

The Ideas and Politics of Universal Social Pensions in the Global South: A Comparative Analysis

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Preface

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Context of Study

1.1 Introduction: Ideational, Political and Historical Approach to Understanding Social Pensions in the Global South

Since the 1990s, social cash transfers¹ have fuelled paradigmatic changes in how southern countries tackle adverse welfare issues like poverty, vulnerability, and exclusion (Hanlon et al. 2010). The significance of social cash transfers in these areas (poverty, vulnerability, and exclusion) prompted Barrientos and Hulme (2009, p. 440) to describe the rise of social cash transfers in the global South as a ‘quiet revolution’. Likewise, Leisering (2019) described the rise of social cash transfers as an entitlement revolution because it socially recognised the agency of the poor and expanded social protection to previously excluded groups.

Despite being the most widespread and oldest variety of social cash transfers, social pensions only became prominent in the arsenal of global South states from the 1990s (Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov 2014; Leisering 2019). Social pensions introductions gained momentum in the 1990s, and by the 2000s, it had mushroomed throughout the global South, thereby providing pension coverage to previously excluded old persons (Böger and Leisering 2020, p. 309; Leisering 2019).

This dissertation is a scholarly effort geared towards understanding social pensions² in the global South. It employs a mixed-method approach to understand the ideas, institutions, and politics of universal social pensions -a rare variety of social pensions that provide non-means-tested, flat-rate benefits for all citizens- in two global South countries with divergent political, economic, and social trajectories. Universal pensions stand out because, in the eyes of some observers, especially from the British Labour tradition and some international NGOs, they epitomise the idea of equality and citizenship rights that define the welfare state. This dissertation explores the concept of universalism beyond social pensions; it examines the social protection ‘regime’ of the case countries by investigating the position of social pensions in the framework of social protection.

According to Pension Watch Database³, there are over 100 countries with social pensions, and 62 of these countries are in the global South⁴. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the trend of social pensions introduction in the global South.

¹ Social Pension is a strand of Social Cash Transfers.

² I use the term social pensions interchangeably with non-contributory pensions in this dissertation.

³ <http://www.pension-watch.net/knowledge-centre/?guid=4f9a744364cde&order=n>

⁴ Global South consist of mid and low income countries located in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Oceania and Asia.

One clear message from Figure 1 is that social pensions are prominent in all regions of the global South. It corroborates the earlier assertion that the 1990s were a period of significant introductions of social pensions in the global South. Despite widespread introductions, it is essential to point out that social pensions in the global South are not uniform. A significant number of countries in the global South have instituted means-tested social pensions, i.e., these countries employ tests such as income tests, asset tests and community quotas as means for identifying potential beneficiaries. Countries like Jamaica have a general social assistance program that covers old persons. Only circa 20% of social pensions in the global South are universal. Often, citizenship/residency is the defining requirement for benefiting from a universal social pension program.

This dissertation closely examines the universal social pensions in Botswana and Nepal. The programs in Botswana and Nepal were part of the big wave of social pension introductions that started in the 1990s. Botswana introduced its social pension in 1996, and Nepal announced its social pension in 1994. Botswana and Nepal are genuinely interesting cases to investigate because of both countries' diametrically divergent political, economic, and social histories.

On the one hand, Botswana has operated as a democracy since 1966, and it is as an example of a stable polity in the global South. On the other hand, Nepal is an unstable and fragile state. Nepal was effectively a hermit kingdom before 1950. It experimented with democracy in the 1950s. However, Nepal's monarchy usurped power in 1960, and from 1960 till 1990, the monarchy ruled as an authoritarian. Democratic governance returned in 1990. However, it is fragile and characterised by frequent government turnovers. Twenty-seven governments were formed between 1990 and 2019. The contrast extends to the economic histories of Nepal and Botswana. Botswana is regarded as an upper-middle-income country, while Nepal is a low middle-income country (The World Bank 2020b).

Adding to the complexities of the case countries, the dominant party that had ruled Botswana since 1966-the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP)-consistently professed itself as a party that favoured a market-driven approach over state-provided social protection⁵ for welfare enhancement (BDP 1984, 1989). In the first half of the 1990s decade, the party preached austerity and warned against expansive government budgets (Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994). However, in 1996 the party installed universal social pensions- a variety of social pensions that is fiscally expensive than other options (The World Bank 1994, p. 240). When Nepal announced

⁵ In this dissertation, I use the term social protection to refer to state-provided social protection i.e., protection offered by the state rather than informal welfare.

its universal social pension program in December of 1994, it depended on financial assistance from outside actors. International organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had sway on macro-economic decisions (Brown 2002; Hachhethu 2002). These organisations preached austerity as the panacea to Nepal's economic crisis in the early 1990s (The World Bank 1999; Brown 2002, p. 172). Nevertheless, Nepal's first communist government introduced a universal social pension program in 1994. Going by comparative social policy literature, the comparison of these cases can be described as the most-different-comparative case design.

The peculiar introduction of social pensions in these case countries encapsulates the *research puzzle* that this dissertation endeavours to solve, i.e., how can we understand the introduction of the same institutional model of social pensions-universal social pension-under different and divergent political, economic, and social circumstances.

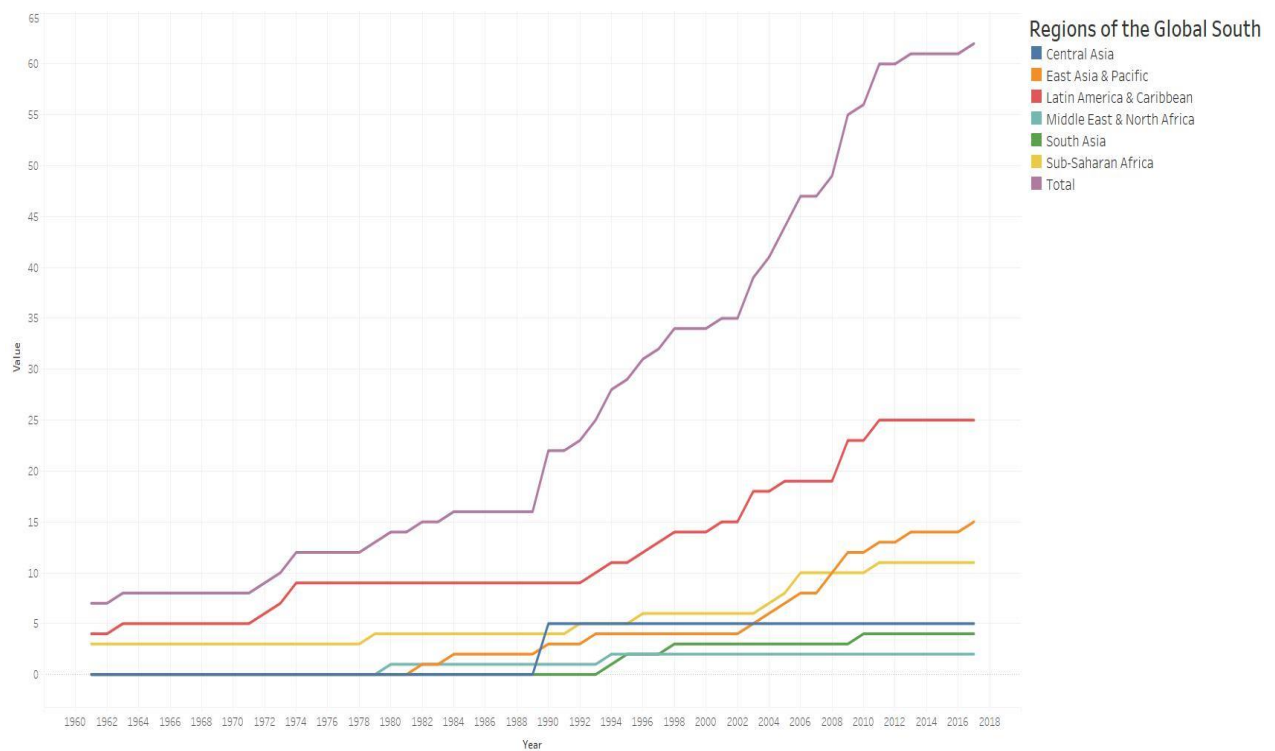
To solve this puzzle, this dissertation posits that political, economic, and structural factors may be critical in understanding the emergence of universal social pensions in the case countries. It argues that ideas, especially micro-level ideas such as beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and images, may shed more light on the improbability of universal social pensions in Botswana and Nepal. The injection of micro-level ideas into the explanatory arena germinates out of the position that social protection programs are not just products of political, economic, and structural factors; that these programs are equally manifestations of latent, dynamic ideas that centre on the perceptions and beliefs about welfare issues. These latent ideas are held by the elites and broader citizens. Although, in this dissertation, preference is accorded to the ideas held by the elites because of the closed (Botswana) and fragile (Nepal) public policymaking process of the case countries. In this way, it is then required to examine these Ideas not only in how they matter for the introduction of the programs under consideration but also how they have changed over time. This is particularly pertinent to the high value-laden concept of universalism.

The focus on micro-level ideas in this dissertation demands an actor-centred, historical, and ideational approach to the analysis of social pensions in a way that is rarely done in social protection and social policy literature. The use of political, economic, and structural factors in explaining social protection dominate the literature. The ideational approach as employed in this dissertation advances social pensions literature beyond the dominant approach. By paying attention to micro-level ideas and how they can contribute to the understanding of the introduction of universal social pensions in two divergent countries that do not enjoy research

attention, this dissertation broadens the understanding of the ‘quiet revolution’ in the global South.

This dissertation further takes the ideational approach to social protection analysis by exploring ideas about social pensions across the global South through a quantitative large N analysis. In these chapters, i.e., the large N chapters, ideas come in as policy goals and actors’ rationales, while in the analysis of the case countries, ideas are comprehensively analysed with the Onion Skin (micro-level ideas) and the ‘Five Is’ (macro-level ideas) Models.

Figure 1: Social Pensions introduction in the global South (1961-2017)



Source: Pension Watch (2018)

The roles of Ideas in explaining social protection are acknowledged in the existing literature. However, Ideas are often taken as secondary to political, economic, and structural factors in explaining social protection programs (Lavers and Hickey 2015; von Gliszczynski 2015, p. 9). This dissertation posits that Ideas, particularly actor-centred Ideas, are vital in providing insights into social protection in the global South. They can deepen the insights garnered from political, economic, and structural explanatory factors.

Ideas, as construed in this dissertation, are context and time-dependent. For instance, how actors might construe similar social issues in country A is not necessarily the same as country B. Likewise, Ideas about social issues in time A are not necessarily the same in time B. Thus, it is essential to examine the ideational evolution of social welfare issues because ideas in time A can profoundly impact ideas and programs about social issues in time B. Hence, the historical tracing of ideas in this dissertation.

1.2 A Brief Sketch of the Core Arguments of this Dissertation

In explaining the introduction of social pensions in Botswana and Nepal, this dissertation postulates that grand, singular theories are unlikely to produce a robust explanation. This is because a) the context in which these explanatory theories were developed differs from the case countries under investigation in this dissertation; b) the introduction of social protection can be complex. As such, it is unlikely that a singular theory will explain the introduction of social programs like Botswana and Nepal's universal social pension. Instead, this dissertation shares the analytical stance of Gough (2008) and Leisering (2020a) that an amalgamation of factors is likely to lead to the introduction of social policy.

This dissertation posits that since the conditions that led to the introduction of social protection in the global North are rarely obtainable in the global South, their explanatory factors are unlikely to 'travel' to countries of the global South without significant modifications. For example, Leisering (2019, p. 27) notes that the political economy approach popularised by Esping-Andersen (1990) is the most common and theoretically grounded approach for explaining social protection and welfare state development in the global North. Esping-Andersen (1990) conceived social policy development as responses to structural exigencies of capitalism driven by ideologies such as Social Democracy, Social Conservatism and Liberalism. Leisering (2019) argued that the reliance on formal labour markets as drivers of social policy development is not applicable in the many global South countries given the prevalence of labour informality. Similarly, democracies and party systems are fragile in the global South. Consequently, Ideologies such as Social Democracy, Conservatism, Communism are unlikely to produce an accurate ideational/ideological explanation for social protection because these broad ideologies are often absent in party systems or modified to fit local realities.

Kpessa and Béland (2013) sketched the main theories of social policy development in literature. These scholars identified the industrialisation arguments, the power resource arguments, the historical institutionalism argument, and the cultural and ideational explanation for social policy development. Curiously, three of the four broad theories identified by Kpessa and Béland (2013) dovetails with the Orthodox model of social policy explanation propounded by Gough (2008, p. 52). The primary conclusion from Kpessa and Béland (2013) is that these theories can provide valuable insights for social policy development in the global South. However, they cautioned that none of these theories could solely provide a satisfactory explanation for the development of social protection in the global South. Hence, they suggested that combining these theories is necessary for understanding social protection in the global South.

The conclusion reached by Kpessa and Béland (2013) meshes well with Gough (2008)'s arguments that social policy development is likely explained by a combination of structural factors, interests mobilisation, political institutions and discourses. That is, grand theories, single-handedly, are likely to provide incomplete explanations for social policy development in the global South. Consequently, Gough (2008) coined the 'Five Is' model as an analytical roadmap for explaining patterns of social policy development.

The 'Five Is' explanatory model contains 5-factor bundles:

Industrialisation: Gough (2008) enjoins an analyst to examine changing social, economic and demographic conditions of a country and how these factors can inform the introduction of social protection. This factor bundle corresponds to the logic of industrialisation arguments as forwarded by Wilensky and Lebeaux (1958), Wilensky (1975), Rimlinger (1971).

Interests: This factor bundle stresses the influences of politics in social protection development. It relies on the Power Resources arguments as forwarded by Korpi (1980, 1983).

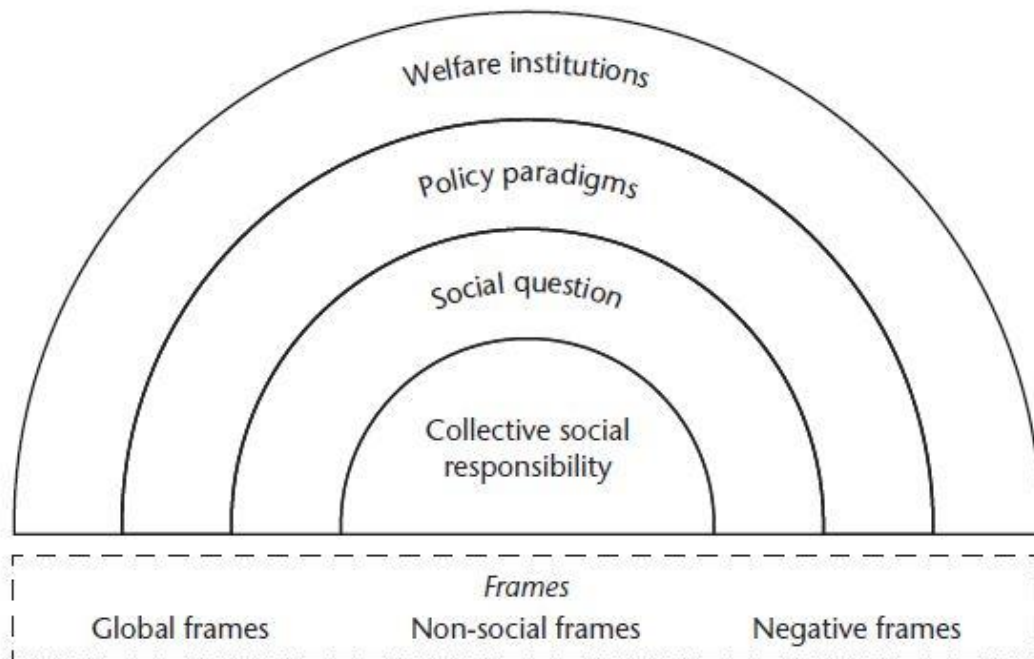
Institutions: This factor bundle examines the influences of political institutions, electoral systems, policy legacies, veto players and separation of powers. Immergut (1992) and Skocpol (1992) are foremost advocates of this explanatory factor.

International Influences: This factor bundle investigates the influences of international organisations, policy learning and transfers on domestic policy development (see, Strang and Chang (1993), Hall (1993), Dolowitz and Marsh (2000), Hall (1993)).

Ideas: This factor bundle focus on broad ideas and ideological explanations for the introduction of social protection programs. It examines the influences of religion, party ideologies on policy development (see, Hall (1989), Esping-Andersen (1990), Lavers and Hickey (2016)).

As stated earlier, this dissertation takes ideas seriously. This dissertation examines micro-level ideas via the Onion Skin Model to deepen the insights from the ‘Five Is’ model, especially the ideas bundle of the latter. It posits that ideas are not inferior determinants of social protection, and they co-constitute all other factors as identified in the ‘Five Is’ model (Leisering 2019, p. 34). The Onion Skin model argues that programs like the universal social pensions in Botswana and Nepal are products and are underpinned by far-reaching Ideas (perceptions, attitudes, image, and beliefs) held by elites and citizens of a country. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the Onion Skin Model. The Onion Skin Model conceives these Ideas in the form of independent but interrelated layers that examine how issues of collective responsibility for the welfare of social groups are constructed and distributed (Collective Social Responsibility layer). The Social Question layer investigates what social questions (or other questions, e.g., economic growth, state-building questions) preoccupies society. The Policy Paradigms layer investigates how social problems are constructed, and the Welfare Institution layer investigates the social program, i.e., universal social pensions. The Onion Skin model posits that programs like universal social pensions rarely enjoy singular legitimacy. As such, actors employ frames, often in discursive areas that transcends the social programs under consideration. For instance, actors may frame social pensions as part of a broader constitutional duty of the state (non-social frame) or a treaty responsibility (global frame) to support its enactment or enhancement. Conversely, actors may invoke what Leisering (2019) termed as negative frames to inhibit the enactment or augmentation of social programs. When actors say that social pensions cannot be introduced or enhanced because of, for example, the need to foster economic growth or balance the government budget, they are employing these needs as negative frames against social pensions.

Figure 2: The Onion Skin Model



Source: Leisering (2019)

The model facilitates comparison in that two countries may differ in some layers but share similarities in other layers. To illustrate, the two countries of this dissertation (Botswana and Nepal) are similar regarding the introduction of universal social pensions (the Welfare Institution Layer). However, the problem to which universal social pension intends to tackle need not be the same in both countries (the Policy Paradigm layer). Similarly, the answer to the question of collective responsibility need not be the same in both countries, i.e., it is not a given that programs like social pensions are evidence that the state fully embraces the responsibility for the welfare of old persons and other denizens of a country.

The Onion Skin Model helps sharpen the focus on one of the fundamental concepts employed in this dissertation: the concept of universalism. It is argued that universalism associated with social pensions is one of the several varieties of universalism. The collective social responsibility layer allows for an investigation into if universalism associated with the state's collective responsibility for all persons in a territory underpin the universal social pension in Botswana and Nepal. In this way, this dissertation expands the empirical discussions on universalism beyond narrow arguments of universal versus means-testing.

1.3 Research Questions, Objectives and Methodology

This dissertation uses a mixed-method approach to answer its research questions, i.e., it mixes qualitative and quantitative approaches (Williams 2019, p. 268). This dissertation is, at its core, a qualitative study. However, the quantitative chapters supplement the qualitative chapters; it provides deeper insights and fuller answers to the research questions posed by this dissertation. In the quantitative large N analysis chapters (Chapter 3), I explore the goals of social pensions from the perspective of actors in the global South (Chapter 3.1). For this purpose, I gathered relevant policy and legislative documents produced by actors in countries of the global South. The goals ascribed to social pensions are extracted through a qualitative reading of the documents. These goals and countries are grouped according to recurring themes from the documents. In Chapter 3.2, I challenge the dichotomous classification of social pensions into universal and means-tested social pensions using Cluster Analysis to map a new family of social pensions across the global South. The analysis conducted in Chapter 3 of this dissertation buttress the main arguments of this dissertation that an actor-centred approach to the analysis of social protection can yield important conclusions that challenge existing insights on social protection and social pensions in the global South. Notably, the analysis conducted in Chapter 3 situates the family of countries of the cases of this dissertation.

In the small N analysis chapters (Chapters 4 and 5), I employ a comparative approach to the question of understanding the introduction of Nepal and Botswana's universal social pension. Given the position of this dissertation, ideas that underpin social welfare are traced in the case countries. These chapters pay attention to the conception of universalism. It posits that universalism associated with social pensions is one of several conceptions of universalism, as hypothesised by Leisering (2019) Leisering (2020a). Subsequently, varieties of universalism such as cultural and systemic universalism are examined in the case countries. The Onion Skin Model propounded by Leisering (2019) and the 'Five Is' model by Gough (2008) aid the analysis conducted in the small N chapters.

In the large N chapters of this dissertation, I examine the array of social pensions across the global South to:

1. Understand the policy goals and rationales ascribed to social pensions by domestic actors in the global South.

2. Investigate the family of social pension programs across the global South by clustering programs using variables that capture benefit levels and standards, coverage, and institutionalisation of social pensions.

In the small N chapters, I examine the case countries of this dissertation by asking the following questions:

1. What are ideas held by the elites and the citizenry as regards issues relating to the welfare of old persons? It asks how welfare issues were framed and defined and how the responsibilities of welfare were defined between the agents of welfare production (the state, the family, and the markets). It asks what other recognised problems preoccupied the elites and the society in the time-span examined.
2. What are the institutional characteristics of the social pension programs in the case countries?
3. What explains the introduction of social pensions in the case countries? This section leans on the insights from preceding chapters to answer the Ideational underpinning of the introduction of social pension in the case countries. It relies on a complex explanatory model that combines the 'Five Is' and the Onion Skin Model.
4. The fourth section switches from the level of programmes (here: social pensions) to the overall architecture (the "social protection regime"), enquiring into the position of social pensions in the overall social protection regime. This section is also relevant to universalism but in a broader sense.

I explain the methodological approach to the analysis conducted in this dissertation as follows:

Quantitative Large N Analysis Chapters

Chapter 3.1: **Title of Chapter:** Reasons for Social Pensions in the global South

Research Question: What goals and rationales do domestic actors ascribe to social pension in the global South?

As earlier stated, an actor-centred approach is not common in extant literature. The edited volume by Leisering (2020a) is one of the pioneering works that employed an actor-centred approach to analyse social protection programs in the global South. In one of the chapters of the edited volume, Ulriksen (2020) analysed parliamentary documents to understand the ideas, views and justification of government ministers on pension policy in South Africa. Her actor-centred analysis was conducted by qualitatively reading through the parliamentary documents to gauge the thoughts and opinions of actors about pension programs in apartheid South Africa. The analysis conducted in Chapter 3.1 borrows from the analytical approach from Ulriksen (2020) by qualitatively reading relevant policy and legislative documents produced by actors in the global South to obtain the goals and rationales ascribed to social pension in the global South. An actor-centred approach used here allows for a first-hand interpretation of the goals ascribed to social pension. Upon reading the documents, social pension programs with similar goals and rationales are grouped using a Venn diagram. Documents from 36 countries of the global South were sourced from the national implementing agencies of social pensions and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) NATLEX database for national laws on social security. Altogether, about 60 documents supported the analysis conducted in this chapter.

Chapter 3.2: **Title of Chapter:** Beyond Universality vs Means Testing: Varieties of Social Pensions.

Research Question: What other families of social pensions are obtainable in the global South beyond the dichotomous classification of universal and means-tested pensions?

This chapter employs a quantitative approach to understand the families of social pension across the global South. This chapter uses variables that capture benefit levels and standards, legal coverage of social pensions and other pension arrangements, the depth of institutionalisation measured by the legislative underpinning of social pensions to cluster social pensions. The

chapter aims to go beyond the universal-means tested classification of social pensions in extant social pension literature.

In the Cluster Analysis, I employ the PAM (Partitioning Around Medoids) method to clustering instead of the famed K-means methods to clustering. The PAM method is suitable for this analysis because it can handle mixed datasets, i.e., a combination of categorical and numeric variables (Kassambara 2017). Moreover, it is robust against outliers, and it is suitable for small to medium-sized datasets as used in this chapter (Shamsuddin and Mahat 2019; Waggoner 2021).

All social pension programs in the global South were considered at the initial analysis of this chapter. However, after the process of data cleaning, only 50 countries were considered in the final analysis. Regarding data, policy and legislative documents were used to assess the depth of institutionalisation of social pensions. These documents were sourced from national agencies and the ILO's NATLEX database for National Laws on Social Security. A qualitative reading of the documents was conducted, and programs underpinned by a legislative document are coded 1 and 0, if otherwise. Data concerning coverage and benefits were sourced from HelpAge International's Pension Watch Database and Pension statistics data tables from the ILO.

Qualitative Small N Analysis Chapters

The small N analysis chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) of this dissertation relies on a case study research design. A case study design offers a comprehensive description and analysis of a real-world phenomenon within its natural context (Kaarbo and Beasley 1999, p. 372). In this dissertation, the phenomenon that I endeavour to describe and investigate is the universal social pensions in Botswana and Nepal. Specifically, a comparative case study approach is employed to systematically compare the introduction of social pensions in the case countries.

In investigating the case countries, an actor-centred approach is employed. Thus, this dissertation is concerned with how actors in Botswana and Nepal think about the issues explored. In this way, the analytical approach of this dissertation leans on a constructivist version of institutionalism. In addition, by suggesting that social programs like universal social pensions are products of longstanding, latent ideas, this dissertation takes a historical approach to analyse the case countries.

Chapter 4 and 5, Section 1: **Title of Section:** Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare: A Historical Tracing (Botswana and Nepal).

Research Questions: What are the Ideas underpinning social welfare in the case countries that might have spurred (or constrained) the introduction of social pensions in the case countries?

Given this dissertation's actor-centred and historical approach, these sections rely on historical sources like development plans, political party manifestoes, speeches by political leaders, and national constitutions as data sources. The period of analysis of this section varies. The analysis of Nepal is from 1950 to 1999. The choice of 1950 stems from the fact that it was a pathbreaking year for Nepal's politics and social welfare issues. In 1950, a revolution that overthrew the autocratic Rana regime gave birth to a period of democratic experimentation. In turn, the period of democratic experimentation brought new ideas about collective welfare responsibility, social recognition of deserving groups and articulations of questions that competed with social questions such as poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. The tracing of social welfare ideas in Botswana spans from 1966 till 1999. 1966 was chosen as the start year because it was the year of the independence of Botswana. 1999 was chosen as the cut-off year because the social pension was enacted during the 1990s decade.

Chapter 4 and 5, Section 2: **Title of Section:** A Description of Universal Social Pension Institutionalisation (Botswana and Nepal).

Research Question: What are the institutional characteristics of the Universal Social Pensions in the case countries?

These sections represent the first foray into the programs under investigation in this dissertation. It investigates the institutional characteristics of the programs by examining how the programs are funded, administered, and institutionalised. It also describes the benefits and the level of coverage of the programs. These sections rely on data produced by national-level agencies and international organisations such as HelpAge International and the ILO.

Chapter 4 and 5, Section 3: **Title of Section:** The introduction of Universal Social Pension: A mid-range explanation.

Research Question: What explains the introduction of social pension in Botswana and Nepal?

This section answers the core question of this dissertation, i.e., what explains the introduction of social pension in Botswana and Nepal. This section eschews grand theories to explain the introduction of social pension. Instead, it leans on mid-range explanations. A mid-range explanation shuns grand abstractions and aims at a careful arrangement of empirical facts to aid a robust explanation of a phenomenon. This section employs the ‘Five Is’ and the Onion Skin Models to aid its objectives. Thorough attention is paid to Ideas and the conception of universalism derived from preceding sections. This section relies on historical sources such as budget speeches, party manifestos, development plans, and autobiographies of political leaders as primary data sources. These sources are supplemented by secondary sources such as books and articles written about the subject matter. In the research proposal of this dissertation, it was stated that semi-structured interviews would supplement other sources employed in this dissertation. Unfortunately, given the prevalent pandemic crisis in 2020 and 2021, a trip to the case countries was impossible. As such, I was not able to use semi-structured interviews in this dissertation.

Chapter 4 and 5, Section 4: **Title of Section:** Program Universalism to Systemic Universalism

Research Question: What is the place of the universal social pension in the framework of social protection programs, and to what extent does the program contribute to the systemic universalism of the framework?

This section takes the framework of social protection as the unit of analysis by investigating the extent that one can speak of systemic universalism of the framework, i.e., it investigates the extent of coverage of programs. It investigates the extent of within-category exclusions, depth of institutionalisation of the programs and which social groups are included or excluded in social protection coverage. This section relies on data from implementing agencies of the social programs in Botswana and Nepal, databases such as Pension Watch database, University of Manchester Social Assistance in Developing Countries Database and published statistical tables from the ILO and the World Bank.

1.4 Academic and Policy Relevance of Dissertation

One of the most significant innovations in social protection in the last three decades is the widespread introduction of social cash transfers in countries of the global South. The mushrooming of the introduction of social pension across the global South represents an essential component of the ‘quiet revolution’ in how countries of the global South tackle adverse welfare issues such as poverty and vulnerability. Nevertheless, knowledge of these innovations is circumscribed. While large-N studies on social protection programs abound in social protection and social pension literature, small N studies tend to focus on a small number of (‘star’) countries such as Brazil, South Africa, India, and China. In other words, a good number of countries with substantial innovations in social pensions and other social protection programs do not enjoy research visibility in the extant literature compared to their ‘star’ counterparts.

This dissertation departs from these trends by thoroughly investigating two countries that do not enjoy research visibility in social protection and social pensions literature. The examination of the introduction of social pension in Botswana and Nepal, as conducted in this dissertation, attempts to illuminate the drivers of social pensions beyond the ‘star’ social welfare countries of the global South. Moreover, Botswana and Nepal have established one of the rarer forms of social pension in the global South. Consequently, an analysis of two countries with divergent political, social and economic histories improves and extends the academic literature’s understanding of social pensions in global South countries in the research periphery.

As mentioned earlier, the knowledge on social pensions and social protection in the global South is limited but growing. However, studies tend to focus on financing and impact evaluation issues and are likely to have a presentist bias, i.e., they only pay attention to recent changes in the world of social protection programs in the global South. What is more, is that a political economy approach dominates in these existing studies. By adopting an actor-centred, historical, and ideational approach to the analysis of social pension, this dissertation moves the literature forward by providing an analytical perspective beyond the dominant political economy approach and the presentist bias of the extant literature.

