

Analyzing the Relationship between the Feminist Movement and Social Stability using Argentina as an Example

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Abstract. The feminist movement has gradually become a force to be reckoned with in the process of global social development, and the Argentine feminist movement, due to its long history and large scale, holds an important place in the development of the feminist movement in the world. This study focuses on the Argentinean feminist movement and aims to analyze the relationship between the feminist movement and social stability. By applying Marxist, Marshall McLuhan and Frankfurt School theories, the causes of the Argentine feminist movement are explored in a multidimensional and in-depth manner. The results of the study show that there is a strong interwoven and mutually influential link between the feminist movement and social stability in Argentina. The development of the feminist movement has contributed to the shaping of social stability to a certain extent, and the state of social stability has had a significant impact on the direction and form of the feminist movement.

1 Introduction

Gender inequality persists in Argentina. Politically, women have relatively little participation and power and are underrepresented at the decision-making level. This has led to many policies and regulations involving women's rights and interests that do not adequately reflect women's needs and concerns, such as the abortion bill that was not passed by the Argentine Senate until 2021, which will make abortion legally and voluntarily available to all women in Argentina. Culturally, more than 70 percent of Argentina's population is Catholic, and Catholicism teaches that an embryo in the womb is a living being with his or her own human rights and that no one else can deprive him or her of his or her right to be in the world. Therefore, the Catholic Church forbids women from having abortions. There are deep-rooted traditional notions of gender, with specific expectations and restrictions on women's roles and behaviors. Women are expected to take more responsibility for the family. Economically, women may experience wage gaps and occupational discrimination in the labour market. There is also a higher proportion of poor women in society. These problems seriously affect women's economic independence and autonomy. In addition, Argentine society is plagued by violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual assault, which seriously

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infringes on women's personal safety and fundamental rights and has been an important factor in the emergence of the strong feminist movement in Argentina.

Various articles have examined different perspectives and aspects of the feminist movement as a topical social issue. For example, gender relations are characterized by the oppression of women and the appropriation of their bodies, not only their labor [1]. The overemphasis on feminist issues, whether reactionary or apologetic, develops such attitudes towards feminism, resulting in ambiguity and confusion and falls short of obviously defined gender equality [2]. Women all over the world are perceived to be lacking opportunities, knowledge, skills, and even some basic human rights [3]. In every country, women are victims of oppression and suppression, and therefore, they are highly marginalized [4,5]. Despite Argentina's strict enforcement of previously passed gender quota laws, women are still generally excluded from key candidate selection processes after 15 years of quota laws.

Against this backdrop, this paper will dissect the causes of the extreme feminist movement in Argentina and analyze the relationship between the feminist movement and social stability. It is based on previous relevant research and utilizes Marxist theory, Frankfurt School theory, and Marshall McLuhan's theory. This paper aims to provide useful research perspectives and guidance for governments and relevant organizations.

2 Reasons for the emergence of the feminist movement in Argentina

The rise of the feminist movement in Argentina was not accidental but instead the result of the interaction of multiple factors. Its history can be traced back to the late 1970s and early 1980s, a period marked by political and social changes in Argentina that gradually gave rise to the feminist movement. In the 1973 presidential election, candidates from the Workers' Socialist Party, Juan Carlos Coral and Nora Ciapponi, introduced the idea of 'freedom of love and abortion' for the first time in their platforms. Ciapponi also made history as the first woman to run for vice president in Argentina, challenging prejudices against women in politics. Concurrently, socialist parties and pan-left groups stemming from robust trade union organizations advocated for equality, justice, and human rights, including gender equality. Women, recognizing the importance of their rights, began to actively seek change. These political developments provided the ideological foundation and organizational support for the burgeoning feminist movement.

The socio-economic changes and developments that have taken place in the country are an important basis for its creation. As industrialization and urbanization continue in Argentina, more and more women are entering the labour market. Women have more opportunities for employment in urban factories and in the service sector. However, they are commonly employed in low-paid, labour-intensive and insecure jobs. In some textile and garment factories, for example, women workers work long hours for little pay. In the 1970s, Argentina's economy suffered a severe crisis, with high inflation, a large number of business closures and soaring unemployment. Statistically, women were more likely than men to be laid off by companies, leading to unemployment for the same position, and numerous women lost their otherwise stable jobs and sources of income. From the perspective of Marxist theory, the economic base determines the superstructure. Women are in a subordinate position in the relations of production [6]. They are also ruthlessly exploited and oppressed by capital. Therefore, this major problem at the economic level is undoubtedly one of the key factors that triggered the feminist movement.

