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MADRE O CIUDADANA?

A comparative gendered analysis of conditional cash programmes in Argentina and Mexico

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies

Hannah Lauren O'Connor
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Professor Peter Starke
Department of Political Science and Public Management

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DECLARATION OF TITLE AND AUTHORSHIP

Name: Hannah Lauren O'Connor

Date of birth: 2 October 1996

Programme: MSc Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies

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SUMMARY

This thesis explores conditional cash transfers (CCTs) in relation to gender dynamics in Argentina and Mexico. CCT programmes emerged within the last twenty-five years as an innovative approach to anti-poverty social policy. The cash transfers are dependent upon completion of conditions, primarily focused on children and adolescents' health and education. The investment in human capital is reflected in this policy model's attempt to end the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

While CCTs, in general, have been regarded as effective innovations in social welfare in relation to better health outcomes and higher educational attainment, this thesis is interested in a gendered analysis of CCTs. Studies published by prominent international institutions emphasise the efficiency of channelling resources through women. Latin American culture has a long history of *marianismo* and the female service to the government's anti-poverty agenda due to 'female altruism'. Providing cash transfers intentionally to mothers invoked the feminised obligation of poverty reduction.

This case study examines the Mexican programmes—*Progresa/Oportunidades, Prospera*, and *Becas Benito Juárez*—and Argentine programmes—*Plan Jefes y Jefas, Plan Familias and the Universal Child Allowance*. First, the analysis dissects the main framework of the social programmes, in order to address the full scope of the policies in relation to successes and targets of the design. Then, I assess in relation to equity and the influence on participants. By breaking down the complexities of what constitutes gender equity, based on Fraser's 1994 matrix, this paper provides a multifaceted examination of CCTs performance. Examination of the findings underline that programme design has resulted in different impacts on gender relations, posing an interesting puzzle: Why has Mexico performed better than Argentina in relation to gender equity, especially considering Argentina, throughout their history, has been regarded as a more developed welfare state?

This paper considers the institutional development of social policy in Mexico and Argentina that led to the implementation of CCT programmes. In particular, this research offers a historical institutionalist explanation of how the policies came to impact gender relations. Early accounts of welfare development signal the centrality of male breadwinner models and overarching maternalism embedded into the design. The explanation suggests that both cases' welfare

trajectories were severely impacted by not only the oil and debt crisis of the 1970s but also due to the neoliberal austerity in the 1980s that followed. During this critical juncture, both countries adopted neoliberal economic paradigms and were more influenced by international organisations. It was clear that Mexico swiftly adapted to embrace the New Poverty Agenda, pressed by another national economic downturn—the tequila crisis of 1994. When their first legislative attempt at poverty alleviation failed due to clientelism, the next new design had to encompass transparency to negate partisan-sponsored corruption. In doing so, Mexico created one of the first national CCT programmes-*Progresa/Oportunidades*. During the same time, the Argentinian welfare state had deteriorated under neoliberalism, having lost their commitment to universalism; welfare provisions became staunchly market-oriented. In 2002, Argentina witnessed one of the worst labour rates in their history, at nearly 22 per cent unemployment. In response, the government established their first CCT programme, *Plan Jefes y Jefas*, followed swiftly by *Plan Familias*.

I assert the reason Mexico's programmes have been more successful and relatively better for women's equity is because of the anti-corruptive institutional design that requires biannual external evaluations. While the initial implementation was not very gender-sensitive, the Mexican government kept women at the forefront of decision making, as exemplified through the creation of the *vocales* sub-programme. In addition, over time the programmes continuously reformed based on audits and beneficiary interviews and began to provide state-subsidised childcare and employment training per-request of participants. Conversely, Argentina's institutional legacy of clientelism permeated CCT design. The decentralised format and poor oversight did not create an environment dialled into the needs of the women. With *AUH* Argentina suggested a return to universal coverage, but this programme design removed women, therefore lacked the capacity to transform gender relations; also, in doing so, removed the feminised burden of poverty management. With the recently implemented *Becas Benitos Juárez* replacing *Prospera* in late 2019 it is too soon to compare the case's new direction of CCTs. This leaves an interesting angle for future research.

KEYWORDS: *Latin America, conditional cash transfers, feminisation of poverty, gender equity, maternalism, neoliberalism, historical institutionalism, social protection*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1.3 billion people in the world, representing approximately 74 per cent of the global population, live in multidimensional poverty (UNDP 'Global Multidimensional Poverty Index', 2019). Of that statistic, 736 million people are in cases of extreme poverty, surviving on less than $1.90 a day (World Bank 'PovCal Net, 2020). Women face higher risk and probability of enduring poverty and are disproportionately represented amongst the impoverished (Rodríguez Enriquez 2014). It is estimated that over 660 million children experience multidimensional impoverished conditions (UNDP 'Global Multidimensional Poverty Index', 2019). Therefore, this has been an important agenda item for social protection efforts, leading to innovative intervention in poverty reduction policies.

At the turn of the century, the United Nations ratified the 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDG), a new 'New Poverty Agenda' intended to signal an international commitment to improving the status of the world's poorest while investing in human development. Unlike its predecessor, this approach laid out a clear blueprint through eight MDG and eighteen associated targets necessary to improve overall human condition globally, including eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (MDG1), achieving universal primary education (MDG2), promoting gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG3), reducing child mortality (MDG4), and improving maternal health (MDG5) (UNDP 2000). The largest target was to reduce rates of extreme poverty in half by 2015 (*ibid*). The World Health Organisation (WHO) cited the targets set by the UN are largely interconnected, emphasizing that gender equality is necessary to improve health conditions and good health is required for children to obtain education and for adults to participate in the labour force; all conditions should be met to reduce inter-generational transmissions of poverty.

Countries across Latin America were targeted by such efforts in the 1990s and 2000s in the wake of the double crisis of debt and ensuing recession of the 1980s, often referred to as 'La Década Perdida' (the lost decade) which left lasting economic trauma in the region. During the oil and debt crisis of the 1980s existing social security systems demonstrated inefficiency and instability in the face of large deficits during this period of great inflation; problems were intensified through structural adjustment programmes. During the financial crisis, Latin America's "per capita GDP fell from 112 per cent to 98 per cent of the world average, and from 34 per cent to 26 per cent of that of developed countries" (Ocampo 2014, 1), leaving a legacy of increased poverty and inequality across the nations. Moreover, the region has arguably the poorest income distribution

compared to any other region in the world (Huber and Stephens 2012). The region was plagued with constant financial crises, which left many citizens living in impoverished and precarious environments. As unemployment was on the rise, so were declines of tax contributions to fund the maturing social security systems in the region, where "the fiscal crisis of the state reduced subsidies, high inflation eroded the value of benefits or put a great strain on the system and created a debt to beneficiaries" (Huber and Bogliaccini 2008, 646). Neoliberalism replaced Keynesianism as the dominant ideological policy model after the debt crisis that was blamed on decades of decommodification and government intervention. The crisis ignited a response from International Financial Institutions (IFIs), most notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the US Agency for International Development, in an effort to combat worldwide adverse financial effects. Structural adjustment reforms were popular policy panacea proposals in the 1980s.

The late 1980s brought resurrection of international interest and attention to poverty reduction and alleviation efforts. After the global economic crisis sparked policy interventions by major international organizations and aid agencies, a great deal of research was conducted on sustainable poverty strategies and possible policy solutions. When the countries in the region were then economically stable enough, the focus shifted to counteract the intensified poverty and deterioration of living conditions caused by the debt crisis. In 1990 the World Bank's annual *World Development Report* addressed one of the most pressing issues obstructing economic development: poverty in the developing world (WDR 90; World Bank 1990). This led to the 1992 publishing of a *New Poverty Agenda* (Lipton and Maxwell) which attempted to outline a new, global approach to poverty reduction. The new poverty strategy centred around a two-pronged solution, where the first prong focused on promoting the productive use and growth in labour and the second aimed at improving access to social services, such as education and health (Bauch 1996).

In an effort to address the MDGs and target extreme poverty in the region, 'conditional cash transfers' (CCTs) are being widely implemented in Latin America in a collaborative effort between national governments and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) (Molyneux 2007b). CCTs quintessentially embodied the New Poverty Agenda, operating as a new form of neoliberal policy to approach policy relief and social welfare. There have been a variety of these CCT programmes, across Latin America, with nearly every nation in the region adopting a form of the policy (Sugiyama 2011). In globalised times diffusion is often used to describe the processes of

widespread adoption as "likely influenced by foreign pressures through complementary processes of learning through neighbours, professional norming through the international development community and incentives through international financial institutions" (Sugiyama 2011, 252). The CCTs have made great progress towards satisfying MDGs, specifically short-term poverty alleviation, increasing access to nutrition, and improving the health and education of children (Tabbush 2009). However, their programmes have been subject to a number of criticisms on their unintended, adverse effects on gender equity.

1.1 Thesis mission and approach

This thesis is concerned with the establishment and reform of different conditional cash transfer programmes in Argentina and Mexico. CCTs are complex phenomena, with diverse design components based on the country of implementation. For this project, I am interested in the gendered angle that CCTs evoke, focused primarily on the targeting of mothers as beneficiaries and how they have addressed and impacted gender relations.

A comparison between Mexico and Argentina sparked my interest because in many respects they are similar. In terms of economy, Mexico has the second-largest and Argentina the third-largest in Latin America (World Bank national accounts data and OECD National Accounts data files 2018). However, there are interesting differences in development, as Argentina is regarded as a welfare pioneer in the region and has historically ranked well in the UNDP's Human Development Index. While Mexico lagged considerably in early welfare development, the country is often cited as the first (in conjunction with Brazil) site of the CCT. I am interested in whether these factors have caused different trajectories in implementation. The overarching two-part question posed in this comparative case study is concerned with which country's CCT is more maternalistic and what explains the difference?

1.2 The structure of the thesis

Chapter two presents the fundamental concepts and literature necessary to understand CCTs within the broader Latin American welfare context. I will first present a background of CCT programmes in relation to social rights and welfare states. Then I explore literature on the feminization of poverty, maternalism, gender inequalities and vulnerabilities make an effort to link feminist theory

and political science. After, I provide an overview of relevant schools of political thought that may be of analytical use.

Chapter three focuses on the guiding questions of this case study. This thesis is primarily exploratory, looking to apply theoretical elements to help explain a puzzle.

Chapter four first offers a brief overview of Mexican and Argentinian socio-economic background, in order to situate their social policy. This is followed by an overview of the different manifestations of CCT policies throughout Mexican and Argentinian history, mostly looking at how these programmes' designs evolved to be major sources of social protection and identifying how they have impacted human development. Then, I present an analysis of a gender equity matrix, which grades each programmes' performance in relation to a set of principles. I indicate how the policies differ in their design and in practice and suggest which countries programmes are more heavily influenced by maternalism. The chapter ends by framing the major puzzle of this paper: why the CCT programmes in Argentina and Mexico have manifested so differently.

Chapter five's aim is to identify and to examine what forces are at play that led to the different social policy trajectories in Argentina and Mexico. This chapter invokes a historical institutionalist approach through a feminist lens, with the intention of finding some of the factors that have had an impact on CCTs' treatment of women and whether or not it addresses transformative or traditional gender relations.

Finally, *Chapter six* presents a conclusion of the main points of this thesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Latin American welfare states and conditional cash transfers

2.1.1 Defining welfare institutions

An assortment of government policies can collectively be understood as welfare, meaning they are used to promote public welfare. "A country's welfare regime is the collective representation of a country's social protection policies" (Dion 2010, 3), whereas social protection policies are understood as social insurance (associated with labour market participation and tend to protect against disability, old-age and unemployment) and social assistance (a non-contributory benefit that can target certain groups, with the goal of reducing poverty, or can be universal, such as healthcare or pensions).

Much of the recent research in the field of welfare studies have focused on regimes. Welfare typologies offer insight into the development of public policy while shedding light on the role of the state and the "interaction of various practices for the reallocation of resources" (Martínez Franzoni 2008, 68). The trend of creating clusters to categorize welfare states has been largely inspired by Esping-Andersen's 1990 seminal work, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* that grouped western democracies by trends and formation of their social policy. The degree of decommodification, stratification, and welfare mix served as the major criteria to this comparative regime classification. At the time this replaced using social spending as the means of measuring a states' commitment to welfare. Esping-Andersen takes into account the formative principles of development, paying special attention to historical coalitions and political behaviour.

2.1.2 Welfare in Latin America

It may seem surprising due to one-dimensional portraits of the Global South and developing nations, but Latin American nations have a rather extensive history of welfare policies. While the quality and generosity vary across countries (and within countries, it can vary based on location), a trend in the region was the rise in welfare and other forms of "social insurance as part of attempts by authoritarian states to co-opt the rising working class in the 1940s and 1950s" (Craske 2003, 54). The region's welfare has been classified as primarily conservative Bismarckian (Lopreite 2012; Martínez Franzoni 2008). In relation to Esping-Andersen's typology, these regimes relate closest to the corporatist countries in continental Europe; this is due to their systems that are earning-related, contributory social security paid to male breadwinners. Prior to the development of CCT programmes in Latin America, the majority of the welfare policies throughout the region

were provided under the labour market as social insurance, namely healthcare and pensions (Stampini & Tornarolli 2012). At the centre of development in the region was Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI), a policy strategy that prioritised domestic production over imports in order to limit the reliance on the foreign periphery (Craske 2003). Latin American industrialisation was funded through international lending, but when the 1970s interest rates skyrocketed, the countries experienced terrible exchange rates which ultimately lead to the astronomical levels of debt. A domino effect of a spiralling economy collapsed when Mexico publicised, they were unable to make debt payments, resulting in financial institutions to lose faith in the region.

Largely inspired by Esping-Andersen, Filgueira (1998) created the first Latin American welfare regime typology; he outlined three typologies of what he denotes 'social states' in Latin America: stratified universalistic, dual, and exclusionary. According to Filgueira what set the states in the region apart from welfare states in advanced democracy is that in Latin America the policies "lacked the idea and political basis to construct some form of social citizenship beyond equalizing opportunities and providing insurance-based schemes for sickness, old age, and disability" (Filgueira 2005: 19). Each classification combines state and private (market) provisions, which has intertwined the roles of providers of social policy. Argentina is categorised into the first group, stratified universalism, due to its extensive social policies that were somewhat restrictive based on occupation group. The management of the debt crisis in Argentina made the stratified universalism more market-oriented than state-oriented. Mexico is classified as a 'dual' country due to the combination of stratified universalism for urban citizens, but exclusion policies that left essentially no public services and redistribution for citizens in rural areas.

Huber and Stephens (2005) categorize two types of social policy in Latin America: (1) social protection and (2) human capital formation. The distinction between the two is key in differentiating the goals of public policy. The social investment perspective view expenditures as improving the skills and knowledge of the next generation of the workforce. The logic behind the social investment is when citizens are more skilled or have higher educational attainment, they gain access to better-paying jobs in the labour market, which positions them out of poverty. Investment in human capital cannot be pursued in isolation, it must be pursued in conjunction with reductions in poverty (Huber and Stephens 2012, 4). The neoliberal entrenched agenda that targeted the region did not make a comprehensive plan for social reform within the structural, economic reforms. In

an effort to address the shortcoming of social policy (read: structural adjustment) during the time of the financial crisis emerged conditional cash transfer programmes.

2.1.3 Conditional cash transfer programmes

CCTs are a hybrid social policy that intends to reduce the factors that lead to extreme and multigenerational poverty (Yanes 2011). In line with the international strategies for poverty reduction in the developmental context, CCTs were designed to offer social protection, while making investments in human capital development to contribute to overall economic growth. These programmes are non-contributory, means-tested cash transfer, that provides social assurance through human capital investment. These social reform proposals began emerging in the late 1990s (*with flagship programmes in Brazil and Mexico*) as an innovative social policy to target poverty and became more widespread through the early 2000s.

As the name implies, these welfare policies are *conditional*, meaning it is essential for an individual to meet certain government expectations to receive the cash benefit; conditions are outlined as pre-defined requirements for participation. Conditions vary depending on the country and program but can range from ensuring school attendance to parental seminars on hygiene and health. The conditions are created with two objectives in mind, a short-term goal that aims at alleviating poverty and a long-term intention to end poverty cycles. CCT programme design may vary from country to country across the region. Three common features found include (1) a monetary transfer that favours women as beneficiaries, (2) conditions surrounding education and health, and (3) targeting provisions (De Britto 2004).

In general, income transfers are a common policy antidote for a macroeconomic downturn (Galasso and Ravallion). Entitlements in Latin America, like the United States, are more focused on individualism—the burden is not meant to fully fall on the state, and the beneficiaries must bear some of the responsibility; this is not surprising due to the weight of the Washington Consensus[1]. Neoliberal social policy reforms are less about social rights and social citizenship and more about poverty eradication. The conditions ignite a co-responsibility, therefore families must play their part and prove 'good behaviour' to receive their cash transfers, and the governments can rely on

[1] The Washington Consensus was a transnational policy paradigm that was created to address the Latin American debt crisis. The Consensus presented ten recommendations, which offered a neoliberal economic model (See Williamson 1990)

punishing beneficiaries by excluding them from their transfers if they do not behave within the parameters of the government's conditions. The *cash* transfer, as opposed to in-kind benefits, allows for immediate alleviation and action against poverty (Tabbush 2009, 487). Moreover, the conditional nature is a necessary selling point for many governments who need to convince their citizens that this anti-poverty policy is not 'just a free handout' to the undeserving poor. This aspect is why some scholars consider CCT programs not to be a *welfare* provision, but rather acting as a part of *workfare*, as conditions are a political factor (Yanes 2011). Others deem CCTs to be a mix of social protection and labour market policies (Barrientos and Hulme 2009; Gentilini 2007).