By adopting an ideational approach, this dissertation advances academic discourses on the concept of universalism. In social protection literature, discourses about universalism usually revolve around the merits of universalism compared to means-testing in the delivery of programs like social pensions. From the analysis of the case countries, this dissertation is able to show that the form of universalism associated with social programs like social pension is one of several

variants of universalism. Indeed, it is the narrowest form of universalism. By tracing ideas about social welfare issues, it was possible to pinpoint the evolution of the state's collective welfare responsibility, which is a cultural form of universalism. In this way, the cultural form of universalism can be construed as an ideational underpinning for the more visible form of universalism, i.e., the universalism associated with social pensions.

Concerning the argument on universalism, this dissertation contributes to growing strands of social pension literature that posit that the dichotomous distribution of social pensions into two camps of universal and means-testing is unsatisfactory and unable to capture the subtleties of the family of social pensions in the global South. The analysis conducted by Leisering (2019) using a Fuzzy Set method yielded some results that show that the dichotomous classification is limited. In the same vein, the Cluster Analysis conducted in this dissertation also demonstrated the limitation of the dichotomous classification. The analysis shows that the clustering of programs using program characteristics such as benefits levels and standards, coverage data (social pension and other pensions arrangements), and the depth of institutionalisation of social pensions produced a family of social pension programs that transcends the existing classification of universal and means-testing.

As mentioned earlier, the literature on social pension and social protection often relies on political economy approaches to analyse and understand social protection programs. However, this dissertation shows that while structural considerations such as elections, economic growth, and institutions can be important factors for introducing social protection programs like social pension, Ideas, especially, micro-level ideas should not be discounted or treated as secondary determinants of social protection programs. In this way, this dissertation shows the need to expand the analytical lenses of social protection programs beyond political economy approaches.

1.5 Structure of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 (this chapter) introduces the objectives, research questions, the analytical methods used in this dissertation and the relevance of this dissertation to academic and policy literature. Chapter 2 discusses the extant literature on social pension and its introduction in the global South. It enumerates the 'Five Is' and the Onion Model in detail. Chapter 2 also clarifies the concepts employed in this dissertation. Critical attention is paid to the conception of universalism and how it is conceived in this dissertation.

Chapter 3 is the Large N chapter of this dissertation. In this chapter, I examine social pension across the global South. Chapter 3 is divided into two sections. The first section takes an actor-centred approach to investigate the goals ascribed to social pensions in the global South. From documents produced by actors in these countries, I extracted these goals and group social pension programs with similar goals using a Venn diagram. The second section uses programs as the unit of analysis. This chapter contends that the dichotomous classification of social pensions as present in literature is limited. As such, I employed Cluster Analysis to find new families of social pensions in the global South using indispensable variables that capture coverage, benefits, and institutionalisation. The main finding of the section is that the Cluster Analysis was able to show that the classification of social pensions into two groups of means-tested and universal social pensions is limited. In this way, this finding concurs with scholars like Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) and Leisering (2019) on the inadequacies of the existing classification of social pensions in the global South. All in all, the research exercise of chapter 3 tries to pinpoint the family of countries in which the case countries in this dissertation belong.

Chapters 4 and 5 correspond to the analysis of the case countries of Botswana and Nepal. Each of these chapters is divided into four sections. The first section traces the Ideas about social welfare in the case countries. It examines how the layers of the Onion Skin Model were constructed and the evolution of the constructions. The second section describes the social pension programs in the case countries. The third section investigates the introduction of social pensions in the case countries using the 'Five Is' and the Onion Skin Models. The Onion Skin Model is employed to deepen the Ideas factor bundle of 'Five Is' model. The fourth section examines the entire framework of social protection in the case countries to investigate the importance of universal social pensions in providing social protection in Botswana and Nepal. In this section, attention is paid to the extent to which these programs add up to the social protection coverage of the denizens of the case countries.

In Chapter 6, I summarise the findings of the dissertation. Then, I compare and discuss the results. The comparison of the development of social pensions in the case countries shows that despite the uniqueness of the cases, I show that Ideas and how actors create, interpret, and perceive welfare issues constitute essential elements in the introduction of universal social pensions in the case countries. Finally, I conclude this chapter by discussing the broader implications of this dissertation and possible avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 State of the Art in Social Pension Research: An Introduction

This chapter reviews the extant literature on major topic areas of this dissertation. It examines the general literature on social pensions; it explores the factors that can help explain the introduction of social pensions. As part of these tasks, universalism, the ‘Five Is’ and Onion Skin Models, and other concepts employed in this dissertation are examined. Hence, this chapter is divided into three parts. The *first section* analyses literature on social pensions across the global South. The *second section* presents explanatory models and studies social protection development, including social pensions. It starts by examining the explanatory factors that Gough (2008) termed as ‘Five Is’ of social policy development. The *third section* enunciates the concept of universalism and other concepts used in this dissertation.

2.2 Social Pension across the Global South

The history of social pensions can be traced to the development of contributory social insurance in countries of the global North in the 19th and 20th centuries (Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov 2014; The World Bank 2018). However, in countries of the global South, social pensions only became prominent as an instrument of social protection over the last three decades. Although, it is essential to note that before social pensions became prominent in the 1990s, several countries in the global South had already institutionalised social pensions. Uruguay introduced its social pension program in 1919, South Africa in 1928, Barbados in 1937, Namibia in 1949, Guyana in 1944 and Mauritius in 1950 (Pension Watch 2018).

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the introduction of social pensions accelerated in countries of the global South, and from the early 2000s, it became a global model for providing income guarantee for old people, tackling broader issues such as rights of old persons and economic development (von Gliszczynski and Leisering 2016). Holzmann et al. (2009) notes that social pensions exist to prevent poverty in old age, realise old persons social rights and augment the coverage deficiencies of existing pension programs. In Chapter 3 of this dissertation, I closely examine the goals and rationale of social pensions from the perspective of domestic actors in the global South. I contend that the goals and rationales ascribed to social pensions in existing literature may not necessarily reflect what the real actors in the global South countries think about the social pension program in their respective countries. Consequently, I examine documents

produced by domestic actors to ascertain the goals ascribed to social pension (see Chapter 3.1 of this dissertation).

Programmatic and regional differences in the rate of introduction of social pensions are noticeable in the global South. In no other region was the introduction of social pensions more widespread than in Latin America and the Caribbean. Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) showed that all countries in the region except Nicaragua and Honduras had instituted social pensions. Despite the uniformity in the introduction trends, differences persist in the scale and coverage of social pension programs in the region. For instance, Bolivia has a universal scheme covering 97% of eligible old people (the age of eligibility is 60 in Bolivia). In comparison, Venezuela has a means-tested social pension program covering 20% of eligible old people despite its tiered approach to eligibility (men qualify when they clock 60 years old, and women are entitled to receive the pension when they turn 55) (Pension Watch 2018).

The trajectory of the introduction of social pensions in Latin America is a sharp contrast to the trend in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 46 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, only 14 countries have instituted social pension (Pension Watch 2018). Although what countries in sub-Saharan Africa lack in numbers, they compensate in the scale and scope of social pensions. Despite having a handful of countries with social pensions, countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have some of the most comprehensive social pension programs regarding the share of the old people covered in the population (The World Bank 2018, p. 73). For example, the social pension coverage of the eligible population in Botswana is 93%, South Africa's social pension covers 74%, Lesotho 126%, Mauritius 103% and Seychelles 104% (Pension Watch 2018).

In Asia, the introduction of social pensions is as diverse as the continent. The political changes that greeted Central Asian countries in the 1990s allowed for reforms of existing pensions arrangements or institutionalisations of new pension programs, including social pension. (Falkingham and Vlachantoni 2012). The year 1990 was pivotal for the introduction of social pensions in the Central Asian region as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan introduced their respective social pension programs (Pension Watch 2018).

There have been 51 introductions of social pension programs in the global South since the 1990s. Countries in East Asia, the Pacific, and South Asia regions constitute 35% of these new introductions. Interestingly, Nepal- one of the case studies of this dissertation- is the first country to introduce a nationwide social pension program in the South Asian region. Although, it should be noted that sub-national experiments were obtainable in southern Asian countries before the

introduction of Nepal's universal social pension in 1994. Indian states of Kerala and Andhra Pradesh started their respective social pension programs in the 1960s (Meena 2006).

One qualitative trend observable in the global South is the presence of social pensions in varieties of countries, regardless of levels of economic development and governance system. For example, social pension is obtainable in autocratic China as well as democratic Botswana. What is more is that despite being adjudged as fiscally expensive than other varieties of social pensions, universal social pensions can be found in high-income countries like Brunei and low-income countries like Nepal.

In an attempt to map the geography of social pensions in the global South, Barrientos (2009) postulated that three clusters are obtainable based on the geographical distribution of social pensions in the global South. In his postulations, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Uruguay constitute the Latin America cluster. He noted a Southern Africa cluster of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho, and Eswatini, while India, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal make-up the South Asia cluster.

Grouping social pensions in the global South transcends geography. Scholars and international organisations often lean on the target mechanisms to group social pensions in the global South. As such, social pension programs are often grouped into two distinct categories of universal and means-tested social pensions. Universal social pensions employ residency or citizenship as the qualifying requirement. To identify potential beneficiaries, means-tested social pensions use requirements that range from asset tests, income tests, quotas decided by local elites, proxy means test, i.e., beneficiaries are identified by employing an indicator that does not refer to the income (Böger and Leisering 2017b). Universal social pensions can reach more beneficiaries by reducing exclusion errors⁶ associated with means-tested pensions. Means-tested social pensions consider the need of beneficiaries, and universal social pensions assume the uniformity of the needs of beneficiaries (Leisering 2019).

The classification of social pensions into universal and means-tested social pensions has been challenged in extant literature. Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014, p. 258) argue that the dichotomous classification of social pensions into universal or means-tested pensions cannot adequately describe social pensions in the global South and should be refined. Similarly, Böger and Leisering (2017b) suggested that the universal and means-tested classification is not enough

⁶ Exclusion error is defined as the ratio of the number of targeted old persons not benefiting from social pension to the target population.

to capture the complexities of social pensions. To tackle this question, Böger and Leisering (2017b) constructed what they described as the social citizenship index that would permit a nuanced classification. The social citizenship index was operationalised using three indicators of coverage, benefit levels and the targeting methods of social pensions. Using a Fuzzy-Set ideal type methodology, they identified four models of social citizenship for clustering social pensions in the global South. They are Layered Citizenship, Basic Citizenship, Precarious Citizenship, Deficient Citizenship. Countries in the Layered Citizenship cluster of their analysis rely on social insurance, minimum pensions, and social pensions to provide income security in old age and tend to be upper-middle-income countries. The Basic Citizenship cluster of countries primarily relies on social pensions to provide income for old persons. The third cluster are countries with Precarious Citizenship. The characteristics of this cluster are that social pensions are marginal in coverage and social insurance coverage is also weak. Bangladesh and India belong to this cluster (Böger and Leisering 2017b, pp. 28–34). The fourth cluster of countries was named countries with Deficient Citizenship. These countries provide social pensions to a large share of the population, but the quality of the social pensions is low due to meagre benefits. This dissertation contributes to this debate by conducting a cluster analysis using variables that capture coverage, benefits, and the institutionalisation of social pensions in countries of the global South (see Chapter 3.2 of this dissertation).

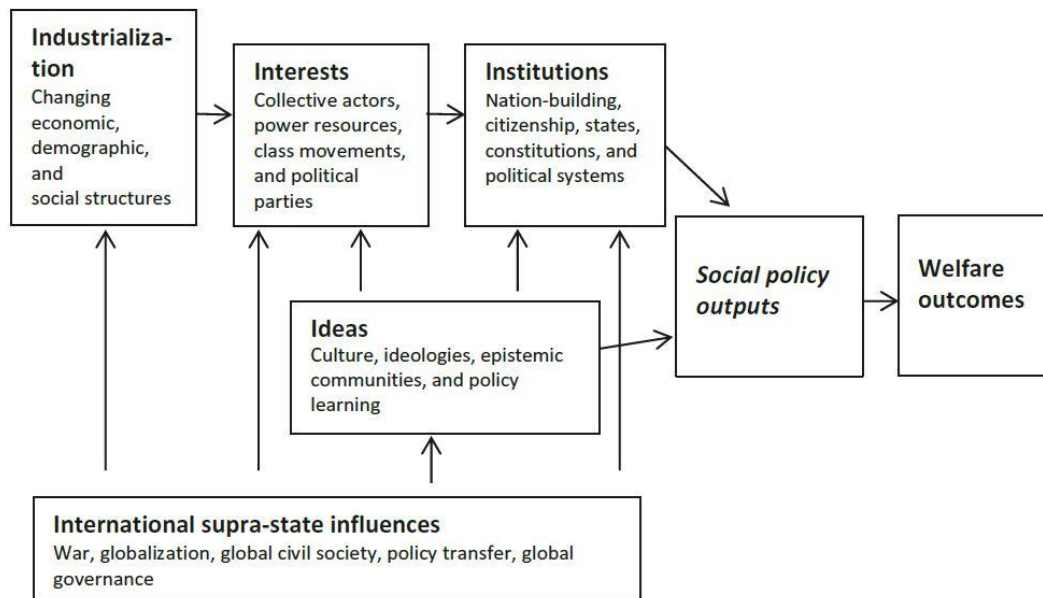
2.3 The explanation for the introduction of Social Protection Programs

The literature on social policy and social protection offers divergent approaches for understanding the introduction of programs. Political economy approaches are the most common approach to analysing social protection programs, especially in the global North (Leisering 2020a, p. 18). Political economy approaches view the development of Capitalism, social arrangements into Class, Institutions and broad ideologies such as Social Democracy, Christian Democracy and Communism as drivers of social programs in the global North. Gough (2008) systematised the drivers of modern social protection programs into five distinct factors that he mnemonically referred to as the ‘Five Is’: Industrialisation, Interests, Institutions, International Influences and Ideas/Ideologies. Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the ‘Five Is’ explanatory model.

Industrialisation: This is the first postulation on how and why social protection programs developed in the global North. The bundle of the industrialisation arguments is also called the Logic of Industrialisation thesis. This school of thought emphasises a functionalist view of social protection development, and it is associated with the works of scholars like Wilensky (1975); Pampel and Williamson (1989); Kerr et al. (1960); Wilensky and Lebeaux (1958); Mishra (1977) and Rimlinger (1971). This explanation purports that structural factors such as spatial and demographic distribution of population, the shift from primary production to secondary production, new social risks and the decline of traditional social security networks are causes of the introduction of social protection programs. Wilensky (1975) drew on this theoretical approach to analyse a cross-section of sixty-four countries. Employing the share of Gross National Product (GNP) dedicated to social protection programs as the dependent variable, he concluded that economic growth and its associated demographic and bureaucratic outcomes are the root causes of welfare state development. Wilensky (1975)’s arguments subordinates politics, ideas and institutions as necessary factors for explaining the development of social policies. Rimlinger (1971)’s analysis of social policy development in Russia, Europe, and the United States concluded that industrial progression and urbanisation necessitated highly organised income protections for the new industrial working class. Myles and Quadagno (2002) argue that there are weaker and stronger variants of the industrialisation arguments, and it is necessary to distinguish these variants. The weaker version of the Logic of Industrialisation argument relates social protection programs as consequences of economic growth and demographic factors such as population ageing. The stronger or contested version of the Logic of Industrialisation

argument centres on the conclusion from Wilensky (1975) that the introduction of social protection programs is bereft of politics, ideas and institutions.

Figure 3: The ‘Five Is’ explanatory model



Source: Gough (2008, p. 44)

Interest: These strands of explanations were postulated by its proponent to respond to the perceived weaknesses of the structural-functionalist explanations. Nevertheless, interest-based explanation for social protection programs employs similar functionalist logic by positing that these programs emerge because of dual contradictions that relate to the opposing interests of capital and labour, and the need to justify the capitalist mode of production (O'Connor 1978). Myles and Quadagno (2002) note that by the 1970s, interest-based explanation took on a class-based slant that emphasised that the development of social protection programs are linked to the power resources of the propertied and the non-propertied classes. Korpi (1980, 1989) systematised these arguments and called it the **Power Resources** argument. The primary principle of the **Power Resources** argument is that control of power resources is a significant determinant of the pattern, outcomes and functioning of the redistribution in society. Consequently, control of societal power resources is central to the introduction of social protection programs. This strand of explanation has two variants: interests from ‘below’ emphasise labour movements and

interest from 'above' emphasise the paternalism of the state. The introduction of social insurance in Germany by Otto von Bismarck in the 1880s encapsulates the paternalism highlighted here.

In their analysis of the welfare state structure of 19 industrialised countries, Huber et al. (1993) found that interests of political parties, left-wing and labour movements were influential in the benefit generosity pattern. They concluded that their findings supported the Power Resources argument that power constellations are important predictors of welfare state efforts (Huber et al. 1993, p. 738). Hicks (1999) leaned on the interests-based argument to suggest that class mobilisation is a core element in the development of income security policies in democratic capitalist countries.

Institution: These explanatory factors depart from the society-centred approaches that typify the Interests and Industrialisation arguments. The Institution argument places the state at the centre of policymaking by emphasising its role in the introduction of social protection programs. Institutional arguments for the development of social protection programs were championed by the works of Skocpol (1992), Skocpol and Amenta (1986), Weir et al. (1988). These scholars postulate that the decision-making mechanisms of a state shape the direction and trajectory of social protection programs. Thus, the institutional arguments encourage analysts to examine electoral systems, separation of powers, regime types, policy legacies to explain the development of social protection programs.

Huber et al. (1993)'s cross-section analysis found empirical support for the Interests, Industrialisation, and Institutional arguments for the development of social protection programs. Gough (2008) leaned on the conclusion from Huber et al. (1993) to name these explanatory factors as the *Orthodox models* for social policy development in the global North.

Given this dissertation's concentration on programs and countries of the global South, to what extent can the Orthodox model of explanation provide insights into the introduction of social protection programs in the global South? Scholarly critiques from Kpessa and Béland (2013), Leisering (2019), and Gough and Therborn (2012) warned that the pattern of the development of social protection programs as found in the global North is unlikely to be repeated in the global South because the contexts are different and, there are varieties of ways in which societies in the global South manage adverse welfare questions.

The recognition of the divergent context of the global South inspired Gough (2008) to include International Influences and Ideas as drivers of social protection programs. He stated that International influences are not considered because welfare state research literature always had

focused on individual nation-states, and the role of Ideas are mistreated as drivers of social protection programs in extant global North literature (Gough 2008, pp. 53–54).

International: Gough (2008) points to the Second World War as crucial in the development of the idea of social rights and extensive government apparatus that birthed the post-war European welfare states. For countries in the global South, it is conceivable that wars and major civil strife would drive the introduction of social protection programs. Gough (2008) singled out the introduction of Vietnam’s Veterans’ program that later morphed into generalised social protection programs as evidence that events such as war can spur the introduction of social protection programs. Gough (2008) cautioned that the association between war and the introduction of social protection programs must not be overstated and that the association between war and social protection requires more research.

Further, Gough (2008) alluded to the influences of supra-state factors as important elements if the introduction of social protection is to be understood in the global South. The advent of international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has had a significant impact on the development of social protection programs in the global South in that they can act as constraining factors for domestic policy decisions. Although, international organisations can also serve as knowledge actors that promote social protection models (Leisering 2019, p. 46). In addition, since the cost of information in a globalised world is low, analysis of social protection programs must investigate policy diffusion, policy learning, and policy transfer to gauge the influences of external actors and mechanisms (Gough 2008).

Ideas: Gough (2008) contends that the role of Ideas is often underplayed in the explanations of social protection programs. Political-Economy and Social Policy literature offer diverse ways of conceptualising ideas. Gough (2008) advised that an ideational analysis should examine the influences of broad ideologies, cultural systems, and epistemic communities in the introduction of social protection programs. He argues that the development of European welfare states could be traced to broad ideologies such as Social Democracy, Social Liberalism and Social Catholicism. The comparative work conducted by Levine (1988) on Britain, the United States, Germany and Denmark illustrates the explanatory power of early ideas and worldviews on the emergence of social protection programs in these countries. Levine (1988) showed how the early constructions of ideas of charity and deservingness in the United States and Britain limited future welfare efforts of the state. Esping-Andersen (1999)’s analysis of the social foundation of the post-industrial welfare state of the global North showed that the worldview held by policymakers that the family plays a central role in the welfare of its members affected the weight that Southern

European countries and Japan placed on family policies such as day-care and maternity programs. He showed that the centrality of the family informed the meagre benefits and attention paid to familiarisation programs.

Campbell (2002)'s conceptualisation of Ideas can be grouped into Macro (Cognitive and Normative Ideas, e.g., worldviews), Micro(Programmatic Ideas), and Meso (Framing) Ideas. Campbell (2002) argues that these worldviews and ideas serve as cognitive and normative checkpoints on policymakers regarding options when drafting a policy, i.e., ideas serve as subterranean constraints on the range of policy choices available to policymakers. Further, he alluded that these cognitive and normative checkpoints can be transnational. Scholastic efforts from the World Culture school argue that ideas and *modus operandi* in an institutional context can diffuse to another institutional context to create globally shared ideas about a particular social problem, normative principles, and institutional models (Strang and Meyer 1993; Leisering 2019). Campbell (2002) notes that Frames represent a way in which ideas spur policy development. Frames are located in the foreground of policy debates and are employed as a tool to broaden the appeal or delegitimise a policy proposal. By prescribing new guidelines and solutions to existing institutions and policy problems, Programmatic Ideas can serve as a route to policy changes (Campbell 2002).

The primary message that can be drawn from the theoretical exercise conducted by Gough (2008) and his analytical framework is that it is unlikely that each of these arguments can singularly provide a robust explanation for the introduction of social protection programs. He concluded in his theoretical essay that 'a combination of structural factors, interest-based mobilisation, political institutions, and policy discourses has determined patterns of social policy development' (Gough 2008, p. 63). This dissertation shares Gough (2008)'s conclusion that it is unlikely that grand theories that focus on a singular factor can provide a robust explanation for the introduction of the universal social pension programs in Botswana and Nepal. Hence, this dissertation postulates that a combination of factors will likely provide a fuller explanation for the introduction of social pensions in the case countries.

This dissertation takes Ideas seriously. It joins very small literature that pays attention to ideas as a relevant factor for understanding social protection in the global South. Lavers and Hickey (2015, p. 11) lamented that ideas have always enjoyed a subordinate status in understanding policy development and are often instrumentalised and construed as secondary to other explanatory factors such as Interests and Institutions. Beland (2005), Schmidt (2008), Blyth (2002), and Hay (2011) argue against the subordinate status of Ideas. These scholars suggested

that Ideas are fundamental for explaining social action. Deriving his stance from a Weberian conceptualisation of ideas, Leisering (2020a, p. 10) stated that Interests and Ideas are vital forces for social action, but Ideas provide legitimacy for Interests. These scholars do not dispute the importance of Interests and Institutions. However, they do not subscribe to the notion that Interests and Institutions are actor-free arenas. Instead, Interests and Institutions are socially, historically, and politically constructed. Thus, the rules that govern the action of actors are not only defined by their material interests but are also subject to their values, worldviews, and perceptions.

The band of scholars that take Ideas seriously in explaining policy development and policy change fall into two groups. On the one hand, the group of scholars favouring the separation of Ideas from other institutional concepts (Schmidt 2010, 2011; Hay 2011) and on the other, scholars that view Ideas as compatible with institutional concepts such as Interests and Institutions (Lieberman 2002; Beland 2005). This dissertation falls into the second group of scholars. This dissertation view ideas as vital for understanding the introduction of universal social pensions in Botswana and Nepal. It submits that programs like universal social pensions are underpinned by Ideas that reflect the perceptions, values, beliefs held by policymaking elites and the citizenry.

To conceive Ideas as an explanatory factor, this dissertation uses the Onion Skin Model as developed by Leisering (2019, 2020a) to analyse ideas in a way that deepens the insights generated from the Ideas factor bundle of Gough (2008) 'Five Is' model.

2.4 The Role of Ideas: The Onion Skin Model

Leisering (2019) introduced a conceptual and theoretical model called the Onion Skin Model (see Figure 2, Page 9) for explaining social policy. The model allows for tracing the cognitive structure of Ideas that form the basis of social protection programs (Leisering 2020a, p. 22). The model purports that social protection programs are products of subsurface dynamics of policymakers' and general society's values, attitudes, and beliefs. Consequently, the Onion Skin Model conceptualise these ideational determinants in four independent but interrelated layers that embody cognitive and normative persuasions for the development of social policy.

The Onion Skin Model devised by Leisering (2019) borrows from previous works by sociologists Franz- Xavar Kaufmann, Georg Simmel, T.H. Marshall, John W. Meyer, and social anthropologists Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann. Specifically, the work of the von

Benda-Beckmanns inspired the layered approach used in the Onion Skin Model. Similarly, the work of Kaufmann and Marshall played an immense role in the analytical conceptions of social citizenship and the social used in the Onion Skin Model.

The Onion Skin Model perceives social protection programs and consequently its analysis in terms of independent but interrelated layers that are subsumed in the notion of social recognition. The model has the analytical power to show that the development and expansion of social protection programs often take a layered approach. Changes in the lower layers may lead to changes in the upper layers, and each of the layers reflects varying but interrelated forms of social recognition and political commitment.

The layers of the Onion Skin Model are:

- Frames
- Collective social responsibility
- Social question
- Policy paradigms
- Welfare institutions

I shall succinctly describe the constituents of the Onion Skin Model according to its description by Leisering (2019).

The Frame Layer: Framing in social policy and public policy analysis is largely used by scholastic work that can be termed as post-positivists and constructivist. Framing as used in policy analysis and social policy is related to similar concepts like discourse and sense-making. The Onion Skin Model shares this constructivist approach to framing by using it as a conduit to elucidate larger ideas that transcend the issue under consideration. That is, when policymakers talk about a policy, they couch the policy in a language that reflects larger ideational topics that are appealing to a broader audience. Framing is important in the introduction and expansion phases of public policies in that the manner in which a policy is talked about domestically or globally may determine the trajectory of such policy, i.e., the framing attached to a policy may determine the solution that would be accorded to a policy problem.

It should also be noted social protection programs like social pension have ramifications that touch every aspect of public life. As such, instituting such programs is not only a question of social protection; it is also a question of economic policies because it requires the redistribution

of resources. In short, the framing attached to a program like social pension may be superseded by frames that are not related to social protection.

The Social Responsibility Layer: This layer seeks to capture the welfare commitment of the state and the wider society. In its assumptions, this layer places the state as the primary provider of welfare but investigate the degree of the welfare burden it shoulders, i.e., the layer seeks to investigate the ‘who is responsible for welfare’ question and the degree of responsibility of other agents of welfare production (notable family, NGOs, faith organisations) as compared with the state. This commitment to social issues by the state can take several forms. The commitment to the social by the state can be enshrined in national constitutions and in the accession to international treaties that relate to social policy. The presence of social rights is the primary manifestation of the commitment of the state to social issues (Leisering 2019). In turn, its presence not only indicates the welfare consciousness of the politicians and the wider society, but it also indicates the universality in which the issue of social protection is regarded.

The Social Question Layer: The layer seeks to investigate what is designated as a general social problem and the solutions that can be accorded to the problems. Although, the social question need not be the defining question that society addresses. Other questions might be higher in the preference of leaders at a point in time. For example, in the immediate years of independence in several African countries, national and state-building questions had preference over questions of poverty in the national discourse (Adésinà 2009). The definition of the social question and other questions does have path-dependent influence on the trajectory and shape of subsequent policies in a country. Similarly, global social questions manifested in new global concerns may also influence the development and trajectory of domestic policies.

The Social Problem Layer: This layer narrows the social question to specific social problems. It investigates how social problems are interpreted and conceived by the wider society and policy actors. It also explores the importance of the problem itself viz a viz other problems and the social group that it affects. In short, it investigates the problem definition of the social, particularly as it relates to the general society. Using Marshall’s perspective, social problems and their solution must be conceived in relation to a societally constructed idea of the ideal. The Onion Skin Model advances a constructivist perspective that considers the historical definition of a social problem and investigates how and why the construction of such a problem has changed over time.

The Welfare Institutions: This is the outermost layer of the model, and like other layers, it is socially constructed. In this case, this layer looks at the array of welfare programs provided by

the state, non-governmental organisations, and private sector. It investigates the definition of the boundaries of welfare in a country and how the boundaries of welfare change over time depending on how social the welfare provisions are and how important they are to broader politics of social policy in a polity. In relation to the social citizenship and social rights conceived by Marshall, the presence of comprehensive welfare institutions is the manifestation of rights and welfare commitments.

In summary, the Onion Skin Model, as stated earlier, employs a constructivist perspective to the analysis of social protection. It provides a blueprint for analysing the normative and cognitive arguments that underpinned the development of programs like social pension by explicating the diverse nature of ideational and political commitments that underlie such program. As highlighted above, the layers represent different strands of commitment to social issues. The Onion Skin Model will assist in investigating how the construction in each layer pave the way for the introduction of (universal) social pension.

2.5 Empirical Explanatory Studies on Social Pension Introduction

Extant studies on the systematic understanding of the introduction of social pensions are very recent and limited. Nevertheless, existing studies on social pensions introduction and social protection have expanded the understanding of why countries introduce social pensions and social protection. This dissertation builds on these advances. An Event History Analysis conducted by Böger and Leisering (2020) on the determinants of social pensions introduction showed that economic variables like GDP per capita are not statistically significant in the decision to introduce or reform social pensions. Similarly, their analysis found that other socio-economic variables like the economy's structure, i.e., the prominence of agricultural production in the economy, decrease the chances of social pension introduction. Meanwhile, the propensity of social pensions increases with the size of the population in rural centers. On political factors, the analysis by Böger and Leisering (2020) showed that the effect of democracy was equivocal in that democracy is not enough for a country to introduce social pensions, but democratic stability is significant for social pensions introduction.

In congruence with the suggestions that countries in the global South develop social policies when the cost of information transfer is low, Böger and Leisering (2020) operationalised the influences of ideas and global norms in their analysis. They found evidence that world level norms and regional diffusion are influential in the introduction of social pensions. Suggesting the influence of international ideas, his operationalisation of germane world events like the World Assembly on Ageing in 2002 showed significance in the introduction of social pensions.

