands of people disappeared (IWCH, 2017). Furthermore, just in 2018, with a mass street mobilisation of over one million women, a partial win, was attained in the Argentinian Senate decriminalising abortion (The Guardian, 2019).

Ni Una Menos movement is named as the most prominent women's movement in Argentina's history (Abrego, 2017). A variety of women's organisations and movements, as well as women's agency, is seen to create a strong and united representation of women in the country. With one of the key objectives to fight against gender-based violence (ibid.), the activists bring in various forms of GBV from the private to the public domain, creating new interpretations of the concept while deconstructing conventional and cultural practices of gender roles and power relations (Hall, 2015; Risley, 2006). Such is also apparent in the introductory quote, where the cues are given to contemporary understanding of gender-based violence and its divergent components, that activists claim to have been ignored or given as a common conduct. It is evident that the activists, as individuals or members of multiple organisations, that form the current outline of GBV understanding is perpetually changing. Thus it is pertinent to look at the ways GBV concept is understood amongst activists of the broadest women movement in Argentina.

With this notion, this paper intends to contribute to a comprehensive knowledge on how *Ni Una Menos* activists understand the phenomenon of gender-based violence, what personal meanings are given to different forms of GBV and what key factors are understood to be to continue reproducing this phenomenon.

1.1 Purpose and Research Question

The vast literature upholds different theoretical approaches to analyse the phenomenon of gender-based violence, what the concept entails and in what ways it transforms or reproduces social changes (Lawson, 2012; Mtetwa, 2017; Merry, 2009; Scriver et al., 2015). Other authors frame GBV through analysing local and global policies and the impact that political and public actors create to curb the issue (Berns, 2001; Calvo García, 2016; García & de Oliveira, 2011; Sutton, 2007; Vargas, 2015). However, in past decades, with the rise of women's and feminist movements worldwide, their role and strategies developed to eliminate GBV have been of particular interest (Abrego, 2017; Del Carmen Feijoo, Nari & Fierro, 1996; Hall, 2015). Authors' attention often is drawn to women's movements' goals, campaign strategies and created impact on policy or societal changes. Yet to this day, fewer academic studies analyse movements' activists' individual perceptions about a particular phenomenon. *Ni Una Menos* is relatively new yet considered to be the biggest women's movement in Argentina, where activists are named as "the agents of transformation" of women's issues (Abrego, 2017:116). This gives evidence that activists play an essential role in the Argentinian context, therefore the importance of studying activists' individual understandings is apparent. Hence, this study aims to contribute to the research field of gender-based violence, by analysing contemporary perceptions of how the movement's activists understand GBV and what elements are linked to or identified as part of the phenomenon. In this regard, the study seeks to answer the research question:

- How is gender-based violence understood by the Ni Una Menos activists in Argentina?

To answer the research question, the intention is to grasp what unorthodox and unconventional interpretations of the phenomenon are described by the activists and ways in which GBV is considered to manifest. As the approach of this study is qualitative,

the main research question is rather broad. Such an approach provides space and freedom for the activists to describe gender-based violence according to their viewpoints.

This study will contribute to the broader development discourse of gender-based violence through providing individual and contemporary comprehensions that are given by women activists, those who are at the frontline, seeking the eradication of GBV in Argentina. As George and Bennett (1975:20) elucidate, by studying a phenomenon within a particular case, which is *Ni Una Menos* activists for this study, it provides “powerful advantages” for identification of novel concepts or variables of that phenomenon amongst particular groups or individuals, which is less explored or lack in gaining adequate recognition. Moreover, studying GBV perceptions amongst *Ni Una Menos* activists, also contributes to other broad development issues such as gender equality, women’s empowerment and the interplay amongst them (Risley, 2006).

1.2 Demarcation

Due to the scope of this study, it is essential to note that while certain aspects of gender-based violence are relevant and essential, they are not analysed in further depth. For the purpose of this paper, an impact, prevention and provision notions of GBV will not be examined. Also, Argentina is a democratic state in which no war or emergencies are present, therefore GBV theoretical discourse in contexts such as humanitarian crisis, war or state internal conflicts are not components of this study. Further, it is relevant to consider that while this study introduces the background of *Ni Una Menos* as a social movement, it does not examine the trajectory of the movement’s structure, its function, strategy, nor does it analyse the impact it creates within Argentinian or global society. Instead, the analysis is situated around *Ni Una Menos* activists’ understanding of the phenomenon within the Argentinian context.

1.3 Thesis Outline

This paper consists of eight parts: the first chapter (1) introduced the main topic, its purpose and the research question. Then a stage (2) is set to present the situational background of gender-based violence in Argentina, the influence of cultural notions and the transformation of women’s movements in the country. Further, (3) a literature review about GBV as a term is provided. Later on, a discourse (4) of feminist and cultural approaches to the phenomenon followed by the introduction of the integrated ecological

model as a framework to the analytical model (5) is presented. The reader then is introduced to the operationalisation (6) of the field study followed by the analysis (7) of the findings. Ultimately, the reader is brought to the conclusions, back to the main research question and suggestions for future research (8).

2 BACKGROUND

For the reader to be informed about the *Ni Una Menos* case study, the following section will provide the respective background information. In order to understand the context of gender-based violence within Argentina, this section will present a concise overview of the GBV situation in the country as well as sociocultural attitudes that are prominent to contribute to the prevalence of the phenomenon. The section is closed with a rise of Argentinian women and *Ni Una Menos* movements, their aspirations and the role they play in respect to women rights and gender-based violence.

2.1 Gender-based Violence in Argentina

Gender-based violence in Argentina has been a decades-long issue becoming increasingly problematic and eventually bringing the attention of the state's governing bodies and international intergovernmental institutions, such as UNHCR (HCR, 2017). Back in 2016, a Special Rapporteur on gender-based violence against women has conducted an official visit followed by the report, which showed disconcerting results regarding violence experienced by Argentinian women (ibid.). In the last ten years, 2638 females were killed by their existing or former intimate partners, for the reason of being a woman (COHA, 2019; ibid.). However, women being killed is only one of the most extreme types of gendered violence prevailing in the country. According to the Domestic Violence Bureau report in 2015 alone there were 11.273 complaints related to domestic violence out of which 79% were submitted by women and girls (Refworld, 2019). From the outlook of the types of experienced GBV, which will be presented in the paper's literature review, the most common are psychological and physical ones (ibid.). This primary empirical data also reflects the types of GBV that are recognised within the state's legal framework and society. While Argentina abides by the internationally agreed legal treaties³, it fails

³ The government of Argentina has ratified the international women's rights treaty, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Also it has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Civil Rights to Women and the Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women (HRC, 2017).

to fully adopt the laws and establish several mechanisms to eradicate gender-based violence (HRC, 2017).

However, evidence also shows that other forms of abuse and violence are being debated and often disregarded in the legal domain (HRC, 2017). For example, the earlier mentioned UN Special Rapporteur's report's findings indicate that the prosecution of a sexual offence, like rape, is not conducted at the Criminal Procedure Code (ibid.), which demonstrate that within the state's legal platform, rape and sexual abuse are seen as a private rather than public matter.

The state takes multiple measures for GBV provision and protection of victims, yet the efforts of adoption of new laws and mechanisms remain within the state legislation, while legal frameworks at the provincial and judiciary levels are seemingly disregarded (HRC, 2017; Vargas, 2015). One of the most controversial cases in Argentina is women's right to their own reproductive rights. Long debated yet accepted partial decriminalisation of abortion, and post-abortion medical care have been agreed at the national level, however, the majority of the provinces are yet to adopt the law (ibid.).

2.2 The Culture of *Machismo*, *Micromachismo* and *Marianismo*

In Argentina, as most of the Latin American countries, the concept of *machismo* is a deep-rooted cultural norm, which, within academic discourse, is claimed to reinforce incidence of gender-based violence, particularly against women (HRC, 2017). Although the cultural term originates from the Spanish word *macho*, which implies an animal male or a man "iron strength", *machismo* is portrayed as an attitude of "male superiority" were "rugged, aggressive [Latin] men... given up on their society" and being viewed as badly-behaved husbands and fathers (Mayo, 1995:51). Moreover, the negative association continues to view men with *machismo* traits as self-proclaimed for domination and control, in the family and against a woman/wife, seeking for women only to satisfy their sexual pleasures while avoiding family or husband responsibilities (ibid). Pinos et al. (2016) study findings show that amongst Latin society *machismo* is understood as a trait that is being taught within families and transferred to younger generations. Moreover, the analysis shows that the responsibility of preserving and transferring *machismo* traits are being upheld not only by father roles, but also by mothers as mothers are regarded to be

the ones teaching their daughters to obey and prioritise the wellbeing of their husbands over own needs (Pinos et al., 2016)

Further, *micromachismo*, although first time mentioned in the early 90s by a psychotherapist Bonino Mendez is a phenomenon that has gained relevance within the feminist movement and fewer academic discourses only in recent years (Bonino Mendez, 2008; Campaña et al. 2017). *Micromachismo* is explained as men socio-cultural subtle practices that are driven by the daily desire to affirm male domination and control (Bonino Mendez, 2008). Many of those attitudes are seen as benevolent, thus the society views them as ordinary (Ramirez García, 2013:73). For example, a husband requiring his wife to share every information regarding her location/movement is an attitude that amongst society is assimilated to the husband as a guardian, yet it also demonstrates man's exploitation of power over a woman (ibid.). Thus, *micromachismo* attitudes call for own recognition within the academic and political discourse due to its particularity and invisibility of daily male domination behaviours, which to this day are not being recognised as an issue in itself and instead is being normalised by the society (Bonino Mendez 2008, Ramirez García, 2013).