2.2 Gender and social policy

Welfare studies are formed around "assumptions about gender that are increasingly out of phase with many peoples' lives and self-understandings" (Fraser 1994, 591). In the mid 20th century, the normative assumption of family composition has been the male breadwinner model. When the male head of household operates in the paid labour force, he receives a wage to support himself, his wife, and their dependents. In return, the woman is tasked with unpaid domestic labour and childrearing. The *Three World of Welfare Capitalism*, while influential in welfare studies, neglected to address the role of gender in the discussion of welfare eligibility criteria and citizenship. In response, gender-specific typologies have emerged in scholarly work in order to indicate whether states have promoted or discouraged the traditional, sexual division of labour. Fraser's regime typology indicated a 'breadwinner' versus 'caregiver' model, where if welfare policies were formulated and developed around these gender assumptions, then social-insurance programmes will have a legacy of the traditional sexual division of labour (Fraser 1994; Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012). Orloff's study on welfare state strategies indicates the prominence of maternalism in certain welfare states (2006). The purpose of these typologies is to indicate the degree a state promotes gender *equity*, as represented through whether they encourage female employment and equal caring responsibly or if they encourage support for traditional structures as indicated "by scant provision of day-care and subsidisation of stay-at-home mothers" (Blofield and Martínez Franzoni 2015, 42).

2.2.1 Social citizenship and gender citizenship

To best understand the welfare state, it is necessary to understand the phenomenon that is citizenship. TH Marshall coined social citizenship in 1950 in relation to his deep analysis of citizenship, where he distinguished between types of citizen rights: civil, political and social.

Marshall's conceptualization defines citizenship as simply full access and membership to a community to "all who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed" (Marshall 1950, 32). The first manifestation of citizenship is the concept of civil rights, which are related to freedom (including freedom of speech or freedom to own property). In the eighteenth century, according to Marshall, civil rights were widespread and already largely granted to men. Political rights refer to franchise, a right that was once just granted to white, property-owning men but slowly extended to all the citizens in society (Marshall 1950, 20). Finally, Marshall discusses social citizenship, as they emerged in the twentieth century to complete citizens' package of rights. Social rights are "the whole range from a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (*ibid* 11). Social citizenship is often cited as the foundational basis for the welfare state as it outlines the obligations a state has to provide for their subjects (Esping-Andersen 1990). The idea is that access to welfare provisions provide economic and social security that secure the right and removes structural barriers for individuals to participate fully in society. According to Esping-Andersen "social policy makes people eligible for resources—whether cash, services, and/or time—based on a number of criteria, from citizenship and work to social need and family status" (Arza 2018, 410).

Sarvasy provides an academic-feminist take on social citizenship that can be broken down into four originations "(1) new modes of citizenship activities, (2) a socialised formulation of rights, (3) new spaces for citizen participation, (4) an emancipatory use of gender difference to expand and redefine gender equality" (1997, 56). Marshall's understanding of citizenship requires individuals to take on certain rights and duties, ones that emphasise the importance of paid labour participation. Without covering the duties of the female citizen, "Marshall assumes a two-tiered notion of social citizenship activities: the male citizen-worker and the second-class female citizen-mother, who depends on her working man for her access to social entitlement" (Sarvasy 1997, 57). In doing so, this definition also ignores the contribution of unpaid domestic labour and caring responsibilities necessary for society. This is especially relevant when considering Marshall published his influential essay in the early twentieth century when women did not participate in the paid labour force at the rate they do today; their contribution was not attributed or encompassed in social citizenship. Feminist critiques of political theory on citizenship challenge the normative practices that have left room for gender exclusion, namely attaching welfare benefits to paid labour participation.

As Molyneux describes, "citizenship provides a political language for thinking about broader questions of social membership" (2001,163). Despite changing times and expanding social membership for women, they have always participated in the community. In fact, many women ran philanthropies at this time that offered private welfare provisions that provided citizens benefits and services necessary to fully participate in the community. Despite community action, security for women "came from paid work where it could be found, from marriage, kin and community, and from the church" (Molyneux 2006, 428). The feminist understanding of social citizenship that emphasizes the connection between female citizenship and social democracy…removing the rhetoric of female dependency on the men to access state support. The historical argument before widespread women's suffrage, that women deserved access not only to political rights but also to social rights because they were already conducting a "gendered type of citizen social service" by contributing caring and domestic practices vital to society" (Sarvasy 1997, 56)—"women's distinct incorporation into public life created and required a female-privileged notion of social citizenship" (*ibid* 56).

If citizenship is "the recognition of rights in liberal societies" (Dominguez 2016, 1), women have had a contentious relationship with it. Citizenship in Latin America was based on a masculine model, women and their associated feminine attributes traditionally excluded. In an effort to incorporate women into the political concept of citizenship, there arose a gender-differentiated concept of citizenship, where "maternity would, therefore, become as relevant politically as the capacity to struggle for the fatherland" (*ibid*). Therefore, "the full inclusion of women into citizenship required a reconceptualization of the male-based hierarchy of what counts as publicly valued and rewarded human activity" (Sarvasy 1997, 58). If caring for the next generation is expected and not publicly valued, it will not be a surprise if women continue to be unable to fully access social citizenship. Gendered dispositions and the gendered divisions are related to inequality between power and access to state resources. Women gain access to informal citizenship, which emphasises inequalities between power and resources between the genders. Informal citizenship refers to the "satisfaction, self-esteem, recognition and respect from their motherhood role and from activities" (Molyneux 2001, 41) that constitute a social fulfilment that isn't directly related to social rights. "The entrance of women into public life rested on a complete re-evaluation of caring and private service activities" (Sarvasy 1997, 59).

2.2.2 Feminisation of poverty

Gendered impact of social adjustment is due to the intensification of women's reproductive demands and responsibilities. The 'feminisation of poverty' acknowledges that women have been found to be more susceptible to poverty at a higher rate (compared to that of men) and work in informal sectors, are confined to the unpaid domestic sphere, and therefore have less access to pensions and welfare benefits that are tied to the formal labour market. Women operate in the informal sectors of the workforce often because it is flexible enough to ensure they can still complete their own household chores and childcare. Despite this, "poverty alleviation pays minimal attention to gender issues" (Craske 2003, 58). The poverty initiatives usually increase female workloads and responsibilities because it does not acknowledge or understand the dynamics of the 'care economy'. For example, "women spend more time cooking to save money, care more for sick and elderly to avoid medical costs and sometimes reduce their own calorie intake to protect that of their children" (Craske 2003, 61). Structural adjustment increased the load on women when the state drastically cut welfare provisions that many families in Latin America came to rely on. In turn, women took the brunt of these social costs, due to the "traditional reliance on women to provide the necessary services to ensure reproduction at different levels of the economy" (Craske 2003, 63) when the state cut the effective mechanisms that once provided them. It would be gender unaware of CCTs to not take into account the caring economy; this could limit the effectiveness of anti-poverty by discouraging some to apply who truly need it or punishment of charging women unable to comply.

Women have come to have a distinct role in poverty management (Bradshaw 2008; Molyneux 2007; Tabbush 2009; Tabbush 2010). Gender-differentiated subjectivities have been (re)produced by international organisations in the post-Washington Consensus policy environment. Female unpaid reproductive responsibilities went unaddressed as a problem, as the gender norms were reformulated in a neoliberal setting (Bedford 2008). Altering gender relations, specifically in relation to improving the status of women, was not originally considered as one of the CCT program's major objectives; however, gender relations are affected by the innovative social policy. Despite not making improved gender equality an explicit goal, these CCT programs utilize women as key policy instruments (Martínez-Frazoni and Voorend 2012). It is an undeniable trend that women have become central to completing conditions; "either explicitly written into their legislation, or in practice, women constitute the main recipients of the cash stipends offered to beneficiary households and are positioned as the key social actors expected to perform the require

co-responsibilities" (Tabbush 2009, 488). When women participate in CCTs, they are "the perfect substitute of the works and service the state was supposed to provide" (Dominguez 2016, 29). Therefore, their role is not for personal development, but to ensure the social services are covered, which aligns well with the privatisation aspect of neoliberal reform; responsibility of government anti-poverty initiatives is transferred to a co-responsibility of mothers and their families. Programme conditions specifically are the major source of feminist's critiques of CCT policies, as they claim it requires poor women with children to mould to the 'correct' notion of motherhood without maintaining the same expectation for the fathers.

But why target women? This logic is based on the explicit acknowledgement that women guarantee a stronger commitment to the overall security and welfare of their family, suggesting that the same is not morally implicit for men (Bradshaw 2008; Molyneux 2006). It has been reported that men are more likely to retain parts of benefits and transfers for their own personal use (Bradshaw 2008). Therefore, transferring the cash to women would circumvent the threat of men misspending the resources and safeguard that the intended recipients: their children. When governments use strategic targeting and gendered inclusion, it is based on "socially constructed altruism of women" that results in improvement for their entire family's welfare as opposed to just their own (Bradshaw 2008, 195). The *World Bank Gender and Development Group* published research in the early 2000s that cites placing resources within women's responsibility is the most efficient way for governments to allocate and has since publishing has reinforced the generalised assumption that efforts to alleviate poverty should foremost (if not exclusively) through women (Chant 2003). The World Bank and the UN have also acknowledged the link between economic growth and decreased gender inequality, so female poverty alleviation has become of greater importance on the policy agenda (specifically on the UN's MDGs and SDGs). This has further emphasized the efficiency gains of imploring women with the responsibility and the task of poverty alleviation. Instead of these developing CCT programmes serving women, women are essentially serving the welfare programme, tasked with an onerous burden of ending poverty. Maintaining gender segmented trajectories becomes the solution for governments to easily manage programmes, basically for people to be incorporated into society they must follow liberal welfare arrangements where men's tasks are paid labour and women are associated with domestic work and motherhood (Tabbush 2009; Levitas 2005). What is the significance of gender for citizenship? Focusing on the underdeveloped access of women's citizenship acknowledges that "women's responsibilities have increased, but not their rights" (Dominguez 2016, 39). Greater attention to the shortcomings of

these policies is the only way to counter how gender discrimination has only intensified through feminisation of poverty.

2.3 Maternalism

Maternalism is a view of women as a group with common features, unique to this gender. This ideology's manifestation of gender suggests women (as a whole) have shared understandings based on motherly strengths and inherent knowledge (Kutz-Flamenbaum 2010). This construction of womanhood asserts women are (*and are expected to be*) "the moral conscience of humanity and asserts women's legitimate investment in political affairs" under this notion (Kutz-Flamenbaum 2010: 1). Maternalism highlights the link between social inclusion, citizenship and participation in these Latin American anti-poverty policies.

There are different manifestations of maternalism—*state maternalism, neoliberal maternalism, working-class maternalism*—and on-going debate in academia on what truly constitutes a definition, and whether maternalism is indeed feminist or not. This ideology posits the role of mother as an intrinsically social and civil duty, and under a more historical perspective, maternalism is more closely aligned with politically conservative ideals of reproduction and a subtle form of female subordination (Jo Plant and Van der Klein 2012: 4). On the other side, we have paternalism, which focuses on policies for men. This compliments maternalism, as the clean-cut role for the father, is participating in the paid labour force in order to serve as the family breadwinner.

In the Latin American context, *marianismo* is a culturally relevant manifestation of maternalism. *Marianismo* is a term for the idealised female gender role in Hispanic society. Characterised through hyper-feminine behaviour, this stereotyped gender expectation has strong cultural significance in Latin America, especially in Mexico (Hall 2005). It is contrasted with but also complements, the male equivalent of *machoism.* This "hybrid complex of idealised femininity offered a series of beliefs about women's spiritual and moral superiority to men that acted to legitimate their subordinate domestic and societal roles" (Chant 2003, 9). It is linked to high fertility rates, traditional home life and most importantly, altruistic motherhood of self-sacrifice. Although it is not inherently religious ideology, it is perpetuated by the Roman Catholic Church which carries substantial weight in Latin America; the name alone is in reference the 'Virgin Mary, mother of God'.

Welfare scholars often view maternalism as distinctive from feminism; that is, an alternative ideology that offers women a small range of policies and a tighter role in the state. Under this view, women are associated with care and the morality of motherhood. For the sake of clarity and uniformity, I define maternalist welfare as the practices and policies used to improve the condition of mothers, children and families, but without attention to improving the citizenship of women. The trend of the literature of maternalism and the welfare state explores the state's role in constructing gender roles and expectation, with maternalism and paternalism in relation to one another; this legacy of "the breadwinner and the homemaker proved to be mutually dependent and mutually reinforcing categories" (Jo Plant and Van der Klein 2012, 6). This system also marginalizes men who participate foremost as fathers, degraded as "feminine" in a culture that promotes hyper-masculine imagery for men (Molyneux 2006). Maternalism in this context offers contractual citizenship to women, based on the one-dimensional understanding of motherhood, as explored above (Razavi and Hassim 2006). I will be using maternalism as an analytical label for policies that accentuate motherhood over womanhood, paying close attention to how traditional welfare has constructed female social citizenship and whether CCT programmes have since paved the way for new female citizenship.

2.4 Historical institutionalism and path dependency

Historical intuitionalism (HI) operates under the wider institutionalist school of thought. This school of thought "characterizes specifically those historical sequences in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties" (Mahoney 2000, 507). Using meso-level analysis, this approach seeks to explain patterns or changes of policy and political behaviour based on institutions' formal and informal rules that create "norms and practices embedded in the organization of politics, society and the economy" (Mackay et al 2010, 575). While mainly concerned with structure, HI also underscores how institutions can not only limit actors' actions but also how they can be a strategic resource. Under this understanding, actors are mutually rule-following and strategically self-interested. This research tradition addresses puzzles though the study of history and institutions, emphasising roles and trends of development (Fioretos, Falleti and Sheingate 2016). The three features of comparative historical analysis according to Mahoney and Rueschemeyer: (1) concentrates on causal explanations, (2) analyses processes over time, and (3) implores "systematic and contextualized comparison" (2003, 10).

Historical institutionalists address political puzzles through identifying "the causal mechanisms that lie behind particular empirical processes" (Waylen 2009, 246). Rather than invoking functional explanations, most "historical institutionalist literature implies a nearly deterministic form of path dependency in which institutional stability is punctuated by exogeneous shocks that produce significant institutional change" (Dion 2010, 8). Path dependence is beyond the commonly described, one-dimensional view that 'history matters', requiring not only a reflection on a chain of historical events but making the link of how that set of historical events are contingent occurrences, making it a theory-laden process. Basic conceptualization that past events guide future developments, emphasizing that events that occurred early on in the history have greater impact and consequences on the sequence (Mahoney 2000). Path dependency is used to understand the change or absence of change to public policy, and range "ranging from the very loose to the more rigidly determining, to look at the ways in which slow-moving causal processes are linked" (Waylen 2009, 247). Therefore, this characterises the development of welfare states into a trajectory as institutional stability that can only be disrupted by intense changes. Levi's more focused definition emphasizes the relativity of benefits and the costs benefit analysis of diverging from the path, as "once a country or region has started down a track, the costs of reversal are very high" (1997: 28). There is greater reinforcement of benefits (increasing returns) the longer they are taking steps in a particular direction. Increasing returns are particularly attractive, accentuating politics' temporal nature and thus illuminating the persistence of the path that makes changes to policy and to institutions costly and difficult (Costa-Font and Rodríguez-Oreggia 2005).

After an institution is initially produced, the path dependence analysis seeks to explain the mechanisms at play that result in the pattern of reproduction. The speed of trigger mechanisms has the ability to "enable an institution to take advantage quickly of contingent events that work in its favour, solidifying a position of dominance before alternative institutional options can recover" (Mahoney 2000: 515). Pierson emphasises the collective nature of politics that are "subject to increasing returns" which leads to "considerable stability of patterns of political mobilization over time" (Pierson 2000: 258). When political institutions hit this status quo, they become increasingly resistant to change, requiring a strong coercive power to create a 'jump' to another path (*ibid*). Deviance from a path is easier when it is centralized, authoritarian power, which limit the high electoral costs associated with altering a path trajectory. In addition to the focus on developmental pathways, HI analyses also describe cases where trajectories have not been completely changed, but also instances of institutional 'layering' where "new institutions added on to existing ones,

particularly if coalitions lack sufficient support to innovate" (Waylen 2009, 247), or of institutional 'conversion', where newly established groups become incorporated into existing ones. The overall approach works to demonstrate how different national norms and rules have an overarching historical context that influences production and reproduction of institutions, which illustrates how "different mechanisms of reproduction sustain different institutions, common international trends can have differing domestic consequences" (Waylen 2009, 247).