Pelham (2007) studied the cluster of Southern African countries to understand why these countries introduced social pensions. Her analysis focused on two pillars of the orthodox explanations in her quest to understand the development of social pensions in southern African countries. She concentrated on the socio-economic and political motivations for the introduction of social pensions in the regions. She posited that top-down and bottom-up pressures at different timepoints persuaded policymakers at different points to introduce social pensions in the case of Namibia and South Africa. In her analysis, she notes that organised labour groups and external influences were driving forces that exerted enough pressure on the state to introduce social pensions. She argued that the major problem definition that social pensions sought to tackle was the issue of poverty and in the case of Lesotho, the dominant problem definition that spurred the introduction of social pension was the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. In her exploration, she touched on the design of social pensions in the countries. Her analysis notes that the universal

design employed by Namibia was borne out of the motivation of not excluding the better-off because they essentially finance the program through their taxes. In short, a cross-class coalition paved the way for a universal social pension in Namibia. Lastly, her analysis showed that social pension was instrumentalised for an improved social contract between citizens and the state and it can foster a sense of citizenship among old persons.

Devereux (2007) used a political economy approach to understand the development of social pensions in Southern Africa. In his analysis, he notes that the development of social pensions in Southern Africa mirrors the political developments in various countries. He concluded that external influences predicated the introduction of social pensions in Southern Africa and Namibia, and various political objectives have motivated its evolution in South Africa and Namibia.

Rudolph (2016) conducted a quantitative study on the introduction of social pensions around the world from 1960-2012. Her analysis and her conclusions regarding socio-economic variables meshed well with Böger and Leisering (2020) in that the GDP per capita of a country is not significant in the introduction of social pensions. Although, her study found that a country's savings rate- a variable used to capture financial health - is significant in the decision to introduce social pensions. It concluded that the lower the country's savings rate, the higher the propensity to introduce social pensions. She also investigated the significance of demographic variables like fertility rate and life expectancy. Her result showed that other things being equal, high fertility rate and high life expectancy lowers the probability of social pension introduction. Contrary to the findings of Böger and Leisering (2020), she found that democracy is a definite indicator of whether a country will introduce social pensions or not and that socialist-leaning governments are more likely to introduce social pensions.

As with other important socio-economic variables suggested in the global North literature, existing studies on the introduction of social pensions in the global South reached varying conclusions in their significance. de La O (2015) provided evidence that economic downturns were significant in the decision to introduce conditional cash transfers in Latin America. Carnes and Mares (2014) showed that deindustrialisation and the economic insecurity that it entailed propelled the demand and preference for a tax-financed alternative (non-contributory pensions) to social insurance pensions. Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) argue that the presence and failures of existing social insurance mechanisms spurred the introduction of social pensions across the global South. This suggestion found an empirical standing with the conclusion of

Rudolph (2016) that the existence of a contributory pension system increases the chances of introducing social pensions.

2.6 Universalism and its Varieties

Universalism is the most significant concept employed in this dissertation. Indeed, the concept of universalism has been rediscovered in social policy and policymaking (Martinez Franzoni and Sánchez-Ancochea 2014). The concept of universalism has underpinned recent proposals from international organisations. The World Health Organization (WHO) is advocating for universal health coverage, the ILO is pushing for ‘social security for all’, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) advocates for ‘Education for all’, and the idea of universalism underscores the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (WHO 2018; ILO 2003; UNESCO 1982; The United Nations 2016).

Notwithstanding the renewed interest in the concept, universalism means different things to different people, and its meaning is also dependent on the field of study under consideration. Despite the divergent conception of universalism, its essential core is that it refers to something that is common to ‘all people’ (Leisering 2020a, p. 4).

In the social protection literature, Leisering (2020a) stated that universalism is often used to refer to the ideological pillar of Northern European welfare states. These scholars identified universalism as the guiding principle of Britain’s post-war welfare state-building, especially in areas of pensions and healthcare. Universalism is also used to reference the redistributive mechanism behind social protection programs. When universalism is discussed in the realm of programs, it is often contrasted with competing mechanisms such as selectivity.

Martinez Franzoni and Sánchez-Ancochea (2014)’s conceptualisation of universalism mainly focused on policy outputs. In their study of the healthcare sector of Costa Rica, Mauritius, South Korea and Uruguay, they contend that universalism can be assessed by examining the extent of competing private programs in relation to public programs, the barrier of entry and how public programs are funded and delivered.

In conceptualising universalism, Leisering (2019) divided the use of universalism into three arenas. The first and broader form of universalism concerns universalism on a value-laden, cultural level. Universalism can take an institutional form, especially when one speaks of the target mechanism of social protection programs. Per Leisering (2019), universalism can take a

systemic form when examining the entire framework of social protection of a country. I shall explain these universalisms in the following:

The enumeration of the broader form of universalism by Leisering (2019) largely focused on how it is conceptualised on a global level. Universalism on a global level is a World Culture value that denotes, for example, rights that are based on all instances of humanity (Anleu 1999, p. 205). The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (UDHR) recognition of the inherent rights, the dignity of all members of the human family succinctly captures the *cultural form of universalism* (Leisering 2019, p. 56). Leaning on John Meyer's theorisation on World Culture, Leisering (2020b) argues that the universalism contained in the UDHR, when translated to social welfare issues, can be construed in two ways: First, all nation-states should recognise that their denizens have the right to social welfare. Second, the welfare effort of the state should cover all persons or citizens in a territory. Nation-states demonstrate the commitment to the cultural form of universalism by subscribing to global level conventions that recognise social rights and/or include social rights in important national documents such as national constitutions. The commitment of the state is a marker of accepted responsibility for social welfare issues. It shows that the state accepts its role as a central player (but not necessarily the only player) in the arena of welfare production and distribution. The accepted responsibility for social welfare issues by the state is evidence of the collective welfare consciousness of not only the elites but also the citizens within a territory.

From the 1950s, states, especially in newly independent global South, interpreted the commitment of the state from a developmental lens, i.e., welfare enhancement of the denizens of a territory was to be driven by the mechanism of the markets through a long-term focus on economic growth. This developmental thinking posits that economic growth should come first, before, for example, social protection programs. This line of thinking has a universalistic thrust because it assumes that collectively in the long-term, every denizen will benefit from a growing economy, thus have their welfare enhanced (Leisering 2019, 2020b). Even in post-War Germany, this developmental thinking held sway. The father of Germany's post-war economic boom, Ludwig Erhard, was also of the position that Germany must first focus on economic growth, and through this focus, the welfare of Germans would be enhanced in the long run. Drèze and Sen (2004) termed this approach as the 'growth-mediated' approach to welfare enhancement. Given its developmental and universalistic thrust, Leisering (2019, 2020b) termed this approach as developmental universalism.

The recent rise of social cash transfers in the global South is a new interpretation of the welfare commitment of the state (Leisering 2019). From the 1990s, developmental thinking shifted towards the recognition of the agency of the poor and their capability to contribute to their own welfare enhancement and economic growth if supported by social protection programs. Leisering (2019, 2020b) claimed that the change in developmental thinking partly allowed for individualised entitlement programs to become a definite part of development policy from the 1990s. The entitlement approach to welfare enhancement and individualised social protection programs are interested in the immediate enhancement of welfare. The entitlement approach to welfare enhancement also has a universalistic thrust if there is a program or an array of programs that cover all citizens in case of need/contingency or irrespective of need/contingency.

In the global South, basic income programs are not common. Besides, the case countries in this dissertation-Botswana and Nepal-have not instituted basic income programs. Examining the array of social protection programs in a country would help garner insights into the extent to which denizens of a country are covered systemically. Leisering (2019) termed this as systemic universalism.

The universalism associated with social pension programs is the narrowest form of universalism. Social protection programs are considered universal when they do not employ means-testing to trim out beneficiaries. In literature, means-tested social pensions are not considered universal. Although, when universalism is examined from a systemic lens, means-tested programs can contribute to the overall protection of denizens of a country.

This dissertation leans on the conceptualisation of universalism coined by Leisering (2019) to explicate the instances of universalism in the case countries. Indeed, the arenas in which universalism can be observed somewhat mirrors the research questions raised in the analysis of the case countries. The first research question traces ideas about social welfare in the case countries. Instances of the cultural form of universalism are expected to be uncovered by answering this research question because it traces and examines the distribution of welfare responsibility between the state and other spheres of welfare provision. The research question on the drivers of universal social pensions in the case countries manifests the programmatic conception of universalism. The research question that examines which group are covered and the extent of exclusion in the framework of social protection in the case countries fall in the realm of systemic universalism.

2.7 Concluding Hypotheses

In this chapter, I enumerated the spread of social pensions in the global South, and I expatiated on the extant theories and approaches used in extant literature in providing explanations for the introduction of social protection programs. This chapter also touched on the extant studies on the introduction of social pensions and the principal concept employed in this dissertation.

Concerning the goals ascribed to social pensions by actors in the global South, one would expect that how domestic actors in the global South perceive social pensions is not necessarily in sync with what is obtainable in extant literature. It is expected that a perusal of actor-produced documents will yield richer insights into how actors in the global South construct the goals and rationale of social pensions. Similarly, it is hypothesised in this dissertation that the dichotomous classification of social pensions into means-tested and universal social pensions is limited and that with variables on coverage, benefits, and institutionalisation, one can expect to obtain a family of social pensions beyond the extant dichotomous classification.

Based on the overview of existing research carried out in this chapter, it is possible to derive some hypotheses. First, it is hypothesised that it is likely that a combination of explanatory factors aided the introduction of social pensions in the case countries. Second, based on the fiscal position of Nepal and Botswana at the beginning of the 1990s, one would suspect that political imperatives trumped economic considerations in the introduction of social pensions. Third, Institutional explanations for the introduction of social protection programs postulates that the capacity of the state informs the shape and form that social programs may take (Brooks 2015). Given that Nepal was a low-income country with an underdeveloped bureaucratic system, one would expect Nepal to institute a program that would least task its underdeveloped administrative system. That is, one would expect that Nepal institute universal social pension-a variant of social pensions that is less tasking than other options- because of its weak administrative system. Conversely, given Botswana longstanding and successful experiences with social protection programs like drought relief and the general reticence of the dominant party against social protection programs, one would expect Botswana to prefer means-tested social pension over other variants. Lastly, it is expected that how actors in the case countries construct and interpret welfare issues concerning old persons and the Ideas attached to these issues would impact the introduction of social pensions.

Based on these expectations, I will commence the empirical analysis of this dissertation. In the Large N chapters, I analyse social pensions across the global South with the aims of

understanding the goals and rationales ascribed to social pensions, obtaining a new family of social pensions, and situating the case countries of this dissertation within these analyses. In the qualitative Small N chapters, I analyse the case countries of this dissertation. I trace ideas about social welfare in these case countries; I analyse the institutional characteristics of social pension in the case countries; I endeavour to provide a mid-range explanation for the introduction of social pensions; and I examine the framework of social protection programs in the case countries.

Quantitative Large N Analysis

Chapters

Chapter 3: Social Pension across the Global South (Large N Analysis)

Chapter 3.1: Reasons for Social Pensions in the Global South: An Actor-Centred Approach

3.1.1 Introduction: A Brief Synopsis of the Global Career of Old Age issues

Table 1 sketches the discursive history of old age issues on the global level. One conclusion that can be drawn from this discursive history is that old persons and issues relating to old age are latecomers in the agendas of international organisations. Specifically, the marginal references to old persons in important global documents and covenants substantiate this assertion. A brief synopsis of the global career of old age issues is enumerated here as a prelude to answering the research question of this chapter: What are the goals and rationales given by actors for social pensions?

The universalism ethos of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognised that all persons as members of a society have the right to social security (Article 22 of the UDHR). It stated that life-course events might necessitate programs that would ensure everyone’s right to a standard of living and security. The document employed a generalised approach to the issues of social security. Nevertheless, it spelt out that old age is one of the life-course events that may warrant public programs to ensure the stated rights.

Table 1: A Brief Career of Old Age as a Global Issue⁷

1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations): ‘right to security in the event of ... old age’ (Article 25 (1))
1966	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (‘Social Covenant’, United Nations): no explicit rights for older persons (but for children); but Article 9 on social insurance
1982	First World Assembly of the United Nations on Ageing, Vienna, First International Plan of Action on Ageing
1991	United Nations General Assembly ‘Principles for Older Persons’ (UN 1991), calling for independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity for older persons
1994	Report ‘Averting the Old Age Crisis – Policies to Protect the Old and Promote Growth’, World Bank (non-contributory pensions vaguely hinted at as option for pillar one in a multi-pillar pension design)
1995	General comment No. 6 by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: ‘The economic, social and cultural rights of older persons’ (including a call for non-contributory pensions ‘within the limits of available resources’, United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1995: par. 21 and 30)
2000/2001	Millennium Development Declaration and Millennium Development Goals, United Nations, do not explicitly mention older persons (but children)
2001/2003	ILO 2001: ‘Social Security: a New Consensus’ calls for Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All, launched 2003
2001	‘Social Protection Sector Strategy. From Safety Net to Springboard’, World Bank (the Bank’s first strategy paper on social protection, advancing the Social Risk Management approach that includes risk prevention, risk mitigation and risk coping), adopting social protection as part of development policy, including social assistance as way of risk coping, with non-contributory pensions for the informal sector as increasing future focus of the Bank’s work on pension reform (World Bank 2001: 15, 32, 33)
2002	Second World Assembly of the United Nations on Ageing, ‘Building a Society for all Ages’, Madrid, Second International Plan of Action on Ageing
2003-2005	Take-off of the global discursive career of non-contributory pensions, propelled by publications by HelpAge International.

⁷ This table is the shortened version of the career of old age as a global issue. A shortened version is employed because this section concerns itself with events around the time of expansive social pension introduction in the global South i.e., the 1990s and the 2000s. A longer version of the career of old age as a global issue can be found in Leisering 2019, pp. 71–72. Boldned events are discussed in this section.

2003-2005	Book 'Old-age Income Support in the Twenty-first Century', World Bank (social pensions as 'zero pillar')
2005	Programmatic document 'Social Transfers and Chronic Poverty', Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom, fixing a global consensus on models of social cash transfers, including social pensions
2006	
2008	

Source: Leisering (2019, pp. 71–72)

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966) was more specific about the right to social security. As stated in Table 1, the binding convention construed the right to social security to mean that everyone should have the right to social insurance (Article 9 of the ICESCR). However, the document did not reference old persons. Likewise, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development of 1969 recognised the need for social security for particular social groups in society. It posited that social insurance schemes are viable instruments for ensuring a proper standard of living for societal groups like the old persons, disabled persons, the sick, and unemployed persons (Article 11 of the DSPD).

Leisering (2019, p. 219)'s analysis shows that from the 1980s, old persons' welfare issues gained prominence in most international organisations' agendas because they were constructed as human rights, development, and global social policy issues. The primary evidence of the ascendancy of old persons in international organisations' agenda was the first World Assembly on Ageing held in Vienna in 1982. The report that emanated from the assembly was of the position that the desire to tackle the problems of the elderly prompted the assembly (United Nations 1982, p. 1). The assembly recognised income security and employment problems as issues facing old persons (United Nations 1982, p. 71). It recommended that states should take appropriate steps to ensure that old persons have a minimum income. In addition, the assembly report advised that countries should establish social security schemes based on the principles of universal coverage for old people (United Nations 1982, p. 71).

Around the 2000s, there was a 'rediscovery of poverty' that led to a convergence of antipoverty stances from international organisations and governments worldwide (Noël 2006). Coterminous with the rediscovery of poverty, the 2000s were a period of paradigmatic change in how adverse welfare questions were tackled. It was a period in which cash transfers mushroomed as instruments for tackling adverse welfare questions (Hanlon et al. 2010). Likewise, international organisations embraced social cash transfers in the 2000s after initial reticence (Leisering 2019, p. 112; von Gliszczynski and Leisering 2016).

International organisations had been cognizant of non-contributory pensions since the mid-1990s (von Gliszczynski 2015, p. 48). As an example, the World Bank had accepted that non-

contributory pension programs (as part of its advocated public pillar) could be vital instruments for ‘reducing old age poverty’, and can serve to supplement other pillars of the Bank’s advocated multi-pillar pension systems (The World Bank 1994, pp. 238–242). von Gliszczynski (2015)’s analysis shows that non-contributory pensions only gained significant attention when it became clear that it has utilities beyond providing material relief to old persons. Specifically, it only attained widespread attention when it was shown that such pensions indirectly benefit children (von Gliszczynski 2015, p. 48).

Table 1 conveys that HelpAge International led the advocacy for social pensions from the 2000s. Specifically from 2003, the activities of HelpAge International and its corporation with the World Bank, DFID and the ILO produced knowledge exchanges and publications that solidified social pensions as a legitimate model of cash transfers against adverse welfare questions (Leisering 2019, pp. 219–220; von Gliszczynski 2015, p. 49).

The arguments forwarded by international organisations as to why countries should institute social pensions vary. As hinted above, the World Bank perceived the public pillar (means-tested and universal flat benefits are two of the four constituent programs of this pillar) as essential instruments for alleviating poverty (The World Bank 1994, p. 239). This view was reiterated in the Bank’s follow up publication in 2005,⁸ where it stated that in its view, poverty relief and pension coverage problems are the reasons why countries should institute means-tested or universal social pensions (Holzman et al. 2005, pp. 94–97). HelpAge International is of the view that social pensions can play a role in alleviating old age poverty, maintain multigenerational support, invigorate local economies, realise the rights of old persons to social protection as spelt out in international rights agreements such as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (HelpAge International 2004, pp. 4–5). The ILO argues that social pensions are essential in guaranteeing basic income in old age and an avenue for filling the coverage gap left by contributory schemes (ILO 2014, pp. 9–14). In 2005, DFID published its stance on social cash transfers. The publication titled ‘Social transfers and chronic poverty: emerging evidence and the challenge ahead’ reckons that social pensions can play essential roles in enhancing the dignity, status of old persons and the relationship between the state and the citizens of a country (DFID 2005, p. 16).

Social Pensions introductions across the global South accelerated a great deal in the 1990s, and by the 2000s, it became a consensus model for tackling income security issues across the global

⁸ The first Publication was called Policies to Protect the Old and Promote Growth. The follow up publication was called Old-age income support in the 21st century: An international perspective on pension systems and reform.

South. More than 100 countries have instituted social pension, and 62 of these countries are from the global South (Pension Watch 2018). Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014, p. 255) argued that the increasing popularity of social pensions in the global South could be attributed to its role in increasing pension coverage. Barrientos (2012b) forwarded the argument that countries, especially low-income countries, institute social pensions because it is being proven to play a role in addressing poverty in old age. Further, Barrientos (2012b) argued that social pensions are often used to close the coverage gap of existing pension arrangements in middle-income countries. In his postulations, means-tested social pensions are associated primarily with poverty reduction objectives while universal or categorical social pensions can also address poverty, but its poverty objective is often superseded by other objectives (Barrientos 2012b, p. 12).

In 2009, the World Bank published an edited volume that brought together scholars on social pensions. It was stated in the publication⁹ that the role of social pensions centres on poverty alleviation, closing the coverage gap left by existing pension systems and that social pensions can play a role in fulfilling the rights of old persons to social security as contained in international documents and conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and ILO conventions and Recommendations (Holzmann et al. 2009).

This chapter does not dispute the validity of the goals and rationales for social pensions as defined by these organisations and scholars. However, the theoretical and analytical approach employed in this dissertation privileges the perspectives of domestic actors. This approach seeks to understand how actors define social issues. Consequently, this chapter seeks to understand the goals and rationales for social pensions in the global South from the perspective of domestic actors.

The analysis in this chapter is also premised on the notion that the goals and rationales for social pensions as espoused by international actors may not necessarily reflect the perspectives of domestic actors. In social protection literature, structural factors such as the size of labour markets, state capacity, and the level of economic development are adjudged to determine the roles of social pension (The World Bank 2018, pp. 73–74; Holzman et al. 2005, pp. 93–99). However, as I have argued in this dissertation, an acute focus on structural factors is likely to produce an incomplete description or analysis of social protection programs. Specifically, how actors define and perceive the problems that social pensions aim to solve often underscore the

⁹ The title of the publication is Closing the Coverage Gap : The Role of Social Pensions and Other Retirement Income Transfers.

goals and rationales ascribed to social pension. For example, as I show in the chapter that provided a mid-range explanation for the introduction of social pension in Nepal, the UML¹⁰ perceived the welfare problems facing old persons as a microcosm of broader societal problems that revolved around state responsibility. Consequently, state responsiveness and poverty alleviation of old persons are rationales that grounded Nepal's universal social pension program.

Similarly, the social pension in Timor-Leste is also proof that an actor-centred approach to the description of social pension provides a richer picture regarding the rationale for social pension. In social pension literature, the focus on structural factors is used in describing and analysing Timor-Leste's universal social pension. The World Bank (2018, p. 74) notes that the desire to use social pension as the main pension program in Timor-Leste prompted the program's introduction in 2008. Although, an examination of discourses in policy documents that relate to the program's introduction suggests rationales that supersede pension coverage.

The history of political violence in the mid-2000s cannot be underestimated in the introduction of social pensions in Timor-Leste. The civil strife had internally displaced a large section of the population of the country. As part of the plan to restore stability and end the exigencies of the displacement, the Government of Timor-Leste adopted the National Recovery Strategy in December 2007 (Wallis 2015, p. 236). The government's recovery strategy centred on, among other goals, protecting displaced citizens by establishing social protection programs for this class of citizens (van der Auweraert 2012). Consequently, extensive cash transfers to internally displaced citizens were established. In 2008, the Government of Timor-Leste admitted that in the creation of its comprehensive social protection framework, it had not paid close attention to the income problems of old persons in the country (Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 2008, p. 1). It noted that such neglect had contributed to the vulnerability that old persons in Timor-Leste faced. Accordingly, it passed a legislative document in 2008 that created the Support Allowance for the Aged cash transfer social pensions in Timor Leste. Aside from the vulnerability argument, few normative ideas were forwarded by the Government of Timor Leste regarding the program's ideational underpinning. The government of Timor Leste admitted that constitutional responsibility was the supporting ideas behind the institutionalisation of the pension program (Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 2008). Given the divisive character of the civil strife of the mid 2000 in Timor-Leste, it is likely that the need to avoid potential divisiveness that is characteristic of means-tested social pension grounded the universal element of the program.

¹⁰ Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist) (UML) is the political party that introduced the Nepal's universal social pension in 1994.

Besides, it is not politically prudent to have a program that would exclude a section of a certain group when you are trying to achieve social peace after a period of civil conflict.

Hence, I posit that when scholars state that context matters for understanding social pension, these should not only centre on structural factors, i.e., to understand the reasons for social pension, it is critical to analyse the perspective of domestic actors. With these suppositions, I submit that a scrupulous, actor-centred examination of the reasons for social pension in the global South is warranted. Moreover, this examination is necessary to get a complete picture of social pension in countries of the global South.

I tackle this objective by qualitatively examining and analysing the discourses of policy documents on social pension across the global South. Upon the analysis of these documents, the goals ascribed to social pension are extracted. Then, countries that ascribe similar goals to social pensions are then grouped using a Venn Diagram. The documents used in this chapter are budget speeches, legislative documents on social pension, administrative directives from agencies that implement social pension (Please see Appendix 1 for the list of data and documents that informs this analysis).

This chapter is structured as follows: In the following section, the rationale for social pension is explicated from the perspective of actors in the global South. This task entails describing the rationale for social pensions and extracting quotes from actors in the global South regarding how they view social pensions in their respective countries. Unfortunately, space will not permit the enumeration of the goals ascribed to social pensions by all the 36 countries analysed in this chapter. Nonetheless, a Venn Diagram provides a schematic description of the rationale that actors ascribe to social pension in the global South. The last section summarises the findings of this chapter.

3.1.2 The Rationales for Social Pension Policy

So, what are the rationales for social pension policies in the global South? As highlighted earlier, it is common in literature to state that the policy rationale of closing the coverage gap left by existing pensions arrangements in the global South justified the introduction of social pension (Leisering 2019; Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov 2014). Others have speculated that poverty reduction imperatives (on the individual and household level) are the reasons for developing and expanding social pensions in the global South (Rudolph 2016; Barrientos 2009). Holzmann et al. (2009) explained that social pensions are instruments for alleviating poverty in old age, a tool for closing the coverage gap of existing pension programs, and a means for fulfilling the social rights of old persons.

However, these scholars rarely provide an actor-centred perspective to ground the reasons for social pension. The generalisation of the policy goals of social pension policies is betrayed by the very fact that the definition of problems relating to old age is rarely uniform across the global South, and social pension can serve multiple, mutually inclusive policy goals. This provides the ground post for investigating the purpose of social pensions across global South countries. This chapter departs from existing literature by not imposing policy goals on the countries with social pensions across the global South but examining how the actors in the respective countries define the goals of social pension.

This line of thought follows the logic of this dissertation that social protection programs like social pensions also reflect the ideas that actors hold. An analysis that tries to understand the perception and beliefs held by country levels actors provides fuller insight into why social pensions has mushroomed in the global South. Analysing the socially constructed goals that actors ascribe to social pensions allows for a socio-cultural meaning behind social pensions across the global South. Pertinently, it sheds light on the policy paradigm layer of the Onion Skin Model, i.e., the layer that concern the policy goals and how the welfare issues concerning old persons are constructed.

To give structure to this analysis, I reconstruct three key goals or rationales of social pension from the perspective of actors in countries of the global South. The actor defined goals of social pension are thus grouped according to the dominant and reoccurring themes regarding social pensions across the global South.

Closing Coverage Gap

In the classic World Bank publication *Closing the Coverage Gap*, non-contributory pensions are one of three programs that are touted as potential instruments for mitigating the failures of existing social insurance programs in the global South. This conclusion is reached in part because of the failure of the modernisation argument that the expansion of labour market formalisation would increase the coverage of pension and provide security during old age for individuals beyond privileged sectors. Leisering (2019) and Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) noted that the failure of this thesis and the social recognition of this failure contributed to the rise of social cash transfers like social pensions in the global South. In short, the incomplete universalisation of pension coverage in the global South, when recognised as a social problem, necessitated the rise of social pensions.

Barrientos (2012b) argued that social pensions could be an essential instrument for closing the coverage gap left by existing pension arrangements in middle-income countries. The line of thought, i.e., defining the rationale for social pensions in terms of the coverage gap left by contributory pension schemes, formed the basis of social protection advocacy for international organisations like the ILO. In its quest to promote access to basic income security for old persons, the ILO deemed social pensions as vital instruments for closing the pension coverage gap despite its storied advocacy for social insurance expansion (ILO 2001).

In the analysis of the policy documents that I conducted in this chapter, the observation from Barrientos (2012b) and Holzmann et al. (2009) that coverage gap questions as rationales for social pensions in middle-income countries largely holds true. I found that middle-income countries of the global South broadly defined the goals and rationale for social pensions partially in terms of the coverage gap left by existing pension arrangements.

Further, the exegesis of the policy documents suggests that actors rarely ascribe a singular goal to social pensions in the global South. The Venn Diagram, i.e., Figure 4 show that multiplicity of reasons ground social pension in the global South.

Interestingly, transitioning countries of central Asia perceive social pensions as a tool of realising social rights specified in their respective constitutions, and closing the coverage gap of existing pensions arrangements. The timing of the institutionalisation of social pensions and the constitutions of these countries suggests that actors in these countries likely perceive social

pension as part of the state-rebuilding process given the dislocations that occurred in these countries at the start of the 1990s.

For example, the Armenia Law on State Pension defined social pension in terms of pension rights and mending the coverage gap left other pillars of Armenia's pension system. The legislative document stated that,

'The principles of the state pension policy shall be as follows: ensuring the pension right, irrespective of nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, property or other status.....An old age social pension shall be granted to individuals, who have reached the age of 65 and are not eligible for an labour pension' (Republic of Armenia 2010).

The administrative documents of the implementing agency of Azerbaijan's Social Allowance (Old Age) stated that,

'Everyone has the right to social security as a basic constitutional right. That is why, after restoring the country's independence, our country has paid special attention to the development of this sphere of law, and numerous normative legal acts have been adopted to protect people's social protection. The main purpose of the social security law norms set out in those normative legal acts is to protect the human rights of all people, while maintaining universal human values and ensuring the principles of justice and humanism..... Old-age benefits are assigned to these persons when they are not entitled to a labour pension and don't work'(MLSP 2020a, 2020b).

The social pension program in Bolivia illustrates the importance of an actor-centred approach to social pensions analysis. In social pension literature, universal social pensions (as in Bolivia) are often touted as important instruments for realising old persons' rights, reducing poverty, tackling HIV and AIDS, and supporting the vulnerable (HelpAge International 2006, p. 1). The World Bank touted universal social pensions as the best way to provide poverty relief for the elderly (Holzman et al. 2005, p.95). Universal social pension is not often perceived as instruments for closing the coverage gap of existing pension programs. However, and in contrast to how universal social pensions are perceived, Bolivia's universal social pension program is

saddled with the objective of closing the pension coverage gap left by the existing pension framework in Bolivia. The main legislative document that established the program stated that,

‘The Universal Old Age Income is the life benefit, of a non-contributory nature that the Bolivian State will grant to:..... To all Bolivians residing in the country over 60 (sixty) years old, who do not receive an income in the Long-Term Social Security System or a remuneration contemplated in the General Budget of the Nation’ (Republic of Bolivia 2007)¹¹.

The excerpt from the legislative document from Bolivia lends credence to the earlier postulation of this chapter that how domestic actors define social pensions may not necessarily reflect what is obtainable in extant literature.

Fighting poverty

Age is a relevant dimension of poverty. Individuals on either side of the life course are usually adjudged to be deserving of social protection programs based on the view that they are more likely to be poorer than other age groups. Based on a survey of empirical evidence regarding the association between old age and poverty, Kidd and Whitehouse (2009) concluded that old persons are more likely to be poorer than other categories of the population in the global South. Furthermore, the incidence of poverty among old persons compared to other population groups is more severe, especially when there is an absence of a comprehensive pension program in a country.