Lastly, the notion of *marianismo* arises from the religious and gendered ideology of a Virgin Mary, which within Latino societies is viewed as an ideal image of a woman (Englander, Yanez & Barney, 2013). The image of Virgin Mary initially has been described as a "female spiritual superiority which teaches that women are semi-divine, morally superior to and spiritually stronger than men" (Stevens, cited in Navarro, 2002:257). However, current stereotypical attitudes of *marianismo* are associated with female passive, submissive and selfless behaviours including experienced humiliations received from men (Englander, Yanez & Barney, 2013). As such, in Latino society, women are often being compared against the Virgin Mary's ideal image and are expected to take up the same role model within women's daily lives (ibid).

These three cultures create the basis for women's struggles in the society that by many scholars are believed to foster male hierarchy and women's subordination (Bonino Mendez, 2008; Englander, Yanez & Barney, 2013; Pinos et al., 2016). Moreover, nurturing such cultures, which is a case in Argentinian culture, continue to reinforce ambivalent

norms and ideas of how women are supposed to be and to act, while not abiding by those norms women are subjected to abuse and violence (Bonino Mendez, 2008).

2.3 The Development of Women's Movements in Argentina

To develop a comprehensive analysis of this study, it is thought to be essential to have a broad overview of feminist movements in Argentina to understand how women's movements altered women's role in society.

The first wave of Argentinian women's activism and involvement in state politics was known since the late 1940s, after a First Lady and a feminist political activist Eva Peron convinced country politicians to provide suffrage for all Argentinian women, which was followed by the creation of the first women's political party called Peronist Women's Party (Shabliy, 2014). This was a historic moment for women gaining an equal right to active participation in the country's politics, being recognised as workers and having access to divorce, which set an example for other Latin American countries (ibid.). Moreover, this was the first indication of women becoming part of society's public sphere (Del Carmen Feijoo, Nari & Fierro, 1996). However, political freedoms for women lasted just until a new political upheaval of dictatorship began and women who continued their active participation in politics became political prisoners (ibid.).

The second wave of women's movement was in the late 1970s, during the Argentinian dictatorship period ruled by the military, where many civilians disappeared as a result of their resistance against state politics (Radcliffe, 2005). As hundreds of young male and female political activists were disappearing from their homes, mothers of the disappeared took the matter into public spaces. A movement of the Mothers of La Plaza de Mayo was born to protest against the dictatorship publicly and resist its systematic abuse of human rights, which was exercised through killings of its own citizens (ibid.) During this timeframe women's public identity from political participation transformed into a new form –mobilising and taking the matters to the streets (ibid).

The most recent and ongoing wave of the women's movement has been fighting against all forms of gender-based violence. The key target is twofold: i) eradicating all forms of GBV and femicide, and ii) seeking for full decriminalisation of abortion. The third wave of women's movement was sparked after a 14-year-old girl was killed by her boyfriend as a consequence of him learning about her pregnancy (REUTERS, 2019). Many feminist

movements and organisations walked out on the streets demanding equal women rights and a life free from killings and gender-based violence.

It is evident that through the different historical periods women took matters into their own hands through activism. They challenged political structures, redefined women's identity in politics and shaped new forms of women's resistance in public spheres. It also shows that, while applying different methods, the ultimate effort was to demand equal women's rights as a response to experienced gendered violence and abuse of different nature.

2.4 *Ni Una Menos*

Ni Una Menos is a self-proclaimed human rights movement that launched its widely recognised mass mobilisation campaign as a reaction to a killing of a 14-year-old girl back in 2015 (Abrego, 2017). The movement is known to become one of the most vibrant movements holding a high profile in Argentina, and the rest of South America (ibid). The network plays a fundamental role in being a public voice and representing vulnerable groups while demanding action from society and the state's governing structures to strengthen women rights and to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence (EUROSUR, 2018; HRC, 2017).

Initially, and as a consequence of Argentinian women being exposed to killings almost daily, the movement campaigned for the eradication of femicide (*Ni Una Menos*, 2017a). Through social media, slogans and protests, the activists' main message was "Vivas Nos Queremos", which indicated that women want to stay alive and free from killings (Abrego, 2017). With the continuation of protests, in the following years, *Ni Una Menos* also put forward issues such as equal opportunities for labour and pay, women trafficking and sexual labour rights (*Ni Una Menos*, 2018). The network also takes an active part in leading the green handkerchief movement, which is a symbol for demanding rights to reproductive health and decriminalisation of abortion (*Ni Una Menos*, 2017b). As the movement continues, activists carry on vocalising and bringing forth public statements where different forms of gender-based violence, abuse, and the factors that keep reproducing GBV, are continuously emphasised (*Ni Una Menos*, 2018).

The movement initiated in the city of Buenos Aires, and soon enough it spread within Latin American countries such as Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Colombia (Latino

America Piensa, 2016). Currently, the movement also appears in other Argentinian provinces and cities, yet the most prominent representation of the women's network is within the Province of Buenos Aires and the Autonomous Capital of Buenos Aires.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

The following section presents an academic and grey literature review of gender-based violence terminology, given descriptions as well as different types and forms in which the phenomenon materialises.

3.1 *Gender-based Violence – Concepts, Meanings and Interplay of Both Terms*

“Gender-based violence”, “Gender violence”, “Violence against women and girls” or “Sexual and gender-based violence” – are the most common terms that are used interchangeably in the academic, political and development discourse (Benjamin & Murchison 2004; Rajagopalan 2010; UNHCR 2018; Ward 2002). However, before going into definitions of gender-based violence, it is essential to make a clear distinction between the concept of *gender* and *sex*, as those terms are often being used alternately and understood as a similar term (Benjamin and Murchison, 2004). The term *sex* “refers to the physical differences between males and females” (ibid.:3) while *gender* underlines the roles of male and female that are socially constructed “context-based, and learned through socialisation” (Ward, 2002:8). Thus, understanding the difference and analysing gender-based violence through the gender rather than sex lens, provides the versatility of factors, dynamics and existing variety of consequences related to gendered violence (Russo & Pirlott, 2006).

Moreover, scholars argue that utilising *gender* term refutes a “one size fits all” approach and goes beyond physical or sexual forms when studying violence aimed at an individual due to his/her gender role. For example, using *gender* term instead of *women* in the context of gender-based violence not only acknowledges individuals from LGBTQ communities, who also experience GBV but also creates associations to a broader variety of gender-related abuses crosscutting ages, cultures, communities and cast (Rajagopalan, 2010). As explained by Rajagopalan (ibid.) by utilising *gender* term, abuses⁴ and

⁴ “Any act of violence ‘that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to human, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.’” (SIDA, 2015)

harassments⁵ linked to cultural norms and social values, such as honour killings, forced marriages or pre-natal sex selection is also being encompassed when analysing the phenomenon of GBV. Indeed, as Russo and Pirlott (2006:179) put it - “gender shapes the meaning of violent acts differently”, which significantly depends on different genders and “varies widely depending on the situational and cultural context”.

Further, drawing on the *gender* concept itself, scholars suggest that it should be accepted and analysed, as a totality of unified elements, which goes beyond the social roles and identities (Russo & Pirlott, 2006). The authors suggest that social attributes like norms, values and behavioural expectations are elements that should be included when studying gender in the context of violence. They argue that the complexity of those elements is what creates gender oriented social rules, prejudice and bring in punitive and discriminatory⁶ attitudes against those who do not fit within those rules (ibid.). Indeed, García and de Oliveira’s (2011) study results of Latin American families show that in a setting where traditional family norms and rules are favoured, male authority over woman’s autonomy is often exploited based on how abiding a woman is to own gendered norms and rules of being a “good wife”.

Hereafter, Russo and Pirlott (2006:180) emphasise the importance of examining not only societal but also individual norms and values, expectations and emotions, where each holds and continues shifting over time and space, as part of the gender concept. Accordingly, it is suggested that *gender* is seen as a concept that delineates an individual’s behavioural conditions constructed by the interactions with surroundings yet changing settings and social structures (ibid.). Thus, it is evident that to study gender-based violence in a holistic approach it is inevitable to encompass social dimensions that are interlinked with the creation or reproduction of gender-based violence.

Nevertheless, multiple empirical data and studies demonstrate the fact that women and girls are the ones to suffer from gender-based violence the most, as such, it reverberates the realities within academia, politics and development discourses often utilising definitions of *gender-based violence* and *violence against women* interchangeably

⁵ “An uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature especially by a person in authority toward a subordinate (such as an employee or student).” (Merriam-Webster, 2018)

⁶ “Discrimination is defined as sustained inequality between individuals on the basis of illness, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other measures of diversity” (Bhugra D. 2016)

(Rajagopalan, 2010:3). Also, it is important to note that depending on the context, within which both concepts are analysed, alteration of the terms might complement or create polemic in the topic analysed (Hall, 2015:3). Interestingly, Russo and Pirlott (2006:181) in their discourse utilise a definition of “gender-based violence against women”, which evidently is a neutral and less controversial form to be used within the discourse of the phenomenon.

Further, looking at a field of intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations, a term of *Sexual and Gender-Based Violence* has been utilised, which:

[...] refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men and boys. [...] is a violation of human rights [...] denies the human dignity of the individual and hurts human development [...] is largely rooted in individual attitudes that condone violence within the family, the community and the State. (UNHCR, 2018a)

This term includes a range of gender-related abuses and violence, to which a person may be exposed, with an emphasis that any of those acts primarily should be taken as a human rights violation. In addition, and in line with earlier presented scholarly discussions of the term gender, the gender-based violence phenomenon is clearly considered as a complex one, yet the undertone of terms *gender* and *power* brings the premise that within an intergovernmental field GBV term is influenced by the feminist theoretical approach to GBV phenomenon, which will be discussed further in the paper.