2.4.1 A gendered approach: feminist institutionalism

A feminist lens to institutionalism offers a distinct influence for political analysis. Attention to gender can help describe the significance of improvements to women's representation, involvement and inclusion in politics; this is especially important to reduce gender inequality. Gender has been widely unobserved in foundational political theory. A gendered analysis of institutionalism also referred to as feminist institutionalism (FI), integrates feminist literature in order to analyse the incorporation of women into formal and informal institutions to reveal "the gender dimensions of political institutions and their performance, and gendered processes of political change, despite shared interests" (Mackay et al. 2010, 579). FI works to fill the gaps left in evaluation from the gender-blindness of the school of thought. "Not only are gender relations seen to be 'institutional', but these relations are also 'institutionalized', embedded in particular political institutions and constraining and shaping social interaction" (*ibid*, 580).

FI emphasizes that the 'rules of the game' were created with gender bias, that is a construction of what is deemed adequate behaviour from men and women (Chappell 2006). Moreover, these "political and policy-making institutions are structured by gender assumptions and 'dispositions' and produce outcomes including policies, legislation and rulings that are influenced by gender norms" (Mackay et al. 2010, 582). In relation to power, traditional understanding is that the feminine traits attached to women (such as the maternalist attributes) are not associated with power, which disadvantages their access to institutional resources. Concerned with transformative features, not only in relation to the power associated with gender power distributions (as produced and reproduced by institutions), but also how the agendas change and how the subsequent changes impact gender relations. Moreover, a FI analysis states that power "is seen as self-reinforcing, as power inequalities become amplified and more entrenched over time." (Mackay et al. 2010, 579). Which can then centralise the role of power in analysis: institutional change is "driven by ongoing political conflict and contestation" (*ibid*).

FI on formal institutions engages with political parties, bureaucratic branches, electoral systems, as well as the interaction between the state and feminist/women's groups on a quest for policy change. Other research is also concerned with the informal shaping of institutions—the influence of informal parliamentary norms on the political outcome of 'women's' policy, or how strong cultural forces of marginalization or stereotypes reinforce societal hierarchy. FI analysis is also concerned with the day-to-day, interpersonal level, where everyday citizens have continuous interactions that shape norms and rules, how institutions (both formal and informal) have distinctive impacts on men and women and how that creates an environment that produces and reproduces laws, rules, and norms.

2.5 Power resource theory

The 1970s observed the publishing of a number of theoretical explanations for the welfare state, expanding beyond the two prominent schools that produced the theoretical traditions of structural-functionalism and pluralism (Olsen and O'Connor 1998). These competing accounts of the origin of the welfare state include the power resource theory (PRT).

Power resource scholars rely on Marshall's three definitions of citizenship (civil, political, and social). Under the understanding that social rights are the core of citizenship, they identify two sources of major powers in politics: capital and right to politically mobilize (Korpi 1998; Orloff 1993).

Korpi defines power resources "as the attributes (capacities or means) of actors (individual or collectivises) which enable them to reward or to punish other actors who have at least some interests in the attributes of the other actors" (1985, 33). Front and centre to this political school of thought is the relationship between labour mobilization and social policy. PRT acknowledges the capitalist class have the most structural access, by controlling economic production, to power in society. In this dichotomous relationship between capital and labour, the capitalists have a powerful incentive to take advantage of the labour; however, this relationship is not static. Labour can access political power through group mobilization to improve their status and move their interests forward. Shifting power to favour the working class required access to politics to "thereby allow it to implement social reform and alter distributional inequalities to a significant degree" (Olsen and O'Connor 1998, 5).

Therefore, variance in welfare states across western democracies comes down to the outcome of different class-struggles for social rights, asserting that greatest development would be in states where labour had the most political power (Esping-Andersen 1990). Western states with particularly strong commitments to welfare policies were particularly powerful due to political coalitions between the working-class labourers with farmers or other white-collar workers (*ibid*). The strength of the political left is one power resource that is often studied in relation to the prevalence and level of social welfare policies and benefits (Huber and Stephens 1993). The "four key dimensions of welfare effort associated welfare regimes [are]: decommodification, solidarity, redistribution, and full employment" (Olsen and O'Connor 1998, 14).

Feminist scholars have critiqued PRT for largely ignoring the implications welfare regimes have on gender inequality (Orloff 1993; O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver 1999). While the role of the family is often discussed in terms of welfare provisions, welfare typologies such as Esping-Andersen's have widely failed to investigate the familial power dynamics. This viewpoint neglects that women serve as the primary welfare source in the family, engaging in most of the unpaid domestic labour and caregiving. For women, there are obligations attached to their gender and purpose—participation in society is still linked to reproduction, with "the subjugation of women in the private sphere" (Orloff 1993, 309). When considering the gendered relationship of the division of labour between families, the state, and the markets, as in the PRT "provision of welfare only 'counts' when it occurs through state or the market, while women's unpaid work in the home is ignored" (*ibid* 312). Therefore, the female experience "is more negative in nations where they encounter the welfare state primarily as social assistance clients rather than as consumers, employee, or political citizens" (Olsen and O'Connor 1998, 17).

3. METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Conceptual framework in Latin America

Many formative theories of the welfare state centre around western democracies, however in Latin America many of the states developed welfare and social policies before or during their transition to from authoritarianism/state-sponsored socialism to democracy. Class-centric methods have been largely used to describe welfare development in the western context (Korpi 1983; Esping-Andersen 1990; Olsen and O'Connor 1998). Latin American nations also experienced greater, chronic instability throughout the twentieth century, often accompanied by the use of state-induced violence (Kling 1956). Instead of focusing on the organisation of wage-earners in the social democratic movement, PRT in Latin America can still look at the shift of power to favour the working class, led by coalition building and political alliances.

Huber and Stephens's (2012) book offers the explanatory factor of the PRT in the development of Latin American welfare states, specifically the influence of power constellations in democratic development—"democracy made it possible for social movements, civil society organisations, and parties of the left to form, grow, and slowly gain influence on policy to shape it more egalitarian direction" (Huber and Stephens 2012, 12). In the Latin American context, historical institutionalism has been combined with class collation approaches (power resource theory) to understand the impact of labour incorporation and democratisation in order to best explain the politics of the welfare state (Collier and Collier 1991; Dion 2010). Blending these two approaches while maintaining a feminist perspective offers the potential for a comprehensive understanding of the complexities.

The following section is a review of the development and reform of CCT programmes in Argentina and Mexico. The data is a compilation of academic texts, existing programme evaluations, national statistics, and analysis of legislation and government publications. What is the best way to assess social policy's impact on female access to benefits as well as the broader aspect of gender relations? The focus is in relation to "social policy's equalizing effects, particularly in women's own, autonomous access to resources and loosely dependency on both markets and men, while altering the sexual division of labour that is behind gender inequality in the household and the labour market" (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018, 410). To determine if and how CCT policies have altered gender relations, I look to "positive change" in female eligibility to access social benefits on criteria beyond dependence on males (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018; Orloff 1993). Building

off eligibility, I will dissect the policies to determine what resources are provided (including the amount of transfer). A combination of generosity and conditions of the benefit determine the degree of autonomy a woman gains through economic transfer.

The following chapter empirically addresses:
Inclusion and access to social programmes. Do all women have access to social programmes or are these staunch maternalist policies (derived from family entitlements)?

1. Are the policy mechanisms gender-neutral or do they reinforce gender biases?
2. Eligibility criteria: "Women's access in their own terms stresses economic autonomy, while access derived from family arrangements is linked to the idea of economic dependence on the male breadwinner" (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018: 411)
3. The effect of eligibility on the sexual division of labour. Do the policies reinforce traditional ideas of women as primary caregivers?

This analysis focuses on both the positive attributes of CCT, as well as how in practice these policies might have circumvented improvements to gender equality. Finally, the discussion will compare and contrast, through conceptual lenses, what the reasonings may be for different manifestations of a similar programme, and different impacts on gender relations.

4. ANALYSIS

In this section I will be dissecting the different CCTs in Mexico—*Oportunidades*, *Prospera*, and *Benito Juárez Scholarship*— and in Argentina—*Jefes y Jefas*, *Familias por la Inclusión Social*, and *the Universal Child Allowance.* Following a breakdown of the components of each programme, I will offer a brief evaluation of the programme's impact and whether it achieved some of its goals and targets. The programme profiles first assess CCTs in general, necessary to offer oversight before distinguishing the programme impact on women and gender relations. Lastly, I will assess each programme concerning a gender equity matrix, to indicate how the countries have performed in their commitment to female parity.

Below is a brief country profile to provide a socio-economic overview that might be of relevance to the case study; these characteristics offer a basis for identifying differences that can affect the demands of each respective population. First, the data is presented in 2000, as to situate in the timeframe when CCTs were first established in each country.

Table 1: Country Profiles, 2000

Country	Population	GDP ($USD)	Poverty rate	GINI index	Unemployment
Argentina	36.87 million	284.2 billion	26.30%	51.1	15.0%
Mexico	98.9 million	707.9 billion	45.10%	52.60	2.56%

Data from CEPALSTAT (2020) & ILOSTAT (2020) databases, based on the latest available statistics
**poverty rate as measured by the poverty headcount ratio, the international measure of those living under $5.50/day*
***Gini index- where 0 represents perfect equality and 100 represents perfect inequality*

Economic "crisis and restructuring [had] also produced widening gaps in income distribution" (Craske 2003, 51). Mexico had 32 per cent of households below the poverty line in 1977 and that proportion grew to 39 per cent in 1989 and 43 per cent in 1997. In Argentina, 9 per cent of the population were living below the poverty line in 1980, which grew to 16 per cent in 1990 and then reduced to 13 per cent in 1997 (Craske 2003; CEPALSTAT 2020). Despite a much larger economy, the Gini index reveals Mexico has greater income inequality.

Table 2: Country profiles, 2020

Country	Population	GDP ($USD)	Poverty rate	GINI index	Unemployment
Argentina	45.2 million	519.87 billion	7.10%	45.4	9.2%
Mexico	126.2 million	1.22 trillion	34.8%	41.4	3.38%

Data from CEPALSTAT (2020) & ILOSTAT (2020) databases, based on the latest available statistics
**poverty rate as measured by the poverty headcount ratio, the international measure of those living under $5.50/day*

4.1 Programme profiles

In many ways, Mexico has been celebrated as the first success story of CCT programmes that led to inspiring other countries in the region to adopt this new form of social policy, offering a blueprint of how to roll out programmes. In response to the 1995 tequila crisis in Mexico, the government replaced its existing poverty strategy with human capital investments. This financial crisis left a legacy of extreme and persistent poverty, with one in five citizens living under the poverty line, a number that heavily affected families (Levy and Rodríguez, 2005). In 1997, *Progresa* was established to provide support for households, targeting those living under the food poverty line in rural areas. In 2002, *Progresa* was renamed *Oportunidades* to rebrand, as the programme would grow to expand coverage from solely rural areas to encompass semi-urban and urban areas (UNELAC 2019). The programme was jointly financed by the national government and the World Bank (Tepepa 2019, 25).

Table 3: Mexico's CCT programmes

Programme	Years	Coverage*	Expenditure**
Oportunidades (formerly Progresa)	1997-2002 2002-2014	29,375,664 people in recipient households (*23.89% of population*)	$5,580,373,450 (*.42% of GDP*)
Prospera Social Inclusion Programme	2014- 2019	31,245,838 people in recipient households (*24.13% of population*)	$4,298,920,183 (*.35% of GDP*)
Becas Benito Juárez	June 2019-present	35,732,842 people in recipient households (*27.25% of population*)	$536,598,336 (*--% of GDP*)

*Data from UNECLAC *Coverage and expenditure based on the latest available year ** In USD*

According to the Mexican government, the objective of this programme was to target extreme poverty through development initiatives that combine cash transfers and coordinated government intervention to improve education, health, and nutrition (Programa de Desarrollo Humano Oportunidades 2012). The Ministry of Human Development acknowledges short, medium, and long-term design incentives to improve well-being, stating they specially use a gendered approach to ensure girls and boys finish their secondary educations (*ibid*). The program's designers refer to conditions as co-responsibilities, deemed as necessary to promote human development to break the cycle of poverty. There are ten components[2] that make up the entirety of *Oportunidades* (UNELAC 2019*)*. Each sub-programme may vary in their target beneficiary, mode of transfer/delivery, the frequency of the transfer, the amount of the transfer, recipient of transfer, and lastly the conditionalities. Out of the ten sub-programmes, seven specifically name the mother as the recipient of the transfer. Out of the three that does not name the mother as the specific recipient, *Apoyo adultos mayores* delivers the transfer directly to the elderly beneficiary, *Jóvenes con oportunidades* creates a bank account for the student that can only be accessed upon their graduation of high school, and finally, *Paquete básico de salud* offers a National Health Card for all household members.

Education benefits are dependent upon grade level and gender, where girls receive a higher average sum than boys (Bradshaw 2008). The money is contingent upon 'successful progress' toward the programmes set educational and health-related targets. These transfers are also dependent upon the mother taking part in workshops and seminars on "related health, nutrition, and hygiene themes," as well being responsible for their child/ren's school attendance and health check-ups (Bradshaw 2008: 192). The promotion of girls' access to education through higher transfers is an important incentive to promote gendered rights and equality. There has been an increase in girls' enrolment in both secondary and higher education across Mexico since the inception of *Progresa* (Bradshaw 2008). The investment of "10,000 Mexican pesos more in support of the education of young women compared to young men" (Bradshaw 2008: 193) was vital to work to break the traditionalist belief that educated women hold less societal value. In

2 (1) *Apoyo alimentario* (Food support); (2) *Apoyo útiles escolares* (Support for school supplies); (3) *Apoyo educatión* (support for education); (4) *Papilla* (for baby food); (5) *Paquete básico de salud* (basic health package); (6) *Jóvenes con oportunidades* (youth with opportunities- educational grant); (7) *Apoyo energético* (energy support subsidy); (8) *Apoyo adultos mayores* (support for elderly); (9) *Vivir major* (food support component); (10) *Vivir major* (child support component)

response, there have been notable improvements to educational attainment. For individuals aged 15-25, the cash transfer benefits the family receives for staying enrolled in school has been reported as the primary occupation at a higher rate for beneficiaries compared to non-beneficiaries: 26.6 per cent of male indigenous recipients compared to 12.1 per cent for non-recipients, 28 per cent of female indigenous beneficiaries compared to 7.4 per cent of non-recipients, and 32.7 per cent of female mestizas recipients compared to 10.7 per cent of non-recipients (Oportunidades, 15 years later 2012, 32). Overall enrolment improved in secondary schools by 7.5 per cent for males and 11 per cent for females (UNDP 2020). Evaluations also report the decrease in the education gap between males and females, as well as improvements in parental expectations for female education attainment due to higher education grants for females (*ibid*).

Oportunidades grew significantly over the course of its eighteen years. In 1997 the programme provided cash transfers for 300,705 households, representing approximately 1.55 per cent og individual persons covered (UNECLAC 2020). In 2002, when *Progresa* was rebranded *Oportunidades* to encompass more of the country 4,240,000 households—representing an estimated 20.35 per cent of the population— were covered (*ibid*). From 2004 until 2007 five million households received cash transfers, and in 2008 the number of beneficiaries grew to 5,049,206 where it steadily propagated until 2014 (with 6,129,125 households covered) when the programme formally ended (*ibid*). The programme had a 60 per cent increase in regional administrative offices as well as the establishment of 75,000 'Communitarian Promotion Committees', which the Ministry of Human Development reported increased the quality of service by improving communication between households and programme ('Oportunidades 15 years later' 2012).

Prospera was launched as the successor of *Oportunidades* in 2014. *Prospera's* aim adopts the core of *Progresa* and *Oportunidades*: to improve the conditions and the capacity of citizens living in poverty through access to resources and information surrounding health, education, and nutrition (Lárraga 2016). The programme targets families and household living far below the *Línea de Bienestar Mínimo* (minimum well-being line), a measurement coordinated by the National Coordination Office that takes into account income against prices for goods necessary for sufficient nutrition and health (*ibid* 8). Coverage is extended across the country, regardless of the municipality. In order for the families to maintain beneficiary status, aside from completing conditions, they are required to have either a child under 12, a scholarship eligible holder, and/or a

woman under 49 as a member of the household (Lárraga 2016, 8). There are fourteen components[3] that comprise *Prospera* (UNECLAC 2020): Eight of the fourteen sub-programmes require the recipient of the transfer be the mother. One of the new components created with *Prospera* was financial inclusion specifically for women in beneficiary households. This provision of 'economic empowerment' promotes basic financial infrastructure by encouraging women to create their own banking accounts and providing access to financial services for savings, insurance, pensions, etc. The overall goal was to remove barriers that have left Mexican women financially vulnerable for decades.