Social pensions are viewed as vital policy options for tackling poverty among old persons in the global South (Barrientos 2006; Kidd and Whitehouse 2009). Social pensions can provide old persons with regular cash that can allow them to have more choices; it allows old persons a sense of control over their lives regarding working during their twilight years. With social pensions, old persons can contribute to children’s educational attainment and reduce poverty among children. In a sense, social pensions are perceived as viable policy options for tackling individual and household poverty. Indeed, all international organisations advocating for social pensions

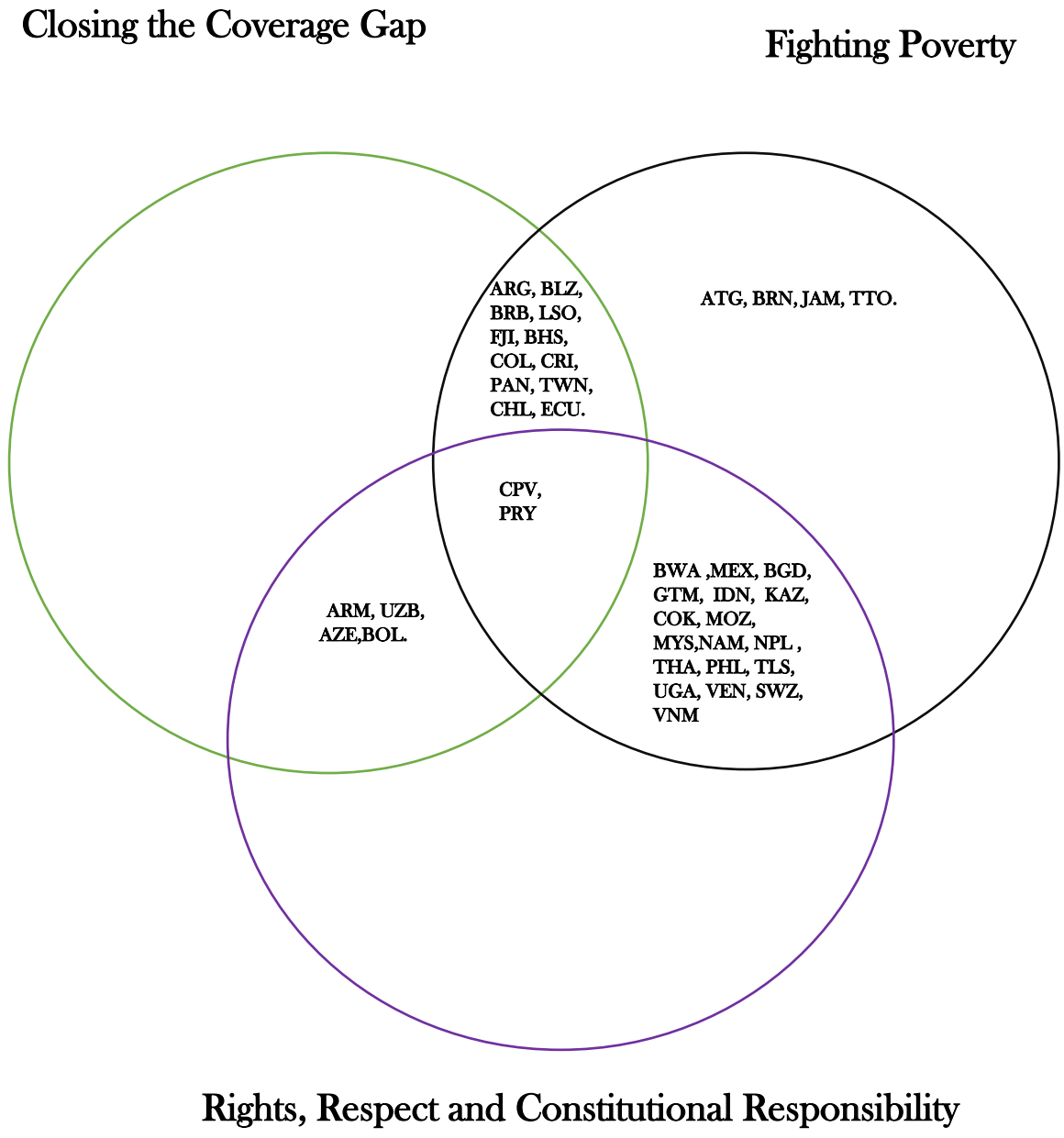
¹¹ The original text was translated using Google Translate. The translated text was confirmed as correct by a Native Speaker.

view poverty and vulnerability alleviation as the primary goal of social pensions (HelpAge International 2006, p. 2; The World Bank 1994, p. 239; ODI and UNICEF 2009, p. 18; DFID 2005, p. 16).

From the documents produced by actors in the global South, it was inferable that most countries in the global South ascribe the goal of poverty alleviation to social pensions. Although, in most countries, the goal of poverty alleviation is viewed in the context of mutually inclusive goals such as coverage gap improvement, constitutional responsibility or as a means of fulfilling cultural objectives (e.g., respect). Moreover, there is a mixed bag of programs and countries that attribute poverty alleviation to social pensions. The goal of poverty alleviation cut across universal/means-tested classification of social pensions. The analysis conducted in this chapter suggests that defining social pension goals in terms of poverty alleviation is shared across the spectrum of income distribution in the global South. From middle income Namibia to low-income Nepal, actors in these countries view social pensions as appropriate instruments for tackling poverty and vulnerability problems among old persons in their respective countries.

The Venn diagram below shows a schematic distribution of how actors in the states define the goals of social pension in the global South.

Figure 4: A Schematic Distribution of the Goals and Rationales for Social Pension in the global South



Rights and Social Pension

The right to social security was heralded as early as 1948 when it was incorporated into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Over the past three decades, there has been an increasing recognition that social pensions can serve as an effective instrument for realising the

rights to income as envisaged by international conventions and agreements (HelpAge International 2006, p. 3). Indeed, HelpAge International's advocacy often constructs the need for social pensions in terms of social rights (HelpAge International 2004, p. 23).

On a national level, an increasing number of countries have included social rights, including the right to social security, in their respective constitutions (Jung et al. 2013, p. 1). As one observer wrote, 20th-century constitutions imposed aspirations and obligations of social security, education, health on governments (Tushnet 1999). In their analysis of 195 Constitutions worldwide, Jung et al. (2013, p. 9) showed that 61% of Constitutions contained the right to social security. The right to social security is justiciable in 41% of the analysed constitutions, and 27% are aspirational. The absence of these rights does not mean that states neglect social obligations to the governed. In some states, providing welfare and social security are viewed as direct state policy.

What is obtainable from the analysis of documents from actors in the global South is that the domestic actors do not necessarily associate social rights with universal social pensions. As I show in the chapter that analysed the introduction of universal social pension in Botswana, actors in Botswana do not associate social pension program with social rights. Indeed, the discourse of rights is conspicuously absent in Botswana. Similarly, with Brunei's universal social pension, it is impossible to speak of social rights given that the benefits that emanate from the program are based on monarchical patrimonialism, and it is not anchored on the idea of citizenship. Per the universal social pension program, beneficiaries are subjects of the monarchy (DCP 2015).

Besides, in some countries, means-tested social pensions are perceived as crucial instruments for realising the social rights of old persons. The social pension in Guatemala is the quintessential example of the association of means-tested social pension with social rights. The preamble of the legislative documents of the social pension program stated that,

'That in accordance with the Political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, the State is responsible for the protection of the physical, mental and moral health of minors and the elderly, to whom it must guarantee their right to food, health, education, security and social security....That the people who correspond to the segment of the elderly population require special protection, since they constitute the sector that has served the country and that they continue to participate in its development, for which reason it is necessary and It is urgent to

provide them with the economic conditions that allow them a better condition of life, by establishing a pension in charge of the State' (Republica de Guatemala 2005)¹².

These examples reiterate this chapter's stance that how social pensions are constructed and viewed by international organisations are not necessarily shared by domestic actors.

3.1.3 Summary

In this chapter, I set out to understand the goals and rationales ascribed to social pensions across the global South on the premise that domestic actors do not necessarily share the perception held by international organisations and scholars. By analysing the goals and rationales of social pensions as advanced by actors in the global South, it is possible to gain insights into how the welfare problems associated with old persons and social pensions are constructed and defined.

It is often argued that the goals and rationales of social pensions play are mainly dependent on structural conditions such as the size of the labour market and economic development (The World Bank 2018, p. 74; Holzman et al. 2005). What is demonstrated in this chapter is that ideas about how domestic actors define recognised social problems also determine the goals and rationales of programs like social pensions. For instance, in Bolivia, actors deem the universal social pension program appropriate in closing the existing coverage gap. In Guatemala, actors view its means-tested social pension program as crucial for realising the rights of old persons. On the other hand, Botswana's universal social pension is not considered a policy instrument for realising old persons' social rights. All in all, the goals and rationales ascribed to social pensions by international actors and scholars are undoubtedly insightful, especially for heuristic purposes. However, and as this chapter shows, it is vital to examine programs from the perspective of real actors to get insights as to what they think about a program.

As mentioned in the earlier parts of this chapter, means-tested pensions are associated with poverty alleviation objectives, and universal social pensions are adjudged to realise the rights of old persons. However, the exegesis of the documents on social pensions across the global South shows fluidity in how actors conceive these goals and rationales. For instance, poverty alleviation

¹² The original text was translated using Google Translate. The translated text was confirmed as correct by a Native Speaker.

is the goal of the universal social pension in Brunei, and one cannot speak of rights in the context of the paternalism of Brunei's monarchy. Meanwhile, the means-tested social pension in Guatemala emphasised the rights of old persons and state's responsibility as its primary goal.

More importantly, analysing the goals and rationales for social pensions across the global South allowed for grouping the case countries in this dissertation into clusters of countries with similar reasonings behind social pensions. One of the significant findings of this chapter is that Nepal and Botswana belong to the class of countries that view social pensions as instruments for tackling poverty among old persons. Although in Nepal, social pension is also viewed as an instrument for realising the constitutional responsibility of the Nepali state towards old persons.

The actor centred approach employed in this chapter brings the debate of the suitability of universal and means-tested classification of social pensions into sharper focus. In the extant literature, it is customary to classify social pensions into two: universal social pensions and means-tested social pensions¹³. The analysis conducted in this chapter shows that the demarcation ascribed to these varieties of social pensions may not necessarily reflect the character of social pensions in the global South.

The following chapter, i.e., Chapter 3.2, thoroughly investigates the suitability of the dichotomous classification. It seeks to group social pension programs in the global South by examining critical dimensions of coverage, benefits, and the depth of institutionalisation of the program. The meta-aim of the chapter is to understand the family of social pension programs in the global South.

¹³ I show in the next section i.e., Section 4.2, there is an increasing but circumscribed literature that challenges this classification.

Chapter 3.2: Beyond Universality vs Means Testing: Varieties of Social Pensions

3.2.1 Introduction

From the exposition of universalism in the literature chapter of this dissertation, I explained that the use of the concept of universalism abounds in the extant social pensions' literature. Commonly, the idea of universalism is used to demarcate social pension programs that do not employ means-testing from those that do so. This conception of universalism as a demarcation tool is narrow, and it is one of three primary variants of universalism identified in this dissertation. Other generalised dimensions of universalism identified in this dissertation are Systemic Universalism (systemic coverage of all citizens or persons in a territory through the combination of social protection programs) and a Universalism that refers to the notion of collective responsibility of the state for the welfare of all the people within a territory.

The variant of universalism discussed in this chapter is a subject of debate in policy and academic literature. Specifically, classifying social pensions by employing the narrower form of universalism is popular with academics and policy practitioners. Depending on the organisation and scholar, the categorisation of social pensions is often a variation of the dichotomous classification of means-tested and universal social pensions. The dichotomous classification is used in describing social pensions around the world in statistical databases of organisations such as the United States Social Security Administration (USSSA 2018) and the International Labour Office's World Social Protection Database (International Labour Office 2017, p. 15).

In this chapter, the dichotomous classification of social pensions in extant policy and academic literature is challenged. This chapter forwards the argument that extant classification of universal and means-testing do not reflect the true nature of the family of social pension programs across the global South. In its place, this chapter attempts to cluster social pension programs across the global South based on the indispensable dimensions on coverage, benefits, and the depth of institutionalisation of social pensions in the global South.

In view of this goal, this chapter is structured as follows: Section 3.2.2 enumerates social pensions classification in policy and academic literature; Section 3.2.3 deals with the assumptions and the dissent advanced by scholars regarding the classification; Section 3.2.4 details the approach as well as the variables employed in the clustering exercise of this chapter; Section 3.2.5 discusses the clustering analysis results and the implication of the results for the case countries in this dissertation; Section 3.2.6 compares the clusters with extant studies with similar classification objectives; 3.2.7 summarises the findings of the chapter.

3.2.2 Social Pension Classification: The State of Art in Policy and Academic Literature

In delineating the options for pension framework, the classic World Bank publication, ‘Averting the old age crisis: policies to protect the old and promote growth’ posited that universal-flat benefits and means-tested pension plans are program options of the public pillar¹⁴ in the multi-pillar pension framework advocated by the Bank (The World Bank 1994, pp. 239–242). Furthermore, the Bank posited that the primary goal of the public pillar is redistribution, and this goal must be achieved at a low cost.

Issues concerning coverage, administration system, cost, institutionalisation, and incentives separate the universal flat-rate benefits and means-tested varieties of the public pillar pension arrangements. Means-tested pensions are adjudged to be a relatively cheap option for achieving poverty alleviation objectives because it restricts benefits to old persons that meet certain income and/or asset requirements. Although, associated costs on administration, stigma, and take up problems go together with means-tested social pensions (The World Bank 1994, p. 239).

Conversely, the Bank submits that universal flat-rate benefits are administratively simpler than its counterpart since it does not require elaborate administrative measures to identify beneficiaries. The expansive coverage associated with universal flat-rate benefits guarantees the attainment of the poverty objectives of the public pillar (The World Bank 1994, p. 240). Universal flat-rate benefits guarantee expansive coverage but, the fiscal cost associated with this variety of pension arrangement is steeper than means-tested pensions, the Bank argued (The World Bank 1994, p. 240). This point is especially apt for low-income countries where several policy areas compete for space in a highly tight fiscal space. In the follow up to the 1994 publication, the World Bank used the term social/basic pension to describe universal and means-tested basic pension as two of the four options in the zero/basic-pillar of its multi-pillar pension framework (Holzman et al. 2005, p. 95).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) had historically advocated for the expansion of formal social insurance pensions schemes (Rodgers 2009, p. 139), which in the global South is summarily restrictive in its coverage and biased towards the urban old and formal workers (Leisering 2019, p. 7, 2020b, p. 90). Over the past two decades, the ILO has encouraged countries to adopt national strategies that would expand pension coverage to previously excluded

¹⁴ The Public Pillar in the World Bank’s prescription comprised of means-tested plan, universal flat benefit plan, employment-related flat benefits, and minimum pension guarantee pension plans.

social groups (ILO 2001, 4-5,40). The ILO coined its version of a multi-pillar pension framework which consisted of four pension pillars¹⁵.

The Zero or Floor Pillar of the multi-pillar framework classifies non-contributory pension schemes dichotomously but with a slight variation. It classified the variants of non-contributory pensions into universal, pension-tested and means-tested social pensions (ILO 2017, p. 77, 2018, p. 6). Its definition of universal and means-tested social pensions bears a resemblance to the description advanced by the World Bank above. With pensions-tested social pensions, an individual only qualifies for social pensions if he/she does not receive any other pension income.

For the ILO, coverage is at the centre of its advocacy. Its focus on expanding coverage is at the heart of the multi-pillar pension model proposed by the ILO (ILO 2018). It recognises that universal social pensions and means-tested pensions can expand pension coverage. However, the latter must be combined with contributory schemes to meet the universal coverage envisaged by its multi-pillar model. With this, the ILO concludes that countries must be encouraged to institute universal social pensions because means-tested pensions are often too narrowly targeted, leaving a large swathe of old persons unprotected. It stated in its 2017 report that,

‘A positive trend throughout the developing world is the proliferation of non-contributory pension systems. However, schemes are often too narrowly targeted, leaving many people unprotected. A challenge for these countries is to transform their systems into universal ones in order to guarantee a floor of income security for all older persons, leaving no-one behind’ (ILO 2017, p. 98).

Providing a nuanced approach to the classification of social pension, Willmore (2012) divided social pensions into four groups: Universal Pensions, Universal Minimum Pensions, Recoverable Social Pensions and Social Assistance. He defined Universal Pensions as social pensions given to residents (all citizens) of a country who meet certain age and residency/citizenship requirements and often dispensed based on beneficiary’s rights. This variety of social pensions

¹⁵ The ILO’s Multi-Pillar Pension Model comprises of the Zero Pillar, First Pillar (Mandatory Social Insurance Pillar), Second Pillar (Complementary Schemes (Mandatory/Voluntary)), Third Pillar (Personal Savings or Voluntary Pillar).

does not consider previous pension contributions, neither does it emphasise the beneficiary's position in the labour market.

Similar to this definition of universal social pensions, Kidd (2015a)'s tiered approach classified universal social pension as an entitlement or citizens' pension since it recognises the rights of the beneficiaries to the pension given their 'contribution' to the country in their active years. Although I showed in the chapter that analysed the goals and rationale for social pensions across the global South, the rationale of rights and societal contributions as underpinnings of social pensions is not exclusive to universal social pensions. The analysis conducted in chapter 3.1 showed that rights and contributions as reasons for social pensions are not exclusive to universal social pensions. The means-tested social pensions in Guatemala is a classic example of a social pension program that links its institutionalisation to the social rights of old persons and their contributions to national development (Republica de Guatemala 2005).

Willmore (2012) defined Universal minimum pension as social pensions given to a beneficiary who does not have access to any other (pension) income. Similarly, HelpAge International distinguished between universal social pensions and universal minimum pensions. HelpAge International defined universal minimum pension as 'one which effectively ensures that any person over a certain age will receive a pension' (HelpAge International 2018). However, it employs a 'pension-test' that excludes individuals with access to some other form of pension (HelpAge International 2018).

In defining his second categorisation, Willmore (2012) admitted that universal minimum pension is often categorised as a universal pension. Willmore (2012) questioned the lumping of these categories of social pensions by arguing that a pension test is a form of income/needs test, albeit its mildness. As such, a universal minimum pension should not be categorised as a universal social pension. Universal minimum pension, which is also known as pension-tested social pension, performs the lightest needs test on its beneficiary. Nevertheless, a universal minimum pension ensures that everyone above a certain age has access to a pension income.

In some global South countries, the universal minimum income often functions as a universal pension because a large percentage of old people do not have access to other pensions. Kidd (2015a) recognises that a pension-tested social pension is not a universal social pension. However, he postulated that although mild, the pension test is analogous to a means test.

Willmore (2012)'s third categorisation is termed the Recoverable Social Pension. This social pension provides benefits to individuals that meet age, residency/citizenship requirements.

However, the beneficiary must declare the cash transfer as an income which is then taxed according to the beneficiary's tax bracket. Hence the cash transfer is recovered through the fiscal system. Except for the social pension program in the Cook Islands, this variety of social pensions is not common in the global South.

According to Willmore (2012), the fourth category of social pensions is the social assistance social pensions. He defined it as a social pension given to a beneficiary upon meeting certain needs/means test requirements. Several organisations and scholars share this definition but not the label. For instance, HelpAge International called it means-tested social pensions because eligibility is based on passing a means test. Leisering (2019) reckon that this type of social pension is widespread in countries of the global South despite the demanding technical and administrative infrastructure needed to carry out the requirements of a means-tested social pension.

While social pensions represent the most ubiquitous form of social cash transfers for old people in the global South, it must be noted that some countries have social programs that are not social pensions but are a functional equivalent of social pensions. The analysis conducted by Leisering (2019, p. 164) showed that the coverage of this class of programs is substantial in the global South. These programs target needy individuals and households regardless of categorical characteristics. In this way, these programs also cover old persons. A typical example of this class of program is Jamaica's Programme for Advancement through Health and Education (PATH). The program provides cash benefits for persons in all life phases. Jamaicans that are 60+ years qualify for the program upon meeting a socially defined minimum (MLSS 2020). The program employs a proxy means test approach to determine eligibility. The proxy test used by the Jamaican program brings into sharper focus the divergent varieties of means-testing in social pensions literature.

Varieties of Means Testing in Social Pensions

A means-tested social pension program, in its essence, is underpinned by normative principles of needs because it considers what the beneficiary requires to reach a socially defined threshold for a decent living. In contrast, a universal social pension does not consider the beneficiary's need, as it bestows equal benefits to old persons irrespective of their living requirements and need. It must be noted that means-tested social pensions do not only use income or assets as a means of targeting beneficiaries; targeting approaches may include geographic location or incidence of deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Leisering (2019, pp. 233–236) identified three

main types of means-testing employed in countries of the global South. They are Minimum Standard Test, General Means Test and Ascribed Poverty Targeting.

Minimum Standard Test confines benefit to individuals that do not meet a socially defined minimum, usually a poverty line. Programs that employ this variety of means-testing endeavours to plug the gap between the income of the beneficiary and the socially defined minimum level of sustenance.

Ascribed Poverty Targeting variety of means-testing is similar to the minimum standard test. However, it does not rely on a socially defined minimum. Instead, it uses proxy metrics that capture the level of indigence of beneficiaries. Examples of these proxy metrics are quotas (a certain number of beneficiaries are selected), and community nominated beneficiaries (a community usually decides who is eligible for a program).

General Means Test variety employs a higher income threshold to crowd out the wealthier sections of the society. This variety of means test is rare in the global South. Through the FLOORCASH database, Leisering (2019) identified Chile, South Africa, South Korea and Eswatini as the countries with General Means Testing Social Pensions (Leisering 2019, p. 234).

The classification of social pensions, as highlighted above, is standard in policy circles. Although in the context of scholarly debates, considerable controversies exist regarding the best policy option that can enhance the welfare outcomes of old persons (Kidd 2015a; Holzmann et al. 2009). The suitability of the dichotomous classification of universal and means-testing in mapping social pensions across the global South is also a subject of controversy that is rarely addressed in social pensions and social protection literature¹⁶. Hence, the desire to contribute to this circumscribed literature and tackle the question of the suitability of the dichotomous classification of universal/ means-tested social pension is the core question of this chapter.

¹⁶ See Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov 2014 and Leisering 2019 for recent attempts on universal means testing mapping controversy.

3.2.3 Universal vs Means-testing: Arguments and Issues

The use of universal and means-tested classification of social pensions in the global South is often based on assumptions that do not adequately capture dimensions and answers to questions that pertain to who benefits from social pensions, how they benefit, the amount that accrues to the beneficiaries and the depth of institutionalisation of social pensions programs.

These limitations have grounded a confusing shoehorning of social pensions into categories that do not necessarily reflect their character. For instance, while organisations like the ILO judge that the social pension in Nepal is pension-tested, actors in Nepal describe it as universal. Universal Social Pension is associated with ideas of rights and guarantee. However, in Botswana- a country with universal social pensions- the ideas of rights and entitlement to social pensions are neither obtainable in legal texts of the country nor are they prominent with the policymakers of Botswana. These divergences indicate that the assumptions that ground the classification of social pensions in the global South do not necessarily reflect the character of the programs. Hence, it throws into question why the labels are used in classifying social pensions.

The primary difference between universal and means-tested social pensions lies in the question of who benefits from social pensions and the principles that underpin the pension programs. Universal social pension employs citizenship principles, and in its essence, it allocates benefits based on two main characteristics: age and residency/citizenship. With these characteristics, the position of an individual on the income spectrum becomes redundant, i.e., those considered well-off enjoy similar benefits with their counterparts on the lower end of the income spectrum of a country. On the other hand, a means-tested social pension gives benefit to individuals based on need principles and criteria such as socially defined minimum, indirect indicators of poverty (proxy means test) and income thresholds.

With these assumptions, advocates of universal social pensions argue for its institutionalisation because it does not create a system of social gradation of the elderly (Kidd 2015a; HelpAge International 2006; ILO 2017). The advocates posit that it is the best channel for answering adverse welfare questions of old persons. These advocates point to the divisive essence of means-tested social pensions. At its core, a means-tested pension divides the targeted category into people that are eligible and people that are not based on a socially defined minimum. Old persons that have formal labour market achievements and those that are below the socially defined minimum line enjoy some form of pension. This leaves a large swath of old persons that are not poor enough to get social pensions and are not well-off enough to live on their

contributory pensions. In a sense, a pensions system that includes a contributory pension framework and means-tested social pensions do not guarantee pension income to all old persons. In this way, universal social pensions intrinsically guarantee income and ensure more extensive coverage during old age, and the same cannot be said of means-tested social pensions.

Caution must be taken regarding a blanket description that means-tested social pensions cannot guarantee mass coverage of old persons. One must look at South Africa, where more than 74% of eligible old persons benefit from social pensions, despite being a means-tested social pension (HelpAge International 2018). Although, South Africa appear to represent the exception rather than the rule in the global South. The expansive coverage of South Africa's social pension is likely because it has the administrative capacity to avoid the exclusion errors that often plague means-tested social pensions.

The fiscal cost of universal social pensions and its coverage of non-poor old persons have allowed advocates of means-tested social pensions to suggest that countries should opt against introducing universal social pensions (The World Bank 1994, p. 240). Faced with a limited budget and the desire to provide income to old persons in old age, a means-tested social pension is adjudged to be fiscally efficient than universal social pensions. This leads to the ethical arguments espoused by advocates of means-tested social pensions. It is only fair to concentrate on the section of the elderly that needs support rather than on the entire elderly population that includes the well-off (Devereux 2016).

With the efficiency arguments, it is assumed that means-tested social pensions provide higher benefits for old persons than universal social pensions. Since means-tested social pensions target old persons that do not meet the defined minimum, enough resources can be dedicated to the group to make a dent in poverty. In its advocacy of means-tested pensions, the World Bank posited that it has significant impact on group and national poverty rates than universal social pensions (Holzman et al. 2005, p. 96). Similarly, Kakwani and Subbarao (2007) concluded that means-tested pensions perform better in reducing poverty among old person than universal social pensions. Böger and Leisering (2017b)'s analysis of social pensions in the global South show that means-tested social pensions, on average, provide higher benefits than universal social pensions.

Although means-tested social pensions are perceived as fiscally efficient, the associated costs accompanying their implementation are touted as the primary reasons why countries in the global South should institute universal social pension. First, in the global South, the state's capacity to

effectively target poor individuals is often lacking. Notably, the psychic and pecuniary costs imposed on claimants are substantial (Kidd 2015a; Kidd and Whitehouse 2009).

Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) lauded the universal-means tested dichotomous classification. However, they criticised it based on the perceived implicit assumptions about coverage and cost, as explained above. They contend that while the classification is suitable for heuristic purposes, they rarely describe the character of social pension programs. They claim that the idea that a means-tested social pension does not guarantee income in old age does not necessarily hold. They point to technically means-tested pensions in Lesotho and Thailand as examples of how means-tested social pensions can guarantee income in old age. In addition to their objections, Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) posit that a nuanced perspective should be taken when asserting that universal social pensions guarantee income at old age. These authors argue that the age of eligibility and life expectancy must be considered, i.e., when asserting the universality of social pensions, careful attention must be paid to how the actors in the countries defined old age. For instance, in Nepal, where the social pension is supposedly ‘universal’, the age of eligibility for social pension is 70. The coverage deficit of social pensions is exacerbated by the fact that the retirement age¹⁷ in Nepal is 58. Consequently, there is a large swath of individuals in Nepal that are adjudged to be old enough to retire but not old enough to receive social pensions in Nepal.

Leisering (2019) advanced the criticism that the dichotomous classification of social pension into ‘universal’ and ‘means tested’ is limited in capturing the complexities of social pensions since it neglects crucial dimensions that make up social pensions. He argued that the notion that universal social pension is more capable of delivering old people’s rights to social security does not necessarily hold.

Using a Fuzzy Set, large N approach, Böger (2013) contends that means-tested social pension can be used to secure rights to old age security. In a self-constructed social citizenship index (the index consists of resources, recognition and participation dimensions), his analysis found that means-tested social pension schemes may rank high across the dimensions and meet the criteria of securing rights to old age pension. He concluded that given the result of the social quality of social pensions in countries of the global South, the monopoly of universal social pension as the purveyor of citizenship rights is unwarranted. Hence, the thrust of his analysis reveals that classifying social pensions from social citizenship perspective transcends the dichotomous

¹⁷ The retirement age defined here is the age that an individual exit the formal labour market and it marks the qualifying age for social insurance pension in Nepal.

classification of social pensions and provides a more differentiated and nuanced way of categorising social pensions.

3.2.4 Analytical Approach

Family of Social Pensions across the Global South

This dissertation understands the usefulness of the dichotomous classification of universal and means-tested pensions. Indeed, the choice of the case countries in this dissertation was partly a function of the dichotomous classification. However, this dissertation equally understands that the dimensions that provide the basis of the dual classification of universal and means-tested are limited. Consequently, this chapter argues that describing social pensions in terms of universal or means-tested neglects essential dimensions that are not captured by the dichotomous descriptions of universal and means-testing.

In this chapter, I employ the entitlement approach propounded by Leisering (2019) to support the variables used in the analysis of this chapter. The entitlement approach advances the notion that answers to fundamental questions of who benefits from a social program, the benefits of a program, and how programs are institutionalised are crucial dimensions necessary for understanding the character of social protection programs. Hence, clustering based on these dimensions can yield insights into the family of social pensions across the global South. Further, an analysis that employs this approach can allow for the affirmation or disaffirmation of the hypothesis that the universal means-tested dichotomous classification is limited and unable to capture the family of social pension programs across the global South. In this sense, this chapter endeavours to produce a new map of the families of social pensions across the global South.

The dimensions of entitlement rest on the idea that aggregated metrics like social expenditure are unlikely to give an accurate picture of the character of social programs (Leisering 2019, p. 89). Consequently, the entitlement approach allows for detailed descriptions of social programs in a way that aids in-depth comparison. The choice of the entitlement approach is partly inspired by the Fuzzy Set analysis carried out by Leisering (2019). His analysis employed the dimensions of entitlement specified here to build what was described as a social citizenship index which in turn was used to assess how programs like social pensions contribute to social citizenship as conceived by famed sociologist T. H Marshall.