Consequently, it is apparent that utilising gender in the context of violence, provides advantages in having a more holistic analysis of the phenomenon. It is also clear that gender-based violence concept encompasses multiple and intricate elements. Thus, in respect to the purpose of this study, it is advantageous to utilise the concept of gender-based violence due to the inclusiveness of a greater diversity of factors that are being associated with or named as a form of GBV. Identification of those factors, their assimilation to or understanding as a type of gender-based violence, is one of the primary purposes of this study.

3.2 *Forms and Types of Gender-based Violence*

Scholars advocating for different theoretical approaches to gender-based violence claim that there are four main forms of GBV those being physical, sexual, psychological, at times called emotional, and economic (EIGE, 2019; Mtetwa, 2017). However, other authors claim that structural violence has to be acknowledged and analysed to have a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon (Scriven et al., 2015). Thus the following paragraphs will expand on GBV forms and types.

Physical gender-based violence is a form where purposefully injuring, torturing, beating or punching are performed against an individual (UNHCR, 2018b). It may be performed in various contexts of gender interplay, within domestic or public spaces. Sexual violence is a form of sexual activity that is performed to another person against his or her consent (ibid.). More commonly known types of sexual acts are sexual harassment, rape, sexual assault⁷, which can be experienced in a different context such as work, within a family and within an intimate relationship. However, depending on the area of contention, gender-based violence such as sexual slavery, forced prostitution, child molestation or forced pregnancy/abortion are also types of sexual violence (SIDA, 2015; ibid.). Psychological or emotional form of gender-based violence is less tangible as it does not involve physical or sexual violence. The psychological form is related to “behaviour or attitude that is designed to control, subdue, punish, or isolate another person through the use of humiliation or fear” (Karakurt & Silver, 2013:805). Whether within the intimate partnership or work environment, psychological abuse may also involve physical attitude yet as those are not directed at a victim, scholars also refer to it as *symbolic violence* (Engel, 2002). Further, economic violence entails behaviours of deliberate limitation to accessing financial resources or funds including financial decision making, education, employment, rights to land as well as property (Fawole, 2008). Like psychological, economic GBV is less visible and may occur within families, intimate partners as well as within work or polity environments (ibid.). While not negating the importance of physical or sexual gender-based violence, Parson (2015) notes that economic violence creates more significant and long-lasting inequalities that are also likely to reproduce further forms of GBV.

⁷ “An illegal sexual contact that usually involves force upon a person without consent or is inflicted upon a person who is incapable of giving consent (as because of age or physical or mental incapacity) or who places the assailant (such as a doctor) in a position of trust or authority.” (Merriam-Webster, 2018)

Lastly, fewer scholars also encompass structural violence suggesting that state politics and related social disposition may directly contribute to generating or prevailing gender-based violence (Montesanti, 2015; Scriver et al., 2015). Essentially, this form of violence in the context of GBV is unequal access to multiple social determinants, such as education, health, labour, which “creates conditions where interpersonal violence can occur and condition gendered forms of violence that place women in vulnerable positions” (Montesanti, 2015:2). Similarly, Scriver et al. (2015) and Caprioli (2005) further explain that often state governing structures maintain gender hierarchies where the stereotype promotion of a woman, as a family carer and inferior to a man, continue to reproduce GBV.

Often a particular type of gender-based violence will crosscut throughout mentioned forms. For example, while sexual assault is considered as part of sexual violence, it does not negate the idea that it also involves other forms of violence such as physical and emotional (GBVIMS, 2011). As such, and the reality of it being one of the most common instances worldwide, cutting throughout all forms of GBV, domestic violence is now and again considered as a separate form (rather than a type) of GBV (UNHCR, 2018b). Domestic violence comprises of intimate partner violence, evolving between current or former partners of an intimate relationship, and family violence, where abuse occurs amongst the family or household (Mennicke and Kulkarni, 2016). The range of perpetrators may also vary greatly, depending on the context that is being studied. Also, taking into consideration the global trend of highest gender-based violence incidence within the domestic environment, the most common offenders vary amongst family and current or former intimate partners (UNWOMEN, 2019b; Ward, 2002).

Scholars of different theoretical viewpoints agree on the most forms and types of gendered violence. However, opinions diverge, and scholarly debates take place as discussions evolve around the causality and reproduction of GBV. Thus for answering the main research question, it is fundamental to have a comprehensive theoretical outline of gender-based violence. In such, the following paragraph will expand on three dominant theoretical approaches to GBV – feminist, cultural and ecological.

4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following section will provide an overview of feminist and cultural theoretical perspectives on the gender-based violence phenomenon with a focus on the Latin American context. It will outline key elements that are interlinked with the concept. Further, the section will present an integrative ecological framework and provide a concise overview of the contexts in which the framework is applied. Lastly an analytical model, its construction and purpose will be explained.

4.1 Feminist Approach to Gender-based Violence

The concept of gender-based violence within a feminist discourse is framed as an issue where gender notion is a central element for having a full comprehension of the phenomenon (Friedman, 2009; Hall, 2016; Lawson, 2012; Russo & Pirlott, 2006; Vargas 2015). Scholars consider GBV as an effect of unequal and disparate gender power relations, which is claimed to be ordinary in the societies where male domination over female are thriving (ibid.). According to Lawson (2012), the existence of domination over a woman naturalises man's behaviour to have a right to abuse his intimate partner and regard her as a subordinate.

Further, while feminist studies emphasise abusive characteristics at an individual level, it rejects the idea of this being analysed as a pathological form, instead feminist scholars propagate that gender-based violence is constructed as a prescription of patriarchy (Friedman, 2009; Ward, 2002). Friedman's (2009) study findings show that violence against women and their reproductive rights comes into play as vital and contentious issues, which fundamentally are being driven by the existing patriarchal structures. For example, in multiple Latin American countries, including Argentina, women have been fighting for a right to be able to make their own and sole decision to have an abortion (ibid.). However, the judicial system obliges a woman to get her partner's consent in order to be accepted for an abortion procedure (ibid.). Such is a clear manifestation of giving substance to patriarchy.

Similarly, Lawson (2012), Ali and Naylor (2013) point out that patriarchal oppression between intimate partners or within the family manifest in males dominant role to control and impose ownership of a female. These traits are seen as part of a male's, as a family provider's, character. Meanwhile, a woman is expected to assert as a guardian for domestic duties, reconciling and being obedient (ibid.). According to Caprioli (2005) and

Scriver et al., (2015), such conventional gender role divisions also preclude women from seeking an independent income, for employment or obtaining an education, which eventually continues reproducing females as inferiors, more vulnerable and an easy target to violence.

In the context of social constructions of gender roles, as a component of gender-based violence, also brings in the discourse of dichotomy between the public and the private. According to Elshtain (2002:59-72), such division is echoed since the writings of Aristotle. The female was assigned a role of *Oikos* or that who is expected to remain within domestic affairs, restrained from any opportunity to take on a public role, belonging to a “second class” and being owned by others (ibid.). While a male, *Polis* is described as a public, free and dominating kind, who is a governing and leading vanguard (ibid.).

Feminists approach also negate the idea of gender symmetry⁸ in the context of gender-based violence (Lawson, 2012; Ward, 2002). This means that while a woman might be violent against her husband, those instances will be often related to self-protection from potential physical abuse towards her rather than actual use of abuse as a tool for maintaining power and control over her partner (Lawson, 2012).

Lastly, according to Vargas (2015), an intersectional dimension is an important one to consider within gender-based violence studies. The author’s analysis confirms that women of diverse ethnicities, race, sexual orientation are experiencing “invisible forms of exclusion” that are often driven due to existing patriarchal hierarchies (ibid.). Exclusion or denial is a form of GBV in itself, which further cultivates other forms of gendered violence against females (ibid., UNHCR, 2018b).

4.2 The Cultural Theory of Gender-based Violence

In contrast to a gender-specific feminist approach to GBV, a cultural theory concept of gender-based violence varies greatly (García & de Oliveira, 2011; Rajagopalan, 2010; Merry, 2009; Yodanis 2004). Yodanis (2004) challenges the conventional feminist approach to gender-based violence at an individual level asserting that fundamental attention to analysing gender fragmented structural and ideological inequalities, within

⁸ Kimmel (2002) explains that gender symmetry is a claim that women as much as men are prone to using violence within domestic environment. However, whether “does gender symmetry mean that women hit men as often as men hit women? Or does it mean that an equal number of men and women hit each other? Does symmetry refer to men’s and women’s motivations for such violence, or does it mean that the consequences of it are symmetrical?”.

different societal levels, are necessary as those impose and normalise certain types of gender abuse. Indeed, Rajagopalan's (2010) work affirm the necessity to examine socio-hierarchical attributes like dowry harassment, honour killings, pre-natal sexual preference or prohibition for abortion are necessary to be taken in when conceptualising and analysing gender-based violence phenomenon.

Merry's (2009) study on cultural perspectives of gender-based violence questions feminist discourse of GBV, claiming that feminists often identify patriarchy as an explanation of gender-based violence ignoring "the complexities of violence or the experience of violence within gendered relationships". Focus and blame on patriarchy continue framing the male as a powerful abuser and the female as a powerless victim, which lacks a comprehensive study of nonbinary gender relationship that goes beyond the notion of patriarchy (ibid.). As an example, a study in a community in Brazil confirmed that male violence against females also occurs as an attempt to maintain his honour or due to his own struggles as a result of economic or social conditions (ibid.). The author also points out that emphasis on patriarchy and depiction of woman as vulnerable and victimised disregards everyday realities of women standing up for themselves and being battered because they "contest their gendered positions of inferiority" (ibid.).