Not only that, but Marx's theory of social reproduction also finds its expression in the feminist movement in Argentina. According to a 2013 survey by Argentina's National Institute of Statistics (INE) on women's unpaid work and use of time, 76 percent of unpaid domestic and care work in Argentina is done by women. During the epidemic, when domestic

workers were unable to come to the house because of epidemiological requirements, women's work in cleaning their homes to avoid contracting the virus became even more onerous, and some of the chores that would otherwise have been done by domestic workers had to be done by women without pay, which lengthened their time spent in the home even further. According to the 2020 estimates of the General Directorate for the Economy, Equality and Gender, the importance of women's domestic work and unpaid care in the Argentine economy has increased by 5.9 percentage points compared to the "pre-pre-epidemic" measure, from 15.9 percent of GDP to 21.8 per cent of GDP. Women's unpaid work and labour in the home have long been regarded by Marxist theory as an important component of social reproduction, yet it is often not understood or valued by male members of society and the family. This has undoubtedly stimulated thinking about gender equity among women in general, and they hope that by highlighting the value of this labour, they will be able to compete for the resources and support that they deserve.

The feminist movement in Argentina, as an influential part of the country's social progress and development, has gone through twists and turns and struggles and has gradually achieved significant advancement of women's rights and interests. In exploring the reasons for its emergence through the theories of the Frankfurt School, this paper finds that the roots of this movement lie in the profound influence of Argentina's social structure and ideology. From a political perspective, Argentina's political system and policy environment have not been able to adequately protect women's basic rights for quite some time, especially on sensitive issues such as the right to abortion, which are definitely controversial. This institutional environment provided the ground for the rise of the feminist movement.

In addition, cultural factors had a profound impact on the feminist movement. In Argentine society, traditional gender concepts are deeply rooted, and women are commonly seen as subordinate to men, lacking due to social status and rights. In 2019, for example, Argentina's *El Horn* newspaper reported that 223 women were murdered in Argentina in the first eight months of that year, with the majority of female victims aged between 21 and 40. Seventy percent of the killings occurred in the home of either the victim or the killer, and 84 percent of the killers were the victim's partner, current spouse or former spouse. The Argentine railway company reported more than 300 cases of sexual violence and 98 arrests for sexual harassment on Argentine trains in 2022. The company also registered more than 300 complaints of sexual harassment on trains. Most of the victims were subjected to gender violence due to family factors. The Frankfurt School can explain this through the theory of cultural industry. Cultural products and media content in society frequently normalize or ignore gender violence, and there is also some discrimination and prejudice against women in society, which leads to women usually being oppressed and violent in society. The injustices they experience have been a major impetus for their campaigns.

The landmark event of 2020, when Argentina's Congress successfully legislated to protect abortion rights, marked a major victory for the country's feminist movement. Cheers rang through the pre-dawn Plaza de Congreso in a flash as women of all ages and identities hugged each other, sang, and shed tears of disbelief [7]. This victory was not only due to the long-term efforts of feminists but also inextricably linked to the wide dissemination of media and extensive public participation. This paper analyzes this phenomenon through Marshall McLuhan's theory of "the medium is the message". According to McLuhan, the media itself is a message, and changes in media technology affect people's behavior and ways of thinking. The media played a crucial role in the development of the feminist movement in Argentina. The prevalence of modern media, such as the internet and social media, has allowed more and more women to become publishers of information, breaking the monopoly of authoritative media and enabling rapid dissemination of information, and feminist issues have received wider attention and discussion [8]. At the same time, these media also provide a platform for feminists to voice their demands and opinions more directly. It can be said that

the changes in media technology have contributed to the development of the feminist movement in Argentina.