The Fuzzy Set analysis of Leisering (2019) aspired to identify an ideal type of social pensions based on the similar dimensions used in this chapter. However, this chapter does not aspire to the identification of such ideal types. Instead, the objective of this chapter is restricted to the classification of social pensions based on the argument that the extant dichotomous classification of social pensions is unable to capture the subtleties of social pensions in the global South since it omits crucial dimensions such as coverage, institutionalisation and benefits.

Clustering Method

In social policy literature, scholastic efforts that seek to classify social programs or welfare systems have deferred to cluster analysis (alongside Fuzzy Set analysis and Factor analysis) as the most preferred method of classification (Böger and Öktem 2019). Powell and Barrientos (2004, p. 91) remarked that cluster analysis is one of the most effective and widely used approaches to identify welfare regimes. Gough (2001, p. 169) posited that cluster analysis is a robust, meaningful and straightforward approach to welfare analysis.

Fuzzy Set ideal type analysis is interested in establishing ideal types that require the analyst to define the measurement and combinations that make up the ideal type (Böger and Öktem 2019, p. 5). Fuzzy Set ideal type analysis is an iterative process that often requires frequent calibration of required dimensions based on externally, dependably known standards (Hudson and Kühner 2010, p. 5). The Fuzzy Set ideal type analysis has helped generate sophisticated insights into the understanding of social pensions in the global South. In particular, the Fuzzy Set ideal type analysis conducted by Leisering (2019) and Böger (2013) advanced insights as to how social pensions contribute to social citizenship in the global South. Leisering (2019)'s analysis generated a four-fold typology of the models of social citizenship in old age security in global South countries.

Factor Analysis has been described as a cousin of Principal Component Analysis because the statistical underpinnings of the two approaches are similar (Shalev 2007, p. 291). Factor Analysis lends itself to uncovering ideal types of policy profiles (Shalev 2007).

Analysis that employs cluster analysis has contributed to a better understanding of social welfare programs in the global South and global North. For example, Abu Sharkh and Gough (2010)'s cluster analysis of global welfare regimes gave insights that a distinct pattern of social welfare can

be observed in the developing world. These scholars characterised the welfare regimes in the developing world as Insecurity Regimes and Informal Security Regimes. Bamba (2007) used cluster analysis that centre on the concept of defamiliarisation to challenge the famed three-fold typology of welfare state associated with the works of Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999). Her analysis of defamiliarisation produced five-fold welfare clusters that stood in contrast to the three-fold typology.

These studies are iterated to show that cluster analysis is a *bona fide* analytical approach that has demonstrated pedigree in advancing the understanding of social welfare programs and regimes. Yes, other methods, namely Fuzzy Set ideal type analysis and Factor analysis have contributed to advancing our knowledge of social programs in the global South and global North.

Given that the goal of this chapter is to understand the clusters of countries based on the dimensions of entitlement and not to establish or aspire to a predetermined ideal type, cluster analysis represents the most appropriate approach for the questions posed in this chapter. Cluster Analysis is the most atheoretical of the aforementioned methods (Böger and Öktem 2019, p. 5). Cluster analysis partitions information based on the relationships between the objects in a dataset. Cluster analysis aims to group objects in a dataset into homogeneous but distinct groups (Tryfos 1998). Clustering is helpful because it can uncover patterns based on the inherent character of objects in a dataset.

Specifically, a k-medoids approach, in contrast to the famed k-means clustering approach, is apt for this chapter because the k-medoids approach can handle mixed data (i.e., a dataset with numeric and categorical variables), and it is robust enough to handle outliers in comparison to k-means clustering (Shamsuddin and Mahat 2019, p. 304). With k-medoids clustering, each cluster is represented by one of the data points in the cluster, called medoids. The medoid denotes an object within a cluster in which the average dissimilarity between it and other members of a cluster is minimal (Kassambara 2017, p. 48). The PAM method (Partitioning Around Medoids) is used to identify the medoids in the dataset, and the average silhouette method is used to estimate the optimal number of clusters that can be found in the dataset (Kassambara 2017, p. 48). The PAM method is best suited for small to medium-sized datasets encountered in social and political research (Waggoner 2021, p. 57).

Data

Naturally, all the social pension programs in the global South were included in the initial analytical phase of this chapter. However, not all the programs made it to the final stage of the analysis conducted in this chapter. Social pension programs with incomplete data points necessary for the analysis in this section were excluded. After initial data cleaning, only 50 programs were included in this analysis.

The range of national documents employed in this chapter were national constitutions, policy documents on social pensions in the case countries and publications from national ministries implementing social pensions. I primarily conducted a qualitative reading of these national documents to ascertain the institutionalisation of social pensions. Social pensions underpinned by legislative documents were coded 1 and 0 if otherwise. Additionally, the quantitative dataset used in this analysis were obtained from HelpAge International's Pension Watch Database and the data tables from the ILO (ILO 2017, 2018). The coverage and benefits data were sourced from the databases and data tables listed above.

Variables

The variables used in this chapter rest on the dimensions of entitlement highlighted in the previous section of this chapter. These dimensions centre on coverage, benefits levels/standard, and the depth of institutionalisation of social pensions. Table 2 provides a summary of the indicators used in this chapter. These variables are explained below.

Coverage: As highlighted earlier, coverage plays a decisive role in how social pensions are classified in the global South. Universal social pensions are deemed to have higher coverage of old persons¹⁸ while means-tested pensions are purportedly exclusionary since it excludes old people that do not meet the qualifying criteria of means-tested pensions. Coverage can be conceptualised in two different ways: Legal Coverage and Effective Coverage. Legal Coverage refers to the section of the population with legal command over the benefit of a program.

¹⁸ This is not necessary the case because of within-category exclusions and high age qualification can result in exclusion of old persons .

Effective Coverage refers to the number of persons that currently benefit from a program and future beneficiaries (ILO 2017, pp. 201-202).

Legal coverage is used in gauging the level of coverage of social pensions. The first variable examines the percentage of the population over eligibility covered. This variable is standard in social pension literature, and it is used by international organisations like the ILO and HelpAge International to map the extent of coverage of social pensions. Unfortunately, the data on effective coverage on social pension was not available for many countries in the global South. As such effective coverage was not included in this analysis.

The coverage of other pillars of pension (voluntary and contributory pillars) are included in this analysis. This is measured by adding the legal coverage measures of the contributory and voluntary pillars of the pension systems of the countries included in this analysis. This variable allows an insight into the role that social pensions play in the overall architecture of old age security.

Benefits: The benefits indicators as used in this chapter is unique in that it not only ask the level of benefits that accrue to old persons, it also recognises that the benefits to old persons are a reflection of what society deems as the appropriate level of sustenance that old persons deserve relative to other societal groups. Leisering (2019) notes that assessing the level and standard of benefit is essential, especially when answering the coverage questions. The discourses on expansive coverage of social pensions favour the institutionalisation of universal social pensions, but rare attention is paid to the benefit that it provides. To measure the benefits level and benefit standard of social pensions in the global South, indicators on the benefit levels in each country are converted to 2018 international USD and to aid comparison of benefits standard, the benefit from social pensions is assessed as a percentage of the GDP per capita of each country.

Table 2: Indicators for Cluster Analysis

Variables	Source	Mean	Min	Max
Other Pension Coverage	ILO	49.442	0	100
Percentage of Eligible Persons Covered	HelpAge International	50.262	0.1	126
Level of Benefit	HelpAge International	178.44	11.4	1055.3

Benefit Standard	HelpAge International	58.053	5.7	800
Legislative Underpinning	National Documents	0.9	0	1

Institutionalisation: The dimension of institutionalisation of social pensions seek to understand the extent to which social pensions is entrenched as an institution of state welfare. The degree of institutionalisation is an essential ingredient required to gauge the depth of the state's commitment to the idea of welfare in later life and serves as a gauge on the temporality of the program (Leisering 2019). Institutionalisation may take many forms. For instance, the idea that old persons are deserving of social palliatives and care during later life may be culturally embedded in society. However, recognising that the state accepts the responsibility for a societal group represents a higher strand of commitment that transcends cultural embeddedness. This strand of commitment is usually exemplified by the codification of such programs into legislative texts or the inclusion of social rights to social pensions in national constitutions.

In the global South, the degree of institutionalisation of a social program may also be indicated by how much priority it garners in the spending priority of the state. For instance, social pension is accorded the same priority as Defence in Nepal (Samson 2012, p. 220). Similarly, states like Kenya and Namibia included the right of old persons to pensions in their national constitutions. These inclusions are a sort of insurance policy that binds present and future policymakers against not recognising the welfare needs of old persons in Namibia and Kenya.

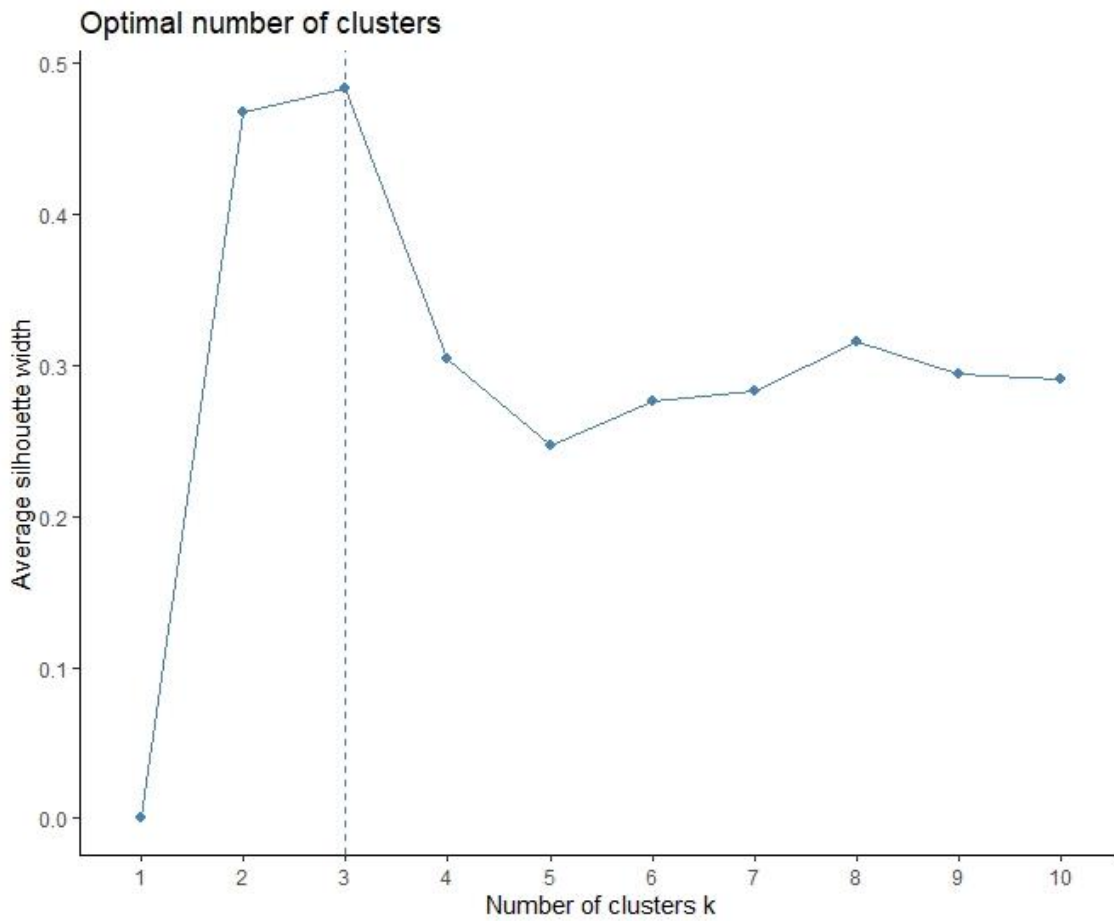
The operationalisation of the depth of institutionalisation of social programs in the global South literature varies. For instance, in the analysis of the case countries of this dissertation, I followed the footsteps of Leisering (2019) by examining funding, legal basis and the system of administration of social pensions as markers of the depth of the institutionalisation of social pensions in Botswana and Nepal. The choice of examining legal text as an indicator of the depth of institutionalisation of social pensions was also based on data availability. National documents like national constitutions and policy documents on social pensions were accessible compared to the funding details of social pensions.

3.2.5 Results and Explanation of the Clusters

The analysis performed on the dataset used in this chapter produced three optimal clusters of social pensions in the global South. Figure 5 shows that given the dataset, three optimal clusters contained homogeneous members, and between which there are clear boundaries. The Silhouette analysis is a method of validating the clusters generated as it measures the quality of the clustering, and it estimates the average distance between the clusters (Kassambara 2017). A Silhouette Coefficient that is close to 1 is evidence that objects in the dataset are well clustered. Conversely, a Silhouette Coefficient close to -1 indicates that the objects are poorly clustered (Kassambara 2017, p. 15). The Silhouette coefficient from the analysis conducted in this chapter yielded a coefficient of 0.45. This figure indicates that the objects in the dataset are satisfactorily clustered.

In lay terms, this indicates that three clusters of social pension programs were obtained from the dataset given the dimensions that capture coverage, benefit, and the level of institutionalisation of social pensions in the global South. What does this mean in substantive terms? The result shows that empirically speaking, the family of countries with social pensions transcends the dichotomous classification that is obtainable in extant literature. In this sense, the conclusions from scholars like Leisering (2019) and Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) that the universal-means tested classification of social pensions is limited and unable to capture the complexities of social pensions in the global South is empirically supported from the analysis conducted in this section. All in all, I shall discuss the classifications in the following section.

Figure 5: Optimal Clusters of Social Pensions



Cluster Summary

Table 3 shows the distribution of the clusters produced in this analysis. The analysis indicated that Belize, Samoa, and Botswana represent the centre of each of the clusters. The table below lists the countries in each cluster.

Table 3: Countries in the Identified Clusters

Cluster A	Cluster B	Cluster C
Algeria	Guyana	Botswana
Argentina	Bolivia	China
Azerbaijan	Brunei	Kiribati
Bahamas	Cape Verde	Eswatini
Bangladesh	Georgia	Papua New Guinea
Barbados	Kazakhstan	
Belize	Lesotho	
Brazil	Mauritius	
Chile	Namibia	
Colombia	Nepal	
Costa Rica	Samoa	
Ecuador	Seychelles	
Egypt	South Africa	
El Salvador	Thailand	
Fiji	Timor-Leste	
Guatemala	Trinidad and Tobago	
India		
Indonesia		
Jamaica		
Kenya		
Malaysia		
Mexico		
Mongolia		
Mozambique		
Panama		
Paraguay		
Peru		
Philippines		

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		
Uruguay		
Venezuela		
Viet Nam		

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the Clusters (Mean and Mode Values)

Clusters	Other Pension Coverage	Percentage of Eligible Persons Covered	Level of Benefit	Benefit Standard	Legislative Underpinning
Cluster A	51.47812	26.09688	115.0938	13.70937	97%
Cluster B	31.51875	94.43750	219.0000	19.66875	100%
Cluster C	25.76000	67.20000	20.4000	10.44000	0%

Characteristics of each of the cluster

Cluster A: Social Insurance as the dominant provider of pension

Table 4 conveys that the countries in this cluster rely more on contributory and voluntary pension pillars to produce income for old persons. They are more likely to use social pensions as instruments to augment the overall coverage of the pension arrangements. Interestingly, per the analysis conducted in chapter 3.1, a large proportion of countries in this cluster belong to the group of countries that partially described social pensions' goals and rationale in terms of closing the coverage gap left by existing pension arrangements. Further, what these countries lack regarding the deficient coverage of social pensions, they make it up with higher standards and levels of benefits, in comparison to their peers in Cluster C. The countries in this cluster strongly

institutionalise social pensions as almost all grounded social pensions in either legislative instruments or a constitutional commitment.

Per the analysis, Belize is the archetype of countries in this cluster. Belize, like most countries in this cluster, operates a social pension that requires means-testing. Belize introduced its social pension out of the motive of poverty alleviation but, most importantly, to provide income to those that do not benefit from the fragmented social insurance pension programs that had been in existence since 1981 (Knox-Vydmanov 2011). In other words, it was introduced as a supplement to the existing contributory system. Documents produced by the implementing agency of the social pension program hinted that the coverage gap was at the heart of the program. It stated that, ‘If there is an entitlement to a contributory long term grant from SSB, the pensioner may opt to receive one of these benefits’ (SSB 2020). Meanwhile, the legislative act that underpins the program stated that mutually inclusive goal of poverty alleviation is also one of the aims of the program. The Belize Social Security Act stated that, ‘Subject to these Regulations, a non-contributory pensions of \$100 shall be payable to a registered female/male persons who has inadequate or no source of income’ (Government of Belize 2003, pp. 198–199).

Tapia (2015), in his analysis of the pension system in Belize, show that social pension plays a secondary but essential role in expanding pension coverage in Belize. Figures from HelpAge International’s database indicate that without social pensions, the percentage of old persons in Belize without any pension income would be as high as 68% (HelpAge International 2018).

What does this cluster mean in terms of the dichotomous description of social pension in existing literature? The cluster in this analysis further proved that grouping countries under the universal-means tested labels is limited. As shown in Table 3, Kenya, a country with universal social pension, is in the same cluster as the Bahamas, a country that operates a means-tested pension.

Cluster B: Social Pension Cluster

This cluster can be easily understood as the group of countries that contrast the countries in cluster A as they rely on social pensions to provide income for old people. Table 4 shows that the countries in this cluster perform better than other clusters in all the dimensions that sought to capture the coverage, benefit, and depth of institutionalisation of social pensions. The range of countries in this cluster is very interesting as it contains democratic and autocratic countries,

low-income countries as well as upper-middle-income countries. Per the analysis, Samoa is the ideal type for countries in this group.

Samoa institutionalised the Senior Citizens Benefit social pensions in 1990. As inspiration for the introduction of the program, the Samoan government reiterated one of the advantages associated with social pensions by stating that the cash to old persons gives the beneficiaries a sense of autonomy and a sense of belonging in their respective communities (SNPF 2020). Samoa operates a comprehensive pension framework that comprises a contributory and non-contributory pillar. However, the non-contributory pillar is more robust as it provides pension income to about 93% of people that are 65+ years in Samoa (ILO 2017).

This cluster of countries is model evidence that when vital dimensions of coverage, benefit and institutionalisation are taken into consideration, the dichotomous grouping of countries is limited in mapping the family of social pensions in the global South. Table 2 conveys a clear picture that countries are not easily demarcated based on means-testing.

Cluster C: Weak Institutionalisation Cluster

Members of this cluster are similar to members in Cluster B in that the countries lean more on social pensions as the primary source of income provision in old age. Surprisingly, the majority of countries¹⁹ in this cluster operate universal or pension-tested social pensions; although, the standard and levels of benefits from social pensions are on average lower than their peers in Cluster A and Cluster B. In addition to the comparatively lower benefit standard and levels, these countries do not ground social pensions in legislative or constitutional instruments. The lack of legislative instrument may help give a glimpse of how social pensions is viewed by the elites and successful governments in these countries. As stated earlier, the lack of strong institutionalisation may indicate the poor level of the state's commitment to social programs.

The archetype country in this cluster-Botswana-announced its social pensions through an administrative fiat in 1996. The social pension in Botswana is without a means-test. As I show in the chapter that analysed Botswana as a case study, the benefits from the program have been consistently lower compared to the socially defined minimum in Botswana. Moreover, the benefits from the social pension program in Botswana are comparatively lower than regional

¹⁹ China is the exception here.

peers like Namibia and South Africa (HelpAge International 2018). Despite exhibiting expansive coverage of about 93%, social pension in Botswana exhibits what Leisering (2019) called residual universalism, i.e., expansive coverage coupled with meagre benefits. As I show (in Botswana chapter), what beneficiaries get are not relegated to the periphery in Botswana. Political actors, especially opposition parties, use the meagre benefits of the social pension program to argue that the dominant party in Botswana (the BDP) has a lackadaisical approach to the question of old age poverty in Botswana.

3.2.6 Comparison of Clusters with extant literature

As earlier stated, the task of this chapter is a subject of controversy in extant literature. However, empirical attempts tackling this controversy is circumscribed. The empirical analysis carried out by Leisering (2019) is the latest (except this chapter) to tackle the question of the suitability of the dichotomous classification of universal and means-testing in describing social pensions in the global South. Although, the analysis of Leisering (2019) goes beyond the task of this chapter by examining the social quality of social pension in the global South.

The Fuzzy Set analysis conducted by Leisering (2019) produced four distinct groups of social pensions in the global South from a perspective that combines the citizenship ideas forwarded by T H Marshall. In his postulation, he identified social pensions by grouping programs into quadrants of four of Tiered Citizenship, No Citizenship, Basic Citizenship and Deficient Citizenship (Leisering 2019, pp. 243-246). In countries in the ‘Tiered Citizenship’ and ‘No Citizenship’ quadrants of his analysis, social pensions play a lesser role compared to social insurance arrangements in the architecture of old age security. However, social pension programs in the Tiered Citizenship quadrant score high on the social citizenship score since these programs provide above poverty line benefits, longer periods of coverage and are based on normative principles of needs, achievement, and merit. This contrasts the ‘No Citizenship’ quadrants where the social pension programs are adjudged to have low social quality because they provide low benefits. Cluster A in the analysis conducted in this chapter is a mixed bag of countries that display characteristics of the Tiered Citizenship and No Citizenship quadrants.

Cluster B, and C, have similar characteristics to the ‘Basic Citizenship’ and ‘Deficient Citizenship’ quadrants in Leisering (2019)’s analysis. The common characteristics of the countries in the ‘Basic Citizenship’ and ‘Deficient Citizenship’ quadrants are that social pensions

play a significant role in the provision of income in old age. However, in the Basic Citizenship quadrants, social pension programs are deemed to have better social quality than their counterpart in the Deficient citizenship quadrant because the programs in the former deliver higher benefits and rely on normative principles of need. The latter, i.e., Deficient Citizenship quadrants, have low social quality because they provide low benefits.

3.2.7 Conclusion and Implication

So, what is the implication of this analysis for this dissertation and the broader social pension literature? The cluster analysis conducted in this chapter gives credence to the position that the universal-means-tested classifications as used in social pensions literature and practice present a valuable but limited avenue for describing and mapping social pensions across the global South.

This analysis shows that conceptualising coverage of social pensions in the narrowest form and neglecting critical dimensions to social pensions (i.e., benefits and institutionalisation) underestimates the varieties and complexities of social pensions in the global South. With the cluster analysis performed in this chapter, it is within reasonable limits to conclude that qualitative differences of social pensions in the global South exist beyond what the dichotomous classification provides. The conclusions in this chapter contribute to more clarity as to the well-known, but rarely addressed issues of the suitability of the universal-means tested classification in describing and mapping social pensions in literature. The findings in this chapter share the scepticism of Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) and Leisering (2019) regarding the suitability of the extant classifications.

Similarly, the results of the analysis of this chapter also have implications for the case countries in this dissertation. Nepal and Botswana do not belong to the same cluster. One of the main qualitative differences between the countries relates to how social pensions are institutionalised.

As will be shown in the later chapters of this dissertation, social pensions play a role that transcends poverty or income considerations in Nepal as it is adjudged to be a fundamental right of old persons. The introduction and expansion of social pensions in Nepal are attached to broader considerations on national questions that relate to state responsibility and the responsiveness of the state to social questions on poverty.

Since the introduction of Nepal's social pensions, policymakers consistently frame social pensions using the individual and collective utility of the program. Specifically, Nepal's social pensions is framed as a necessary instrument for closing the gap between the governed and government. Political actors view the social pension program as evidence that the state can be responsible for the welfare of its citizens, given the country's autocratic past.

For Botswana, the fact that its social pension program is not statutorily grounded hints at how policymakers in Botswana view social protection in general. Extant evidence from policy documents in Botswana (please see the Botswana chapter) shows that policymakers in Botswana do ascribe a narrow policy goal to social pensions in that they do not view it and, indeed, social protection in Botswana as channels towards broader goals such as social rights. Instead, the social pension program in Botswana is grounded in cultural ideas of intergenerational solidarity. These constructions will be elaborated upon in greater depth in the following chapters.

Qualitative Small N Analysis Chapters

Chapter 4: Botswana

Botswana Case Study: Research Agenda

Post-war developments in the global South, especially in newly independent countries in sub-Saharan Africa, were marked with political independence, decolonisation, and state-building struggles. Social policies that concern education, infrastructure, and health were integral to several leaders' state-building agendas in post-independent Africa (Adésinà 2009; Mkandawire 2005, p. 13). Concurrently to these developments, social protection programs that look after the welfare of specific social groups were not accorded importance.

Botswana was slightly different from its peers on the continent regarding the significance of social protection programs. In the early years of independence, the primary aim of social policy was to establish a robust education system capable of supporting the national question of state-building (Khama 1966; Republic of Botswana 1966; Colclough and McCarthy 1985, pp. 205–224). In contrast to its peers, social protection programs against the social question of drought were significant constituents of post-independent Botswana's social policies. At independence, Botswana faced what its first president Seretse Khama described as a 'crippling drought' (Khama 1966, p. 4). Consequently, about 20% of the recurrent budget and over 40% of the internally generated revenue was envisaged as the necessary budget for drought relief programs at the time of independence (Selolwane 2012, p. 103).

The drought relief program enacted at independence comprised a three-pronged approach to drought mitigation. It comprised food-for-work programmes for non-disabled persons, in-kind food transfers to school children and vulnerable groups, and destitute relief for old persons without family support (Seekings 2016a, p. 12). The drought relief of the early independent years set the tone for further expansion of social protection in Botswana. Today, Botswana has one of Africa's most extensive social welfare framework regarding the coverage of social protection programs (Seekings 2017a).

This chapter examines one of Botswana's most significant social protection programs. It investigates ideas that underpin social welfare; it analyses the institutionalisation and introduction of Botswana's social pension program and the framework of social protection in Botswana.

The introduction of the program in 1996 was peculiar because, in the years leading to the program's introduction, the theme of austerity dominated the discourses attached to public policy and government expenditure on social policy. In addition, the political party that introduced the program—the BDP—had a pedigree of being reticent towards social protection programs. This

chapter, in its sum, aims to provide a mid-range explanation for the introduction of the program using a multidimensional analytical framework comprising Gough (2008)'s 'Five Is' and Leisering (2019)'s Onion Skin Model.

The logic of this dissertation is that the last 'I' of the 'Five Is', i.e., Ideas are essential constituents of social policy development, and they must not be viewed as subordinate to interest, institution, and other structural factors in the quest of understanding the introduction of social protection programs. Consequently, this dissertation treats Ideas from macro and micro perspectives. It posits that Ideas transcends macro, broad ideologies such as Social Democracy, Liberalism, Communism and Social Conservatism. Ideas are equally about micro-level cognitions and norms that concern the beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and images that elites and wider societies hold about social issues (Leisering 2019, p. 34). In this dissertation, preference is accorded to the Ideas held by the elites. The Onion Skin Model captures these micro-level ideas in a multi-layered way that requires tracing how actors construct them. Given that the Ideas factor bundle of the 'Five Is' examines Ideas from a macro perspective, the Onion Skin Model's micro-level treatment of Ideas deepens the ideational explanation for the introduction of Botswana's universal social pension.

In this way, this dissertation posits that social protection programs like universal social pensions are not just products of political and economic concerns. They are equally manifestations of historical, latent, micro ideas embodied in the perceptions and beliefs held by elites and the broader citizenry. These ideas manifest in how a polity constructs the notion of collective welfare responsibility, i.e., who is responsible for shouldering adverse welfare problems and to what extent are these responsibilities shared by various welfare providing spheres of the society. In consonance with collective welfare responsibility, answers to fundamental questions of which frames, social problems, social questions, social groups, and policy paradigms are accorded preferences as subterranean influences on the introduction of social protection programs.

The logic of the Onion Skin Model requires a historical tracing of these subterranean ideas. It requires the examination of how actors answer and construct these questions. Given the approach stated above, it is reasonable to affirm that this dissertation employs a historical, actor-centred, ideational approach to the analysis of social protection. The approach employed in this dissertation is not common because there is an inclination towards political-economy approach to the study of social protection in extant literature. Recent attempts by Seekings (2016a), Seekings (2017a) in explaining welfare policies in Botswana represent a positive step towards an actor-centred approach. The edited volume by Leisering (2020a) on the ideational development

of social protection have yielded robust insights into the development of social protection programs in Brazil, India, South Africa, and China.

The chapter on Botswana is structured as follows:

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Botswana (1966-1999)

This section investigates the ideas that underpin social welfare in Botswana. It investigates the constructions and answers to questions of collective responsibility. It asks what social questions were raised and how these questions evolved. It examines what other questions were raised in consonance with social questions. This section examines what social groups were accorded preferences. It specifically examines how old persons were viewed viz-a-viz deservingness. It also examines how social protection programs were framed in Botswana. As stated in the introduction chapter of this dissertation, 1966-1999 was chosen as the period for tracing the ideas that underpin social welfare in Botswana. This is because 1966 was the start of Botswana's statehood. 1999 was selected as the cut-off year because the program under investigation was introduced in the 1990s decade. To aid clarity and readability, this section is divided into two parts. Part A examine these questions from 1966 till 1989. Part B examine these questions from 1990-1999.

Section 2: The Description of Universal Social Pension Institutionalisation in Botswana

This section introduces the social pension program in Botswana. It examines the institutional characteristics of the program by investigating how the program is funded, administered, and institutionalised. Further, it describes the benefits, coverage, and the extent of within-category exclusions of the program.

Section 3: The Introduction of Universal Social Pension in Botswana

This section of the Botswana chapter examines the drivers of universal social pension introduction in Botswana. It answers these questions through a multidimensional framework that consist of the 'Five Is' and Onion Skin models to explicate a mid-range explanation for the introduction of the social pension program in Botswana. It uses the insights from Section 1 to deepen the ideational explanations for the program.

Section 4: Program Universalism to Systemic Universalism

This section embeds the universal social pensions in the broader social protection framework in Botswana. It examines if the program contributes to the systemic universalist character of the social protection framework in Botswana. Systemic universalism denotes the extent to which individual programs contribute to the universalist coverage of all persons within a territory.