Further, the author states the necessity to study anthropological perspectives to understand gender-based violence as a sociocultural issue on a broader scope (Merry, 2009). With such an approach that examines GBV through cultural settings enables it to encompass different dimensions, such as family, community, state structures and global politics, and how these dimensions intersect and influence each other (ibid.). Moreover, it is fundamental to look at various contexts that give different meanings to and reproduce gender-based violence. In the cultural approach to GBV, the meanings of the concept and the social gender roles are non-fixed, it changes within time, space and sociocultural settings (ibid.). Indeed, while in the Western cultures gender-based violence is often associated with battered women within intimate relationships, the same phenomenon has a different meaning within Asian countries, where GBV is linked with women kidnapping and selling as wives, dowry-related abuses and violence or selling of children (Merry, 2009).

Hereinafter, the cultural approach emphasises the variety of gender-based violence determinants as being ideologically driven thus legitimising abusive behaviours towards a woman (Merry, 2009; Parson, 2015). In this regard, Parson (2015) explains that particularly within the Latin American context, religious institutions' driven societal ideology places higher value on family unity over personal safety. In a domestic violence instance, such ideology compels a woman to strive for family conciliation and to maintain "societal expectations about women's gender roles" over ensuring their own life is free from violence (ibid.:12). Such ideology is violence in itself as domestic abuse becomes a private and normalised instance that is expected to be solved within the family (Franceschet, 2010).

García and de Oliveira's (2010) multi-country study of family transformations in Latin American countries show that while a constant growth of women's economic activity and increasing educational achievements are evident, women's role within family structures has not changed considerably. The scholars' findings reveal that while state policy changes to minimise structural gender inequalities are progressing, within an ideological domain, women's role within a family dimension continue to be "deeply rooted" to woman's subordination, male's ongoing control of her income, movement and communication, which eventually lead to different forms of gendered abuse (ibid.). While gender role ideologies go in line with the feminist approach, cultural theorists emphasise the importance to acknowledge the diversity of those roles (de Beauvoir, 2010). In this regard, Simone de Beauvoir (2010) describes that construction of domestic roles and identities within the community or the state shows how the role of a woman, as a wife, has a wide variety of fabrications. For example, in one social structure a wife's role may be seen as a trophy, a jewel, with physical beauty traits that bring joy to a husband, whereas in another community it may be approximated to ensuring family reproduction, raising of children and prioritising family needs instead of her own (ibid.). The diversity of family role fabrications and how they generate multiple forms of GBV and abuse is an important part to be factored in the studies of the phenomenon of gender-based violence.

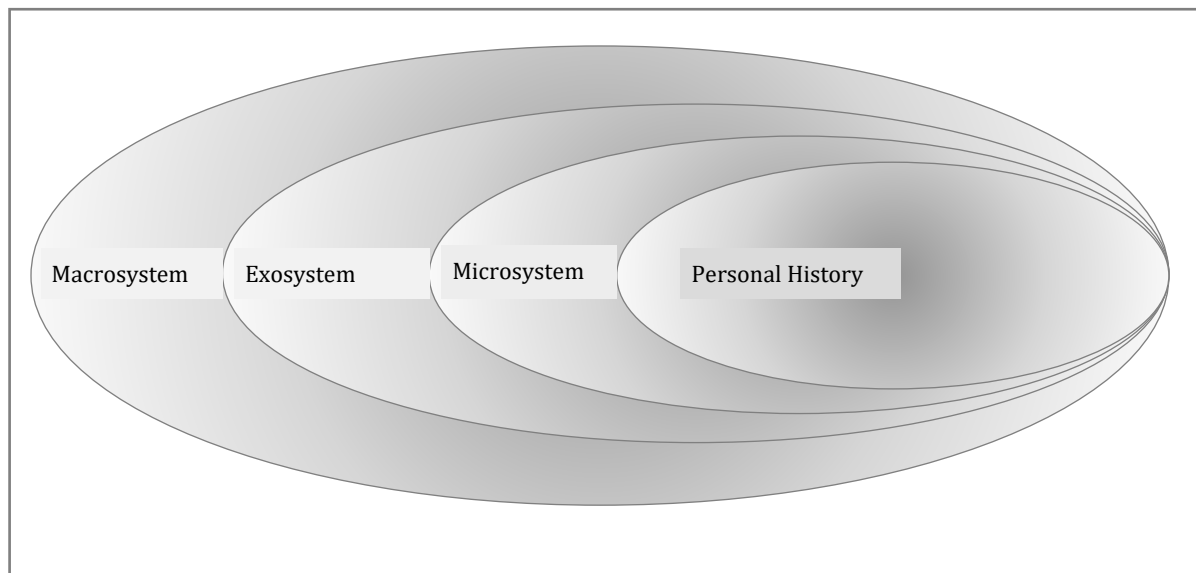
It is evident that gender-based violence concept is constructed not only within a gender perspective but also within multiple sociocultural dimensions. Thus, to understand the concept of gender-based violence, it is fundamental to understand the "*etiology of violence*" directed at an individual (Heise, 1998:263). Indeed, any scholarly studies of

gendered violence must acknowledge the importance and include “culturally constructed messages about the proper roles and behaviour of men and women” and how the culturally constructed roles make women a target of violence (Heise, 1998).

4.3 An Integrative Ecological Approach

One of the early adopters of the ecological framework (also named as a social-ecological framework) within the violence against women context was Heise. The author initially developed and utilised the integrative framework as a comprehensive approach to analyse violence against women (Heise, 1998). The ecological framework also allows analysing types of gender-based violence not only through the single-factored theoretical approaches, such as claiming that patriarchy or gender power relations are causal factors, but instead, it enables to study the “the full complexity and messiness” of the concept (Heise, 1998:264). Hereby, the scholar’s ecological framework has four different levels, as presented in Figure 1, where each one plays an integral part in seeking a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon and ways through which the concept materialises (ibid.). Moreover, the four levels also show complex interactions and how each dimension influences and amplifies each other (ibid.). Such dependencies also show that each level should not be studied as a single element.

Figure 1. An Integrative Ecological Framework



Source: replicated from Heise, L. (1998:265) Violence Against Women: An Integrated, Ecological Framework. *Violence Against Women*.

Later on, the Integrative Ecological Framework was adopted by multiple scholars and governing institutions due to being recognised as a versatile method to analyse different

forms of GBV phenomenon or to develop provision and prevention methods (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Tekkas Kerman & Betrus, 2018; WHO, 2019). Tekkas Kerman and Betrus (2018) has adopted the Ecological Framework for their study of violence against women in Turkey. Correspondingly to Heise, authors claim that in order to study any form or type of the phenomenon in a particular context, it is fundamental to include social and cultural factors that develop or reproduce violent behaviours (ibid.) Scholars thus identify four ecological framework levels: an individual, relationship, community, and social (ibid.:2). The individual level of this model identifies what potential factors on a personal level increase the likelihood of violence (ibid.). Common elements such as the history of experienced abuse, alcohol substance, education or economic status play a role in individuals being prone to being violent or a victim in experiencing it (ibid.). Within this level, prevention strategies commonly address attitudes, beliefs and behaviours (ibid.; WHO, 2009). The next level relates to the personal relationship that has an influence in becoming an abuser or being abused. Close groups such as family, life partners or close friend groups may be a negative influence in the prevalence of violence (ibid.). The community level analyses surroundings of social structures (formal and informal) like work environment, educational institutions, religious institutions where relationships with those type of community structures are anchored and thus may contribute to building an environment where some forms of gender-based violence are accepted or encouraged (ibid.). The last circle looks at extensive societal factors that may reinforce and even legitimise gender-based violence. Those are political, cultural and social norms, political environment, policies and laws (ibid.).

5 THE ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AS ANALYTICAL MODEL FOR GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

For the purpose of this study an Integrative Ecological model, constructed by Tekkas Kerman & Betrus (2018), has been used as an analytical tool that allows not only to analyse gender-based violence from different levels, but it can be utilised as a tool, which enables combining different theoretical approaches to GBV. Thus, for this paper, the Ecological Framework is applied to structure and to analyse the research data while drawing on both feminist and cultural theoretical approaches towards gender-based violence and its reproducing factors.

6 METHODOLOGY

To carry out meaningful research, the methodology has to be well thought through and planned out (Panke, 2018). This research was using a fieldwork method where various forms of interactions and methods were used to collect necessary data. As such, this section explains the chosen approach, applied methods, the process of the data collection, experienced limitations and other components that are fundamental to be recognised and shared.

For the purpose of this study and researched phenomenon, the research adopts a social constructivist worldview, where the lookout is for “the complexity of views [...] and rely as much as possible on the participants’ views” (Creswell, 2007:20). As Moses and Knutsen (2007:178) point out, constructivists’ approach to knowledge is based on the perception that “human knowledge has evolved” in that society and the knowledge, which they generate, is constantly changing. Thus applying constructivist approach facilitates answering of the research question in a profound manner.

6.1 Research Design and Method

To find out what the *Ni Una Menos* activists’ understandings of gender-based violence and factors that are being associated with the concept in the Argentinian context are, this study applied qualitative research. This method fits well as the emphasis is placed on an individual’s verbal sharing rather than quantifiable data (Bryman, 2012). Further, a single-case study was chosen as such a design allows an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon constructed by a particular women’s movement (Creswell, 2007). In this study, the unit of analysis is activists of *Ni Una Menos* movement. It is important to note that no differentiation of other units was made as *Ni Una Menos* is an umbrella movement where multiple women’s networks, non-governmental and civil society organisations operate with no particular assignment of roles within the movement (Abrego, 2017).

Data collection was obtained through conducting a fieldwork study, which was carried out during 3 weeks, from February 6th until February 25th, 2019, in Buenos Aires. Primary data of qualitative research can be gathered through a verbal, written or visual contents, which is done through interviews, observations or focus groups discussions (Brancati, 2018). For the purpose of this study, the primary data was collected by carrying out semi-structured interviews with movement activists. Utilising this method allows the obtaining of an in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon that each activist holds (ibid.)