Educational scholarships are calculated based on grade-level, school type and gender, dependent upon completion of the conditions of regular class attendance and continued enrolment in the programme. With exception of the urban pilot programme monthly stipend, rural and urban students of the same grade and gender receive the same scholarship amount. Primary school benefits do not vary based on gender and range from 175 MXN/month (for a third grade) to 350 MXN/month (for a sixth-grade student) (Lárraga 2016, 22). When students reach secondary school, amount variance based on gender begins; for example, a male student in the first year of secondary school qualifies for a 515 MXN monthly stipend, while a female student would qualify for 540 MXN. For each year completed of secondary school and high school, there is an incremental increase of benefits, with the highest allowance for students (between 14 and 21 years of age) in their third year of high school: 980 MXN/month for male students and 1,120 MXN for female students. The school supplies benefit either supply benefits in cash or in kind, with different payments dependent upon whether the student is in primary school or secondary/high school. Finally, *Jóvenes con Prospera* offers a one-off payment for scholarship holders upon completing high school before the age of 22. A household will max out their benefits at 1,825 MXN without high school scholarship students or at 2,945 MXN with high school scholarship students (*ibid*).

3 *(1) Apoyo alimentario* (Food support); (2) *Apoyo ùtiles escolares* (Support for school supplies); (3) *Apoyo educación* (Education support); (4) *Suplementos alimenticos* (Food supplements); (5) *Salud* (Health); (6) *Jóvenes con Prospera* (Youth with Prosperity education grant); (7) *Apoyo energético* (Energy Subsidy); (8) *Apoyo adultos mayores* (Elderly support); (9) *Apoyo alimentario "vivir major*" ("Vivir Mejor" food support component); (10) *Apoyo infantile "vivir major"* ("Vivir Mejor: child support component) *can be with or without conditions*; (11) *Becas para educación superior* (Higher education scholarships); (12) *Inclusión financiera* (Financial inclusion); (13) *Inserción laboral* (Labour inclusion); (14) *Salidas productivas* (Productive exits)

Concerning child poverty, this type of programme assumes that parental decision-making is the major obstacle to education when it is more often reported to be "higher economic or social barriers (*such as discrimination in their access to services*) that require other set of policies" that may force families to have their students drop out "because the alternative cost of not doing it will result in their inability to meet the basic needs of the family" (Arévalo 2018, 9). The Mexican government was successful in not only conducting internal analyses of their CCT programmes but also being responsive to external reports and critiques of conditions. Complying with certain conditions can be extremely costly for families, such as the associated costs of school (uniforms, supplies, transport) and the cost of time for the mothers that had to attend different workshops and training. *Prospera* was efficacious in identifying and countering some of these barriers, such as through adding the "school supply provision" to ensure there was not an additional cost for parents to endure to send their children to school that may serve as the difference between continued enrolment or dropping out.

Prospera was abolished in late 2019, due to widespread cuts under the President Manuel Andres Lopez administration. Two social policy initiatives were created to try and fill the replace the benefits of *Prospera*: (1) Benitos Juárez educational scholarship and (2) universal old-age pension. Nevertheless, there is a large coverage gap after 21 years of coverage under *Progresa, Oportunidades,* and *Prospera* not filled by these new initiatives. The *Becas Benito Juárez (or the Benito Juárez Scholarship for the Well-being)* was rolled out in 2019, replacing educational aspects of *Prospera*. Still classified as CCT by the UNECLAC, this programme strongly focuses on human development of children and adolescents through education and eliminated many of the health and nutritional aspects of the two predecessor CCT programmes.

The target population mirrors that of *Oportunidades* and *Prospera*: family households living in conditions of poverty and economic vulnerabilities. Former recipients considered so long as they continue to meet eligibility: families with children and young adults enrolled in public education. The programme is split into three components based on school level: (1) *Becas de Educación Básica* (primary education scholarship), (2) *Beca Universal para Estudiantes de Educación Media Superior* (secondary education scholarship), and (3) *Beca Jóvenes Escribiendo el Futuro* ("Youth Writing the Future" post-secondary education scholarship) (UNECLAC 2020).

The primary education scholarship qualifies students up to 15 years old enrolled in public school. This flat transfer of 800 MXN/month is made to the mother, contingent upon regular attendance and ensuring children (*under 15*) do not engage in work activities (UNECLAC 2020). There is a limit of one transfer per household, regardless of the number of children enrolled in primary school. The second component is directed at impoverished students, aged 14-21, enrolled in public secondary schools. Students are the preferred transfer recipients, but when the student does not control their finances the transfer is made to the mother. This scholarship offers a flat transfer of 800 MXN/month per student, with no maximum per household. Conditionalities require valid school registration, attendance, and oversight access to family socioeconomic status. The third component—*Beca Jóvenes Escribiendo el Futuro*—offers financial support to students (up to age 29) enrolled in a form of post-secondary education who are living in poverty. This flat transfer pays 2,400 MXN a month directly to the student. Conditions require enrolment and continence toward a tertiary education. This CCT programme is an aspect of the national labour inclusion programme, *Jóvenes Construyendo el Futro* ("Young people building the future"), also established in 2019. 2019 data of the programme's first year estimates 27.5 per cent of the population are receiving one of the three *Benito* scholarships.

When *Becas Benito Juárez* programme emerged, many aspects of anti-poverty and gender-sensitive indicators from *Progresa* and *Oportunidades* were eliminated. While still considered to be a conditional cash transfer, many conditions were eliminated besides the minimal expectation of continued enrolment and attendance to school. The programme encouraged transfers to be paid directly to the student scholarship recipient, with the exception of children under 15 enrolled in primary school which still pays directly to the mother. The gender-differentiated transfers for education that encouraged girls' education and highlighted the government's commitment to "female empowerment" were abolished. Yet, articles published on the programmes official website emphasize enrolment of women and girls, claiming over half of the recipients are female which shows their dedication to combating gender inequality and violence through education ("Más Del 50% De La Beca Universal Benito Juárez De Educación Media Superior Se Entrega a Mujeres", 2020). Conditions of health seminars or community training that required mother participation were also eradicated. It is too soon to tell if *Becas Benito Juárez* will be enough to assist the number of beneficiaries that were covered under the prior schemes.

Table 4: Argentina's CCT programmes

Programme	Years	Coverage*	Expenditure**
Jefas y Jefes de Hogar Descocupados	2002-2005	6,624,842 people in recipient households (*16.97% of population*)	$1,134,238,912 (*.57% of GDP*)
Familias por la Inclusión Social	2005-2010	2,989,261 people in recipient households (*7.34% of population*)	$615,568,287 (*.14% of GDP*)
Asignación Universal por Hijo para Protección Social	2009- present	3,994,424 people in recipient households (*8.97% of population*)	$3,175,658,532 (*.61% of GDP*)

Data from UN ECLAC
**Coverage and expenditure based on the latest available year ** In USD*

Argentina's first CCT program, '*Plan Jefes y Jefas de Hogar Desocupados: Derecho Familiar a la Inclusión Social*,' was introduced in 2002 in response to the 2001 economic crisis, in a time where national unemployment and poverty were record-high (Tabbush 2009; Galasso & Ravallion 2004). The policy's objective is ensuring unemployed families a source of income—a subsidy of 150 pesos per month—as opposed to more broadly funnelling resources to alleviate extreme poverty for the poor (MTESS 2003). *Plan Jefes* provided cash transfer to the unemployed, regardless of sex. Eligibility required household members to include children (under the age of 18), disabled individuals, and/or pregnant women (UNECLAC 2020). The recipient of the subsidy is the head of the household, with a maximum of one transfer per household. At the time of inception, *Plan Jefes* was a revolutionary CCT in the region, as it defied trends of targeting poor women with children by transferring to any unemployed head of household.

Transfers were made the condition of either completing productive activities for the community or engaging in individual training, split into three categories of conditions: employment, health, and education. Employment conditionalities were based on beneficiary participation in projects or training that require a time commitment of a minimum of four hours a day or twenty hours a week (UNECLAC 2020). These conditions were aimed at improving labour market participation—for many women, the change from unemployed to employed didn't solely have an economic benefit, but also increased social inclusion, purpose, and acquiring skills that can be transferred to the

personal sector (Tabbush 2010). Health and education conditionalities were based on attendance to medical check-ups and school, respectively.

While the transfer was equally accessible by men and women, based on the data of enrolment by gender, men were a part of the programme more so in the beginning whilst the economy was still in poor condition. It appears through enrolment by gender that for men this policy was more of a temporary solution for intermediate and fluctuating employment opportunities caused by the economic downturn. Moreover, levels of cash transfers from *Plan Jefes* were found to not be sufficient enough to have a major effect on improving immediate poverty levels (Tabbush 2009). An economic evaluation by the World Bank Economic Review found that the programme had a modest but effective impact alleviating extreme poverty; results state that without it, ten per cent of the participants would have experienced extreme poverty (Galasso & Ravallion 2004, 394).

Three years after the implementation of *Plan Jefes y Jefas*, the Argentinian economic situation was stabilized enough to divert some of the resources from *Plan Jefes* 'emergency measures' fund into improving the poverty status of the most vulnerable families through a new CCT programme, *Plan Familias*. *Plan Familias* was created to specifically to improve social inclusion of families living in poverty by fostering human development initiatives, with special attention to youth education and health. These objectives emulated the region's first national CCT success story: *Oportunidades*. So long as the conditions of child school attendance and health appointments are met, the cash transfers are supplied to directly to women. In terms of eligibility, the beneficiaries include "female beneficiaries of *Plan Jefas* who have low education levels, two or more children, and who reside in one of the 403 municipalities or surrounding areas identified as geographical priorities" (Tabbush 2009, 509). 95 per cent of the beneficiaries that shifted from *Plan Jefes* to *Plan Familias* were women (*ibid* 510). The transfer amount depends upon the number of dependents, with a maximum of six qualifying child beneficiaries per family (UNECLAC 2020).

Initially, welfare policies in Argentina were nationally funded, but as CCTs gained global attention for their apparent initial success, IFIs paid greater attention to other countries in the region's efforts to implement CCT policies in an effort to end poverty. The World Bank supported the shift from *Plan Jefes* to *Plan Familias*, transforming from nationally funded to almost 70 per cent funded by the International Development Bank (IDB), which attached pressures for Argentina to conform to conditions that IFIs deemed ideal (Tabbush 2009). In doing so, Argentine CCTs

reverted to the maternalist trends in the region. It operates under normalized liberal welfare arrangements, where tasks are gendered; it assumes women are most effective caretakers and parents, while men are expected in the paid labour force. The ministries explicitly target women to take responsibility for human capital investment, by insisting female heads of households are the ones to sign the contract with the government and subsequently are responsible for the programme conditions. Men can access the benefit "only in cases where the male applicant is a single parent, or when he has a partner who is a foreigner, disabled, imprisoned, or below 18 years of age, is he allowed to act as the man participant in the programme" (Tabbush 2009, 511; Joint resolution of MTESS and the MSD 143 and 264/2005).

Plan Familias was replaced in 2009 by the *Universal Child Allowance for Social Protection* (*Spanish acronym AUH*). This programme targets households with children under 18 that live in poverty (as defined by the government as an average income below that state-set minimum wage indicator). In its 2009 conception, the *AUH* was comprised of two components: (1) *Universal Child Allowance* and (2) *Universal Allowance for Children with Disabilities*. The transfer is officially stated to be transferred to either parent (or legal guardian), but in practice appeared to still prefer women to engage with the social policy. The female beneficiaries from *Plan Familias* were encouraged to be the one to transfer over to *AUH*. Conditions are health and education centred, requiring up to date vaccinations, enrolment in SUMAR (a broader national initiative to make the universal healthcare system for effective), as well as regular school attendance. The *Universal Allowance for Children with Disabilities* allowance provides assistance to parents living in economically vulnerable situations, who are caring for a child with a disability, regardless of age. The central condition is that the parent(s) assist in the treatment of the illness or disability. The beneficiary must possess a 'unique disability certificate. In 2011 the third provision, a pregnancy allowance, was formed to improve infant and maternal health. This benefit is transferred directly to the mother, with conditions of on-going health checks throughout the pregnancy and the baby's first year as well as vaccinations for the mother and infant. The final provision of *AUH*, the Annual School Allowance, was created in 2015 to supplement the child allowance with school-related costs. All cash transfers hold 20 per cent of the benefit amount until the conditions are officially processed as complete. If compliance is not accredited, the beneficiary is charged from this hold.

The aforementioned CCTs on a whole have had positive impacts on improving children's health check-ups and school attendance. Whether intentional or not, they have also affected gender relations, specifically the relationship between unpaid family work and paid labour.

4.2 CCT performance of gender equity principles

The setup of the CCT programmes weigh the feminization of responsibility differently and therefore can have two different outcomes on gender relations: whether they'll advance gender roles from traditional expectations or reinforce maternalist expectations. While gender equity is often discussed as equal respect and treatment of men and women. When scholars, feminists, and lawmakers alike often talk about 'gender equity what does that exactly entail? Gender equity is most often discussed as two separate definitions: (1) *equality* or (2) *difference*, "where *equality* means treating women exactly like men, and where *difference* means treating women differently insofar as they differ from men" (Fraser 1994, 594). Gender citizenship refers to the two manifestations of the feminist equality vs equity debate: gender-uniform citizenship and gender-differentiated citizenship (Tabbush 2009; Tabbush 2010). Gender-uniform citizenship aligns with the equality principle championed by liberal feminists, where the foremost principle is having women on an equal playing field to men. While in the field of Feminist Studies and gender theory, many scholars celebrate the nuances of what constitutes equity and the debate over *equality* vs *difference*.

Four aspects of gender-sensitive policy, meaning four things that illustrate that programme design is some degree gender-aware: (1) transfers to mother, (2) increases the number of girls completing secondary school, (3) ensuring access to health care services for mothers and breastfeeding mothers, and (4) the promotion of leadership and citizenship to mothers, as displayed in policy design (Molyneux 2006, 436). A policy has the ability to be gender-sensitive, yet inconsistent in their targeting as highlighted though commitment for female equality for the youth and adolescents, without considering the demands it places on women's/mother's time. Some dimensions provide access to social services for women over men because they are 'gender-specific'. Access to healthcare can be 'gender-specific', as women and men have specific needs based on the gender, such as women's specific needs concerning reproductive health; these gender-specific provisions provide modest improvements to decommodification for pregnant women. Overall, since children and adolescents are the target population of *Plan Familias* and *AUH*, the access to social services that will (*in theory*) lead to improvements in social citizenship for the children, not for the mothers.

Fraser emphasises the substantive aspects of equality—redirecting the focus toward resources and the capacity of difference between men and women's participation in society (1994). Fraser postulates the importance of normative theorizing, acknowledging the complexity of gender equity, but also the need to reconceptualize for academia (1994). In doing so, Fraser created a framework on systemic gender equity that has served as a basis for numerous studies since its publishing in 1994 (see Martinez Franzoni and Voorend 2012). It is comprised of distinctive principles that encompass beliefs from both sides of the equality/difference debate, assessing multiple dimensions of gender equity, instead of analysing just one factor. The matrix is comprised of five normative principles of social welfare provisions to best analyse gender equity, but to best apply it for this project, I rely on the four following principles:

Table 5: Gender equity principles

1. Antipoverty principle	The most apparent goal of welfare: preventing and alleviating poverty*: How successful is the CCT policy in increasing women's access to services and cash?*
2. Antiexploitation principle	The provision of alternative sources of livelihood and income for vulnerable people as to improve the bargaining power and status of those in unequal relationship: *How successful is the CCT policy in disabling traditional assumptions that unpaid domestic labour is the female's responsibility? (**a**) What are the CCTs 'empowering' effects?*
3. Anti-inequality principles	(**1**) Social income equality: *How successful is the CCT policy in reducing the gap between men and women in regard to social income?* (**2**) Time use equality: *How successful is the CCT policy in dismantling traditional gender roles to reduce conflict between unpaid and paid work?* (**3**) Equality of respect: *Does the CCT design show equal treatment and equal expectations for men and women?*
4. Anti-marginalisation principle	This provision is concerned with promoting women's access to social life and activities (including employment, civil society, politics): *How successful is the CCT policy in improving the status of women's access to the paid labour force? What provisions (such as day care and/or elderly care) are in place to limit barriers of female inclusion?*

Source: Personal adaptation based on Fraser (1994*) and* Martínez-Franzoni and Voorend (2012)

The first principle refers to the most "obvious objective of social-welfare provision", preventing poverty (Fraser 1994: 596). While there are many approaches to fulfil basic human needs and alleviate the suffering associated with poverty, the antipoverty principle is focused on gender equity

in social policy. The antipoverty principle is concerned with increasing women's access to welfare services that provide some form of economic security. Increased access to social resources has the potential to improve women's living conditions (Martínez-Franzoni and Voorend 2012). The generosity and attached conditions of the cash transfer indicate the intensity of decommodification.

The second principle, antiexploitation, is closely related to antipoverty, as "in guaranteeing relief of poverty the, welfare provision should also aim to mitigate exploitable dependency" (Fraser 1994, 597). The logic behind this is that when women and their children (traditionally vulnerable populations) can access another form of income then they can improve their position in an imbalanced power dynamic. Under the umbrella of the antiexploitation principle, I add an 'empowerment' sub-category, since programmes have "made some impressive claims about their empowering effects on women" (Bradshaw 2008, 201), such as being treated with greater respect in their communities or reporting that financial security has offered greater self-esteem (Molyneux 2007). Throughout development literature is the idea of 'empowerment'. The term is extensively used by international organisations and women's groups. While it is often thrown around as a political buzzword, what does it mean? Can it be quantitively measured? It is a generally accepted notion that we want women and girls to feel empowered, but what are the pathways to empowerment? It is largely defined as the transformative process of an individual or a group acquiring competences and the ability to alter their subjectivity and facilitate their own agency. Kabeer (1999) emphasises the power in empowerment as the ability for women to make independent decisions. Aspects of empowerment engaged politically, awareness of gender consciousness. On the macro-level, empowerment should lead to a bigger voice in personal decision-making, with outside pressures having less of an impact.