Chapter 4: Botswana

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Botswana (1966-1999)

Important Events in Botswana 1966-1999

Part	Year	Event
A	1960-1965	Drought Years (1965 was the climax of the drought)
	1962	Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) was founded
	1966	Independence, Drought Relief
	1967	Diamond discovered in Orapa
	1978-79	Drought Year
	1980	Seretse Khama dies; Quett Masire ascended to the position of President.
	1980	The establishment of the National Destitute Policy
	1981-1987	Drought Years
	1989	BDP wins general election securing 91% of parliamentary seats
	B	1994
1996		Old Age Pension introduced
1998		World War 2 Veteran Allowance re-introduced
1999		BDP wins general election securing 83% of parliamentary seats
1999		Short-Term Plan of Action (STPA) was formulated, and the Orphan Care Program was established.

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Botswana (1966-1999)

PART A: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Botswana (1966-1989)

4.1.1 Introduction: Constructing Collective Responsibility (New Authority vs Old Authority)

Like in many African countries in the 1960s, the anticipation of independence brought a radiance of hope for the fruits of self-governance. Botswana was not an exception in this regard. The departure of colonial Britain was as peaceful as it was when it first arrived in the 19th century (Khama 1970, p. 5). As a consequence of Britain's departure, state-building and self-governance were the overarching national questions in the years and decades after independence.

Given the nature of Britain's indirect rule, the traditional rulers in Botswana perceived themselves as the natural successors of the departing colonist. The indirect rule of Britain had allowed broad discretion of the power of the traditional rulers. The chiefs had autonomy on wide-ranging aspects of tribal life in their respective reserves (Jones 1983; Proctor 1968). Consequently, the traditional rulers sought to establish authority and legitimacy in traditional power structures embodied in the institution of hereditary chiefs (Holm and Botlhale 2008).

The autonomy of traditional rulers encompassed areas of law and order, and crucially here, the responsibility for the welfare of tribe members, especially in times of bad harvest (Nthomang 2007, p. 5; Seekings 2017a, p. 5; Schapera 1955). In Tswana tradition, the welfare responsibility of the chief of the tribe was socially embedded and was captured by expressions such as, *'kgosi ke modisa wa morafe'*, which means that the welfare of the people in the tribe is the responsibility of the chief. Likewise, the chief is regarded as the provider for the tribe, as epitomised in sayings like *'kgosi ke mosadi wa morafe'* - the sovereign is the wife of the tribe- and he is looked upon as the provider of wealth and the source of reward and support in the tribe (Schapera 1955, p. 68).

The question of collective welfare responsibility was in sharper focus not just because of the questions of nation-building but also because Botswana at the time (the 1960s) was going through a period of severe drought. Seretse Khama termed the drought as 'crippling' and the first development plan of Botswana described the drought that raged in the 1960s as 'the most calamitous drought in living memory' (Khama 1966, p. 4; Republic of Botswana 1966, p. 5). Hence, the drought question and the social exigences that emanated from it were integral to the quest for state-building in the early independent years in Botswana.

To answer the national question of state-building and the question of drought, Khama and the BDP adjudged that it would require the subordination of tribal allegiances in favour of national-

level identifier associated with the state (BDP 1965). To achieve the goal of subordinating tribal allegiances, Khama and the BDP had to subjugate the powers of the traditional rulers.

Converse to the traditional rulers' ambition, the BDP, led by Seretse Khama and Quett Masire portrayed themselves as the purveyors of modern ideas of multiparty democracy and multiculturalism. The BDP pushed to establish authority and legitimacy through legal-rational ideas and rule-based institutions as the foundation of the new state (Beaulier and Subrick 2006, p. 109; Seidler 2010, p. 25). Seretse Khama and the BDP were determined in their rejection of traditional and charismatic authority. In the 1967 national convention of the BDP, Khama stated that,

'This government would be making a serious miscalculation if it entrusted the entire destiny of the Batswana, their welfare and progress, to the sole care of traditional rulers. This is the age of self-determination, and the elected representatives of the people must assume more and more responsibility' (Khama 1967; Frank 1981, p. 174).

The triumph of the new political elites over the traditional chiefs was epitomised by important legislations like the Chieftainship Act of 1966 and the Local Government Tax Act of 1968 (Jones 1983).

The shift in the centre of power away from the traditional rulers came in sync with the articulation of the answer to the collective welfare responsibility question. The BDP-led response to the drought question of the 1960s provided the answers to the question of collective welfare responsibility in Botswana; it demonstrated that the new state was an encompassing welfare agent that could answer these questions. Equally, it allowed the BDP to articulate its blueprint for tackling adverse welfare questions in drought and non-drought times in Botswana (Seekings 2016a, p. 14, 2017a, p. 4).

In coining the social and welfare blueprint for the new state, Khama explicitly privileged Tswana-sourced principles. He was of the position that locally sourced ideas and principles were readily comprehensible to the citizens of Botswana, and are unlikely to generate the sort of confusion associated with imported ideas (Khama 1966, p. 6). Hence, a welfare doctrine that borrowed extensively from traditional Tswana ideas of solidarity and balanced welfare responsibilities between the public and private spheres of welfare production grounded the new

state's drought responses. These ideas underpinned subsequent social protection programs in Botswana.

The enormity of the drought relief program marshalled by the BDP led government in conjunction with the WFP was the utmost evidence of the new state's collective welfare responsibility. Drought responses were no longer delimited according to tribal associations. It was a national project. Marshalled by functionally differentiated state apparatus, Picard (1987) estimates that the drought response covered about two-thirds of Botswana's population.

The WFP's mandate centred on providing short-term food security. However, it was also inclined to support long-term developmental projects such as food for work and livestock feeding (Seekings 2016c, p. 17). The WFP was willing to support feeding schemes to vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, the disabled and destitute old persons; it was unwilling to provide food to non-disabled adults (Seekings 2020, p. 124). The paradigm championed by the WFP meshed well with the preferences of the leadership of the BDP. Consequently, the BDP government created food for work schemes for non-disabled men and women to support their families. In addition, the BDP government posited that the food for work schemes would reinforce traditional Tswana ideas of self-reliance (Seekings 2016c, p. 18).

Akin to the Tswana idea of welfare responsibility of traditional authorities (Schapera 1955, p. 68), the new political elites were of the position that the state must assume responsibility for the welfare of persons that are incapable of personal welfare enhancement (through self-help or kin support) due to age (children and old persons), disability and motherhood (Seekings 2020, p. 125). Seretse Khama and the BDP posited that welfare enhancement was a question for the private and public spheres; that non-disabled persons have responsibility for enhancing their welfare and their respective community's well-being through self-help (Khama 1966, p. 14). In this way, Khama and the BDP viewed the drought relief of the 1960s as a tool for mitigating the exigencies of the drought; it was also an opportunity to articulate the welfare doctrine of the BDP regarding its preferred paradigm to adverse welfare questions.

The articulated answer to the question of collective welfare responsibility took a hierarchical form in which individual gumption and personal responsibility took precedence over public responsibility. The activation of the public sphere for deserving groups was equally segmented. The private sphere (kin and family relationships) bears the responsibility for enhancing the welfare of these groups, but the public sphere (the state) steps in when the private sphere failed in its welfare enhancement responsibility.

Kagisano: Tribal form of Universalism and an Epitome of Collective Welfare Responsibility

The articulation of the state's collective welfare responsibility during the drought years was perceived as integral to the state-building endeavour of the new political elites in Botswana. Accordingly, Khama and the BDP grounded the guiding principle of the new state in Tswana ideas. In his speech delivered to the 11th Annual Conference of the BDP in 1972, Seretse Khama spelt out the idea of *kagisano* as the guiding principle of the new state. The Tswana idea of *kagisano* embodies a universalistic ideation that not only commits the state to social issues but equally enjoins the wider society in the pursuit of communal and individual welfare enhancement. He noted that,

‘What are the roots of *kagisano*? It is not anything new. Everybody here knows what it means. Its application to our national policy is the logical outgrowth of our national principles. It has always been an essential part of life. It has always been part of our custom that members of a family should help each other and overcome the problems of life. The well-known proverb *kgetse ya tsie e kgonwa ka go tshwaraganelwa* (a bag of locusts is better carried by many people) accurately sums up our approach to national policy and to life in general. What we are trying to do in the new Botswana is in fact nothing new. We are simply applying a well-established value, applied in the family, the ward and the tribe to the wider concept of nationhood’ (Khama 1972).

In sum, the process of state-building allowed the state to take responsibility for the welfare of the denizens of Botswana. However, the nature of the new state's accepted responsibility carried an ethos that differs from the welfare responsibility of hitherto hereditary chiefs. The new responsibility carried a universalistic ethos. The nature of the new, universalistic welfare ethos of the state connotes that instead of having welfare responsibilities demarcated by sub-national identifiers like tribe associations, the state, embodied by democratic institutions, have a welfare responsibility for all persons in Botswana.

It must be stated that the form of universalism mentioned here differs from the conception of universalism commonly debated in social protection literature. The universalism discussed here carries a broader, value-laden, more abstract conception of what welfare responsibility entails in Botswana. It carries the idea that Botswana is a nation in which there is a welfare consciousness that is culturally accepted by the elites and broader society.

This variant of universalism embodied in state's collective welfare responsibility is critical in the state-building process. Its intrinsic nature to state-building is often why states legalise it in national constitutions or international conventions and agreements (Leisering 2019). In Botswana, the state's accepted welfare responsibility is not grounded in the constitution of Botswana or ratified in international conventions and agreements. While it is within reasonable bounds to argue that the non-legalisation of collective welfare responsibility connotes a weak acceptance of such responsibility, it must be noted that such responsibility is culturally accepted and intrinsic to the identity and history of Botswana. Besides, at the time of the promulgation of Botswana's current constitution in 1966, the inclusion of social clauses that embodies collective welfare responsibility in national constitutions was rare (Jung et al. 2013).

4.1.2 Developmental Universalism: Aggressive Modernisation and the Rejection of Redistribution

While the burning questions at the time of independence centred on state-building and drought questions, the leaders of Botswana's government also articulated other vital questions. These questions centred on poverty and human capacity development.

On the verge of independence in 1965, Seretse Khama delivered a speech at Fordham University, New York. In this speech, Khama voiced the social questions and problems facing the new country. He outlined the extent and seriousness of poverty and inadequacy of human capacity in Botswana. He elucidated the importance of answering these questions to the cause of state-building. He elaborated thus,

'Even so, I believe that the problems that face us at independence are greater than have faced most other colonial territories at a similar stage; however successfully we may have utilized our national resources, we will fall short of what we require for an independent nation in many respects. For the sake of simplicity, it is possible to describe our problems as falling into three main categories. The first of these arises out of our geographical position: we are virtually surrounded by countries which have quite different policies from our own. The second, and probably most fundamental, is that Bechuanaland is one of the poorest countries in a relatively poor continent. Thirdly, arising out of the first two, we lack adequate numbers of educated Batswana to administer and develop our country' (Khama 1966, p. 19).

The drought conditions in Botswana abated in the early 1970s. Favourable rainfall and the boom in mineral exports accelerated economic growth in Botswana. The favourable conditions of the early 1970s allowed for an elaboration of the policy paradigms of the BDP against questions of poverty and human development in the broader context of the question of nation-building.

Seretse Khama recognised that the questions of poverty and human development in Botswana were questions that, if unanswered, would jeopardise the national aspirations of *Kagisano* (unity, peace, harmony, and a sense of community). He posited that *Kagisano* was about responsibility and reciprocity in all spheres of societal relations. As per the identified social problems of poverty and human development, Khama emphasised that the state's strategy would not entail redistributive policies and programs. He stated that,

‘emphasis on equality must not lead us into assuming that there is national crock of gold waiting to be divided up among allcomers-deserving and undeserving. No-one should think that the living standards of all the population can be raised by redistributing the assets of the few people who are relatively well-off, though such people must be prepared for sacrifices’ (Khama 1972; Minogue and Molloy 1974, pp. 166–167).

Khama and the BDP's strategy against these questions entailed the wholesale rejection of the ideas, policies and politics of redistribution- an unusual position in the context of post-independent sub-Saharan Africa (Maundeni 2003). Seretse Khama and the BDP rejected the redistributive ideas espoused by the Botswana People's Party (BPP)-the leading opposition party at the time of independence. Seretse Khama was antipathetic to redistributive politics and programs because he believed they were a bane on the public purse and a distraction from more pressing priorities like education and infrastructure (Hamer 2016, p. 4). Khama and the BDP attacked the redistribution orientation of the BPP on the grounds that the pursuit of redistributive programs was irresponsible, unrealistic and dangerous for the future of the Botswana (Maundeni 2003). The leaders of the BDP surrounded themselves with pragmatic bureaucrats and experts that favoured market-based ideas. Seekings (2016a) suggested that Khama's ideas are grounded in the realm of One Nation British conservatism. Khama's ideas on redistributive programs and politics contrasted with most post-independent African leaders,

who were mostly teachers and intellectuals with strong inclinations towards Fabian Socialism (Maipose 2009, p. 113).

Instead, Khama and the BDP held the view that concentrating on long-term, market-oriented policies that would enhance the collective welfare of the denizens of Botswana was the best route for answering the identified questions of poverty and human development (Seekings 2016a; Khama 1966). This strategy entailed the expansion of public education, healthcare, and infrastructure (Seekings 2016a, p. 8; Colclough and McCarthy 1985, pp. 224–225).

The discovery of diamonds in the late 1960s and the joint-venture agreement between the government of Botswana and De Beers Corporation altered the structure of Botswana's economy, setting it on a path of unprecedented economic growth (Hillbom and Bolt 2018, p. 95). Consequently, the government of Botswana established the Accelerated Rural Development Program (ARDP) in 1973 to build infrastructures that would enhance rural income, reduce the disparity between rural and urban centres, and improve access to social services. In addition, the National Policy on Income, Employment, Prices and Profit was adopted in 1972 to counter rural emigration, encourage job creation, and foster a business-friendly macroeconomic climate (Chinyoka 1979; Siphambe 2014, pp. 51–52).

The questions of poverty and human development were perceived and framed as integral parts of national questions of state-building. Hence, the overarching policy paradigm against these questions entailed the embrace of a developmental universalist stance, i.e., Khama and the BDP placed exceptional attention on programs and policies that aimed to generate long-term mass welfare enhancement through economic growth. Although, and as I show below, the exigencies of the drought that started in 1978 and the changing social structure of Botswana's population altered the approach of the BDP regarding social protection programs.

4.1.3 BDP's Welfare Paradigm and new Questions of Drought

Drought and drought relief became the defining questions for substantial parts of the 1980s decade. Due to its severity, the BDP adjudged that it needed to expand the human and financial resources of the state to tackle the exigencies of the drought. The BDP led government diverted funds meant for developmental projects into drought relief and, it increased the number of ministries dedicated to the tasks of mitigating the effects of the drought (BDP 1984, p. 1; Holm and Morgan 1985, p. 470).

In contrast to the drought relief programs of the 1960s, the government's favourable budgetary position allowed for the national ownership of the drought relief programs (Holm and Morgan 1985). More than the hitherto responses, the drought relief program of the 1980s allowed the state to reinforce its collective responsibility role. It also allowed the BDP to implement its welfare doctrine that places the state at the heart of welfare provisions when the private sphere failed (Selolwane 2012; Hamer 2016).

The nature of the state's role emphasised parsimony and paternalism regarding the benefit from drought relief programs (Seekings 2017a). The drought relief programs embraced the welfare doctrine of workfare for non-disabled adults and welfare for specially recognised groups. The approach was premised on the idea that people who can work should earn their relief by working, and people who are unable to work should be offered minimum subsistence. The welfare doctrine carried on by the BDP was of the notion that state responsibility for welfare should not translate to the comfort of the (able-bodied) beneficiaries (Seekings 2017a). These ideas meshed with the modern ideas of the leading political figures at the time of independence. It also gels with the traditional ideas of self-reliance and self-responsibility of the Tswana people.

Cash replaced food as payment for the employment scheme of the drought relief. The change in payment instrument stemmed from the idea that such cash would provide short-term supplementary income for benefiting individuals (Holm and Morgan 1985, p. 468; Hamer 2016, p. 6). Per the welfare doctrine of the BDP, food aid was directed to recognised social groups that were not able to cater for themselves. This group included children, tuberculosis patients, lactating women, persons registered as destitute, i.e., elderly without kin support (Holm and Morgan 1985; Seekings 2016a; Hamer 2016). The groupings of the drought relief were similar to the drought relief of the 1960s. This evinces an ideational consistency from the BDP.

In addition to the hierarchy of deservingness of public assistance, i.e., welfare for the deserving group, workfare for non-disabled persons, the core idea of BDP's welfare doctrine was rooted in BDP's perchance for rural life (Seekings 2017a, p. 13). Khama and the BDP had a distaste for urban life (Seekings 2016a, p. 14). Thus, the reverence of Tswana ideas such as Kagisano was grounded in Khama and the BDP's appreciation of rural life, and a broader strategy to cultivate an image of an ideal rural life without conceding powers to hereditary chiefs (Seekings 2017b, 5; Seekings 2016a, p. 13). The significant human and financial resources expended in the 1980s was not only about mitigating the exigencies of drought. The actions of the BDP was also premised on the idea of keeping together the structure of the rural population and discouraging rural emigration (Masire and Lewis 2007, p. 218). Seekings (2016a) suggested that political

calculations also underpinned the BDP's drought effort. He suggested that the BDP likely expended significant efforts to maintain its grip on the rural voting bloc.

The desire of the BDP to grapple with the changing structures of the spatial distribution of Botswana's population set it on an inexorable path that led to the establishment of Botswana's National Destitute Policy in 1980. The following section examines the development of the destitute policy.

4.1.4 The Development of Pro-Poor Policies

The exigencies of drought and the changing population structure of rural areas led to the enactment of what can be described as Botswana's first 'poor policy'. In 1980, the government of Botswana introduced the National Policy on Destitute Persons. The policy followed the prevailing (drought) paradigm by providing in-kind food basket rations worth 8.50 Pula a month²⁰ to beneficiaries and, it was means-tested. The government of Botswana judged that modernisation factors like urbanisation, migration and economic development were the root causes of the deprivation and deficiencies in rural areas of Botswana (Republic of Botswana 2002). It singled out old persons because they were perceived as one of the most vulnerable groups that suffered from the changing structures of rural centres in Botswana. The policy lamented that:

'Independence came with urbanisation, migration and rapid economic developments. These attracted the educated and the young people to the urban areas to seek employment, leaving the elderly alone in-rural areas. In some cases, this led to the gradual loss of support for the poorer members within the extended family system. As a result, the 1980 National Policy on Destitute Persons was formulated, for systematic tackling of poverty' (Republic of Botswana 2002, p. 2).

Changing population structure came in sync with the new ideation about the welfare of old persons in Botswana. Rural emigration shattered the previously reliable kin and family

²⁰ The value of the food ration was increased four times between 1980 and 1995. The increase was meant to keep the value of the assistance in tandem with inflation. But as reported by the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis, the despite the increases, the allowance had remain fairly constant. Good 1999, p. 193.

relationships, which, historically, had been responsible for the welfare of old persons, especially in non-drought years. This new ideation necessitated the incursion of the state into a welfare arena that had been previously solely occupied by private agents of welfare production. Notably, the institutionalisation of the destitute policy was the utmost evidence of the withering rural ideal espoused by the BDP. It pointed to the limits of kin and family relationships in augmenting welfare; it showed that the previous stance of aversion to social protection was no longer tenable and that the state must occupy a more prominent position in the matrix of welfare provisions in Botswana.

The challenges to the BDP's rural ideal did not entirely alter its welfare doctrine. The 1980s marked the beginning of more significant state's intervention in the welfare areas previously occupied by kin and family relations (Seekings 2017a). However, the destitute policy largely illuminated the reticence of the BDP towards social protection programs.

The simplicity and vagueness of the program's document gave the impression that it was not a priority to the BDP (Bar-On 1999). The program document was not of a legislative character. Instead, it took the form of an administrative document. The destitute program showed that while the state accepted its welfare responsibility, it endeavoured to keep its intervention at a minimum and maintain the position that the private sphere had the ultimate responsibility for taking care of its members. Furthermore, it showed that paternalism and parsimony characterised the welfare responsibility of the state.

As mentioned earlier, the destitute policy's primary transfer instrument was food, which was provided at 1,750 calories per adult. It should be noted that the caloric benefit of the destitute program was 30% less than the 2,300 average caloric intake requirement per adult in Botswana at the time (Bar-On 1999). Similarly, cash was included as part of the benefit after a reform in 1982 (Selolwane 2012, p. 124). However, the cash component was also subjected to the paternalism and parsimony of BDP's welfare doctrine. While it framed cash as a medium that ensures the recipient's dignity and pride, the cash component of the program did not grant autonomy to the beneficiaries in respect to what could be purchased with the cash. Instead, the program prescribed a list of items that beneficiaries can purchase (Republic of Botswana 2002).

4.1.5 Summary: -The Onion Model and the History of welfare ideas in Botswana

At the outset of this section, I specified that the Onion Skin Model would serve as the analytical framework for understanding the ideational undercurrent of welfare issues surrounding old persons in Botswana. Table 5 summarises the Onion Skin Model layers as per the answers to the questions of collective welfare responsibility, the questions that preoccupied the elites and citizens of Botswana, the paradigm employed against the questions and the welfare institutions that emanated.

Table 5: Onion Skin Model (1966-1989)

Theoretical concepts	
Frame	Self-reliance, Personal and Communal responsibility.
Social responsibility	Culturally accepted collective welfare responsibility embedded in Tswana idea of Kagisano.
Social/National question	State-building and the establishment of welfare doctrine. Drought questions, rural questions relating to how to keep the rural ideal espoused by the BDP.
Policy paradigm	Welfare for deserving groups (including old persons); workfare for able-bodied citizens.
Welfare institutions	National Policy Destitute program, Drought relief programs and public works programs.

One of the most important conclusions that can be drawn from tracing the ideas about social welfare in Botswana is that old persons occupy a privileged status regarding the pecking order of deservingness of social protection programs. I showed here that the deservingness did not only stem from the fact that old persons cannot by themselves enhance their welfare. I showed that changing ideation about the welfare of old persons brought about by rural emigration and changing population structures of Botswana altered the welfare matrix in a way that inserted the state in welfare arenas that had been previously solely occupied by kin and family relationship.

Botswana's policy responses between 1966 and 1989 emanated from the social questions and problems of the time. Intrinsicly, the shape and approach adopted in all stages of the development and implementation of the responses to the identified questions and problems were underpinned by fundamental ideas that the responsibility for welfare lies with the state and the

individual. Accordingly, the state accepts its role in the provision of welfare for social groups that are incapable of personal welfare enhancement due to age and/or social characteristics. The BDP laid down a doctrine in which state's effort regarding welfare enhancement must be complemented by the gumption of non-disabled individuals.

The tracing of ideas conducted here found that the ideas of paternalism and parsimony informed the nature of the state's responsibility in that the distinct character of social protection programs after independence in Botswana took the understanding that welfare provisions to beneficiaries must not equal to comfortability or welfare rights.

All in all, social protection programs in Botswana in the timespan analysed above were not just responses to structural conditions and natural occurrences; they were also influenced by subterranean ideas that pertain to questions of collective welfare responsibility, recognised social questions and problems and the favoured paradigm of the elites in Botswana. As I show in Part B, these ideas provided the blueprint for welfare expansion in the 1990s, as the focus of the elites in Botswana moved towards the diversification of the economy, managing HIV/AIDS and rural migration.

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Botswana (1966-1999)

PART B: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Botswana (1990-1999)

4.1.6 Introduction: Ideational stability of the BDP in a changing World

The idea of developmental universalism i.e., the primacy of the markets and a long-term approach to poverty reduction through economic growth continued to dominate Botswana's economic and social policy paradigm in the 1990s. The idea of developmental universalism underpinned the defining economic goal in the 1990s. For one, emphasis on streamlining the state and eschewing redistributive policies dominated envisaged policy programs found in BDP's 1989 election manifesto and the budget speeches by various finance ministers of the 1990s (BDP 1989; Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994). The BDP adjudged that redistributive programs and high social spending contravened the idea of developmental universalism, and they competed against the societal goal of economic diversification. The party denounced the advocates of welfare expansion as irresponsible and wasteful, and that redistributive programs were fiscally unsustainable and detrimental to the country's long-term economic health (BDP 1989). The negative frame of irresponsibility attached to the ideas and programs that pertain to redistribution and welfare expansion is reminiscent of similar frames employed by the BDP and Seretse Khama in the immediate years of independence. Recalling from the early analysis in this section, I showed that Seretse Khama and the BDP attacked the BPP's advocacy for redistribution and welfare expansion because they perceived such pursuit as irresponsible and detrimental to the future of Botswana.

While the leading political party and political figures in Botswana stuck to the long-term approach to adverse welfare questions concerning social welfare programs, immense changes were sweeping through how global-level organisations and other countries in the global South approached adverse welfare questions, in particular poverty questions.

On a global level, the 1990s brought significant changes in the dominant discourses and paradigms directed towards anti-poverty policies (von Gliszczynski and Leisering 2016). The misgivings of international organisations about instruments such as cash transfers were withering, and by the end of the 1990s, cash transfers attained legitimacy as viable instruments against vulnerability and widespread poverty in the global South (Hanlon et al. 2010, p. 27). From the 2000s, social cash transfers became a new social protection model in global social policy (Leisering 2019, p. 130).

In Botswana, the idea of using cash as a viable instrument against adverse welfare questions had a foothold before its popularity on a global level. The long-standing preference for in-kind benefit

was slightly altered when a cash component was introduced as part of the Destitute Policy in 1982 (Seekings 2017a, p. 3; Selolwane 2012, p. 124). In addition, policy entrepreneurs from the leading party²¹ advocated for social cash transfers as early as 1988 (Ulriksen 2010, p. 141). Opposition parties like the BNF made cash transfers (for old persons) one of its social protection promises in the 1994 elections²² (BNF 1994). The BDP reluctantly included a promise to conduct a feasibility study of cash transfers for old persons in its 1994 campaign (Ulriksen 2010, p. 141; BDP 1999). In short, before social cash transfers emerged in the global South and on the global level as legitimate and desirable instruments for development policy in the 1990s and 2000s, it had achieved a legitimate status as viable instruments against adverse welfare questions in Botswana.

Changes in global level ideas about welfare and welfare instruments were equally observable in the changing roles of international organisations in the global South. From the 1990s, international organisations veered off their traditional roles of lending technical assistance and advising on best standard operating procedures. Instead, they took on the goal of seeking to influence domestic policies, especially in social policy areas, through ideas and policy advice (von Gliszczynski and Leisering 2016, p. 326).

In Botswana, the influences of international organisations have always been tepid and restricted to responses to drought (Holm and Morgan 1985; Beaulier 2003). The exigencies of the 1990s HIV/AIDS pandemic in Botswana necessitated Botswana's collaboration with international organisations (Chinyoka and Ulriksen 2020, p. 247). Outside knowledge actors do seek to influence domestic policymaking, especially regarding the welfare of specific social groups. One that comes to mind in the 1990s was the 1993 International Workshop on the Situation of the Elderly in Botswana. The workshop highlighted the plight of old persons in Botswana and advised the government to institute social cash transfers for old persons in Botswana (Bruun et al. 1994). However, there is no evidence that the advice was influential in the subsequent introduction of cash transfers for old persons in Botswana. All in all, the influences of international actors in domestic policymaking in Botswana is limited (Whitfield and Fraser 2010).

²¹ There is a need for a qualification of this statement. BDP backbencher Clara Olsen led the argument for the introduction of cash for old persons in Botswana. There was a cross-party consensus as regards the appropriateness of the idea of social cash transfers for old persons. Nonetheless, the upper echelon of the BDP was reluctant as regards the institutionalisation of social cash transfers for old persons.

²² Personal communications with experts on social welfare development in Botswana posited that BNF advocated for cash transfers for old persons in its 1989 election manifesto. The unavailability of the manifesto document precludes the confirmation of this position.

The 1990s were a period of welfare program expansion in Botswana. It introduced the universal old age pension in 1996; the War Veteran cash transfer was introduced in 1998; National Orphan Care Programme was introduced in 1999. It is unlikely that the changes in global level ideation about welfare issues affected the welfare expansion in Botswana in the 1990s. Discourses and themes from the manifesto and the budget speeches of the BDP indicate that its long-term ideation of parsimony, paternalism, insistence on self-help and balance between the private and public in welfare production remained consistent in the 1990s.

4.1.7 Evolving Societal Questions and the embrace of Welfare Individualisation

The diamond industry, which had propelled Botswana's economy in hitherto years witnessed a slowdown, and the incidence of people living below the national poverty line of 100 Pula was about 38%% of the population, and the national GINI coefficient stood at 0.56 at the start of the decade (BIDPA 1997; Siphambe 2014). Like the societal goal of the preceding decades, the overarching societal goal of the BDP was economic growth. However, the recognition that Botswana's dependence on diamond export as the primary source of income of the government was unsustainable in the long-term prompted a slight revision of the societal goal of the BDP. The new goal was economic growth marshalled through the diversification of Botswana's economy. In addition, poverty and unemployment were social problems that the BDP identified as significant in the first five years of the 1990s decade. It described these recognised problems as multidimensional problems. The BDP adjudged that tackling these problems was crucial to the broader goal of economic growth (BDP 1989, 1999).

The BDP largely followed the blueprint of the preceding decades. The 1989 manifesto emphasised the long-standing position of the BDP that public action against poverty should focus on collective measures like economic growth and that market-mediated growth was the best way to reduce poverty (BDP 1989). In the 1994 and 1999 elections, a tepid shift towards an individualised approach to welfare enhancement was noticeable from the BDP's election manifestoes. For instance, in the 1994 elections, the BDP stated that it would examine the possibility of introducing an old age pension program (BDP 1999). In addition, the 1999 election manifesto posited that the nature of vulnerability was not uniform across vulnerable groups in Botswana. Consequently, it stated that the BDP would investigate the causes of the vulnerability that affect different social groups in Botswana (BDP 1999, p. 13).

Consistently, the main opposition party for the 1994 and 1999 elections- the Botswana National Front (BNF)- judged that poverty was one of the leading social questions of the time. As such, it wholly embraced individual entitlements for social groups as a legitimate approach against poverty. It promised to institute cash transfers for old persons through legislation and adopt a need-based approach to social protection programs in Botswana (BNF 1994, 1999). Other opposition parties like the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) also noted that poverty, income inequality and unemployment were urgent problems that required the attention of the state. Therefore, the BCP embraced a rights-based approach to the creation of a comprehensive social security framework in Botswana (BCP 1999).