6.2 Data Sampling

During the data gathering process, the interviewees were selected by utilising snowballing and purposeful sampling approaches. The decision for using these approaches was made during the planning stages of the fieldwork, with reference to the research method literature and initial observations of *Ni Una Menos* movement (Brancati, 2018; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2007). The snowballing method “recruits participants through contacts” as it is challenging for the researcher to identify those with necessary characteristics (Brancati, 2018:129). Two primary sources were acquaintances with two language professors in Buenos Aires, who shared initial contacts of fewer students that were women activists, who took part in *Ni Una Menos* activities and were willing to participate in this research. Through the nominations of initial interviewees, further contacts were received.

Further, purposeful sampling was applied to ensure that suggested interviewees represent activist characteristics (Brancati, 2018). Purposeful sampling ensured that interviews are being conducted with participants who are suitable for this study (ibid.). Thus, before primary sources and initial interviewees were providing their nominations, they were asked to consider the characteristics of the nominated ones. Potential nominees needed to take any form of participation in at least two movement activities – from leading or coordinating any of movement event to joining the actual march. The criteria of nominees did not include a requirement to be a member of any other organisation as a result of *Ni Una Menos* not maintaining formal memberships. Thus, anyone, a member of other formal organisation or not, was welcome to be part of *Ni Una Menos* movement.

There were no gender-specific characteristics identified, thus throughout the nomination process, all interviewees were only females. This is accepted as a reasonable subsequence due to the reality that *Ni Una Menos* movement is largely represented by females. There was no age limitation either, which allowed collecting data from females of wide age range representing different generations. In this study, the age ranged from 20 to 48 years.

To answer the research question, eight semi-structured interviews with activists of *Ni Una Menos* movement were conducted. A “theoretical saturation” was obtained after the

around 6th interview, as “no new relevant data seem to emerge” in answering the main research question (Bryman, 2012:421). The size of the data sample is highly debatable amongst the research method scholars (Brancati, 2018; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2007) thus for the transparency and verification of the saturation, the choice was made to continue with the remaining two interviews.

6.3 Material

The interviews were carried out through face-to-face interactions and phone calls. Four face-to-face interviews took place within the capital of Buenos Aires, two in Tandil, and two over the phone. Recognising that data gathering was conducted during the highest period of summer vacations, and due to the time constraints of the data collection, the decision was made to accomplish all the interviews prioritising the availability and present location of the interviewees.

Further, to have a better understanding and add more depth to the material as well as the analysis of this study, secondary data materials were also analysed. For example, before and during the data gathering process, public materials within social media, like Facebook and Twitter, as well as the movement’s website were examined. This was an integral part due to the fact that these are main communication tools that the movement utilises.

Further, to deepen the researcher’s understanding of *Ni Una Menos*’ appearance in the public space, how activists organise themselves and what public messages/slogans are being used in the context of gender-based violence, a participant observation, as an auxiliary method, was applied. For example, during a mass protest taking place on December 5th, 2018 in the city of Buenos Aires, videos and photos were taken to support further investigation of this study. Academic readings suggest that through participant observation the researcher “immerses into the environment of their subjects” to better “consider things from their [participants’] point of view” (Brancati, 2018:170). For this study, an overt and passive role for participant observation was chosen (ibid.:174), which hardly created any impact in participant behaviours as the observation took place during the mass protest, with thousands of activists.

6.4 *Semi-structured Interviews*

Brancati (2018) indicates that using semi-structured interviews gives greater flexibility to the researcher. While observing the information received during the interview, the questions may be posed differently, or some questions even avoided if it was naturally answered at the earlier stage of the interview (ibid.). Moreover, such an approach allows asking additional questions to ensure that it contributes to the main research question (ibid.). To guide the interview, 11 main open-ended questions were created. It is essential to note that, following Brancati (ibid.) suggestion, the choice was to maintain open-ended questions, not tight to the analytical model, to allow the interviewees to speak their minds. Asking questions that oblige the interviewees to frame their answers in line with the analytical model could potentially limit their answers.

The interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish languages, where the language preference was given to the interviewee. The duration of each interview varied from forty minutes to one hour forty minutes. The primary source of contacting and maintaining communication with participants was using WhatsApp, as in Argentina this online platform is one of the main ones for formal and informal communication. Before delving into the interview questions, the purpose of the study and the conditions under which this interview is being conducted were explained to each interviewee. A consent form (Appendix A) was prepared and explained to each interviewee after which each participant provided their verbal agreement for participating in this study. It was also emphasized to the interviewees that at any time of the interview they were free to terminate the interview or withdraw from the participation of the study.

Further, with participants' consent, all interviews were recorded. While recording the interview, the author can concentrate on the participant and the interview flow (Brancati, 2018). Most of the interviews were transcribed shortly after the interview allowing the researcher to reflect on the information and to make potential adjustments to the following interviews (ibid.).

6.5 *Data Analysis*

To conduct purposeful analysis, the transcript data has been analysed utilising NVivo tool. The findings were coded into the main themes and sub-themes according to the analytical model. Sub-themes were created based on the repetition and reflection of the

theories and analytical framework. The analysis involved identification of “regularities in the data [...] contextualising the information” with a developed analytical framework (Creswell, 2007:193). While identifying patterns is common for the ethnographic researches (ibid.) it is believed that such an approach is also handy when studying a broad and complex phenomenon like gender-based violence.

6.6 Limitations and Reliability

In a single case scenario where non-random sampling applies there is a chance of selection bias occurrences (Brancati, 2018). With the minimum characteristics for purposeful sampling being applied, the researcher herself had limited influence in pre-selecting particular interviewees. Thus, it is essential to acknowledge that the initial contacts’ subjectivity for selecting further participants might play a biased role in this process (ibid.).

Also, Brancati (2018) explains that single case studies may not provide an option for generalisation of a theory, as a single case in academia is not considered representative enough. However, choosing a single case approach allows unpacking the specifics of a case “to develop a rich, complex and compelling argument” (ibid.:120).

Interviewing over the phone when studying a sensitive topic may prevent receiving in-depth information as the interviewees may not feel comfortable enough, or the researcher may not capture body language, “which may convey interviewee’s thoughts and feelings” (Brancati, 2018:138). However, to establish a call that was comfortable and free from tension, the interview began by the researcher presenting their own background and personal reasons for choosing to study gender-based violence phenomenon. This gave time and space for an interviewee to feel at ease and be more open for a following in-depth conversation. In addition, a clarification was made that the interview is structured in such a form that it is expected to have a flowing conversation rather than a question and answer format.

Bryman (2012) raises concern over obtaining verbal consent from the participants, although he also emphasises that requesting to sign a form may create additional concerns to the participants, leading them to withdraw from the study. Therefore, for this study, preference was given to the participants, where each was content to continue with

verbal consent. Following the participant's preference is believed to give a path to trust building between the participant and the researcher.

Lastly, the potential limitation of the meaning and interpretation of the language used by the participants. It is thought to be necessary to acknowledge that while the data gathering was mostly collected in Spanish, which is a native language to all interviewees, it might provide discrepancies during the analysis and interpretation of the language (Bryman, 2012). To avoid misinterpretation during the data analysis process, the interviewees were requested to speak at a slower pace. Also, participants were informed that at any moment they might be asked to clarify a particular word or phrase used during the interview. In addition, native Spanish speakers were consulted when developing interview questions in Spanish. This ensured that "the language is comprehensible and relevant" to the participants (Bryman, 2012:473).

6.7 Ethical Considerations

As Creswell (2007) suggest, research design with a qualitative approach will always face ethical issues, which may emerge at any time throughout the course of data collection. This study's primary material is data from the interviews, an approach where individuals are sharing their personal views and intimate details, which may make them feel vulnerable (ibid.). Thus following Bryman's (2012) proposal of ethical principles, actions were taken to ensure that a harmful approach was avoided in every possible manner. Making sure that each participant is comfortable to take part in the study and comfortable during the interview process are fundamental elements in qualitative research (ibid.). It was ensured that each interviewee was given priority to choose the language that they feel comfortable to use. They were also given priority to choose the location and the timing that suited them best. Before the interview, the purpose of the study, management of the interview transcripts, participant access to the data and overall participants rights were described. Each participant also had the contact information of the researcher, in the case of the interviewee having any concerns or clarifications after the interview was conducted.

Also, a fundamental ethical consideration must be understood in the need to build trust to obtain in-depth information (Bryman, 2012). Researchers, as female student status, with a genuine interest and academic dedication to understand and contribute to solving

gender-based violence issue is thought to facilitate it. However, having to acknowledge that a foreign female inquiring about a delicate and complex issue, may place the researcher, interviewees and key informants in a vulnerable position. While *Ni Una Menos* activists seem to be outspoken and engaged in the process of this study, following Creswell (2007) and Bryman (2012) ethical considerations, all contact information of those interviewed, was made confidential and anonymous.

7 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The theoretical framework concepts combined with the analytical framework is what guides this section to answer the main research question: how *Ni Una Menos* activists understand gender-based violence concept. The findings and analysis section discussion is around the findings that relate to the factors which activists perceive as or assimilate to creation or reproduction of gender-based violence.

To build up the analytical model, the data from the interviews was analysed to identify main themes and then categorized and arranged in four levels as follows: individual, relationship, community and societal.