In addition, McLuhan's theory of the "global village" can also provide a new perspective of interpretation. According to McLuhan, with the popularity of electronic media and the acceleration of globalization, the whole world is becoming more and more like a "global village". In this "global village", communication and contact between people have become closer and more convenient. The theory also applies to the Argentine feminist movement. With the acceleration of globalization and the development of the Internet, Argentine feminists have been able to connect with the international community and exchange experiences more easily. Such intercultural exchanges and co-operation have not only enriched the ideas and strategies of the Argentine feminist movement but also strengthened its influence and cohesion.

3 Content of radical feminism in Argentina

The radical feminist community is derived from feminism but is more radical and aggressive towards various gender-induced social issues than regular feminism. Radical feminism asserts that women are one class and men are another. They are fiercely and unequivocally opposed to a patriarchal society, and through their propaganda demonstrations, they are building women's spaces and women's culture [9].

In recent years, Argentina has witnessed an increase in the presence of radical feminism at social events that have highlighted its claims and led to widespread discussion and controversy in Argentina and internationally.

Radical feminism has demonstrated an overemphasis on women's rights and interests. In a number of public demonstrations and protests, such as those against gender violence, radical feminists in Argentina have overemphasized the absolutism of women's rights, even attempting to place men in an antagonistic position, and have overemphasized women's victimhood, ignoring the fact that men can also be victims of gender violence.

Radical feminism also manifests itself in areas of opposition and resistance to men. At certain social events, the activism of radical feminists manifests itself in direct resistance and opposition to men. For example, during the celebration of International Women's Day or other women's festivals, they may organize protests against men and even resort to violence, which undoubtedly exacerbates the conflicts between men and women and has a negative impact on social harmony and stability.

Radical feminists in Argentina have also contested traditional social practices and gender roles at some social events. Some Argentine feminists have advocated nude demonstrations, arguing that they have the freedom to dress as they please. Such behavior, however, certainly offends conservatives as a group. These conflicts reflect both the radical attitudes of radical feminists and the complexity of their society's attitudes towards gender equality. In some specific social events, such as abortion rights and gender equality laws, they may take a radical approach to push the issue forward, even going so far as to clash with the government or religious groups. For example, on the issue of abortion rights, radical feminists in Argentina may organize large-scale demonstrations to demand that the government relax restrictions on abortion.

Beauty contests in Argentina have long been industrialized, with an international pageant generating as much as \$1.2 billion for Argentina and a 30-40 percent boost to tourism. It provides more than 1.8 million jobs. Yet radical feminists firmly believe that beauty pageants essentially objectify women. Based on this perception, they started organizing various demonstrations on an ongoing basis with the aim of protesting and trying their best to stop the pageants from taking place. However, this act resulted in a large number of hotel catering staff losing their jobs. Numerous people who lost their jobs or suffered damage as a result

of this radicalization developed a high level of resentment and resistance to feminism, which in turn exacerbated the gender dichotomy in society.

It should be noted, however, that these radical acts do not represent the positions and actions of all Argentine feminists. In addition, there are liberal feminists, Marxist feminists and others who favor a peaceful, legal and constructive approach to women's rights and gender equality.

4 Relationship between the feminist movement and social stability

Over the course of its history, the feminist movement has gone through various stages and waves. The first feminist movement began in the second half of the 19th century, fighting for women's suffrage, employment, and education. The second feminist movement emerged in the 1960s and 1970s and had a broader goal and scope, covering the rights and interests of marriage, the family, employment, political participation and more [10]. Moreover, the third feminist movement emphasized attention to a wide range of issues and called for the elimination of gender roles and prejudices in society. The third feminism emphasizes attention to a variety of issues and calls for the elimination of social gender roles and prejudices. Along with the continued advancement of the feminist movement, women have achieved unprecedented social status and achievements, and a sense of equality has gradually permeated all sectors of society. At the same time, the feminist movement has given a strong impetus to the development of the human rights movement, making women's rights an important part of human rights as a whole.