In articulating its emphasise on why poverty was the dominant social question, the BNF, in its 1994 electoral manifesto, employed quantitative evidence of increasing household poverty from the government-led household survey to illustrate the unsuitability of the approach to poverty reduction by the BDP (BNF 1994, 1999). The BCP used similar statistics with similar objectives as the BNF. The BCP was critical of the view BDP's view that the state should take a relegated stance (in relation to other spheres of welfare production) regarding welfare responsibility. It rejected the BDP's naturalisation of poverty and inequality and noted that poverty in Botswana had more to do with the inequitable distribution of productive assets (BCP 1999).

Two conclusions jump out of the position of the political parties. First, all the political parties agreed that collective welfare responsibility questions are in the state's purview; that the state is responsible for the welfare enhancement of *all persons* in Botswana. This is what I referred to as universalism on a cultural level. In this form of universalism, there is an understanding in that state responsibility is to all persons, and it forms the basis of public action in Botswana. Recalling from the early analysis carried out in this section, I showed that this understanding of welfare responsibility is of a cultural character grounded in Tswana inspired ideas. What the parties disagree on is the extent of this responsibility. The BDP favoured a subdued responsibility, while the BNF and the BCP favoured a robust state responsibility regarding social welfare issues in Botswana.

Interestingly, the BDP employed macroeconomic indicators like GDP growth to buttress its approach to economic and social policies in Botswana. In a way, the parties' focus on different macroeconomic indicators can be said to reflect the societal questions that the parties deem as more important. It equally shows the parties' varying emphasis on individual entitlement programs as legitimate instruments in the quest for poverty alleviation and economic growth.

Other social questions were also pertinent in the 1990s decade. For instance, in the budget speeches from Botswana's government, the economic and social consequences of HIV/ AIDS were widely discussed. In addition, it featured heavily in the manifestos of major political parties in the 1990s. Likewise, the question of social-economic inequality was germane in Botswana in the discourse and rhetoric of the leaders of the BDP and BNF (Seekings 2016a). Although in practice, efforts by the BDP led government mostly centred on issues of economic growth, economic diversification, countering the HIV/AIDS problem and poverty alleviation. In contrast, the issues of inequality did not rank high on the priority of successive BDP led governments in the 1990s. Some observers have argued that the neglect of socio-economic inequality as a defining social question in Botswana's political economy was deliberate and

tolerated because inequality in income, wealth and productive assets had attained a level of cultural legitimacy in Botswana (Good 1999).

4.1.8 Renegotiation of the Question of Welfare Responsibility

As indicated previously, the supreme societal goal championed by the BDP was economic growth through economic diversification. Per the BDP, the strategy towards the goal of diversification was to be manifested in the reduced role of the state and the enhancement of the activities of the private sector in all spheres of the economy, including the question of who is responsible for the provision of welfare (Siphambe 2014).

The idea of reducing the state's role is succinctly encapsulated in the discourse of '*mutual social responsibility*' debuted by Festus Mogae, the Finance Minister, from 1989 to 1998. The discourse reinforced the notion that the state still accepted its collective responsibility of providing welfare to the very poor (the BDP emphasised attention to the disabled and the 'genuinely destitute'). However, the role of the state in economic and social policy must be reduced to a facilitator role to enable the emergence of the private sector and unleash latent private forces that would spur economic growth. The idea of reducing the role of the state according to the discourse of mutual responsibility entailed cost-cutting, efficiency in public finance and deregulation.

In programmatic terms, mutual social responsibility entailed a reassignment of welfare responsibilities previously in the purview of the state. In no other example of the retreat of the state more manifested than in the privatisation of public pensions in 1987. The social construction of the need to reform public pensions underpinned the issue of privatisation. It formed a vital part of the drive towards reducing the state's role and diversifying the economy by encouraging the development of the private sector. The BDP led government consistently employed a frame that painted the state as becoming too big such that it was having an overcrowding effect on the economic growth and stifling the growth of the private sector (Selolwane 2012, p. 112). This frame was used to justify and legitimise the privatisation of the pension system in Botswana (Selolwane 2012). Consequently, the BDP led government created the Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund in 1987 -a private entity saddled with the responsibility of catering for public sector workers' pension. In sum, the privatisation of public pensions in Botswana was the epitome of the evolving notion of collective responsibility for social issues in the 1990s.

The shift in responsibility away from the state had repercussions in the review of the social pensions program in 2007. As I show in Section 3 of the chapter on Botswana, the distribution of welfare responsibility away from the state became one of the powerful weapons used by actors who wanted to jettison the ‘universal’ character of the social pensions in Botswana. These actors suggested that since some sections of the social group defined as old persons benefit from private pensions arrangements, the responsibility for enhancing the welfare of members that belong to this special group should not be shouldered by the state (Seleka et al. 2007, p. 16)

4.1.9 Universalism: New Vision of Compassion and Care

In the analysis of ideas about social welfare from 1966-1989, I showed that the acceptance of welfare responsibility by the state was premised on ideas that had roots in Tswana cultural understanding that authorities had a responsibility for looking after the welfare of the tribe. The new political elites adopted this idea in post-independent Botswana. As such, the idea of welfare responsibility took a national character, and the state assumed the welfare responsibility for all persons. Seretse Khama succinctly encapsulated the idea of universalistic responsibility in the Tswana concept of *Kagisano*.

The idea that the state has the responsibility for the welfare of all persons in Botswana is what I referred to as a cultural form of universalism. The universalism embodied in Tswana ideas of *Kagisano* is reminiscent of world cultural universalism found in global level documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and most recently, global calls for ‘Social Security for All’. Similar to *Kagisano*, universalism in these documents entailed an abstraction that refers to all persons. The cultural form of universalism embodied in the global level documents has been touted as a reflection of world cultural ideas and a guiding principle of modernity (Leisering 2020b, 2019).

The BDP responded to the national questions and social questions between 1966 and 1999 by enacting a universalistic welfare doctrine. The BDP’s interpretation of the state’s universalistic responsibility placed considerable emphasis on economic growth rather than programs that can be described as individual entitlement programs. By the middle of the 1990s, a new conception of cultural universalism called *Botho* was layered on *Kagisano*.

Botho

Like many countries in different epochs of their histories, Botswana in 1997 promulgated a national vision that would anchor and guide government policies till 2016. It developed what can be regarded as a national manifesto. The document named *Vision 2016* was an existential document to determine the long-term policy framework and society that political elites in Botswana intend to construct (Presidential Task Group 1997). The vision document admits that ideas and discourses regarding economic and social policies were changing at a rapid pace on the global level. It enjoined the denizens of Botswana to be flexible enough to adopt these ideas without jeopardising traditional Tswana ideas.

One of the national vision's distinct innovations was the addition of a Tswana inspired principle to the existing national principles of Botswana. Since independence, government policies have been rooted in *Kagisano*-the idea that placed the responsibility of community progress on the state and citizens. The new vision added the *Botho* principles-which denote the conception of universal social justice and service. In one way, *Botho* was used to conceptualise the idea of the oneness of Botswana's citizens. The idea of Botho was used in the vision document to recognise the idea of progress and the universality of the citizens of Botswana in a way that is evocative of the broader cultural conception of universalism that I explained at the beginning of this chapter.

Since Seretse Khama and Festus Mogae declared that the principles of *Kagisano* and *Botho*-both representing an embodiment of universalism -would underpin and guide public policy in Botswana, it is then logical to suggest that subsequent public programs, including programs directed to questions of economic growth, drought and other recognised social problems are not only reflective of both ideas and principles, but they are also a product of these universalistic thoughts.

4.1.10 Summary

At the outset of this section, I stated that the research questions centred on investigating ideas about social welfare and how they evolved. I stated that I intended to investigate other questions alongside social questions raised in Botswana in the timespan analysed. In the analysis conducted here, I asked which social groups were accorded recognition and the position of old persons in these recognitions. I equally set out to explicate and examine the frames accorded to social protection programs in Botswana. I summarise the findings in the Table 6 and paragraphs below.

Table 6: Onion Skin Model for Botswana 1966-1999

	Frames	Collective Welfare Responsibility	Social/National Question	Policy Paradigm	Welfare Institutions
1966-1989	Self-Reliance	Kagisano	State-building, Drought, Rural, Poverty, Human Development questions. Economic Growth	Developmental Universalism. Welfare for deserving groups (including old persons); workfare for able-bodied citizens.	National Policy Destitute program, Drought relief programs and public works programs.
1990-1999	Self-Reliance, Mutual social Responsibility	Kagisano, Botho	Economic Growth, Economic Diversification, HIV/AIDS, Poverty questions,	Developmental Universalism. Welfare for deserving groups (including old persons); workfare for able-bodied citizens.	Universal Old Age Pensions, Veterans Cash Transfer, Orphan Care Program

On Collective Responsibility: The tracing of ideas conducted in this section indicates that collective responsibility that formed the basis of public action in Botswana after independence was sourced and inspired by indigenous ideas. The political leaders of post-independent Botswana aimed to create a modern state with guiding principles sourced from ideas that Botswana's denizens were familiar with. Consequently, Kagisano (and later Botho)-both

connoting universalism for all persons in Botswana- were made the guiding principles of public policy in Botswana. The appeal to Tswana ideas was based on the notion that ideas encoded in various ‘-ism’ were foreign and unfamiliar to the people of Botswana.

On Social Questions: The overarching question that Botswana’s political leaders sought to answer at the time of independence was the question of state-building. The leaders led by Seretse Khama aimed to create a rule-based, legal-rational democratic political order. These objectives entailed the subordination of the traditional rulers and the establishment of legitimacy. In consonance, drought was an important question that the political leaders in Botswana grappled with at independence, and through significant periods analysed here. The question of drought was perceived and framed as important constituent of the quest for state-building in Botswana.

The shift from a cattle-based economy to a diamond export-based economy prompted more questions for the BDP. Rural emigration and drought revealed the limitation of the rural ideal favoured by the BDP. The BDP responded to changing structures of the rural population by instituting social protection programs geared towards arresting rural emigration and the exigences that emanated from it. The institutionalisation of the National Policy on Destitute evinces this notion.

On Social Groups: The Botswana state’s collective welfare responsibility meant that its strategy for welfare enhancement was premised on looking after the welfare of all persons in Botswana. The preferred strategy of the BDP was one that I described as Developmental Universalism. It preferred a long-term strategy for welfare enhancement through the markets; although, the questions of drought and changing social structure necessitated the introduction of social protection programs. The BDP based the programs that it introduced on paternalistic and parsimonious ideas. By the welfare doctrine of the BDP, old persons alongside children, disabled persons, and pregnant women were adjudged to be deserving of welfare programs. Conversely, non-disabled persons were expected to work in exchange for social sustenance.

On Frames: Frames used by the political elites in Botswana link narrower social welfare areas to broader discourses. As I showed here, the questions of drought, poverty, and human development in the immediate years of independence were not discussed narrowly. The political elites in Botswana framed the intended responses to the recognised questions in broader questions such as state-building questions. In the 1990s, the questions of welfare responsibility were framed in broader areas of economic growth and economic diversification. Similarly, the welfare doctrine of the BDP was connected to broader ideas that transcended social programs.

For instance, self-help discourses on social protection were linked to Tswana ideas of self-reliance, so was the grouping of welfare deservingness in Botswana.

Chapter 4: Botswana

Section 2: The Description of Universal Social Pension Institutionalisation in Botswana

4.2.1 Coverage of Universal Social Pension: A Universal Program with Hidden Exclusions

One of the most significant development in social protection in Botswana in the 1990s was the introduction of the universal social pension program called Old Age Pension in 1996. This section examines the characteristics of the program by investigating vital dimensions such as coverage, administration and funding, the legal and political base of the program, and the benefit standards and level of the program. The enumeration carried out in this section serves as a prelude to the mid-range explanation for the introduction of the universal social pension program in Section 3.

Discourses from the BDP's manifesto in the 1994 elections and budget speeches in the first half of the 1990s indicated that the party was not inclined to expend the fiscal resources of the state on social protection programs. It repeatedly indicated that the BDP led government was committed to reducing the size of the state through austerity and cost-cutting (Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995). As stated in Section 1, policy entrepreneurs within the BDP had suggested that the state should introduce a separate social protection program for old persons. However, the upper echelon of the BDP dissented because they felt that the state was not financially healthy to introduce such a program (Ulriksen 2010, p. 141).

Therefore, it was a surprise when the universal social pension program was introduced in 1996. More so, the choice of bestowing benefits to all old persons in Botswana irrespective of income levels was unusual, given that the BDP consistently preached fiscal austerity throughout the early 1990s. Equally pertinent is the qualifying age of the social pension program. The program adopted 65+ years as the qualifying criteria for the program. However, the retirement age out of the labour market is 60 (BPOP 2020). The discrepancy in the program's qualifying age was evident from the start of the program. In the parliamentary discussion that heralded the program, opposition parties argued that the discrepancy was unfair against individuals that exited the labour market at 60 but are not eligible for the program (Ulriksen 2010, p. 142). The BDP's choice of 65 instead of 60 appears to be consistent with the parsimonious character of its welfare doctrine.

While it is reasonable to adjudge that the discrepancy between the mandatory retirement age from the labour market (60) and the age requirement of the Old Age Pension program (65+) represents a classic case of within-category exclusion, it must be noted that the qualifying age of 65+ is ubiquitous in social pension programs in the global North and the global South. Of the 112 countries with national or regionally instituted social pensions, about 40% of these countries

use 65+ as the qualifying age²³. In Southern Africa, Botswana qualifying age is uncommon. It has the second-highest legal coverage age behind the 70+ years qualifying age employed in Lesotho and the Zanzibar region of Tanzania. (See Table 7)

Table 7 Social Pension qualifying age in the SADC²⁴ region

Country	Year of Introduction	Qualifying Age
Angola	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Botswana	1996	65
Comoros	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Democratic Republic of Congo	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Eswatini	2005	60
Lesotho	2004	70
Madagascar	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Malawi	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Mauritius	1950	60
Mozambique	1992	60
Namibia	1949 for whites, 1992 Universal	60
Seychelles	1979	63
Tanzania	2016 (Regional)	70
Zambia	2007 (Regional)	60
Zimbabwe	No Social Pension	Not Applicable

Source: Pension Watch (2018)

Regarding the effective coverage of the Old Age Pension program in Botswana, the exclusion and inclusion errors are minimal. The database operated by HelpAge International called Pension Watch Database adjudged that exclusion errors are minimal because the program covers 93% of the designated individuals²⁵.

While these coverage figures suggest that the universal social pension program commands extensive coverage, the hidden within-category exclusion of the program confirms the apprehensions of the opposition parties (BCF, in particular) in Botswana that the program is not comprehensive enough since it leaves out a large number of persons that are deemed too old for the labour market (BCP 1999, 2004). Furthermore, analysis conducted by HelpAge International suggests that if the compulsory labour market retirement age of 60 was employed

²³ HelpAge Pension Watch Database - <http://www.helpage.org/silo/files/social-pension-database-1-march-2018.xlsx>

²⁴ SADC: Southern African Development Community

²⁵ <http://www.pension-watch.net/country-fact-file/botswana/>

as the age of requirement for the social pension program, program's effective coverage rate drops to 65% of the targeted category (Pension Watch 2018).

In addition, supplementary conditions associated with the Old Age Pension in Botswana can result in the hidden exclusion of old people in Botswana:

- 1 The possession of a national identity card (called Omang) is a requirement. The national identity card must be renewed every three months to prove that the beneficiary is alive.
- 2 The beneficiary must be a citizen of Botswana. Regulations regarding citizenship do not specify the qualifying number of years for a non-citizen to benefit, but citizenship can be acquired in Botswana if an individual has resided in Botswana for ten years. In short, individuals that are 65+ and unable to prove their citizenship will be excluded under this condition.
- 3 An individual serving a prison sentence cannot benefit from the program while incarcerated.

The within-category exclusions and the supplementary requirements of the universal social pension in Botswana buttress the contestation of this dissertation in Chapter 3; it is necessary to understand how domestic actors define old persons before portraying programs like universal social pensions as the variant of social pensions that guarantees coverage of old persons. Further, the discrepancy of the definition of who benefits and who does not give credence to one of the fundamental arguments of this dissertation that an actor-centred approach to the analysis of social protection would likely yield a richer picture of the characteristics of programs.

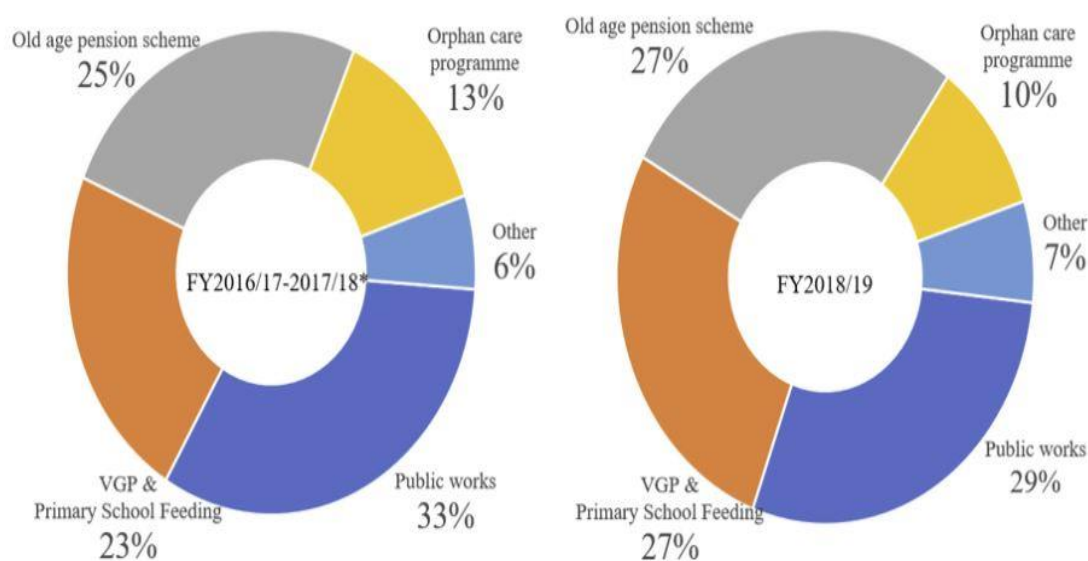
4.2.2 Administration and Funding

The institutionalisation of the universal social pension in Botswana can be considered strong given that the program is locally administered and domestically funded. The program is administered in a decentralised manner by the administrations in the districts of Botswana, but they must file reports to the central Ministry of Local Government. For the funding dimension of institutionalisation, the government of Botswana shoulders the responsibility of financing all the social assistance programs, including the universal social pension program (Seekings 2017a).

Historically, sales of natural minerals play an essential role in the structure of the government's revenue. While taxation is not insignificant, its role is smaller than the former (Ulriksen 2013). While the (mineral) extractive industry is significant, non-mineral tax revenue has recently played a significant role in Botswana's revenue structure. From 2008 to 2015, non-mineral tax revenue made up about 56% of government's revenue (IMF 2017), and in 2019 the government of Botswana reported that the share of non-mineral tax revenue in Botswana rose to 57% (Republic of Botswana 2019).

Due to the paucity of data, a time series tracing of the importance of old age pension in Botswana's budget is impossible. However, in 2018, UNICEF released a report on the budget composition of social programs in Botswana. The report showed that the Old Age Pension accounted for about 25% of the total budget spending on social programs from 2016-2018. Figure 6 provides more details regarding budget allocations to social protection programs in Botswana from 2016 to 2018.

Figure 6: Composition of Social Welfare Spending²⁶



Source: UNICEF (2018, p. 8)

4.2.3 Legal Base

In Botswana, there is a longstanding tendency for non-legalisation of social protection programs. The section that traced the ideas about social welfare in Botswana, i.e., Section 1, showed that the first National Policy on Destitute in 1980 was introduced via an administrative document rather than a legislative instrument. The non-legislative character of the program indicates that the executive branch in Botswana has discretion over changes in the policy. The same applies to the universal social pension program introduced in 1996. The introduction of the program was not via a legislative instrument. Instead, the 1996 budget speech-which can be regarded as an administrative document of the executive branch-introduced the program, and till date, the universal social pension program in Botswana is not supported by any legislative document.

The non-legalisation of social protection programs in Botswana contrasts its Southern African neighbours. South Africa and Namibia have justiciable or aspirational social clauses in their respective constitutions, Botswana does not have either of the two social clauses in its

²⁶ Figures show average figures extracted from actual expenditure from the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Budgets

constitution. A reasonable argument for why this is the case may be that Botswana has had a stable constitution since 1966, and the difficulty associated with changing constitutional clauses may have proscribed the inclusion of similar social rights in Botswana's constitution. Besides, the constitutions of South Africa and Namibia are newer, and belong to a generation of constitutions with the proclivity for constitutionalised social rights. Seekings (2017a) speculated that the non-legalisation of social welfare programs in Botswana reflects the lukewarm approach that the BDP has towards social welfare and the desire of the party to discourage the view that social welfare is an entitlement in Botswana. It is equally reasonable to suggest that since the collective welfare responsibility of the state is grounded in socially embedded cultural ideas, there is no need for further legalisation because the responsibility of the state to old persons is culturally accepted and understood.

4.2.4 Political Base

Irrespective of the non-legalisation of the social pension program, its popularity with the BDP and other political parties in Botswana suggests that the program is atemporal. Since the program's inception, discourses surrounding the program have revolved around augmenting the program's benefits. The BDP touts the program (without mentioning the within-category exclusion character of the program) as evidence that it takes the issue of social protection seriously (BDP 1999, 2009, 2014). Opposition parties use the program's benefits and within-category exclusion as evidence that the BDP takes a lackadaisical perspective on social protection issues in Botswana (BCP 1999, 2004; BCP and BAM 2009; BDP 1999, 2009, 2014; BNF 1994, 1999; BNF et al. 2004; BNF 2009; UDC 2014).

The program is entrenched in Botswana politics and social life to the extent that the prospect of changing an aspect of the program is deeply unpopular. An archetypical case of the program's entrenchment can be observed when the universal social pension was reviewed in 2007. BIDPA²⁷ argued that categoriality should be jettisoned for a protection-categoriality or, in simple terms, the program should employ means-testing to screen out affluent old persons. This suggestion was unpopular with the beneficiaries. The suggestion was rejected because a targeting mechanism

²⁷ BIDPA- Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis. BIDPA is non-governmental research organization that with analysing public policies of Botswana's government.

would exclude some old persons and embellish the deservingness tenets of the program. The Review stated that,

‘Views regarding the eligibility criteria for the OAP scheme were varied. The majority of government officials, including those who are directly implementing the scheme, recommended that this programme should be means tested. One fundamental reason justifying means testing was that those elderly benefitting from alternative pension schemes (for example, retired civil servants) or those with adequate means to sustain themselves should not be eligible for additional pension under the OAP. Means testing would also ensure that the money saved from those who are taken out of the scheme is used to increase the cash benefit to the remaining beneficiaries, since some needy pensioners contribute to children or grandchildren’s education and welfare through OAP benefits. Those in favour of the current status, where means testing is not conducted, argued that since government decided that the purpose of this scheme is to reward the elderly for (or appreciate) their contribution in society, it would be unjustified to then disqualify some of them from receiving the OAP benefits. Pensioners interviewed in a focus group discussion were adamant that this ‘gift’, as they call it, should not be taken away from anybody despite their socio-economic status’ (Seleka et al. 2007, p. 16).

In response to the suggestions by BIDPA, the BDP accepted the recommendations for other social protection programs except for the universal social pension program. In response, the sitting Finance minister, Honourable Baledzi Gaolathe, in the 2007 budget speech reiterated the government’s commitment to the ‘universal’ character of the program. He stated that,

‘The ultimate goal is that all citizens will share in the fruits of our economic growth. To this end, Government provides a number of social safety nets, which include the destitutes’ allowance, the orphan care programme, and the old age pension scheme. A review of social safety nets was completed last year and all the recommendations of the Review were accepted, save for the introduction of a means test for the Old Age Pension Scheme’ (Gaolathe 2007, p. 6).

The above statements indicate that while modifications of the program’s structure and conditions were popular with bureaucrats, it was unpopular with the politicians and the beneficiaries. These quotes also hint at the ideational construction of the social pension program by various actors in Botswana. The bureaucrats perceived the program as a matter of need and

financial resources of the state. In compassion, the beneficiaries perceived as ‘gift’ for their contribution to the country.

The BDP and opposition parties in Botswana viewed the social pension program in terms of the recognition of the contributions of old persons to national development. The ideational construction of the program by the political parties credence to the ‘collective utility’ arguments advanced by Kaufmann (2012). The ‘collective utility’ argument posits that to lend legitimacy to social protection programs, political actors construct the use of a program in broader terms that transcend the immediate use of such program, i.e., political actors construct the individual utility of a program in terms of the collective utility of such program. For the case of the universal social pension program in Botswana, the political parties did not only view the program in terms of the material augmentation (individual utility) it provides for old persons in Botswana, but the political actors also framed the program in terms of border issues surrounding national development (collective utility). When viewed from this lens, it is then understandable why a universal character was chosen instead of means-testing because it is harder to make a case that a section of old persons contributed to national development and other sections have not. It is then reasonable to suggest that the program's universal character is partly due to the ideational construction of its collective and individual utilities.

A political explanation for the rejection of the technocratic suggestion of BIDPA also relates to the program’s popularity and the voting constituency that benefit from the program. As Mokomane (2000), Seabo and Isbell (2018), and Bothomilwe (2011) showed, old persons in Botswana represent a critical voting bloc for the BDP and are more likely to vote in elections more than other age groups. This suggests that the vested interests of old persons and the fact that old persons in Botswana constitute an essential voting constituency for the BDP may have prevented an assault on the status-quo of the ‘universal’ character of the social pension program. The BDP likely avoided the proposed change because of the desire to maintain the support of a critical voting bloc and not to be perceived as the party that took away the ‘gift’. In other words, while the BDP continue to claim credit for introducing the universal social pension program, it actively sought to avoid the chance of assaulting the status-quo.

All in all, given the popularity of the program politically, it is improbable that the universal social pension program is temporal. Besides, there is a trend of longstanding social protection programs in Botswana. The School Feeding Program, the Public Works Program and the universal social pension have been in operation for more than 20 years, surviving political changes and economic downturns.

4.2.5 What are the Benefits, and how adequate are the Benefits of the Universal Social Pension Program?

The advent and subsequent ubiquity of social cash transfers in the global South have been accompanied by the questions raised in this section: If cash transfers represent a revolution in how poverty is tackled, to what extent can the benefits help improve the living conditions of beneficiaries? In short, this observation wants to understand the programs' generosity, and how adequate are they, viz-a-viz, the reality of living in a country.

This question is especially apt for the universal social pension program in Botswana not only because old persons (alongside children) are more likely to be poorer than other groups in Botswana (The World Bank 2015, p. 72). Moreover, programs with universalistic labels and characteristics are esteemed in the social policy literature as ideal-types programs that can improve the social-economic outcomes of beneficiaries (Kidd 2009, 2015b; Cruz-Martinez 2016; Sánchez Ancochea and Franzoni Martínez 2013).

How can the adequacy and standard of the benefits of the universal social pension in Botswana be measured? This dissertation follows the prescription by Leisering (2019) in this regard. In his book on the global rise of social cash transfers, he proposed two indicators that can help evaluate the benefit standard and adequacy of a social cash transfer program. He suggested that gauging the level of benefits (defined as what the beneficiaries get) and standard of benefits (defined as a socially defined comparative standard of reference) can provide a clearer picture of the social, political, and economic quality of a social welfare program.

4.2.6 Level of Benefit and Benefits Standard of Universal Social Pension in Botswana

Upon introducing the universal social pension program, the government of Botswana's bestowed 100 Pula on the beneficiaries in 1996 (Mogae 1996, p. 8). Over the career of the program, moderate increases have been accorded to the program beneficiaries. By 1999, the cash transfer benefit stood at 110 Pula a month—an equivalent of 23 USD (Devereux 2007, p. 555). Within a decade, the benefit doubled to 220 Pula a month (30 iUSD)²⁸ in 2009/2010. Unlike in Nepal, where normative ideas often prompt increases in the benefit levels, the government in Botswana

²⁸ International Dollars Conversion rate was sourced from Penn World Tables version 10.0

constantly referred to broader macroeconomic conditions in justifying the increase in the benefit levels. In 2012, the benefit level was increased to 250 Pula (32 iUSD). As of 2020, the benefit level stood at 530 Pula per month (49 iUSD). Specifically, the government of Botswana adjusts the program’s level of benefit by taking macroeconomic factors like inflation into consideration. (BFTN 2007, p. 18). It should be noted that the increment in the benefit amount is not indexed but discretionary.

The amount accorded to old persons in the universal social pension program has been consistently below Botswana’s national poverty line. The residuality of the program’s benefits is a microcosm of the social protection framework of Botswana and a confirmation of the parsimony character of the collective welfare responsibility of the state in Botswana.

To gauge the standard of the benefit, the poverty line is used as the yardstick of comparison. Botswana’s poverty line is the threshold for extreme poverty, and it is calculated using the household as the base unit (Statistics Botswana 2018). It is apt to assess the standard of the benefit using the household as the base unit, given that most of the old persons in Botswana live in a household setting. The 2011 Botswana census concluded that only 13% of old persons live alone while more than 60% live in a varied communal living arrangement (Bainame et al. 2015b; Bainame et al. 2015a). In the same vein, it is not uncommon that cash transfer collected by an old person is shared in the household (Duflo 2003; Edmonds et al. 2004). Table 8 and Table 9 explicates the benefit levels and benefit standards in relation to the benefit from the universal social pension program in Botswana.