Figure 2. Analytical Model with sub-themes

| | <i>Feminist & Cultural Conceptualization to GBV</i> |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Individual Level</i> | - upbringing - fear of losing control and status |
| <i>Relationship Level</i> | - family influence - male dominance - gender power imbalance |
| <i>Community Level</i> | - religious communities - peer influence |
| <i>Societal Level</i> | - woman objectification and victimisation - the culture of micromachismo - legitimisation of GBV - male vs female roles |

The determinants (Figure 2, right column) were established based on the search for the repetitions and similarities throughout the data. The common concepts articulated by the interviewees as those constructing or reproducing gendered violence phenomenon were intergenerational dimension, masculinity gender power imbalance, acceptance of abusive behaviours within the family, acceptance of abusive attitudes amongst

colleagues, friends and religious structures, romanticising and normalising violent acts. Also, particular referencing was articulated by the interviewees to cultural factors such as micromachismo.

Further, it is essential to note that identified determinants of each level are not intended to be represented as single elements. Each determinant is substantially interconnected with each other. Also, not to imply that interlinkages are only one-directional, meaning that only the dimensions of societal level may affect or proliferate dimensions at the community or relationship levels. Particularly in the Latin American context, it is known that religious structures also influence factors at the societal level, which will be evident in the analysis discussion.

7.1 Individual Level

7.1.1 Upbringing

Activists' perceptions of the importance of the environment in which a person has grown into, are likely to reproduce multiple forms of gender-based violence and is the basis for the likeliness of how submissive to or exercising GBV the person will be. During the interviews, multiple mentions were situated around how within the Argentinian context the upbringing plays an important role in reproducing gender-based violence. With one of the interviewees, the discussion derives around the family set up that an individual is born and raised in and how such an environment builds the likeliness of domestic violence. Here, Participant 2 draws an image:

[...] for the majority of my [primary school] female classmates, by 15-16 years old, they chose to become mothers. [...] but then in that age, what else can you do? And they [women] then had to stay with the baby, who sets the order to woman's life. [...] So, it is only her luck, if she does not experience violence in the family yet she continue living at the mercy of her partner [...] because it is the man that continues to work, to earn money, to decide until when the woman can stay out. This woman, with what discourse you think she will raise her kids? (Participant 2, 32)

The notion is around the reality of the Argentinian context in which it is common to build a family at an adolescent age. An example of young motherhood, the nature of being

dependent on a partner or husband is then being followed by the next generations. Indeed, like Tekkas Kerman, Betrus (2018) and Heise (1998) explain, creating families at a young age is often related to women being exposed to violence due to a man, provider for the family, naturally holding power over the rest of the family. Such family setup is then “handed over” to their children, where similar beliefs and norms are reproduced (ibid.) Moreover, participant 2 undertone depicts that for a woman to live in the family free from domestic violence is so-called ‘luck’, from which a finding can be drawn that in young Argentinian families domestic violence is a common occurrence.

7.1.2 Fear of Losing Control and Status

Regarding man’s fear of losing control and status, activists described the relationship of strong masculinity image and how for a male to uphold that image, abuse and violence are used. Participant 5 explains her view as “Masculinity [...] is really fragile. Anything that happens to attack masculinity, men become so defensive”, implying that defence of personal status turns into abuse or violence. Merry (2009) in her study suggests a common idea that male violence is not fuelled only by the existence of patriarchal dominance. Instead, and in connection to what Participant 5 says, abusive or violent behaviour against a woman evolves as a vindication of experienced threat against a man’s honour. Such a threat often evolves from being susceptible due to social or economic conditions that expand female partner with the knowledge and financial independence (ibid.). With such, women gaining more independence is perceived as a threat to losing control over women, thus losing man’s honour and status.

7.2 Relationship Level

7.2.1 Family Influence

Commonly mentioned determinants by the interviewees, identified as each playing a role in reproducing gendered violence within relationship level, are the presence of influence from the family, the dominance of the man, as an intimate partner and the continuation of power imbalance within relationships. Here Participant 6 explains how family normalising abusive behaviours is understood to be gender-based violence in itself:

When I was younger, way before the times of *Ni Una Menos* [...] I was in a situation with one guy. During one party he was trying to get on top of me [implying wanting to make out], while I did not want to do that. Nothing bad happened, but I cried for weeks [...] Eventually I told this to my mom, and her response was “well, but these things happen”. And I had to dismiss this incidence, to dismiss just because I am a woman. But I don’t agree now, who says that one needs to dismiss such instance. “This is how it is” they say, but no, it isn’t! (Participant 6, 26)

Similar situations were brought up by Participants 2, 3 and 4 expressing that particularly mothers are accepting certain instances of abuse or sexual harassment as a normal case because *this is how it is*. The normalisation of verbal sexual abuse or harassment that has no visible or tangible outcomes take place on a daily instance and at times is even seen as part of building a relationship between the couple.

Moreover, participants explained that often, when sharing a sexual harassment experience with a family member, not only it is seen as being normalised, but also the abused woman is seen as the one who is exaggerating and creating a problem where there is none (From an interview with Participant 2, 3 and 4). Merry (2009) describes that when abusive or harassment experiences are understood as common amongst the family members, more significant gender-based violence issues, such as sexual violence, may appear. A mother not recognising as anything wrong when daughter experiences verbal sexual harassment, also ignores to recognise it as an abusive behaviour (ibid.). That is also a symbolic contribution to the existence and reproduction of gendered violence giving “privilege characteristics associated with masculinity” (Gouws 2016:402; ibid.) and male domination in the relationship. It also continues to reproduce a cultural environment in which the next male generations are grown into.

7.2.2 *Male Dominance*

The determinant of male domination within the family or amongst intimate partners in Argentinian context is recognised by activists as, although not physical, yet a form of violence, which is existing daily:

The same family [father] or a partner that keeps subjugating certain pressures
“How [dressed up] are you going out?”, “Where are you going out?”, “At what

time are you coming back” – all these small pressures are mini, but they are there. This is not physical violence, but... (Participant 6, 26)

While the thought was not worded directly, the participant gave a clear signal that male dominant behaviours, whether from a father or intimate partner figure, is a typical instance that women are regularly experiencing. The emphasis here is given to the daily, and often seen as insignificant, behaviours, relating them to gendered violence. Indeed as Engel (2002:12) is suggesting, male attitudes that are “designed to control, intimidate, subjugate, demean, or isolate another person” is considered emotional violence. More importantly, such “invisible” violence is what reproduces other forms of violence (ibid.). Comprehensibly, it is also relevant to underline that such attitudes may arise with the influence of dimensions from the societal level, such as socially dictated male and female roles (Tekkas Kerman & Betrus, 2018), which is discussed further in the analysis.

7.2.3 *Gender Power Imbalance*

Interviewees often draw emphasis on the existing gender power imbalances, common in Argentinian and Latin American contexts. Activists would refer to the economic dynamics and the power of decision making that the man appropriates. Here one participant shares a witnessed example:

Many of my course mates from the university faculty who had or want to resign from the studies because their husbands don't support them, so they don't have enough time to study. I always say “Don't leave. If you can come only one day a week, come that day. I will share my notes for the rest of the classes. But don't leave.” [...] “but I don't have enough money” [...] (Participant 2, 32)

The statement confirms existing interplay that is made between gender power, control and prevalence of economic violence. The participant continued explaining the importance of such everyday power dynamics that eventually equip men to take advantage of physically abusing a woman. Essentially, daily controlling behaviours that women experience through deliberate limitations (Karakurt & Silver, 2013) to being provided with or building their own economic independence, limits their professional growth, and promoting “to [woman's] physical violence [...] [or] sexual exploitation” (Fawole, 2008).

Similarly, Participant 1, shared her family member's example experiencing gender-based violence from the husband, who was a high ranked policeman, and against whom the woman never acted:

She never did anything [regarding reporting about violence], because she knew that her husband would lose the job, thus - no income into the family. So everything is connected: "I don't ask for help because I know the consequences". I don't ask for a divorce because I know I won't have the income to survive. (Participant 1, 26)

Here, Participant 1 also describes an association between gender power imbalance and how that is integral to gender-based violence reproduction. Moreover, this also shows that a woman herself, while recognising such interplay, still chooses to continue living in the suffering. Further interpretation can be made that such inaction may derive from the pressure of societal factors such as the importance of maintaining family union and welfare over their safety and a life free from violence (Parson, 2015).

7.3 Community Level

7.3.1 Religious Communities

Through multiple conversations with activists, it was apparent that religious institutions and communities are playing an active role in multiple societal areas such as education and politics. Religious structures in Argentina are known to be involved in long lasting controversial debates over women's reproductive health and rights. A church-initiated campaign against abortion amongst interviewed activists is seen as an enforcement of gendered violence. During the interview, Participant 5 explained her viewpoint of religious denial for abortion being yet another tool for the reproduction of violence against women and girls:

That [denial for access to abortion] in itself is a violent act on so many levels and the inaction of the state. Firstly, framing women as a reproductive object and that is what women supposed to carry this burden because this is what God made us for - it is God's word. (Participant 5, 20)

Moreover, Participant 5 referring to "God made us for - it is God's word" confirms that religious arguments are driven by the gendered ideology, which are not accepted as

harmful to a woman. In addition, the religious position is seen as placing female reproduction as women's burden that is claimed to be not interrupted.

A connection may be drawn between the individual and relationship levels. A woman (often adolescent) becoming a mother, is placed to being financially dependent on her husband and a subject to quotidian abuse or violence (from the conversation with Participant 2). Moreover, with family claiming particular harassment or abuse as part of an intimate relationship and religious groups promoting family values over individual's safety, this continues not only to reinforce domestic gender-based violence, but as such is being normalised as a constituent of building a family (Franceschet, 2010; Parson, 2015).

7.3.2 *Peer Influence*

Interviewees identified peer groups such as the schoolmates or friends influencing and propagating abusive and gender aggressive daily behaviours in Argentina. Participant 2 explains:

[...] For example, generally when in Argentina we [activists] refer to a macho figure, it is meant to note that macho interaction amongst friends is simply a form to demonstrate how macho can shame a woman in the street while in front of his friends [...]. This also has to be understood as violence (Participant 2, 32).