Anti-inequality addresses the fact that a welfare state could target women's poverty and ensure anti-exploitation while still allowing for gender inequality. This principle is split into three diverse manifestations of inequality that must be addressed to reduce the disparity between men and women.

Income equality "requires a substantial reduction in the vast discrepancy between men's and women's incomes" (Fraser 1994, 598). The second conceptualization is concerned with the distribution of leisure-time, as women experience 'time poverty' excessively more than men. Time use equality takes into account all paid and unpaid work done by men and women and idea

In the process of dissecting the programmes across Mexico and Argentina, I looked at the duties assigned to women as conditions to the cash transfer in comparison with the rest of the household. There are many praiseworthy results of CCT programmes in Mexico, specifically the improvements to health and education. Children and young people gain more access to social rights through education and managing health. This long-term goal of the programme appears to be on track to make a dent in lowering the inter-generational cycle of poverty, especially for young girls who have higher educational attainment. When *Prospera* replaced *Oportunidades/Progresa,* it built off the successful components and increased the number of subprogrammes to have a further reaching social policy

I will be paying close attention to inclusion strategies, which refer to not only the qualifications beneficiaries must meet in order to apply for the transfer, but also how citizenship and social rights are expanded or restricted through policy. In this analysis, I will be assessing whether the programme relies upon gender-differentiated logic, thus the government offering support to poor mothers or whether it was broader in who they wished to offer poverty relief (Jo Plant 2012). It is clear that in both Mexico and Argentina, their policies place greater responsibility on mothers. As explored in the Literature Review, this is not too surprising due to the feminisation of poverty duties as perpetuated through studies that women are more efficient with benefits than men. Families must play their part and prove good behaviour to ensure they receive their cash transfers, but this responsibility is then burdened onto women because a macro-generalization of men has concluded their behaviour isn't 'good' or 'responsible' which then adverse effects on the entire family, namely the child(ren) it targets. In practice, these policies are not challenging gendered expectations of care, a disservice to both women and men; in fact, they seem to be worsened by the policy's reinforcement of said expectations.

CCTs haven't redefined the gendered terms of inclusion, which aligns more broadly as inclusion into social participation. While it is over-ambitious to expect one form of social policy, with modest budget relative to other welfare expenditures, to reinvent underlying social statures, they do little to limit the patriarchal undertones, while making bigger claims of empowerment. A radical social policy reform would transform gender relations, through dematernalisation. This would look like universal models that promote equal responsibility of caring and other household duties to men and women, focusing on integrating men into the domestic sphere and promoting women's participation in the paid labour force. However, these programmes, more so than not, reinforce

traditional families and are inconsistent in their gender-sensitive indicators. —need a more sustainable anti-poverty policy beyond the maternalist influenced CCT. This matrix will be used to analyse how different CCT programmes shape various aspects of gender relations. While some of these principles are not necessarily vital to the welfare state, they are necessary to contextualize the states', through CCTs, effect on gender relations.

4.2.1 Principle 1: Antipoverty

The principle of antipoverty is concerned with increasing women's access to social services and cash transfers. All of these programmes granted women access to social income, even if just small levels. In a way, these CCTs create a dependence on the transfer that inadvertently reaffirms motherhood's caring role as the mode of completing government anti-poverty objectives. Under these programmes there have "the huge expansion of CCTs throughout the region has increased women's access to cash, recognizing (and at the same time reinforcing) their role as primary caregivers." (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018, 423). There is a consensus across CCT literature that these policies, in general, do help alleviate poverty (Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012; Molyneux 2006). While different programmes, of course, affect the degrees of anti-poverty, providing the cash transfer to women offers them access to economic (and social) resources. A major commonality is that none of these programmes has offered a substantial safety net, with modest transfers that cannot adequately decommodify families; this has left many critics doubting the anti-poverty nature of these programmes (Molyneux, Jones and Samuels 2016).

Initially, under *Plan Jefes*, CCT in Argentina offered inclusion to benefits based on participation in the labour force. This social policy targeted both men and women as heads of households that were suffering from unemployment in a time of economic crisis. Economists reportedly anticipated that *Plan Jefes* would attract more poor women, as the CCT programme was self-selected in terms of enrolment; due to existing cultural division of household labour, women are overwhelmingly in charge of domestic labour and household tasks, therefore restricting their access to the paid labour force (Tabbush 2009). *Plan Jefes* demographic data from the Ministry of Labour (MTESS 2004) found "close to 71 per cent of participants in the programme are women, with low educational levels (primary school) and in their reproductive years (between 30 and 40 years of age)" (Tabbush 2009: 495). While the average beneficiary was female, only 43 per cent of the workforce at that time was comprised of females (Galasso and Ravallion 2004). *Plan Jefes* fulfilled the anti-poverty principle. 95.79 per cent of all *Plan Familias* beneficiaries were women (Tabbush 2010, 510).

Overall the three Mexican CCT programmes have been successful in addressing the antipoverty principle. An impact study of *Progresa* evaluated the effects on rural communities and found that the transfer reduced both the poverty gap as well as the severity of the poverty; it was most successful with the poorest of the poor (Skoufias 2005). Skoufias (2005) concluded the cash transfer had an overall positive effect on family incomes. *Oportunidades* had an income effect of increasing households' overall earnings, attributed to the cash subsidy (Parker 2017).

While the conditions in place do little to remove structural inequalities and to improve redistribution for the parents, they do provide. Regardless of the reasoning behind granting access to women or confining the transfers to mothers, the result is that both Mexico and Argentina supported Fraser's antipoverty principle.

4.2.2 Principle 2: Antiexploitation

Influenced by Fraser's antiexploitation principle, I assess how successful the CCT programmes are in overcoming traditional expectations and the sexual division of labour that expects women to be solely responsible for unpaid domestic and caring work. With many Latin American governments subscribing to the notion of naturalisation of care as a woman's duty, I expect most of the CCTs in Argentina and Mexico to perform poorly in relation to the antiexploitation principle. Eligibility requirements and benefits provided indicate whether a CCT programme treats women as "instruments than as subjects of public policy, mobilizing their energy and time to help social policies meet their objectives" (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018, 417) or not. The conditions further highlight that the government expects the manifestation of a mother who will comply with expectations and services without stressing her own demands of personal human development.
The transfer theoretically is successful in averting the exploitation of women, because providing money to unemployed or underemployed women reduces economic dependency on their husbands.

Oportunidades was a strongly maternalistic programme in that it relies on clear gender distinction, coupled with the cultural understanding of motherhood and feminine identity. Mexican women do not appear to be considered to be citizens foremost by the governments. Rather, they are seen as mothers. The Mexican government was able to play up the culturally significant 'altruistic motherhood'. However, transferring this ideology of altruistic motherhood into their participation

in CCT programmes is as mothers of the next generation, the generation the government is targeting to attempt to end the cycle of poverty. *Oportunidades* "participants have highlighted how they feel discriminated against by the programme's demands on their time, that some activities they felt obligated to perform offended their dignity and have questioned the rather one-sided nature of 'co'-responsibility" (Bradshaw 2008, 195; see Molyneux 2006). Beyond conditions that make mothers explicitly responsible for children's education and health, the first services offered directly to women were training and seminars on how to become a better carer with "capacity building programmes [that] focus on improving their role in the household" (Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012, 394). A notable improvement for Mexican women was *Prospera*'s creation of a 'financial inclusion' component, which offered financial training that promotes savings and grant access to a life insurance scheme and credit with a low-interest rate (UNECLAC 2020). The targeted recipients are the women beneficiaries of the programme, in an effort to close the financial knowledge gaps. Even though the modest amount of the transfer does not provide enough to make women truly economically autonomous, even a small amount of cash has the potential to prevent women from being exploited.

When *Plan Jefes* "was redesigned to become *Plan Familias* and cater for the *Jefas'* female beneficiaries, some modifications in its design were introduced that reinforced traditional gender roles rather than transforming them," (Tabbush 2009: 515). Conservative national ministry officials' ideologies impeded the programme and emphasizing said traditional gendered expectations through conditionalities that centred around women as nurturers, mothers, and primary caregivers. This programme, much like *Oportunidades* and *Progresa*, offered inclusion to women based on familial relations. *Plan Familias* conditions emphasise the role women play in running domestic matters of the family, requiring women to hold responsibility for the conditions of managing health check-ups and school attendance. While *Plan Familias* did not perform well in terms of the antiexploitation principle, *Plan Jefes* and *AUH* did less to explicitly enforce the traditional family model.

Plan Jefes integrated participants through paid labour participation for both men and women, while *Plan Familias* used a moral integration, pulling on maternalism. Advocates suggest that the supplementary income provided through CCTs creates a degree of financial autonomy for women, which should transfer into empowerment in family relationships. "This positive analysis is tempered by gender-based concerns about the developmental value of policies that appeal to

women as “mothers”, founded on traditional cultural norms and values within regional policy design” (Tabbush 2010, 451) in Argentine context, where the link between women and the state is an active form of civil society.

While “the money being transferred to women does imply some recognition of the crucial role that they play in managing household resources” (Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012, 394), without promoting a reform of the sexual division of labour the policy does little to mitigate the exploitative features. The most meaningful acknowledgement from these policies wouldn’t be crediting females carrying the sole obligation of domestic work, but rather encouraging restructuring of traditional family structures. *Oportunidades* and *Progresa’s* antiexploitation effects were overall poor, however, the newest reform and establishment of *Benito Juárez* removed the majority of exploitative conditions for women.

4.2.3 Principle 2a: Empowerment

Positive gender dimensions include the effect on female household bargaining power through control of cash transfer. As a result of being the CCT beneficiary, “many women have acquired a more prominent role in managing household resources, giving them control over consumption decisions” (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018, 418). An evaluative study of *Progresa/Oportunidades* found that targeting women as recipients for the transfer had an unintended positive effect on women through increasing their power of decision-making and control over how the cash income is spent (Handa and Davis 2006). Skoufias’ 2005 impact report on *Progresa* also noted a positive impression on men’s attitudes towards women due to the gendered targeting of the transfer; “by giving money to women, *Progresa* forced recognition among men, and within the community as a whole, of women’s importance and of the government’s recognition of women’s level of responsibility” (Skoufias 2005, 60). In turn, this offered some empowering effects to some participants, which the author defines as “increased self-confidence, awareness, and control over their movements and household resources” (Skoufias 2005, 61), specifically women reporting they exhibit greater control of expenditures in the family.

As Mexico was first in the region in targeting mothers as recipients of financial transfer, the CCT programme has been associated with gender-awareness (Molyneux 2006). While these programmes are in some respects was exploitative toward women, the Mexican government asserted they helped to “empower” women to justify the service. There is a doubt to the blanket

claims of empowerment, especially when the state is in a position to improve gender stratification (as opposed to deepening it). This would be beneficial to modernize the traditional roles and foster a culture where fathers can (and should) have a larger caring position. Claims of empowerment of women and their daughters have been reiterated, as gender was written into the structure of the programme serving as evidence that the design was promoting female access to management and citizenship. According to critics of the *Oportunidades* programme, the conditional nature of the transfers removes autonomy of the poor and forces in a "scheme [that] is based on a systems of rewards and punishment which assumes that the poor do not know what they want" (Yanes 2011, 49). Mothers could be fined for not meeting the expectations and targets set by the programme (Molyneux 2006). Many complaints were in response to the stated goals of having beneficiaries exercising co-responsibility to exert social rights to reach full citizenship (Molyneux 2007). These programmes' understanding of autonomy is autonomy within their existing circumstances, not compete for autonomy, because they are confined to domestic tasks as the conditions indicate; "women are empowered only within these structures, which are ones through which disempowering gender asymmetries are reproduced" (Molyneux 2001, 72).

In 2002, *Oportunidades* created local community committees, composed of elected beneficiary women—*vocales*. These spokeswomen served as liaisons between the local community and centralised programme administrators, in an effort to improve programme functionality. The *voacles* were expected to provide social oversight to the programme administrators, tasked with additional accountability and, in theory, had a place to raise concerns and channel their voice (Fox 2007).

A major difference between the two countries is Argentina didn't make large claims of empowerment but also means they didn't evolve to encapsulate these empowerment claims. Across CCT programmes there is a trend with "the linking of social assistance to minimal social rights" (Tabbush 2009: 487). CCT as a social policy is about poverty eradication, not about social rights. So, despite women being central to CCT initiatives, they are not gaining access to social citizenship, an aspect central to many welfare states.

4.2.4 Principle 3a: Social income

The anti-inequality principle is split up to represent the three manifestations of inequality in relation to (1) social income, (2) time use, and (3) respect (Fraser 1994). For a CCT to succeed in equality

of social income, it must actively reduce gaps between men and women. 'Time use' assess the tension gender roles cause on between ability to engage in paid and unpaid work. Finally, respect is primarily concerned with the ways that policy design address women and men, in relation to each other.

Principle 3a is concerned with assessing how successful the CCTs were in reducing the gap between men and women's social income. In theory, by transferring the benefit to the mother decreases social income gaps between women and men, as it will modestly increase female's social income (Parker 2017). It offers some form of monetary compensation for not only completing the conditions but for women being confined to the home. The transfer system doesn't rival the income of a full-time job, especially under the male-breadwinner model's wages. However, the transfer benefit does help reduce the gap between employed men and women confined to the domestic sphere.

4.2.5 Principle 3b: Time use

Pressures to women's time "occurs when compliance with the conditionalities, in fact, requires additional efforts, for instance, owing to previously non-existent travel and waiting time needed to procure school assistance certificates of for health checks to their children" (Rodríguez-Enriquez 2014, 9). The very nature of the conditions not only require commitments to attending workshops or information sessions but reinforces the role of household manager. Adato et al. (2000), among others, also found that women's workload increased as children's contribution to domestic tasks decreased due to their school demands. Before these CCTs, when Mexican mothers had full agendas their expectations for their daughters to contribute to household duties and chores increased, which is often cited as a major reason girl drop out of school earlier than boys (Molyneux 2001). When girls' education became a greater priority, as reaffirmed by Mexico's higher transfer for girls' education compared to boys', school duties were prioritised over home duties. This highlights the inconsistency of the government's commitment to their reported gender-equity perspective—there is both a commitment to equalling education for girls but still heavily maternalist measures in terms of the conditions placed on the mothers (Molyneux 2007). While the time use becomes more equal between sons and daughters, the mothers became more burdened. Such care responsibilities pose barriers to joining full-time working arrangements, force work interruptions for child-rearing, and push women to the informal sector" (Blofield and Martínez Franzoni 2015, 40-41).

An impact study created a statistical analysis of female participants and found evidence that participating in *Progresa* and completing conditions increased the time women spent on familial and caring duties (Skoufias 2005). Focus groups indicated an even divide between women who felt the programme was too demanding on their time (especially the condition that required community work) for the transfer they received, while the other half did not raise complaints. The overall consensus, however, was that their time spent doing housework increased since they were taking over the chores their children had to forego as they focused on schoolwork more (*ibid*). Some reports "raised the problem that the time and labour demands on beneficiaries' conflict with women's other income-generating activities" (Molyneux 2001, 71). If mothers do work, they are pushed to operate in the informal sector due to flexibility and in some cases, it de-links mothers from paid labour, which may but their transfer at risk (ie. AUH). Partially addressed with *Plan Familias* due to "subsequent changes in programme regulations that allow women receiving the cash stipend to work in the formal sector only if the salary they earn is less than the minimum wage" (Tabbush 2009, 512). Rather than citizenship building tasks, the conditions of community work (that required mother, for example, to clean schools or other community centres) were busy work and demanding of time. An impact report on *Oportunidades* deduced that completing the conditions had little impact on women's leisure time (Parker 2017, 11).

4.2.6 Principle 3c: Respect

This principle analyses whether the CCT programme design and implementation equally treat men and women or if they create gender-differentiated obligations. "Theoretically, citizen-workers and citizen-caregivers are statuses of equivalent dignity" (Fraser 1994, 609), yet in practice, care is strongly related to femininity and does not achieve parity with the masculine breadwinner. With the increased participation of women, when CCTs do not address the unequal demand between women and men, the strategies threaten "possible overburdening and time-poverty" with nor do they attend to their need for long-term exit strategies out of poverty through job training and the provision of affordable and accessible care services" (Tabbush 2009, 520)

Since the inception of CCTs in Mexico, all three programmes are centred around investing in and improving children and adolescence's human capital. Men are largely absent from the structure of the CCT programme design. In practice some things have a greater impact than programme design, despite on paper stating there is equal access for mothers and fathers to participate, mothers are the

ones encouraged to serve as beneficiary. *Oportunidades'* self-description of their design states they are gender-sensitive, as exemplified through leaderships training that promotes access to citizenship for women (Molyneux 2009).