In a short time, however, the radical feminist movement has undoubtedly brought many destabilizing elements to the social environment. Radical feminism tends to view gender as a zero-sum game, and some of the views and behaviors of radical feminists may exacerbate the antagonisms and contradictions between men and women, which weakens rational, equal and harmonious communication between different genders in society. For example, radical feminists will denigrate and attack men on the internet, and their comments are often filled with negative emotions such as anger and provocation. Such negative energy will not only lead to frequent Internet violence but may also evolve into direct conflicts in real life, and such tensions will undoubtedly exacerbate gender conflicts in society, thus affecting social harmony and stability. In addition, radical feminism advocates narrow and radical values, such as "the theory of male disappearance", which ignores the complementary roles of men and women in social development, leading to the misunderstanding and rejection of feminism in the whole of society, which is not only not conducive to the realization of gender equality, but also impedes the development of the process of gender equality. This is not only detrimental to achieving gender equality but also hinders its development. Some radical feminists also use very radical means to express their views and demands, such as occupying public places, organizing protests and demonstrations, etc. If these activities are not properly managed and controlled, they will take up a large amount of public resources, disrupt public order, and even lead to nasty and violent conflicts, which will seriously affect social stability and security.

In the long term, the feminist movement has played a positive role in a number of areas, and there is a mutually reinforcing relationship with social stability. It has continued to push for changes in laws and policies related to gender equality, providing a solid guarantee of the rule of law to reduce gender discrimination and safeguard women's rights and interests, which is conducive to the maintenance of social stability and justice. In the economic sphere, it is committed to enhancing the economic status of women, allowing them to participate in economic activities on an equal footing and enjoy equal labor rights and interests and opportunities for career development, which helps to reduce economic inequality, raise the

overall level of social well-being and enhance social stability. In the socio-cultural field, it challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes, promotes the updating and progress of social concepts, breaks down gender discrimination and prejudice, creates an equal and inclusive social environment for women, and injects positive factors into social stability. In addition, the feminist movement also pays great attention to women's physical rights and interests, advocates against sexual violence, fights for reproductive rights and other issues, improves women's quality of life and sense of security, reduces social conflicts and contradictions, and creates favorable conditions for social harmony and stability. It is committed to increasing women's participation and representation in political, economic and social affairs, enhancing social diversity and inclusiveness, reducing gender prejudice and discrimination, and laying the foundation for social stability and development.

5 Conclusion

This study shows that the birth of the feminist movement in Argentina was no accident but had deep social, economic, political and cultural roots. At the same time, there is a complex relationship between the feminist movement and social stability in Argentina, which are intertwined and mutually influential. On the one hand, the feminist movement fights for equal rights and opportunities for women, promotes the fair distribution of social resources, and pushes society in the direction of greater justice and equality, thus laying the foundation for social stability; On the other hand, the state and degree of social stability also constrains and guides the scale, mode and direction of the development of the feminist movement, and provides the environmental conditions and guarantees for the development of the feminist movement. When we confront or manage social phenomena and events such as the Argentine feminist movement, we need to treat them in a rational, objective and comprehensive manner. The government and all sectors of society should fully recognize the reasonableness and legitimacy of the feminist movement, actively listen to women's voices and demands, and provide women with equal opportunities for development and protection of their rights through improved laws and regulations, policies and institutions, and social mechanisms, so as to promote the realization of gender equality. At the same time, in the course of the development of the feminist movement, the government and all sectors of society should guide it to proceed in a peaceful, lawful and orderly manner, so as to prevent the movement from becoming extremist and violent, and to reduce the emergence of social conflicts and factors of instability.

By providing an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the feminist movement and social stability in Argentina, this study hopes to provide useful references and guidance to the government and related institutions in formulating policies and regulations to promote gender equality and in promoting strategic planning for stable social development. At the same time, it will also help all sectors of society better understand the meaning and significance of the feminist movement, enhance their awareness of women's rights and interests, and promote social harmony and progress. This study only focuses on the feminist movement in one country, Argentina, which is relatively small in scope and may not fully reflect the relationship between the feminist movement and social stability on a global scale. In addition, the analysis and conclusions on some issues may have certain limitations and shortcomings due to the limitations of the research methodology and data sources. Future research can further expand the scope of the study to include feminist movements in different countries and regions in the research field, and conduct comparative analyzes and comprehensive studies, so as to reveal more comprehensively and in-depth the universal laws and internal mechanisms between feminist movements and social stability. At the same time, more diversified research methods and technical means, such as big data analysis, field surveys, case studies, etc., can be used to conduct more precise and detailed research on

related issues, so as to provide more scientific and effective theoretical support and practical guidance for the promotion of gender equality and the stable development of society.

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