This activist's description echoes Heise's (1998) claim that male aspiration for sexually intimidating or abusive attitudes is desired to adhere to "fit within" male peer groups where often male dominance and superiority is at the core front to be sustained. Participant 2 also mentions a cultural context where such dominance is driven by the culture of machismo, upon which the study elaborated in the background section. Merry (2009) states that cultural traits within the community are necessary to be critically studied as community behaviours are factors assimilated with and directly reproducing gender-based violence.

Interestingly, Participant 4 expands a little more on peer influence reproducing violence. During the discussion about group behaviours inflicting abusive gendered behaviours, the activist described the situation where her younger brother's male friendship group

shared an objectifying image of a woman taken in the street, which then was shared on social media and commented on by the rest of the group mates. Participant 4 claimed that sharing sexually abusive material does not make a man less responsible for being part of a woman's abuse. Participant 4 emphasises the daily attitudes of an invisible form of traits that are perceived to perpetuate greater male dominance, which is already known to reproduce domestic, often physical, violence (Bonino Mendez, 2008).

7.4 Societal Level

7.4.1 Woman Objectification and Victimisation

Each interviewee described the factor of women's objectification and victimisation by public structures as a great contributor to the prevalence of gendered violence. For example, Participants 7 and 8 spoke of the impact that Argentinian media and music has by continuously placing a woman as an object. This includes TV shows placing women in intimate and tight clothing, making humour around women's sexuality or creating music lyrics of particular styles, such as *reggaetón* and *cumbia*, placing the woman as a "thing to be looked at". Similarly, Participant 4 shares:

[...] it is necessary to understand that woman [in Argentina] is seen as a lesser, as a product of consumption, a product of desire, anything material – and that is what continuously generates different aspects of gendered violence. The man who shouts out to a woman from his car "oh, how pretty you are" sees a woman as lesser, understands that a woman is something to be watched at. (Participant 4, 26)

Further, multiple participants depict their perception of women's victimisation explaining the importance of such factors being considered as a significant contribution to violence. In this context, the conversation with Participant 5 evolved around how the media and public structures frame victims of gender-based violence:

The whole [media's] attention would always be on her [the victim]: what was she doing, what was she wearing, trying to find guilt on the actual victim. As a victim was doing something to be kidnapped or raped or murdered. Meantime the person responsible for the crime is being forgotten, left out of the situation. (Participant 5, 20)

In a similar discussion with Participant 7, she emphasises the role that daily TV shows play in portraying the woman as an object, moreover a sexual one. The activist explains:

The humour of the TV shows and family [content] programmes are centred around the sexuality, common scenes such as a boss grabbing a skirt of his secretary or a father who is leering at his own daughter's classmates who arrived at the house to study. [...] And such scenes are generalised and normalised! (Participant 7).

Adequately, woman victimisation and objectivization are considered a societal acceptance of male dominating behaviours and associated prejudices that legitimise the "inequality, subordination and symbolic non-existence of women" (García Campaña, 2018:146), which create a pathway for further women's abuse and harassment eventually evolving into gender-based violence. Thus the reinforcing effect that such societal factor creates regarding gender-based violence is evident.

However, Participant 1 provided an interesting viewpoint, while not negating the existing objectification created by mainstream media, she places responsibility onto the mothers explaining that, "Mothers say to their daughters: "You are beautiful". [...] it is so important to say that a girl is also strong and intelligent and not just understand that a girl is empowered through beauty." (Participant 1). This gives an interpretation that in Argentina, mothers are also playing an essential role in contributing to the reproduction of gender-based violence.

7.4.2 The Culture of Micromachismo

The notion of micromachismo and its immense contribution to gendered violence in Argentina was brought up by every interviewee. As stated in the background section of the paper, studies of this cultural phenomenon are scarce and somewhat limited to South American scholars. However, amongst the activists, it is unanimously seen as one of the critical factors in understanding gender-based violence and its complex roots. Here Participant 4 explains:

It is the small daily attitudes that create its amplitude and the understanding that micromachismo is the root of gender-based violence [...] which still for

many people [as males] does not suit, because that takes away their ability to own a woman. (Participant 4, 26)

Similarly, another participant (2) describes the daily realities of micromachismo, which every Argentinian woman is facing:

You keep hearing [in the streets] “oh, what a beauty you are”, fine this may not look like something scary, but it is absolutely unnecessary to be told out loud. [...] Moreover, my self-esteem does not depend on whether the male from the street provides his “validation” in how I look! (Participant 2, 32)

In addition, Participant 3:

In the past, micromachismo was seen as something normal, something that was ignored. Small things as a comment in the street “oh, a woman you must be” [as a demeaning connotation], but now, we finally say “no!” to this, it is a form of violence. [...] There is finally an attention to this [micromachismo], and it cannot be ignored anymore. (Participant 3, 20)

Participants’ description of micromachismo is an evident manifestation to existing social dynamics between male and female where daily male dominance and superiority over a woman is understood to result in more visible gender-based violence. The described attitudes are not punitive nor formally legally bound. However, the activists’ perceptions are of influence and effect that it plays in reproducing gender-based violence as well as being named as a form of violence itself.

The activists’ understanding goes in line with Bonino Mendez (2008) and García Campaña (2017:146) who outline the fundamentality of the invisible and daily attitudes that are a primary “transmission of gender-based violence”.

7.4.3 Legitimation of GBV

Tekkas Kerman and Betrus (2018) suggest that when studying societal factors which interplay with GBV, existing state policies and the approach that it takes in policy implementation are significant. Although the purpose of this study focused around perceptions and not around the political approach nor political implementation, activists regularly referred to instances that were perceived as the state failing to implement

mechanisms and more importantly a lack of sensitivity about the issue amongst the politicians and within the society.

There was a recent case where a 12-year-old girl was sexually abused, became pregnant and the state's legal procedures did not allow the girl to receive abortion although the girl wanted it. With much pressure from the province, from the religious groups stating that the girl's nature is to have a maternal instinct. [...] (Participant 2, 32)

Also, on multiple occasions, participants referred to mainstream media supporting legitimisation and moreover romanisation of different forms of gender-based violence. Continuing the discussion with participant 2, she explained:

[in relation to the same case of a 12-year-old] The Nation [national newspaper] referred to the situation as a victory framing the girl as a "*niña madraza*" which describes the 12-year-old girl being saved to maintain her motherhood. At the age of 12 about what motherly instincts can we even talk! [...] (Participant 2, 32)

According to the Argentinian judicial system, sexual experience with a child younger than 13 years old, in Argentina is legally the crime of rape (HRC, 2017). Yet the state and mainstream media's approach shows an apparent normalisation of such instances, naturalising and legitimising crimes of gender-based violence, in particular sexual assaults and rapes. Such case confirms the activists' recognition of the existence of what Scriver et al. (2015) and Montesanti (2005) explain as structural violence. These authors (ibid.) elucidate that the contribution of social and political structures are necessary to be considered when analysing gendered violence, as public structures are often great contributors to the reproduction of GBV. However, the interviewed activists claim that public structures (such as political and media) continual endorsement of the stereotypes of social roles over the precedent of violence against women and girls is not only a contribution to gender-based violence but should be comprehended as being an equal part in constituting gender-based violence.

During the conversations, the activists also framed educational structures as reproducers of structural gender-based violence. Participant 7, holding an academic position herself,

described how in academia, a persisting masculine approach to science contributes to the normalisation of gender hierarchy, thus reproducing forms of gender-based violence:

The image [of science] is always masculine. I say so because it arises from the existing masculinities in science [...]. To this day the science defines what is feminine; that we hold a particular position, where being feminine we are not able to think universally [...] because women argue with each other, because they are emotional, because they menstruate [...] Yet everything that involves rational, objective and universal thinking is what a male is capable of [...], which shows not only gender dichotomy but a clear superiority of a man. And that is what to this day we are taught by the science (Participant 7, 48).

The described woman's versus man's ideological status within academic society and science, to which women continue to be associated daily, is an evident presence of gender power and inequality. Furthermore, such ideological status limits a woman's career development and opportunities, which in itself is economic violence. Yet, in the Argentinian context, such a dichotomy is seen to be valid as the science reinforces it. Similarly, Yodanis (2004:657) argues that such a conformist outlook continues to reproduce male domination within academia, thus male-constructed and encouraged academic and scientific practices, where further structural forms of violence are not "likely to be punished or stopped", are considered as "natural".

7.4.4 *Male vs Female Roles*

Regarding the sociocultural division of male and female roles, Simone de Beauvoir (2010) describes that society continues placing female identity within "femininity" and "masculinity" categories, where the former is associated with obedience and fragility while the latter is associated with pride, independence and the natural way of a human being. Thus, when a woman is seen as taking a "masculine" role, she is being approximated to "one of them [male]" (ibid.: 471). Such a viewpoint is articulated by Participant 4's shared experience:

When I was serving as a secretary for gender-related matters in the political party, during meetings related to gender issues, I would often receive a comment from male peers "you are not like all the other women, you are more like guy, like a man" [...] Only after some time did it occur to me that

what they were saying was [...] obviously a woman cannot manage politics [...] yet if they do, they become part of the manhood [...]. (Participant 4, 26)

This quote is also a manifestation of how in the Argentinian context a woman's position in society is weaker and once there are exceptions to the norms of gender role, it is being approximated to the role of male rather than an acknowledgement of a woman's strength and equal participation within different societal levels. Additionally, this also depicts that the political sphere is a man's domain.