Plan Jefes y Jefas, even in the name, explicitly equally target men and women as beneficiaries. The equal recognition of the sexes as the potential to enrol in the title of the programme is adequately mirrored in programme design. From a gendered perspective, there is no explicit recognition that men and women should have different responsibilities. Nevertheless, despite how the labour conditionalities of *Plan Jefes* activated governmental attention in engaging women in economic activities when *Plan Familias* replaced *Plan Jefes* the state began active efforts to detach women from the labour market. In design terms "women are included as mothers and intermediaries of children's human capital development" (Tabbush 2010, 448) whereas men are essentially just expected to maintain breadwinner status. While the legislation does not explicitly name men or women as the expected beneficiaries, in practice the regulations and enforcement require female participation. The Argentinian Ministry of Social Development strongly encourage women to apply, and in the cases where men are eligible and attempt to serve as the beneficiary, the ministry recommends that the subsidy be reassigned to a female in their household (Tabbush 2009). The maternal altruism impedes the expectations of the state officials who deem mothers, over fathers, as able to complete the conditions necessary to meet welfare targets. In all, female citizenship can appear to be linked to reproductive capacities. This is also clear in the health design not having a "clear link to social services for women other than prenatal and postnatal care" (Arza and Martínez Franzoni 2018, 417) which aligns with the main focus of women as mothers as opposed to addressing their health needs as independent citizens. A central to feminist critiques of CCTs across all of Latin America is the time burden associated with conditions which "reinforce the sexual division of labour" (*ibid* 418).

4.2.7 Principle 4: Anti-marginalisation

According to Fraser, the anti-marginalisation principle aims to guarantee female's "full participation on a par with men in all areas of social life" (1994: 599). In analysing social policy, this principle is concerned with what are the CCTs are doing to promote women's participation and engagement to the labour market. This principle focuses on removing the separate spheres men and women operate in due to traditional norms. One of the major factors contributing to women's overall vulnerability is "because of their labour market situation is precarious, low paid and

interrupted by period of childbearing and the demands of caregiving" (Molyneux 2001, 41). One of the most prominent factors preventing women from participating in the formal labour market is lack childcare provisions (Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012; Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012). Lack of accessible day-cares is a major social and financial barrier that makes the difference between women engaging in paid labour or remaining in the domestic sector. If the CCTs were to commit to the anti-marginalization principle, that would require not only promoting female employment but providing services to alleviate the burdens and barriers that stand in the way. Moreover, emphasising domestic roles through CCT conditions also can impede female membership in other aspects of the community, such as civil society and politics (Fraser 1994). The CCT model can still be successful in stimulating female employment, thus satisfying the anti-marginalisation principle even if the scope of which fields women engage in.

Plan Jefes operated quite well in relation to encouraging women's access to paid work, relative to the other Argentine CCT policies. Upon enrolment, the success of exiting the programme with a job in the paid labour force was largely gender-differentiated (Tabbush 2009). The programme reportedly stratified the required labour tasks, with women in domestic roles, tourism, cleaning services, and administrative tasks while men were primarily funnelled into more physically demanding work, such as construction. Despite the stratification between men and women's access to jobs, this programme still did the most out of any other Argentine CCT policies to improve women's access to the labour force through capacity-building programmes and initiatives that reportedly improved community engagement and motivation (Tabbush 2009). Participating in community projects was the largest aspect of work conditionality in *Plan Jefes* program, with 60 per cent of the beneficiaries involved. However, within this category data highlights that the division of tasks enforced and reinforced gendered assumptions, with men engaging in more manual labour (namely construction) and women working in the domestic sphere as cleaners. These activities and projects offered different opportunities for individuals to improve their skills and autonomy through access to adult education, building social networks, and specific knowledge on labour capital and fiscal responsibility. Unemployment was reduced by approximately 2.5 per cent from 2002-2004 (Galasso & Ravallion 2004). Around half of beneficiaries received employment as a result of *Plan Jefes,* with half re-entering the workforce after being unemployed and the other half pulled from economic inactivity, of which were mostly women (Galasso & Ravallion 2004, 389).

The paradoxical transformation of *Plan Jefes* to *Plan Familias* deactivated women as workers. The design, in part, indicates that the state is aware of how many women that were living in poverty had low skill and education levels, coupled with domestic duties. “In an effort to weaken social movements and enhance the social outcomes of the national administration, community work and job training for women were cut down” (Tabbush 2010, 452). Yet instead of structurally addressing these conditions that leave women socially vulnerabilities and that stopped them from accessing paid work, it offered cash to mothers to continue completing their maternal responsibilities. The employment training and community work provisions of *Plan Jefes* were cited as the most popular among participants yet was cut out as an option for women and replaced with more requirements related to the education and health of their children (Tabbush 2009). In applying for *Plan Familias* programme, these female beneficiaries were then statistically categorized as ‘economically inactive’ and were not encouraged to take place in the workforce. It does little to nothing to better women’s labour market potential. It performs poorly in preventing marginalisation, “by supporting women's informal care work, it reinforces the view of such work as women's work and consolidates the gender division of domestic labour” (Fraser 1994, 609).

A large request presented by the mothers serving the programme is that they receive more training to benefit themselves and improve their status as citizens (Molyneux 2006). Mexico has been responsive to these critiques and has made efforts to evolve to encompass training programmes for adults. At first, under Oportunidades, CCTs didn’t support women engaging in the labour force, but they evolved under *Prospera* in response to criticism that the existing programmes were not transforming traditional gender roles (Molyneux, Samuels and Jones 2016). It grew to extend access for female beneficiaries to participate in local employment training and a complementary subsidized crèche scheme (childcare facilities) (Holmes and Jones 2013). In response to the growing demand, Mexico established *Estancias Infantiles* in 2007, a nationally funded childcare scheme provided to eligible families with children four and under. In addition to providing care, it created over 38,000 jobs for women (Holmes and Jones 2013). This provision was created to support women, especially those participating in *Prospera*, so they have the ability to move beyond their reproductive responsibilities and engage in paid work. Overall it helped improve the autonomy of women, offsetting the care costs of families would incur and freeing up women’s time so they can engage in paid work (Fultz and Francis 2013).

Argentina's universal child allowance at first targeted unemployed citizens and workers in the informal labour sector with children. However, it grew to encompass domestic workers (with incomes lower than the minimum wage) after there were large scale fears from the domestic/household workers that registering their work would limit their eligibility to receive the benefit (as those operating informally). This sector of the economy is largely dominated by female workers, many feeling they had to choose between making a small wage working, or not participating in the labour force and receiving the social benefit. In response, the social security administration adjusted eligibility to encompass registered domestic worker (under the set minimum wage income) (Arévalo 2018: 11). This small change in eligibility requirements signals a government commitment to encouraging female paid work.

In the later reform of CCT programmes in Mexico, there was a slight retreat from the maternalism that was once heavily emphasized and central to the policy design. *Becas Benito* limits maternal involvement and expectations, evolving into human capital investment, education forward policy. By removing many extra obligations and threats of fining away from the mother, the *Benito Juárez* CCT programme reduces some barriers to employment while still supported by the *Estancias* childcare provision.

While it is important that the programme focused on the children's needs, in some cases making a larger effort to empower young girls, "the question is whether these programmes, in targeting one group in need, disadvantage another group in the process" (Molyneux 2007, 30). Gender equity in these welfare states would require a complete structural reconstruction. Has there been a transformative structural dimension—gender-sensitive embedded to improve social mobilization for women? It is fair to view CCTs as examples of maternalism, which creates a "gender hierarchy in which women are limited to their historical domestic roles as mothers and housewives" (Martínez Franzoni and Voorend 2012, 400). Social development: inclusive to gender economic vulnerabilities, but less so with social vulnerabilities. Need to "dematernalise women and maternalise society" (Chant 2003, 13).

Table 6: Gender equity performance

CCT programme	***Becas Benito*****	***AUH***	***Prospera***	***Plan Familias***	***Plan Jefas***	***Oportunidades***
Principle 1: *Antipoverty*	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Principle 2: *Antiexploitation*	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Poor
Principle 2a: *Empowerment*	Fair	Fair	Good	Poor	Fair	Good
Principle 3a: *Social income equality*	Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good
Principle 3b: *Time use equality*	Good	Fair	Fair	Poor	Fair	Poor
Principle 3c: *Equality of respect*	Good	Fair	Poor	Poor	Good	Poor
Principle 4: *Anti-marginalisation*	Fair	Fair	Good	Poor	Good	Poor

Source: based on personal performance ranking

*** due to the recent establishment of the Becas Benito CCT programme (in late 2019), the following ratings of gender equity principles will be a projection of how I believe the programme will perform based on the policy design*

4.3 The puzzle: no convergence?

Under the logic of globalisation, the world is more connected than ever before; countries have become increasingly interdependent on one another. Policy diffusion is a widely accepted causal process of globalisation used to help understand how policies are developed and reform in a wider context; it is primarily concerned with how the policy decisions made in one nation impact the policies of other countries (Meseguer and Gilard 2009). Convergence is the notion that policies, due to the effects of globalisation, are become more and more similar across states. In reference with with the end result, this concept asserts that global legislation is moving toward a common point. We may expect the processes of diffusion to result in convergence effects, where policies become alike. Along with international politics, this phenomenon can also be applied to regional interdependence. However, the globalisation argument cannot explain the changes amongst CCTs that have led to such diverse manifestations of the policy designs and different performances in relation to gender equity.

While CCTs have come to be endogenous with the region, with wide adoption as a primary source of social policy, it appears that the notion of policy diffusion stops short of similar influences of IFIs and broader influence of international pressure to push for human development to end poverty. International interference in Latin America can be attributed to the social investment paradigm after neoliberalism (Lopreite and Macdonald 2014). In collaborative efforts with IFIs to contain the increased poverty rates as a result of the debt crisis, both governments received external funding in exchange for accepting outside approaches. A major legacy of the outside influence in conjunction with a degree of convergence, mixed with the remnants of their commitment to their once universal welfare state created an interesting approach to address social policy. My analysis of the evolution of CCT programmes in relation to their performance of Fraser's gender equity principles highlights the advancement of Mexico while revealing a retreat in Argentina. While *Oportunidades* and *Prospera* were still maternalist programmes that utilised motherhood in order to perform anti-poverty work, Mexico did more to simultaneously empower women, with special attention to reforms to improve areas where women were overwhelmingly taken advantage of.

Why have efforts in Mexico been more transformative? Evaluations of CCTs have offered policy recommendations to make the state intervention more impatful for those living in poverty, especially training and income generation schemes to address the multiple manifestations of

poverty, offering both long term structural solutions as well as short term aid. Beginning under *Oportunidades*, every six months the programme undergoes evaluation by *Puntos Centinela* (a national monitoring system) to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, and to underscore deviations in the programme (Fultz and Francis 2013). Since their inceptions, the programmes in Argentina and Mexico have undergone reforms, in some cases resulting in complete replacement in name and governing body, while some small-scale changes were also implemented to make the programmes more efficient and effective. In addition, after MDGs reached their 2015 target date and subsequently evolved into the Sustainable Development Goals, there were discussions surrounding the international development agenda. The first versions were focused purely on managing poverty, through children's health and educational attainment. However, the later versions adopted a multi-faceted view, wherein Mexico they adapted to "empower" the impoverished citizens. IOs broadened their scope of assessing CCTs and made changes to the overall objectives; instead of placing a large emphasis on quantitative indicators, IFIs invested in more qualitative assessments, conducting more interviews and focus groups in order to be more attuned to local beneficiaries. In doing so, the view of poverty became multi-dimensional which allowed for better gender-sensitive design; for instance, *Progresa's* "beneficiaries [were] offered employment training and income-generating opportunities, as well as being provided with subsidised childcare through the *Estancias* subsidised crèche scheme" (Molyneux, Jones and Samuels 2016, 3).

In the other case, Argentina is increasing "gender differentiating poverty as a female concern" (Tabbush 2010, 452), having stopped encouraging women's employment as means for exiting poverty. This evolution into a child-centred approach to poverty reduction sets aside the needs of women, while still requiring their service. It appears that in Argentina there was a backwards movement from *Plan Jefes* to *Plan Familias*. While *Plan Jefes* ended up benefiting mostly women, on paper, it was committed to equal treatment of men and women in terms of eligibility and enrolment requirements. However, when *Plan Familias* was introduced there was a blatant retreat to traditional gender roles and expectations of women. This recoil to the maternalist values, with direct targeting to expecting mothers or parents of children under 18 or parents of children with a severe disability (with preference to transfer to mothers), under the condition of structural poverty. Seemingly shifting away from universalistic programmes which are arguably more preventative.

Plan Familias also is far more marginalising than *Oportunidades* and *Prospera*, another puzzle since there was a greater legacy of Argentine women having higher education rates and performing paid work more so than in Mexico coupled with a much high illiteracy rate for Mexican women (Lopreite and Macdonald 2014: 86). Since Mexico has been consistent as the first CCT programme in the region, with a long history of women having a secondary role in society, it would not have been nearly as shocking if the role CCTs reinforced traditional gender norms. In Mexico, there has not been a long history of women's rights being protected by law. Civil codes required women to run the domestic front, with abandoning domestic duties a punishable offence until 1974 (Molyneux 2006). However, *Oportunidades* and *Prospera* placed a wider effort on encouraging work, most notable with the creation of a subsidised childcare scheme. This is especially perplexing considering Argentina had consistently scored better in gender equality indexes and been widely regarded as a good country for women. The following chapter will implore political theories in an effort to understand how the policies have taken such divergent paths, specifically concerned with why Argentina retreated to more maternalist policies after *Plan Jefes*, while Mexican CCTs reformed to become more transformative for women?

5. DISCUSSION

Chapter four outlined the components of Argentina and Mexico's CCT policies and analysed their effects on gender equality, concluding that Argentina has had a counterintuitive trajectory. The following chapter is concerned with the theoretical explanation(s) between the two cases, returning to the schools of thought presented in the literature review in Chapter 2. Welfare development can be analysed as a multicausal sensation. However, the puzzle is the apparent retreat of Argentina to more traditional gender assumptions. In this section, I engage a variety of theoretical perspectives to integrate persuasive explanations. I address commonly invoked political science explanations for welfare development, such as pluralism, partisan competition, but rely primarily on a synthesis of feminist historical institutionalism and PRT analysis. Situating Argentina and Mexico's CCT programmes in a comparative theoretical framework within a broader understanding of their welfare states seeks to understand how development has altered their trajectories that resulted in such diverse manifestations of the same type of policy, describing conditions that lead different respects to gender relations.

This section implores existing literature on the traditionally cited roots of welfare state development/expansion. There has been an increased academic focus on Latin America more broadly in studies of emerging welfare states in the Global South in the last couple of decades. An array of theoretical arguments are employed in academic debates and discussions as possible explanations to account for variation in policies. To explain the circumstances under which CCTs in Mexico and Argentina targeted women, and why we see a noteworthy difference between the two countries. More specifically, the dissimilarity between the reforms in policy design and the subsequent effects on gender equity and coverage: *why have these two countries manifested their CCT so differently?* Using a feminist institutionalist analysis approach, this chapter aims to propose a comparative historical examination of social policy development in Argentina and Mexico.

Having a deep understanding is necessary for a comparative study, as sources of variation between cases can explain the root of the current diverse effects of CCT. One analysis tactic to determine whether path dependency has had a role in policy establishment is outlining the political conditions leading up to a specific policy (Costa-Font and Rodríguez-Oreggia 2005, 300). The concept of path dependency emphasises the historical time-oriented trends that describe the distribution of interests, which seek to explain the environments in which CCTs evolved in the respective countries. A current analysis of CCTs requires reflecting on causal inferences. To explain the

gendered outcomes under a HI/FI framework it is necessary to fire "identify the causal sequences and development pathways that led to these varying outcomes" (Waylen 2009, 250).

5.1 Pluralism

Pluralism is rooted in liberal philosophy and seeks to describe different actors and cross-cutting cleavages as the reasons for political change. "pluralism maintained that power is widely diffused among a variety of competing interest groups and not held by ruling elites or classes" (Olsen and O'Connor 1998: 5). Competing ideas, rather than the consensus among groups, so under this school of thought "social welfare policies and programmes are viewed as the states demands of various" (Olsen and O'Connor 1998: 5) interest groups such as women, elderly, capital, farmers, etc).
Emphasises the role of pressure groups on the state (Idiart 2014). Maternalism in both countries has a long legacy – essentially forced onto women through political institutions controlled historically by men. This is not to say women in Argentina and Mexico haven't organised. The second wave feminist movement was widespread across the region, drawing attention to the importance of adopting a gender-aware conceptualisation of social policy. The two major sources of social protest were in response to the economic crisis and combating abuses of human rights. For many women, the costs of engaging in protest were too high, a 'triple-burden'. In Mexico, the largest group was called the *Mujeres en Solidaridad*. Activism in the 1970s and 1980s was led by mothers of missing protestors (*Madre movement*), created a powerful image celebrated throughout Latin America: the self-sacrificing mother who puts the needs of their children, husbands and of society, before their own well-being (Miller 1991).