Further, during the interview with Participants 7 and 8, they related male vs female role divisions to symbolic violence:

Often, when arriving at an evening event or a gathering, that is not work-related, the first thing that I am being asked is where my kids are. And I am certain that none of the fathers is being asked the same question in a similar context. And that is how it continues shaping the idea of being a mother as the idea of being a woman in Argentina. (Participant 8)

Participant 7 added:

Placing the woman in such a concrete role is symbolic violence in itself, yet it also soon materialises. It materialises into gender-based violence. Because if you decided to become a mother, you have to comply to be a determined mother to fit within the society (Participant 7, 48).

Here the participant continued explaining that fitting within the society implies being a mother who takes care of domestic family matters, raises children, stays at home and is obedient to her husband or partner. Those not complying with such an ideology are subjected to punishment, which commonly materialises as domestic abuse and violence. Moreover, a relationship can be made to the earlier discussed relationship level determinants of male dominance and gender power imbalance. A woman holding a traditional mother's role is likely to lead to missed chances for career development, financial independence, thus being more vulnerable and exposed to economic and emotional violence (Englander et al., 2013; Karakurt & Silver, 2013).

8 CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

8.1 Summary

This paper aimed to answer the main research question: How is gender-based violence perceived by the *Ni Una Menos* activists in Argentina? As mentioned at the beginning of this study, the intention to choose activists, particularly from this women movement was drawn from the magnitude and the visibility that this new movement has. To understand gender-based violence in the Argentinian context, the reader was initially provided with the current country situation, the sociocultural elements essential in understanding gender-based violence and a concise history of women movement in Argentina. Further, the literature review of gender-based violence terminology is presented, including predominant forms and types of the concept. To equip the reader with comprehensive theoretical knowledge, a theoretical framework presents the debate between feminist, cultural and ecological approaches. There the controversy around the factors and their multiplicity generating and reproducing gender-based violence is presented. Eventually, guided by the ecological framework, an analytical model was developed to facilitate the research and to analyse its findings. It further proceeds to the operationalization of the data collection process where qualitative research was carried out using semi-structured interviews with 8 *Ni Una Menos* activists.

8.2 Answering the Research Question

Guided by the ecological framework, the analysis of activists' perceptions about gender-based violence align with a feminist theory where gender hierarchy and male domination are understood as an inclusive part of gender-based violence. Activists also adhere to the prescription of sociocultural norms and behaviours driving common forms of gender-based violence in Argentina. Additionally, activists' perceptions of gender-based violence are largely situated around the invisible quotidian attitudes which are perceived as roots to trigger various forms of GBV. However, while the multiplicity of sociocultural factors, as contributors to the phenomenon, may not be new within the scholarly and grey literature, the activists take a step further by placing those factors as a separate *form* of gender-based violence rather than a *mean* of gender and social constructs. Such is a manifestation of activists giving new meaning where a cultural normativity becomes a new form of gender-based violence.

Further, adhering to structural violence, activists underline the role that public structures, such as politics, mainstream media and religious groups play in gender-based violence. Pervasiveness to legitimize and romanticize prevalent gender-based violence, as cruel as rape, in order to vindicate ideology driven gender roles, activists describe public structures as equal culprits of gender-based violence incidence. Moreover, currently held political, religious, and media influence and their public stance on gender norms and behaviours are perceived as amplifiers of gender-based violence instances.

Lastly, it is significant to have a critical reflection about the main research findings and the knowledge gained about gender-based violence phenomenon. The magnitude of *Ni Una Menos* is what strengthens women's public claims and visibility of contemporary GBV perceptions. However, since the movement's establishment, activists' understandings of gender-based violence, as well as their claims, are continuously changing, which might be influenced by the diversity of networks and organizations that partake in *Ni Una Menos*. This may be problematic for the movement to advance policy development as movement's activists may have contradictory ideas in agreeing to the strategic priorities as well as what and how those policy changes are to be implemented.

8.3 Future Research

While conducting the research, due to the scope and time limitations, some dimensions could not be included within the framework of this study. Also, during the interviews and throughout data collection, multiple aspects were brought up that could potentially be explored for future research.

As such, it may be valuable to conduct a comparative study of how gender-based violence is framed by *Ni Una Menos* movement activists and within national policies. Such a study would be essential for examining to what extent GBV phenomenon is constructed and aligned amongst political and social actors. Investigating potential discrepancies could be pivotal in the state failing to eradicate gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence issues in the region are not new within the development field, nor are studies investigating the strategies that social movements or the civil society build to create social change. However, an interesting approach for future research should be to analyse the influence that *Ni Una Menos* movement create within policy and legal transformations, within Argentinian and regional context. Such can provide knowledge

that could shed light on the extent to which the women movement drives national or regional policy change and the direction it takes.

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10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A – Interview Consent Form

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

For a Research Project:

Understanding perceptions of gender-based violence amongst social movement activists in Argentina

Thank you for your time and agreeing to be part of this research, which is a part of the Master's Programme of International Development and Management at Lund University (Sweden).

Research Purpose: to study how activists of *Ni Una Menos* social movement perceive gender-based violence in Argentina and in what ways it is seen to manifest.

The Interview Process: This is a semi-structured interview, meaning that there are main guiding questions, though additional questions might be asked. You are also encouraged to provide your input beyond the asked question if you feel that it provides additional value to the interview. Further, this consent form is to make sure that as a research participant, you understand its' main purpose and that you agree to the following conditions:

- This interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be produced. The transcript will be sent to you upon your specific request, to provide you with an opportunity to correct factual information.
- The transcript data will be used only for this research purposes.
- During the entire process of this project, your identity will not be given away to any other 3rd party, unless you provide a formal agreement to proceed otherwise.
- In a case of any changes to the interview data, those will be done only with your specific agreement.

Some parts of the transcript may be quoted directly. In such case, please indicate one of the choices as per below:

- I agree with my words being quoted directly, without my name being published.
 I do not agree with my words being quoted directly

Also, with signing this form, you agree to:

1. Participate in this project voluntarily and without expecting to receive any form of benefit for your participation.
2. You understand that you can stop the interview at any time.
3. You can ask any questions you might have, and you understand that you are free to contact the researcher with questions you may have about this research.

Name and signature of the Participant _____

Date _____

I would like to receive transcript of this interview Yes No

If selected Yes, please provide your email address:

Name and signature of the Researcher _____

Date _____

For any questions or concerns about this research project, you may contact the researcher:

Ieva Misiunaite

Email: ie6427mi@student.lu.se

Skype: ievonce

FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO DE LA ENTREVISTA

*Para un proyecto de investigación:
Entender las percepciones de violencia de género entre activistas de movimientos sociales en
Argentina.*

Gracias por su tiempo y por aceptar ser parte de este estudio, que es la parte del Programa de Maestría en Desarrollo y Gestión Internacional de la Universidad de Lund (Suecia).

Propósito de la investigación: estudiar cómo los activistas del movimiento social de *Ni Una Menos* perciben la violencia de género en Argentina y de qué maneras se ve que se manifiesta.

El proceso de la entrevista: esta es una entrevista semiestructurada, lo que significa que hay preguntas principales de orientación, aunque se pueden hacer preguntas adicionales. También se alienta que proporcione su opinión más allá de la pregunta si crea que lo da un valor adicional a esta entrevista. Además, este formulario de consentimiento es para asegurarse de que la/el participante de esta investigación entienda su propósito principal y que acepte el siguiente:

- Esta entrevista será grabada y se producirá una transcripción. A su solicitud específica, se le enviará la transcripción para brindarle la oportunidad de corregir información objetiva.
- Los datos de la transcripción se utilizarán solamente para el propósito de este investigación.
- Durante todo el proceso de este proyecto, su identidad no se entregará a ninguna otra parte, a menos que proporcione un acuerdo formal para proceder de otro modo.
- Los cambios en los datos de esta entrevista se realizarán únicamente con su acuerdo específico.

Algunas partes de la transcripción pueden ser citadas directamente. En tal caso, indique una de las opciones siguientes:

- Estoy de acuerdo con que mis palabras sean citadas directamente, sin que mi nombre sea publicado.
- No estoy de acuerdo con que mis palabras sean citadas directamente

Asimismo, con firmar este formulario, usted acepta:

1. Participar en este proyecto voluntariamente y sin esperar recibir ninguna forma de los beneficios por su participación.
2. Entiende que puede detener la entrevista en cualquier momento.
3. Puede hacer cualquier pregunta que pueda tener, y comprende que puede comunicarse con el investigador si tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación.

Nombre y firma del participante _____

Fecha _____

Me gustaría recibir la transcripción de esta entrevista Sí No

Si está seleccionado Sí, proporcione su dirección de correo electrónico:

Nombre y firma del investigador _____

Fecha _____

Si cualquier pregunta o inquietud sobre este proyecto de investigación, puede comunicarse con la investigadora:

Ieva Misiunaite Correo electrónico: ie6427mi@student.lu.se Skype: ievonce

10.2 Appendix B – List of Interviewees and Interview Schedule

| ID of the Interviewee | Age | Interview date and time | Duration of Interview | Location | Form of conduct |
|-----------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| P1 | 26 | 06 February, 2019 | 01:05 | Buenos Aires | Face-to-face |
| P2 | 32 | 07 February, 2019 | 01:28 | Buenos Aires | Face-to-face |
| P3 | 20 | 11 February, 2019 | 00:37 | Buenos Aires | Phone call |
| P4 | 26 | 14 February, 2019 | 01:12 | Buenos Aires | Face-to-face |
| P5 | 20 | 15 February, 2019 | 01:08 | Buenos Aires | Phone call |
| P6 | 26 | 15 February, 2019 | 01:24 | Buenos Aire | Face-to-face |
| P7 | 48 | 25 February, 2019 | 01:25 | Tandil | Face-to-face |
| P8 | NA | 25 February, 2019 | 01:25 | Tandil | Face-to-face |