However, pluralism isn't a sufficient description of the differences. Civil society is weak in Latin America because "susceptible to co-optation by the state, individual populist leaders and political parties" (Craske 2003, 66). Despite grassroots efforts, social movements haven't been successful in the region. This can be attributed to clientelism. Moreover, this resulted in political parties resurfacing as "the main channel of representation in many countries…with the re-establishment of parties and executives, women are more likely to be excluded given their weaker presence in these areas" (Craske 2003, 66) (The role of parties will be addressed in chapter 5.2). Despite the efforts of citizen groups, they were unable to influence the gov't bc of the clientelistic relationship between populism and constituency. The legacy of authoritarian culture that permeates into politics today (interesting both for a path dependency outlook, but also for why pluralism fails to explain). Efforts of the feminist movement weren't enough to transform social rights in Latin America. The

clientelistic relationship between the state and citizen groups will be an interesting dynamic to explore within institutional parameters in *Chapter* 5.3.

5.2 Partisan control & competition

Th intensity of political competition is studied as a driver of welfare expansion, reform and retrenchment. This is particularly interesting when looking at democratization effects since social insurance was established in these countries under authoritarian and populist rule. Throughout the 20th century, social protections introduced across Latin America were strongly attached to formal labour market participation. These 'insiders' were granted access to social welfare, while 'outsiders' including their dependents, as well as informal or rural workers and the unemployed, were restricted access to state benefits.

During the latter half of the century, the region underwent two major, macro-level changes: widescale implementation of democratic governments and liberalisation of economies (Garay 2016). The adoption of democracy "institutionalised electoral participation and opened channels for the expression of interest and demands" (Garay 2016, 1) which portended well for welfare expansion to reduce the gap of coverage. Outsiders began to become recipients of social policy, namely benefiting from these cash transfers which is counterintuitive based on the "widely held assumption that outsiders lack the capacity to exert political influence and attain meaningful policy responses" (Garay 2016, 3). The recent expansion of social policy, as the innovative CCT programmes, have focused on women, once outsides "who have been generally less able to access social security protections in the formal labour market, and who now constitute the main beneficiaries of pensions for outsiders and transfers for low-income households" (Garay 2016, 7). There are ramifications from the women and welfare connection— "as gender inequality has been associated with mean pernicious social dynamics worldwide" (Garay 2016, 8). In Latin American political studies, there is an argument that expansive welfare reforms are primarily motivated by left-of-centre governments, as equalising social policy has historically been promoted by left-parties, and successful social policy implementation relies on their access to state power (Altman and Castiglioni 2019).

Mothers gained access to social transfers following the New Poverty Agenda and Pink Tide. When governments are ruled by the left, their agendas tend to encompass more anti-inequality and economic empowerment initiatives (Filgueira and Martínez Franzoni 2017). Despite seemingly

positive efforts by these governments, the feminist agenda and redistributive/poverty alleviation agendas didn't coincide (Blofield and Haas 2011). "Addressing the intertwining between both types of inequalities is both politically hard and at the same time critical for advancing either one" (Filgueira and Martínez Franzoni 2017, 392). The Peronist party has fluctuated across partisan ideology but overall is classified as a left-centre despite right-wing candidates and some conservative supporters. Especially during the Kirchner administration, many scholars classify the Peronist party as centre-left (Pribble 2013). However, across all of Latin America, CCTs have been implemented regardless of partisanship and orientation of the president and/or congress that is in power (Sugiyama 2011). Since the early 2000s, there has been a shift to left-wing governments in the region, which emphasises the possibility of left-party power expansion (Garay 2016).

Table 7: Implementation of CCTs across Latin America by party

Country (year)	**Programme**	**President's ideological leaning**
Mexico (1997)	Progresa/Oportunidades	Centre-right
Honduras (1998)	Programma de Asignación Familiar	Centre
Colombia (2000)	Familias de Acción	Centre-right
Costa Rica (2000)	Superemonons	Centre-right
Nicaragua (2000)	Red de Protección	Right
Brazil (2001)	Bolsa Família	Centre
Chile (2002)	Chile Solidario	Centre-left
Ecuador (2003)	Bono de Desarollo Humano	Centre-left
Argentina (2004)	Plan Familias	Centre-left
Dominican Republic (2005)	Solidaridad	Centre
El Salvador (2005)	Red Solidaria	Right
Paraguay (2005)	Red de Promoción y Protección Social	Right
Peru (2005)	Juntos	Centre-right
Guatemala (2008)	Mi Familia Progresa	Right

Adapted from Sugyama 2011

The increased electoral success of progressive, left-leaning parties was dubbed the 'left-turn', or the 'pink tide' (Filgueira and Martínez Franzoni 2017). But it is not enough to purely look at the left-strength to explain policy adoption, as CCTs, for example, also "occurred under the right-leaning presidency of Vicente Fox (200-2006) of Mexico's National Action Party (PAN), at a time when the left only held a small share of seats in Congress" (Garay 2016, 13). Argentina's poverty strategies underwent changes via presidential decrees throughout the 2000s, which in turn altered the design and implementation of CCTs. The reform of CCTs in Argentina reflected constantly evolving definitions of what the state deemed the main social concerns (Tabbush 2010). Therefore, under this viewpoint, women's roles and overall gender relations are dictated by changing governments and different party control. Depending on who is in power or how severe the partisan competition is, the agenda on how to reduce poverty changes.

In Mexico, after a 71-year rule of a single-party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI—Institutional Revolutionary Party), the 2000 election resulted in the victory of the Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN—National Action Party) candidate, President Vicente Fox. Though right-of-centre, "Fox pledged to make social justice a priority of his government, recognizing that poverty was a 'multidimensional phenomenon', and raising social expenditure by an average of almost 10 per cent per annum" (Molyneux 2006, 433). Due to the spread of partisan control during CCT creation and implementation, I do not rely on partisan competition to describe the differences between the cases.

5.3 Institutionalism

Adhering to a feminist-historical institutionalist analysis, the following section aims to describe how welfare development in each country has impacted the design and implementation of CCTs, paying close attention to how gender inequalities have structured Argentinian and Mexican trajectories. The FI framework that most transitions or constraints to action weigh heavily on actors—while impacted by institutional structures. Therefore, it is important to understand how the relationship between different groups of actors and institutional setting can empower some groups to produce their agenda while constraining others from acting.

5.3.1 Early social policy development

Social policy has never been gender blind (Molyneux 2006). Even prior to the emergence of CCTs, social provisions were based in gendered conceptions of service and needs, which established

traditions of paternalistic and patriarchal familial dominance. Early social welfare provisions were formed around the male-breadwinner model, so when women did engage in employment they were concentrated in unorganised or informal sectors. Bismarckian welfare state models rely on gender biased assumptions, where "women are entitled to the benefit not directly but only through her relationship with the man" (Rodríguez-Enriquez 2014). The pension model has historically punished women, who engage most of their time to unpaid care and domestic care yet do not receive access to welfare on their own merits. For women who did engage in paid work, their pay was low, justified by the notion the wages were only supplementary to that of the men. Under this formation, care is determined to be a private responsibility, with the man acting as the financial provider, there is an expectation of "a stay-at-home mother, perhaps a grandmother, or an unmarried aunt" (Blofield and Martínez Franzoni 2015, 39) or for wealthier citizens a nanny or other hired help to take care of the children.

From 1912-1930, Argentina's radical party was a strong driver of modernization in the government and broader society. Early state expansion at such an early point "is highly correlated with early democratic experiments" (Filgueira 2005, 15). This laid the foundation in Argentina for commitment to public health provision and the promotion of basic education through mass politics, even though Argentina's democratic reign ended in the 1930s and did not return to stable democracy until the 1980s. The indirect rewards for mothering became a form of prioritising family policy. Family relationships are central to well-being in Latin America and are "frequently more dependent on female unpaid labour than on public policy" (Martínez Franzoni 2008, 67). The 1930s brought the emergence of an Argentine welfare state. In 1937, the government established their first infant and mother's health targeted programme. Argentina's social state "built its foundation on charity provided by nineteenth-century women's organizations" (Idiart 2012: 228). One of the most notable women-led organizations in Argentine history was *Sociedad de Beneficencia*, responsible for charitable welfare and health services for women before public provisions. From the 1950s until the 1980s Argentina was living through a period of welfare development with underlying commitments to universal coverage. Despite issues of implementation and faults of coverage, the system was guided by the goal of equal access (Idiart 2012).

In Mexico, the development of welfare initially emerged in industrialised times, which gave greater power and influence to unions and organised labour. During that time, development was "dramatic and profound, and the institutions that resulted from them also shaped the future development of

welfare, although change was not entirely pre-determined or path dependency" (Dion 2010, 6). In the early twentieth century, organised Mexican labour was the major driver of national welfare institutions. Through strong political mobilisation, the working class was able to articulate demands for state-sponsored policies to protect the workers and their families; under the Mexican authoritarian rule the unions and the state were able to create worker benefits and labour-market dependent welfare support, using "its position in the ruling coalition to pressure the state periodically for additional worker benefits throughout the period of state-led industrialisation" (*ibid*, 5). A profound institutional change occurred in 1959 with the establishment of a brand-new bureaucracy for welfare.

Throughout development, both countries have adhered to a strong degree of conservative-familialistic models of social security in early development have emphasized the male-breadwinner model, Mexico more so than Argentina. The historical importance of rights attainment and gender difference can be attributed to colonialism and the height of Catholic rule. Motherhood became the claim to women's rights, justified due to their service to the nation which entitled rights "not in spite of difference, but because of difference" (Dominguez 2016, 2). Maternalism has become central to many Latin American social policy transfers and discussed by Latin American scholars in a more positive light, often associated with women's movements and tightly associated with the promotion of children's welfare.

Once "a regional leader in welfare development", Argentina showed aspects of social democratic in their early commitment to universal public health and public education (Lopreite and Macdonald 2014, 85). Mexico, comparatively, lagged in commitment to welfare development during the early to mid 20th century. Both states are models of historically committed breadwinners, which can account for the trend of women's part-time work and lack of maternity rights and state-sponsored childcare. The legacy of a "strong male-breadwinner states have tended to draw a firm dividing line between public and private responsibility" (Lewis 1992, 159). A major commonality between the two is the legacy of corporatism, which created the "political bond between the worker and the ruling party" which serviced male-dominated fields and trade unions, ensuring "their compliance secured through negotiated pacts over wages, working conditions, and social security" (Molyneux 2006, 428). This legacy created the "family wage", where men were paid more to support their wives and children. In turn, women were positioned as dependent, and often subordinate, on their husbands. With women essentially absent from corporatist negotiations, justified due to lower

female labour participation in the labour force; when women were present, they were working in less formal sectors, being paid low wages, or confined their duties to the domestic sphere operating under expectations of maternal functions. Despite many Latin American women protesting that protectionist discourse undermined their right to access equal jobs, the prevalence of support for a family wage pushed women into full-time motherhood (Molyneux 2006, 428).

The period without democracy in Argentina still saw an expansion of the welfare state and the constant strive toward modernization, largely through corporatist arrangements. Even under the regime of president Perón, there were great expansions to worker's rights and protections, increased funding to national health services, and expansion of social security (Filgueira 2005). Argentina was able to push through a social agenda "through vertical corporatism and broad policies that were enacted as power changed hands between the military, the radical party and builder of the social state; the Peronist movement" (Filgueira 2005, 20). This created a theme of Argentine social policy centred on contributory insurance schemes.

Maternalism in the Latin American context refers to "any organized activism on the part of women who claim that they possess gendered qualifications to understand less fortunate women, especially children" (Idiart 2012, 228). When women were mobilised by the state, such as Cardenist Mexico or during Perón in Argentina, "the political message always involved motherly virtues" (Dominguez 2016, 27). The tenets of *marianismo* (and maternalism) "most dramatically epitomised in the figure of Eva Perón in Argentina" (Chant 2003, 9), the wife of a former president Perón. She preached to women to support their husbands by staying home and taking care of their families. While she was credited at mobilising women, but only within the boundaries of existing gender roles that directed them to serve the state, all under a patriarchal construction of womanhood and motherhood. Where improvements were made to rights as mothers, not as women because of the patriarchal control, women and motherhood have become so closely associated that it has become central in the gender debate—hard to disentangle the two when women have been conditioned as carers throughout Latin American history. Moreover, the formation of women's rights was associated with familial protection and social rights specifically rooted in maternalism. Mexico witnessed citizenship struggle in the late 20th century, "where women, once again, were the majority of the activists looking for participatory —and social— responsible versions of citizenship against corrupt and alienated politics of the state" (Dominguez 2016, 29). However, despite efforts by the feminist movements in Argentina and Mexico, the state did not disrupt the

gender-based institutional bias, not only through the promotion of male priorities but how women's participation is feminised in order "to establish their secondary supportive and dependent roles in public service and markets" (Gideon 2002, 182). Since institutions mirror the needs of the economy, this reinforces the association between motherhood and female citizenship.

The import substitution industrialisation (ISI) model further shaped the political economy, where the "model was forged in the context of a particular type of state-society relationship, marked by the predominance of corporatist partisan representation" (Lopreite 2012, 234). The broad yet harmonious coalition of Argentina's middle class created an environment of social cohesion which helped maintain their welfare support; especially compared to other countries in the region, Argentina was able to offer generous insurance schemes (healthcare, social security), albeit stratified by contribution. Entitlements to these provisions were earnings-related, with the overall target to maintain income for the breadwinners (*ibid*).

A notable legacy of both countries' authoritarianism is clientelism. Political clientelism refers to the extending of goods and/or personal favours in return for electoral support (Stokes 2011). These material goods commonly include welfare support, jobs, and money (Berenschit 2018). Clientelism leads to an unequal government—which tends to disproportionately has adverse effects on women and the poor; it " has an important psychological effect: it undermines the ability of citizens to demand better services, because they consider services as gift" (World Bank 2010, 8) rather than a service they are entitled to receive as citizens. Clientelist forces at play can also undercut efforts of collection action and citizen mobilisation, since "community-based groups can be co-opted by clientelistic networks, thereby undermining the empowering role they can play" (World Bank 2010, 8). Poverty creates an environment that supports clientelism and is found at a higher rate in poor countries. Corporatism in Mexico created a strong alliance between labour and the ruling party, which guaranteed the political loyalty of the powerful, organised labour unions. These trade unions were male-dominated, and therefore men were the ones to benefit from these 'corporatist social contracts'; these same contracts were the ones to establish a 'family wage' which offered higher wages to men on the assumption that of female dependence, meaning men had to financially provide for the whole family. Despite Mexico once having said strong institutionalised corporatist relationship between the ruling political party and (male-dominated) labour unions. Due to the strength of labour, "union strategies and the intensity of opposition to social protection reforms have varied across tradable and non-tradable sectors, despite similar corporatist institutions and

internal forms of organization" (Dion 2010, 10). This legacy underwent a critical change in the late 1990s. The "institutional change within the ruling party was subsequently reflected in the party's new reform proposals and emphasis on welfare" (*ibid*). This declining weight of unions' influence on the new government was reflected the decline of clientelism in Mexico's welfare.

5.3.2 Economic crisis, ensuing austerity and neoliberalism

In response to the debt crisis in the mid-1980s, reform proposals to existing welfare policies were presented, most notably the (*failed*) structural adjustment programmes and later neoliberal driven privatizations and efficiency cuts. The Washington Consensus affected the trajectory of the development of social welfare, as both countries adopted a new economic model based on the policy prescription packages. The first phase was backed by IFIs. These supranational organisations provided the much-needed loans to Latin American countries on the condition that they adopted reforms that "follow the basic tenants of neoliberalism" (Craske 2003, 48). These economic plans, pushed through international influence, was aimed at long-term economic growth to ensure post-industrial development. The said shift to neoliberalism had a different timeline for both Mexico and Argentina, with Mexico embracing neoliberal reforms and international influence almost a decade before, ending with the emergence of the first CCT program before Argentina. From 1976 until 1983 Argentina was under a military dictatorship, with the return of democracy in the mid-1980s occurring during a time of economic instability, which has since affected the social and political development (Tepepa 2019).

Both countries were strongly influenced by the adjustment measures. Subsequent reforms from the 1980s onward became entrenched with neoliberalism restructuring. Reforms endorsed by IFIs in this decade, such as structural adjustment, had adverse effects and resulted in intensifying the debt crisis and brought on a recession. Both Mexico and Argentina privatised much of their welfare provisions, which was accompanied by a large reduction in social spending as to reflect the 'fiscal responsibility' of neoliberalism. The cut of social programmes impacted the government and the private sector's relationship. In 1988, the Mexican government widely retrenched social insurance benefits, most notably privatising pensions, after just a decade earlier in the 1970s pushing strongly to increase welfare benefits universally (Dion 2010). These economic regeneration plans reduced state social services and "had a serious impact on poor and middle-income families, especially women" (Craske 2003, 48). These social costs had different impacts on countries; Mesa-Lago's 1997 survey concluded that both Argentina and Mexico bore medium impact. Mexico and

Argentina had the second and third highest debt burden, respectively, in the region, behind only Brazil. This debt burden left both countries more vulnerable.

Table 8: Debt burden in Argentina and Mexico, in billions of USD

Year	Argentina	Mexico
1982	$43.6	$57.4
1990	$62.8	$104.4
1998	$144.1	$160.0

Data from Craske 2003, based on Inter-American Development Bank data

Structural adjustment impacted gender provisions, and for the first time explicitly associated poverty alleviation as the responsibility of poor family living. This instigated the legacy of women absorbing the impact of not only the economic recession but the subsequent government policies that rely on their participation. The failure of policies throughout the 1980s brought a period of reform and restructuring in the following years. The Mexican welfare state wasn't as impacted as Argentina's, where the quality and coverage of services were largely dismantled (Tepepa 2019, 14). However, both nations saw a rise in poverty rates and inequality as a result of welfare cutbacks and adjustment processes.

Austerity measures particularly affected families, with the major cutbacks "it became evident that the provision of social services relied too much on families, and the decline of the male breadwinner further undermined the ability of families to absorb social risks" (Lopreite 2012, 237). The work-family structure did not adapt with women's altered economic conditions: women in Latin America joined the paid labour force at a much higher rate since the 1980s, as to offset some family financial problems caused by the economic crisis. The table below illustrates this transformation, and the increase of women's participation in the labour force, which has not been accompanied by transformation into the unequal division of domestic responsibilities. Women participating in the paid labour force are then plagued with the 'double burden' of continuing housework and care responsibilities while balancing a job. However, the main impact of structural adjustment on women's employment trends was the precarity and the intermittent nature of the jobs they could find. In Argentina, even paid work was concentrated in domestic labour, providing caring services

for other families' homes (Lopreite 2012, 238). For women in Latin America today, there are still segregating forces in the labour market that play a factor in women earning lower wages (*Ibid*).

Table 9: Female labour force participation rate (% of female population ages 15+)

Year	Argentina	Mexico	Regional average*
1990	45.45%	33.87%	36%
2000	49.82%	38% (*2001)*	46%
2010	47.95%	43.07%	50.65% (*2011)*

*Data from ILO 2020 * Latin America & Caribbean*

5.3.3 New Poverty Agenda, changing family dynamics and emergence of CCTs

It seems that there was a point of critical juncture in the early 1990s. The 1970s and 1980s were filled with economic crisis and subsequently major involvement from international organisations that pushed neoliberalism into Latin American countries. Up until this point, Argentina's path was largely shaped by early development that created a legacy of generous social insurance. Economic restructuring altered the Argentine welfare model into a more neoliberal variant. At the same time, employment was precarious and the informal economy grew meaning "workers lack[ed] social insurance" (Lopreite 2012, 235).

Due to the obvious corrosion of living conditions in the Latin American countries that had implemented structural reforms, the IFIs that had provided the failed policy recommendations reformulated a plan to combat poverty. The 1990s focused on the New Poverty Agenda, which brought greater attention to provisions of social safety nets. The legacy of political liberalisation in the 80s "shifted the balance of class power away from organised formal sector workers" while simultaneously enfranchising those who were not historically covered by social insurance schemes: the urban poor, rural workers, and women who did not participate in the formal labour market (Dion 2010, 193). Ramos (1997) attributes the macro-imbalances to the external debt crises, the unproductivity of the region's reliance on import substitution industrialisation and fears that modernisation efforts of the welfare state could not be sustained through the weak economic structure as drivers of radical measures.

Mexico witnessed a pivotal shift of welfare goals from Bismarckian systems that once primarily focused on old risks—providing insurance for the paid labour force—to poverty alleviation to citizens primarily not formally employed. Besides, the predominance of male breadwinner was reduced in addition to the increase of women-run households, which has been a by-product of the feminisation of poverty (Tabbush 2009). Emerging welfare policy reflected more modest provisions for low-income citizens and reoriented means-testing to determine eligibility (Tepepa 2019, 16).

Argentina and Mexico experienced critical junctures due to "changes in family composition and the crisis of old forms of social provision have driven social policy transformation," (Lopreite 2012, 237). In Argentina, the familialistic welfare regime that relied on a strong male breadwinner was "weakened as a result of the combined effect of changing families, neoliberal policies that have drawn more women into the labour market, and changes in family support policies in place since the 1990s" (Lopreite 2012, 229). The erosion of the breadwinner model began with structural adjustment's attention to women and welfare. Moreover, the changing family dynamics required new approaches, which has resulted in market-based solutions in Argentina; these neo-familial policies still relied on traditional gender roles and "altered relations among paid work, unpaid work, and welfare protection for women" (Lopreite 2012, 229). The adaptations made to social policies intensified targeted nature, which a key departure from Argentina's once universalistic nature of welfare. In addition, the government maintained their commitment market-based inclusion; this was not effective for those living in poverty or experiencing precarious work or unemployment

At the beginning of the decade, the primary form of poverty relief in Mexico was an in-kind benefit known as the 'universal tortilla subsidy' (Bradshaw 2008). In addition to the lasting effects of the oil and debt crisis Mexico experienced the tequila crisis in 1994; in an effort to both adhere to provisions of the New Poverty Agenda and to maintain wide electoral support, Mexican President Salinas (1988-1994) established a new anti-poverty initiative. The Salinas government built coalitions under an umbrella of a social welfare scheme referred to as PRONASOL, mobilising the once unorganised and underrepresented groups. Political clientelism has had an institutional legacy in Latin America, and Mexico had a particularly bad track record. PRONASOL ultimately failed because it was deemed clientelistic incorporation of those living in poverty (Sugiyama 2011).

In 1997, Progresa emerged as a new anti-poverty proposal. Since inception, *Progresa/Oportunidades* was subject to non-partisan assessments, first carried out by the International Food Policy Research Institute (Sugiyama 2011). The main concern was transparency, especially in the system that distributed transfers, as to avoid claims that this programme was buying political support. It was also structured to be run by a non-politically affiliated agency, and enrolment periods could not overlap with elections. Programme officials were not in charge of the cash, rather outside banks were used to avoid claims of mishandling cash (*ibid*). These actions were implemented to institutionally remove the programme's ability to be used in clientelistic exchanges. At first President Zedillo (1994-2000) rejected international funding for *Prospera*, as to emphasise that it was a domestic effort and Mexico was not being coerced by international actors (Sugiyama 2011). Early *Progresa* implementation signalled the importance of human capital development, completely switching from an increasing supply of infrastructure to alleviate poverty. "In one sense, demand for *Progresa* signalled a failure of economic liberalization to effectively reduce rural poverty, as some rural regions fell further behind in terms of economic development" (Dion 2010, 204). The expansion of *Progresa* and subsequent rechristening into *Oportunidades* "not only the ad hoc transformation of Mexico's welfare regime but also the consolidation of important changes in Mexico's economic development model and in its democratization" (Dion 2010, 204). Such a continuation of these CCT programmes in Mexico have signalled the popularity of the non-contributory social assistance that targets poor women; this reflects continual welfare transformation through 'institutional layering'. Most of those who benefit from CCTs in Mexico are women who work in informal sectors or operate exclusively in the unpaid domestic sphere, so instead of transforming and extending social insurance, they substitute with social assistance.

Argentina's unprecedented unemployment as a result of the 2001-2002 national financial crisis demanded policy response. Many welfare provisions were attached to labour market participation but with the unemployment rate reaching its pinnacle at 21 per cent in May 2002, policies had to be reformulated (Tabbush 2009). In response, the government collaborated with IFIs, such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to establish the *Plan Jefes* CCT programme. As explored in greater detail in chapter 4, *Plan Jefes* targeted the unemployed heads of households with conditions relating to workfare. Just two years later, *Plan Familias* emerged following "the social investment strategy in human capital that international organization promoted" (Lopreite 2012, 240). Yet despite being partially influenced by Mexico's CCT

blueprints, *Plan Familias* failed to train/encourage women to integrate into the labour force thus reinforcing traditional roles as mothers.

This period also witnessed a step away from Argentina's commitment to a (*stratified*) universal welfare and the re-emergence of targeting programmes. These reforms employed means-testing and selective beneficiaries which "meant targeting poor women as biological mothers, ignoring structural reasons for their poverty" (Idiart 2012, 235). While there were still anti-poverty provisions in place, the presence of neoliberalism reinforced the female dedication to motherhood and in a way restricted citizenship to motherhood since the once universal nature of the welfare was reformed to targeting mothers. For example, "mothers, not women, could access medical and nutritional programmes" (*ibid*, 240).

The modifications from *Plan Jefes* to *Plan Familias* was heavily influenced by "the views of key international players on gender relations thereby contributed to a more conservative interpretation of gender roles" (Tabbush 2009, 515). While it may appear counterintuitive, the "modifications in its design were introduced that reinforced traditional gender roles rather than transforming them" (*ibid* 514). Policy rhetoric closely mimics that of IOs, Leaks in Argentine CCT programme benefits seems that those who did not fulfil all the conditions or hitting the expected targets were still considered for their transfer. According to outside evaluation, the social policy network's core had recurrent challenges of "overlapping competition and lack of coordination among social sectors and between social sectors" (Idiart 2012, 239). In Argentina, "maternalist views have impeded policy interventions in areas that would address the structural bottlenecks for women's access to jobs, giving the state little incentive to innovate in terms of care service provision and active labour policies." (Filgueira and Martínez Franzoni 2017, 388). *Plan Familias* was established under Kircher's administration, which gender-coded the processes of poverty reduction (Tabbush 2010). It reconstructed how women should participate in society, disregarding the efforts of *Plan Jefes* to integrate women into the workforce through training programmes and community work initiatives that constructed women foremost as citizens. Under the logic of *Plan Familias*, men worked, and women cared; mothers were kept busy through the new conditions, becoming 'conduits of policy' in the national government's efforts to end the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Historical maternalistic legacies impacted "the design phase when proposals were made to call the current *Familias* programme 'Plan Evita', making reference to the social work of Eva Perón" (Tabbush 2009, 516).

A lasting institutional legacy that offers explanation for the difference between the two cases is the role of clientelism. Clientelism poses a threat to institutional efficiency and democracy (Hopkins 2006). Clientelistic forces are stronger in Argentina and the decentralised structure of CCT oversight only intensifies the influence; conversely Mexico has made greater progress to limit political corruption. *Plan Jefes* was considered a decentralised programme since the local municipalities were in charge of creating and monitoring work requirements (Tabbush 2009). Throughout the programme, the conditions became less of an obligation due to poor oversight and enforcement on the local level making the work requirements seem optional, which progressively made recipients discouraged to complete the tasks (Tabbush 2009, 500). Local enforcement also left transfers susceptible clientelism. The CCT programme designs have also been less focused on transparency, which can foster a greater lack of trust between the public and the government, leading to clientelism in order for political parties to maintain electability.

The institutionalist analysis finds that some electoral systems embolden clientelism; "clientelism is frequently encountered in democracies with political party competition, where politicians use public services to get votes" (World Bank 2010, 8). In addition, the three Argentine CCTs were not subject to consistent evaluation and have undergone less internal reforms. In Mexico, one of the best design elements that had an impact on improving gender relations was how the CCTs were constantly receiving audits. This offered a place for women to voice concerns about the programme's role. This is not to overstate the CCTs have been the panacea for women's equity. Mexico's CCTs still had their fair degree of exploitation towards women as conduits of their policy. However, the ability to consistently adapt to overcome some facets of marginalisation has made Mexico perform better, relative to Argentina. Even though Mexico is a federal state, "the distribution of public investment has always been centralized and subject to the dogmas of the government in office" (Costa-Font and Rodríguez-Oreggia 2005). Their fiscal coordination bill centralized state profits generated from oil, mining and taxes then distribute among the municipalities. "In this context, federal investment funding remains a very significant proportion of the state income, and hence it is important to analyse how that funding has been allocated during the different presidential terms" (Costa-Font and Rodríguez-Oreggia 2005, 301).

In Argentina, it seems as if the initial introduction of CCTs was an attempt to break path dependency, following the trend of the New Poverty Agenda. However, the strong forces at play

(Argentina's divided history of universalism and stratification) appeared to bring the policy "back to the path". In a sense, there was failed path departure. The legacy of authoritarian culture that permeates into politics today coupled with the greater incorporation of neoliberalism. Neoliberal social policy reforms are less about social rights and social citizenship and more about poverty eradication. Across CCT programmes there is a trend with "the linking of social assistance to minimal social rights" (Tabbush 2009: 487). CCT as a social policy is about poverty eradication, not about social rights. So, despite women being central to CCT initiatives, they are not gaining access to social citizenship. Even when the programme extended its reach to "near-universal" coverage in selected regions, women were incorporated into the programme on an individual basis with no clearly defined collective or societal project with which to identify beyond a rhetorical invocation of "citizenship" and their shared roles as mothers (Molyneux 2007, 40). Argentina moving toward universalism with the *AUH* social policy reform in 2009, "but the initiatives lacked a stable funding source and the country's progress was generally slower" (Pribble 2013, 2).

6. CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined six conditional cash transfer programmes in Mexico and Argentina. CCTs were widely adopted throughout the early 2000s, aligning well with the goals of the 'New Poverty Agenda'. CCT programmes have become endogenous with the Latin American region, and their favourable contributions to anti-poverty initiatives have inspired subsequent adoption across other countries, concentrated in developing nations of the Global South. The education and health investment in the next generation of workers is regarded as the most efficient means to prevent and alleviate poverty and deprivation as developing countries and international organisations were trying to meet the UN's MDGs (Bradshaw 2008; Molyneux 2007).

The underlying structure of CCTs rely on gendered divisions to work, while simultaneously reinforcing the gendered expectations. The maternalist models of care have potentially negative consequences for mothers burdened with the work, but the marginalised fathers absent from familial care expectations. In all, CCTs have nuanced effects on gender—some complexities cannot paint the analysis as purely positive or negative. Among the strengths is ensuring access to cash, which offers some form of autonomy and improves women's decision making (Rodríguez-Enriquez 2014). Yet the major trends of weakness include the expectation of maternal care, resulting in the reinforcement of the sexual division of labour. Without adequate childcare, the burden of care is a major constraint to paid work. Furthermore, "CCTs strengthen a meritocratic and maternalistic approach to social policy" (*ibid*, 10) that has the potential to limit women's rights. Targeting mothers (and women more broadly) to fulfil governments' welfare legislation is described as women being conduits of policy, where society assumes their "primary duties lay within the family" (Molyneux 2006, 427). The social impact of the CCT programmes seem to be a bit overstated in their 'empowerment' of the women in extreme poverty, who are servicing the agendas in an effort to provide for their children yet lack many (if any) exit strategies for themselves.

As emphasised in *Chapter 4*, Argentina scored worse in an overall assessment of CCTs performance of gender equity principles, specifically in relation to anti-marginalisation. After *Plan Jefes*, subsequent CCTs did not offer parallel programmes of subsidised childcare initiatives, often cited as the major barrier to women's employment (Molyneux 2008; Tabbush 2009). While children and adolescents received investment in their human capital via schooling, there were neither trainings nor educational efforts to improve work-force skills for the women. I ended

Chapter 4 with two question: Why have Mexico's CCTs been relatively more transformative for gender equity? Why haven't Argentinian CCT programmes improved traditional gender relations? This puzzle is especially curious since Argentina has always been cited as a pioneer of progressive welfare in the region (Filgueira 2005). As defined in *Chapter* 5, I engage with feminist historical institutionalist approach to explain the puzzle. *Chapter 5* also explores two commonly cited theories of policy development: pluralism and partisan competition—yet I assert that they do not adequately explain the puzzle.

In both countries Bismarckian welfare regimes, the family served as the foremost social unit to provide welfare. The presence of maternalistic features in policy reinforced the notion that the mother's primary responsibility was to the family and the domestic sector, an expectation that is later reflected in CCT design. While though Mexico lagged behind Argentina in early development of social policy, their welfare stability was less impacted from the economic chaos of the 1980s. Argentina's social policy path hit a point of critical juncture; the aftermath of the crisis changed their once universal welfare commitments to contributory-based, guided by neoliberalism. These market-based provisions emphasised privatisation, which in turn results in more poverty and class inequality (Lopreite 2012).

Though Mexico experienced their national 'tequila crisis', their quick implementation of the 'New Poverty Agenda' was clear through the creation of their first CCT in the late 1990s. The exponential growth of both poverty and extreme poverty demanded a government response, and Mexico having already tried the available social instruments had to innovate. Mexico's institutional design of *Progresa/Oportunidades* was staunchly anti-clientelistic; after a long history of corrupt policies to serve politicians' interest, the pressure to act resulted in a transparent and centralised structure. On the other hand, persistence of clientelism in Argentina's wider trajectory impacted CCT design. Lack of consistent evaluations and limited windows for participants to voice their concerns did not help CCTs adapt to the major problems that stood in the way of positive gender relations.

The most recent CCTs adopted in Argentina (2009) and Mexico (2019) reflect conditional, yet universal child allowances. Transfers are based on more minimal forms of co-responsibility, primarily adhering to school attendance. These child-centred social initiates are the future of anti-poverty. There are many opportunities for future research to both qualitatively and quantitively assess the gendered impact these CCT initiatives will have on the next generation. It will be

interesting to see whether the increased attention to young girls' educational attainment, especially in Mexico, will dramatically improve women's participation in the formal workforce and equalise wages and domestic responsibilities.

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