Table 8: OAP Benefits vs Average Food Poverty Line & Average Poverty Datum (All figures in Pula)

Year	Benefit level	Average Food Poverty line 2002/3	Average Poverty Datum 2002/3	Average Food Poverty line 2009/01	Average Food Poverty line 2009/10
1996	100	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
1999	110	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2003	151	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2005	166	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2007	166	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2009	220	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2010	220	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2011	220	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2012	250	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6

2013	250	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2014	300	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2015	330	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2017	330	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6
2020	530	429.5	571.6	680.7	881.6

Source: Average poverty and poverty datum data were sourced from World Bank (2015). The benefit levels were sourced from Mogae (1996); Devereux (2007); World Bank (2013); Social Security Administration (2017)

Table 9: Disaggregated Average Food Poverty Line & Average Poverty Datum (All figures in Pula)

	Average Food Poverty line 2002/3	Average Poverty Datum Line 2002/3	Average Food Poverty line 2009/01	Average Food Poverty line 2009/10
Urban	414.7	573.2	669.2	897.4
Rural	450.3	569.2	696.7	859.5

Source: World Bank (2015)

The poverty line and the food poverty line derived from the 2002 Household Income and Expenditure Survey and the 2010 Core Welfare Indicators Survey confirms the residuality of the benefit of the universal social pension program (see Table 8). Estimates from this survey indicated that in 2002/2003, the food poverty line in Botswana was 429.5 Pula in a month, while the poverty line stood at 571.6 Pula in a month. Similarly, the food poverty line in 2009/2010 was 680.7 Pula, while the Poverty Datum line for Botswana stood at 881.6 (World Bank 2015). All these figures are substantially higher than the benefits of the universal social pension program in the corresponding periods. Further disaggregation of these figures does not dispel the residuality characteristic of the benefit of the social pension program. Rural/Urban distribution of the food poverty line and the poverty datum line in both survey years also indicate that the program's benefit is significantly lower than these thresholds (see Table 9).

The figures from the surveys and benefits of the universal social pension program bring into focus one of the most contentious debate in social welfare literature. It brings into focus the debate whether a universal or means-tested social pension program is better for poverty alleviation among old persons. Cruz-Martinez (2016) argues for universal social pension on the grounds that it is an efficient tool for tackling income poverty among old persons. Kidd (2009, p. 386) concluded that universal social pension is the 'best way forward' regarding poverty

reduction among old persons in the global South. Kidd (2015b) argues that ‘inclusive social security’ e.g. universal social pension tend to offer higher value to the recipient and are more effective against poverty and inequality. Given the conclusions reached by these authors, it is unlikely to come to a similar conclusion for the universal social pension in Botswana, given that the benefits of the program are consistently below the nationally defined poverty line.

The conclusion reached here further illuminates if it is reasonable to demarcate social pensions into two- universal vs means-tested social pensions. The analysis of all the social pensions across the global South, and the place of Botswana in the newly generated classification suggests that the dichotomous classification of universal and means-tested is not suitable to capture the complexities of social pension in the global South.

In this dissertation, chapter 3 analysed all the social pensions in the global South, and one of the conclusions from the cluster analysis conducted in that chapter is that the label ‘universal’ do not necessarily connote high benefit. The result of the analysis showed that the universal social pension in Botswana clustered in a group that contained countries with means-tested social pensions. The Botswana cluster group’s major characteristics are that, in comparison to other clusters, coverage is expansive, but benefit levels and standards are low.

4.2.7 Summary

This section describes the universal social pension in Botswana. This task was carried out by examining how the program is institutionalised. Consequently, it explicated how the program is funded; it investigated the legal and political bases of the program and the level of benefits of the program. With the description carried out, it is possible to summarise universal social pension in Botswana as follows:

The universal social pension in Botswana is one of the most distinctive reflections of the welfare doctrine that the BDP had laid out since the independence of Botswana at independence. Section 1 of the analysis of Botswana showed that the BDP had embraced a universalistic welfare ethos in which the state accepts the welfare responsibility for all persons in Botswana. The activation of the state’s welfare responsibility is predicated on the failure of other agents of welfare production mainly, kin relationships. In addition to this welfare ethos, the state’s welfare responsibility is characterised by parsimony and paternalism. This section showed that the welfare ethos of responsibility and parsimony (and less paternalism) and the idea of reward

characterise the universal social pension in Botswana. The universal social pension in Botswana is expansive (as a testament to the universal responsibility of the state), the residual nature of the benefit of the program and the within category exclusion of the program can be said to reflect the parsimony of the state welfare responsibility. Similarly, it is within reasonable bounds, given the evidence presented here, that old persons in Botswana occupy rank high in the hierarchy of deservingness of social protection in Botswana. The refusal of the BDP to not listen to calls for turning the program into a means-tested program evinces this conclusion to a large degree.

One core argument of this dissertation is that social protection programs like the universal social pension in Botswana are underpinned by perceptions and beliefs held by citizenry and elites. Although, in this dissertation, preference is accorded to the perceptions and beliefs of the elites. Nonetheless, I showed here that the perception of the universal social pension as a reward for the contribution of old persons in Botswana underpinned the universal character of the social cash transfer program.

Often, debates in social pension literature centre on arguments on universal or means-tested social pensions. In these debates, programs with universal labels are associated with social democratic or progressive thinking and programs labelled as means-tested programs are thought to reflect a liberal view of social policy (Böger and Leisering 2017a, p. 48). The description of the universal social pension carried out here show that the association of universal labelled programs to social democratic thinking does not hold. While recent discourses on universal social protection link universal programs to social rights, such discourses are conspicuously absent in discourses on social pensions in Botswana. What this means is that universalism as a concept associated with specific programs is interpreted differently, and its interpretation is context-dependent.

Chapter 4: Botswana

Section 3: The Introduction of Social Pension in Botswana: A Mid-Range Explanation

4.3.1 Introduction

This section provides a mid-range explanation for the introduction of universal social pension in Botswana. The main argument underpinning this dissertation is that social protection programs like universal social pension are not just products of structural considerations like urbanisation, political elections, or class politics. In this dissertation, I submit that social protection programs are equally products of ideas. Specifically, micro-level ideas that centre on essential questions of collective welfare responsibility, recognised social questions, recognised social groups, the framing and discourses attached to social protection programs and the policy paradigms directed at recognised societal questions and problems.

The quest of uncovering these micro-level ideas guided the analysis carried out in Section 1 on Botswana. In Section 1, I traced the ideas and discourses attached to social protection in Botswana from the time of its independence in 1966 till the end of the decade in which universal social pension was introduced in Botswana i.e., till 1999. The findings from Section 1 on Botswana present an important step for answering the questions posed in this section, i.e., ideas about social protection can help uncover insights into the introduction of social pensions in Botswana.

In Section 1, I found that the BDP's welfare doctrine was inspired by the Tswana idea that the authority accepts its welfare responsibility for persons within its jurisdiction. In pre-colonial and colonial Botswana, the traditional authority known as the Kgosi had the welfare responsibility for all persons within the tribal territory (Schapera 1955, p. 68). The welfare responsibility of the Kgosi was characteristically patrimonial

The political leaders of post-independent Botswana reprised the welfare responsibility akin to pre-colonial and colonial Botswana. In post-independent Botswana, state's collective welfare responsibility was universalistic, i.e., the state accepts its welfare responsibility for all persons in Botswana. However, the nature of the new state's welfare responsibility was not legalised since such welfare responsibility was not included in the constitution of Botswana. Instead, it was grounded in socially understood and culturally embedded Tswana ideas like Kagisano and Botho.

Equally, the nature of the accepted responsibility of the state is segmented. The state provides welfare for people who cannot personally augment their welfare due to age, sickness, and

disability. Conversely, the state's responsibility for able-bodied persons is premised on the idea that able-bodied persons are expected to work in exchange for social protection.

In Section 1, I found that the BDP espoused the idea that the private sphere, i.e., kin relationships (and later markets), should take precedence in tackling adverse welfare questions in Botswana. However, the questions of drought, rural emigration, and poverty forced the state to expand its welfare responsibilities and occupy a welfare boundary that kin relationships had previously dominated.

Consequently, drought relief programs and the National Policy on Destitute were among the programs instituted in Botswana in the years analysed in Section 1. In institutionalising these programs, the state favoured in-kind transfers over cash. Cash benefits were later introduced to accompany the in-kind transfers. Although, beneficiaries had no autonomy on what they could spend the cash on, especially for the beneficiaries of the National Policy on Destitute. The programs instituted were expansive, but the benefits were designed to be parsimonious.

In the analysis carried out in Section 1, I found that old persons are an important social group in the hierarchy of deservingness in Botswana. For instance, old persons were singled out as one of the most vulnerable groups that were suffering from the dwindling structures of rural centres in Botswana, i.e., the failures of the private sphere (kin relationships had the traditional welfare responsibility for old persons) prompted the responsibility of the state in augmenting the welfare of old persons. Formal recognition of old persons' social and economic plight partially gave rise to the enactment of the first National Policy on Destitute in Botswana. The National Policy on Destitute Persons was enacted partly because,

'Independence came with urbanisation, migration and" rapid economic developments. These attracted the educated and the young people to the urban areas to seek employment, leaving the elderly alone in-rural areas. In some case this led to the gradual loss of support for the poorer members within the extended family system. As a result, the 1980 National Policy on Destitute Persons was formulated, for systematic tackling of poverty' (Republic of Botswana 2002, p. 2).

The economic and social problems, especially income problems that affected old persons were further legitimised when these issues were discussed and framed as a matter of moral responsibility and urgency in a parliamentary debate in 1988 (Ulriksen 2017, pp. 83–84). The

parliamentary deliberations called for a separate social protection program for old persons in Botswana; it called for an introduction of a social cash transfer program for old persons in Botswana (Ulriksen 2010).

It was not until 1996 that a separate social protection for old persons was introduced. As stated in Section 2, the introduction of the program came as a surprise, given that discourses of thrift and austerity dominated public policy discourses in the early 1990s. In the 1996 budget speech, the sitting Finance minister, Festus Mogae, announced that the BDP led government would introduce a regular and predictable cash transfer with a legal coverage of persons that are 65 years and above and a benefit of 100 Pula per month (Mogae 1996, p. 8). The program employed a universal target mechanism, i.e., all persons in Botswana age 65 and above, irrespective of poverty or need, are entitled to benefit from the program

This section (Section 3) of the Botswana chapter examines the introduction of the universal social pension in Botswana. Through a multidimensional framework consisting of the ‘Five Is’ and Onion Skin Model, this section attempts to answer the research question: What explains the introduction of social pension in Botswana? It uses the insights from Sections 1 and 2 to deepen the ideational explanations for the adoption of the program.

The ‘Five Is’ and the Onion Skin models are used in this regard. The ‘Five Is’ model is not an encompassing theory of explaining social welfare policy development. Instead, it is an analytical roadmap that social policy analysts can use to understand the drivers that precipitated the development of a particular social protection program. It helps to explicate the political, economic, and institutional context of social welfare policy development.

While the ‘Five Is’ model intends to expound on the institutional drivers of social welfare policy development. The Onion Skin Model employs an actor-centred, constructivist approach that views the development of social welfare programs as products of far-reaching subterranean ideas that foreshadows and transcends the policy under consideration. These ideas often pertain to the question of responsibility for welfare, questions of deservingness and the weight that elites and broader citizenry exert on the idea of public provision for a particular social group. Answers to these questions cannot be divorced from how actors talk about and legitimise a social protection program.

The use of a multidimensional framework in explaining the drivers of the adoption of universal social pension in Botswana allows for a sophisticated picture of the program’s adoption. Further,

the Onion Skin Model allows for an actor centred approach to the task of explanation. In this sense, the Onion Skin Model deepens the Ideas factor bundle in the Five Is Model.

4.3.2 Explaining the introduction of Social Pension in Botswana through the ‘Five Is’

The introduction of the Old Age Pension in 1996 was part of the big wave of social pension introductions that started in the global South in the 1990s (see Figure 1). So why did Botswana introduce social pension in 1996? In the social welfare literature, the orthodox explanations for social protection programs like social pension centre on political, polity and economic explanations. Gough (2008) suggested that in explaining social protection programs in the global South, an analysis should account for the influences of ideas and international factors. He mnemonically referred to these factors as the ‘Five Is’ (Industrialisation, Interests, Institutions, International Influences, Ideas).

4.3.2.1 Industrialisation and Other Macrosocial Changes as drivers of Social Pension in Botswana

Industrialisation

These strands of explanations posit that high-level economic growth and development, urbanisation, demographic factors are the root causes for introducing social protection programs. Extant studies on social pension adoption drivers found that economic and demographic factors are not unimportant determinants of social pension introduction. In her study on social pensions in the global North and global South, Rudolph (2016) showed that economic and demographic variables are statistically significant for the introduction of social pensions in the global South and global North. She found that countries with low savings rates are more likely to adopt social pensions, and in countries with decreasing fertility rates, there is a high propensity for social pension introduction. Converse to these conclusions, Böger and Leisering (2017b) showed that the level of economic development measured in GDP per capita does not affect the propensity of social pension introduction.

Botswana's economy was one of the fastest developing economies in the world between 1966 and 2005, with an average annual growth rate of 9% (Durán-Valverde and Francisco Pacheco 2012). The expansive growth was primarily driven by revenue from the export of diamond mining. Although considerable efforts have been directed towards diversifying Botswana's economy, the mining sector still plays a significant role in the structure of government revenue. The shrewd approach of the BDP to public finances created a continuous accumulation of budget surpluses and financial reserves that allowed Botswana's government to finance its social protection programs through budget allocations. In fact, in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, Botswana is distinct in this regard.

Despite the expansive growth of Botswana's economy, the BDP did not embrace expansive government spending on social protection programs. The reticence of the BDP shows that the influence of variables like economic growth on the propensity of introducing social protection programs is not deterministic. The non-deterministic relationship contravenes the arguments of structural-functionalist hypothesis for social policy development. Wilensky (1975, xiii) argued that economic growth and its demographic and bureaucratic outcomes are the root causes of the general emergence of the welfare state.

In the case of Botswana, I posit that the influence of economic variables depended on how actors perceived social protection programs and how it affects broader economic goals. This notion was evinced when the idea of social cash transfers for old persons was first discussed in the Parliament of Botswana in 1988. Despite cross-party support and government budget surplus, the upper echelons of the BDP dissented on introducing cash transfer on fiscal grounds. The Finance Minister Mr Peter Mmusi remarked that,

'The financial implications should be taken into consideration [...] Government must always have it in mind that we should ultimately get to this, but of course it is very important to say what at this stage is our financial position' (Mmusi 1988; Ulriksen 2010, p. 141).

Similar sentiment was echoed by Festus Mogae, the Finance Minister, from 1989-1998. The themes of austerity and thrift tinged the budget speeches that he delivered during his tenure (Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993). In the budget speech in 1996, Mr Mogae hinted that the state was not in an excellent fiscal state to finance a program like social pension (Mogae 1996).

At the introduction of the program, he noted that, ‘studies are still being conducted to find how this pension [...] will be funded²⁹’.

Converse to the perspectives of Mmusi and Mogae, the then President Quett Maisre later remarked in his memoir that the revenue from the sale of diamonds had created enough fiscal space that warranted the introduction of social pension in Botswana. He stated that,

‘we discussed the idea of an old age pension scheme for many years. If one called it a pension , it suggested that people would have either worked to earn it or saved something in a pension fund. But the real problem was the needs of people who had done neither. And, from where would we get the funding for something meaningful? However, by 1996, we felt that we had enough revenue coming diamonds, and those funds belonged to all Batswana. So we discussed it and decided to go ahead’ (Masire and Lewis 2007, p. 234).

From the statement of Maisre, it can be deduced that the role of economic growth cannot be underestimated in the adoption of social pension in Botswana. Although, the sentiment expressed by Masire is in sharp contrast to those expressed by the Festus Mogae and his predecessor. The contradictions in the perspectives of these BDP elites suggests that while economic and fiscal concerns were important for instituting social pension, they were not important enough to stifle its introduction. Given the position of Mogae and the general reticence of the BDP against social protection, it is likely that other considerations precipitated the introduction of the program. The contradiction also suggests that the decision to either introduce or not introduce the program was less about fiscal space for the introduction of the program. Instead, it was likely that it was a question of political will or other imperatives. In a sense, it is then rational to say that in the decision to introduce social pension in Botswana, the importance of economic variables like economic growth and budget surplus is mediated by other considerations that most likely relate to political considerations.

The contrasting perspectives of the BDP elites bring political and economic arguments about government’s fiscal budgeting on social protection programs into sharper focus. Conventional political economy literature suggests that policymakers operate in a real-world of budget constraints (Devereux 2016; The World Bank 1994). As Kidd (2015b), Pritchett (2005), Devereux (2007) and Beattie and McGillivray (1995), this assumption assign an objective

²⁹ Ulriksen 2017, p. 84; Seekings 2016b, p. 22.

character to a process that is essentially social constructed. As Beattie and McGillivray (1995) aptly quipped, no economic law prevents governments from allocating more to social protection programs and less to other areas. Given that the subjectivity of budget allocations to politics, Hickey (2008) advised that an analyst should examine the nature of the politics surrounding policy development decisions. He suggested that analysts should examine, for instance, the nature of political incentives or pressures that prompt the redirection of public expenditure to vulnerable groups (I answer this question in the 'Interest' section of this section).

Other Macro Factors

One of the consequences of independence in many African countries was the rapid urbanisation that accompanied the political and social changes of the 1960s. In this regard, Botswana was not different. After independence, Botswana was one of the most rapidly urbanising countries in Africa (Bryant et al. 1978). Silitshena (1984) stated that the main contributor to rapid urbanisation and rural emigration in the immediate years of independence was the high prevalence of poverty in rural Botswana. He noted that the chief motivation for rural emigration was economic, as people of working age flooded major cities for better employment and better services.

One of the primary consequences of this migratory pattern was the thinning of social and family structures in rural Botswana. With the mass emigration of non-disabled men and women from rural areas, old persons were left alone with children in rural areas. As early as 1980, the state recognised that the changing socio-structural conditions in rural areas required deliberate state action as traditional functions performed by families and communities were withering. Accordingly, the state responded with the National Destitute Policy of 1980.

In the National Policy on Destitute that was introduced in 1980, the breakdown of traditional social structures of rural areas due to rural emigration was stated as one of the reasons for instituting the destitute policy. The policy document noted that,

'Before Independence, the extended family system was a major safety net, catering for all kinds of needs of its members, be they material, social or emotional.....Independence came with urbanisation, migration and rapid economic developments. These attracted the educated and the young people to the urban areas to seek employment, leaving the elderly alone in-rural areas.

In some case, this led to the gradual loss of support for the poorer members within the extended family system. As a result, the 1980 National Policy on Destitute Persons was formulated, for systematic tackling of poverty' (Republic of Botswana 2002, p. 2).

Through the mechanism of policy failure and policy learning, the National Destitute Policy was jettisoned for a program that exclusively targeted old people. The departure from the National Destitute Policy was also prompted by the dwindling of traditional social security system and the adverse effects it had on old persons in Botswana. In other words, the introduction of the social pension program was the utmost demonstration of the welfare doctrine of the BDP- a welfare doctrine in which the state is activated when other agents of welfare production failed.

Excerpts from the memoir of the then-sitting president Sir Ketumile Masire encapsulated the influence of Botswana's dwindling rural population and its effect on the welfare of old persons. In his memoir, he wrote that,

'In traditional Tswana society, there were social networks that helped provide for people, particularly the elderly, who were unable to work for a living. However, as we began to modernise and become more urban, these systems started to decay. We had provisions in government programmes to assist destitute, but the amounts of money were small, the system required a means test, and the instruments for measuring people's means were not very accurate and were costly to administer. Both our own observations as politicians travelling around the country and the statistics that were coming out showed us that many of the destitute were old people, and we could see their conditions were really deplorable' (Masire and Lewis 2007, p. 234).

The importance of the breakdown of traditional social structures in the adoption of social pension in Botswana confirms the hypothesis coined by Case and Deaton (1998) that 'it is often the case that demand for social pension is driven by poverty among the elderly as multi-generation living arrangements break down, when the young are either no longer willing or perhaps able to care for aging parents' (Case and Deaton, p. 1335). Similarly, the finding here also confirms Leisering (2019)'s findings regarding the positive influence of socio-economic modernisation on the propensity of social pension introduction.

4.3.2.2 Interests

Elections and Party Interests

If social pension is a product of responses to perceived social problems that affect old people in Botswana, politics is the vehicle that realises the solutions to the perceived social problems. Given that there is no natural or economic law that mandates the allocation of public resources to tackle social problems, public attention to social problems indicates the centrality of politics and political decision-making in the introduction of social protection programs. This centrality is pertinent too in the introduction of social pension in Botswana.

Before, the adoption of social pension in 1996, the idea of social pension was discussed as early as 1988. Despite cross-party consensus regarding the merits of social pensions, the BDP led government railed against the idea on fiscal grounds. In its 1989 manifesto, the BDP argued against the notion of public spending on transfers and portrayed the opposition party, mainly the BNF, as a group of actors that cannot be entrusted with the political and economic future of Botswana (BDP 1989).

At the time of rejecting the idea of social pension in 1988, the BDP enjoyed an unparalleled but declining stranglehold on political power in Botswana. The party controlled 85% of the Parliamentary seats after the 1984 elections, and after the 1989 elections, it controlled 91% of the total seats in the Botswana Parliament. However, the start of the 1990s ushered in a period in which the BDP was beset with factional split, nationwide strikes, and corruption charges (Osei-Hwedie 2001, p. 69). Concomitantly, the main opposition party-BNF- was going through its own transformation. With inspiration from changes occurring in South Africa, membership of trade unions and increasing urbanisation throughout Botswana increased the support of the BNF (van Allen 2001, p. 45).

The 1994 elections manifested the political climate that was sweeping across Botswana. The BNF reaffirmed its longstanding offer of a comprehensive social protection framework that included cash transfers for old persons in Botswana (BNF 1994). In what can be termed as unusual given its rhetoric of austerity and cost-cutting, the BDP included unspecific promises of conducting financial feasibility of a social pension in its 1994 manifesto.(Ulriksen 2010, p. 140; Seekings 2017a, p. 8).

In the 1994 general elections, the main opposition party BNF pressured the BDP by making inroads into strong constituencies held by the BDP. Remarkably, the BNF was making inroads into rural areas of Botswana (Wiseman and Charlton 1995). The result of the 1994 elections manifested the pressures and the loss of reputation suffered by the BDP. In the 1994 elections, the voter turnout was 10% point higher than the 1989 elections, and the BNF won 33% of the parliamentary seats—a 25% point increase from the 1989 elections (Parliament of Botswana 2016, pp. 14–16). The results of the elections challenged the BDP, and the desire to maintain its stronghold on its traditional constituency, i.e., old persons and rural centres in Botswana, cannot be disputed as a contributory factor in the introduction of social pension in 1996.

The importance of the 1994 elections in the introduction of social pension reiterates the ideas explicated by Hickey (2008) that to systematically understand the influence of politics in the introduction and evolution of social protection programs, an analyst should assess the pressures and incentives that the incumbent government face when they institute social programs. For Botswana, the explanation above shows that political pressures and incentives to preserve the support of the traditional constituents of the BDP were important factors for the introduction of social pension in Botswana is to be understood.

Other Interest-based explanations

Arguments in social policy literature suggest that activities and pressures from ‘below’ are important determinants for adopting social protection programs. This line of arguments commonly subsumed under the power resources hypothesis contends that activities of trade unions, interest groups and the strength of left-wing political parties are not unimportant in the introduction of social protection programs (O'Connor and Olsen 1998; Korpi 1998).

Translating these explanations to global South contexts is not an easy task since widespread informal labour precludes strong trade unions. Nevertheless, these arguments have been used to explain the development of social pension in the global South. For instance, Sagner (2000) noted that class politics and trade unions were a major impetus for the introduction of social pension in South Africa in the 1920s.

In Botswana, the activities and influences of trade unions in the development and institutionalisation of social pension cannot be ascertained because social protection programs like social pension are not priority areas for trade unions in Botswana (FEB 2018, p. 1). This is

because the relations between the state and trade unions are limited (FEB 2008). The organisational capabilities and freedom of action by trade unions in Botswana are restricted (Good 1996, p. 45). The relationship between the state and trade unions is limited to advisory structures in which trade unions are considered stakeholders. Outside of these structures, the influences of trade unions in Botswana are limited. In particular, the influence of trade unions on public policy is not significant because none of the trade unions are affiliated with political parties in Botswana, and the statutory position of trade unions in Botswana is limited (FEB 2003).

Although, trade unions in Botswana continually encourage political parties to adopt a pro-social protection stance in their programs. For instance, in 2007, the leading trade union in Botswana, the Botswana Federation of Trade Unions released a position paper geared towards explicating a unified position regarding social protection programs and social policy. In the position paper, the trade unions advocated that Botswana should ratify all Social Security Conventions of the International Labour Organization, including Convention 102 of 1952 (BFTN 2007, p. 45). However, at the time of writing this dissertation, Botswana is yet to ratify these conventions. Consequently, it is within reasonable limits to conclude that trade unions were not influential in the development of social pension in Botswana.

Another strand of the influences of Interests rests on the idea that left-wing parties are more likely to introduce social protection programs. This line of argument has generated considerable debate as it concerns the global South. For instance, Huber et al. (2008) found little effect of partisanship on social expenditure in Latin America but left-leaning parties are more likely to favour social protection programs like non-contributory programs and conditional cash transfers.

In Botswana, the effect of self-described 'left-leaning'³⁰ parties in the introduction of social pension is limited because no 'left-leaning' party have ever formed a government in Botswana. Although, they make up for this shortcoming through ideational means. For instance, the clamour for social pension was pursued earlier by the BNF because it was consistently included in the party's manifesto prior to the introduction of the program in 1996. Upon the introduction of the program, the BNF alleged that the BDP co-opted its ideas and that the introduction of the social pension program was evidence that the BDP was acquiescing to the ideas of the left-leaning BNF (Seekings 2017a, p. 17; EIU 1996, p. 4).

³⁰ The BNF describes itself as a socialist party.

4.3.2.3 Institutions

These strands of explanations posit that in explaining the introduction of social protection programs, an analyst should examine the structures of political institutions and how power is distributed among the arms of government. It requires the analyst to examine the ‘rules of the game’, conventions of policymaking and how they shape the introduction of social protection programs (Maioni 1997).

Since independence, a skewed distribution of power in favour of the executive is apparent in Botswana (Good 1996; Molomo 2000; Bodilenyane 2012; Bothale and Kebapetse 2013). Good (1996) posited that the power vested in the executive is sweeping and extensive in relation to other arms of Botswana’s government. He argued that the distribution of power in Botswana is a simulacrum of an authoritarian liberal regime that eschew popular participation and openness. Molomo (2000) concluded that the power structures in Botswana’s polity precludes accountability of the executive and insulates it from parliamentary scrutiny. Bodilenyane (2012) concluded that the distribution of power between the executive and legislature is such that the latter only functions to rubber-stamp the whims and decisions of the former.

The power structures found in Botswana have enormous consequences for policymaking and how social protection programs are institutionalised. The vice president and the president are in absolute control of the two most powerful decision-making bodies of the state regarding public policy and control of resources (Good 1996; Bothale and Kebapetse 2013). Given that sweeping powers of the presidency and the fact that the presidency is not constitutionally accountable to the Parliament (Bothale and Kebapetse 2013, p. 43), it is then rational to suggest that the character and the development of the universal social pension in Botswana were determined by the whims of the top echelons of the executive branch. Likewise, the longstanding procedure of introducing social protection programs³¹ via executive administrative documents instead of legislative documents reflects the executive arm’s dominance over the legislature in Botswana.

Notwithstanding the distribution of policymaking power in Botswana, it must be noted that the BDP only relented in introducing social pension in Botswana after it had lost many parliamentary seats in the 1994 general elections. This in turn, suggests that democracy as a governing institution cannot be discounted in the introduction of social pension in Botswana. While both authoritarian and democratic countries have introduced social pensions, the effect of democracy on the

³¹ The National Policy on Destitute was introduced via an administrative fiat while the universal social pension program was introduced in the 1996 Budget Speech-a document produced by the executive branch.

development of social pensions has been established in other empirical studies (Stasavage 2005; Huber et al. 2008; Mares and Carnes 2009). Rudolph's (2016) analysis on the determinant of social pension introduction showed that democratic countries are more likely to introduce social pension than authoritarian countries. Leisering (2019) found that democratic countries are more likely to introduce social pensions than authoritarian countries. The finding on the effect of democracy on the adoption of social pension in Botswana lends credence to the conclusion reached by these studies.

Another strand of the institutional arguments for policy development, as enumerated by Gough (2008), centres on the idea of policy legacies. Hecló (1974) wrote in his book on the development of social policy in Britain and Sweden that policymaking is not only about tackling problems; it is also about deciding which problem to tackle and knowing about a problem. This line of argument speaks of 'knowing' as it relates to the history of a program. This argument rests on the idea that the weight of history and the failures or successes of past programs impacts politicians' policy decisions. This 'policy creates policy' argument posits that through learning, politicians, bureaucrats, and policy experts evaluate the performance of previously enacted policy. In turn, these evaluations could affect subsequent decisions about a particular policy or program (Béland 2006).

This argument is pertinent in explaining the universal character and the introduction of social pension in Botswana. As noted in the earlier sections, the National Policy on Destitute enacted in 1980 was means-tested, i.e., it covers all persons in Botswana if they meet the criteria for qualifications. Through the mechanism of social learning, high-level politicians in Botswana attested to the failures of the program's means-testing approach. The inefficiency and inadequacy of the existing Destitute Program played major roles in the thinking of senior politicians during the process of introducing the universal social pension program in 1996. The then-president Quett Masire attested to this in his memoir. He stated that,

'We had provisions in government programmes to assist destitute, but the amounts of money were small, the system required a means test, and the instruments for measuring people's means were not very accurate and were costly to administer. Both our own observations as politicians travelling around the country and the statistics that were coming out showed us that many of the destitute were old people, and we could see their conditions were really deplorable' (Masire and Lewis 2007, p. 234).

Therefore, it is within reasonable bounds to suggest that the universal character of the social pension program in Botswana owes its existence, in no small terms, to the inefficiencies of the National Destitute Policy in Botswana. In short, the policy legacies of the destitute program were drivers of social pension in Botswana.

The extant argument from social pension literature that past programs influence present program is applicable here, but with some qualification. Scholars like Palacios and Knox-Vydmanov (2014) noted that the widespread adoption of social pension in the global South could be partly explained by the failure of existing contributory pension in increasing the coverage beyond a tiny proportion of the population. Studies conducted by Böger and Leisering (2017a) and Rudolph (2016) found that the policy legacies of existing pension arrangements influenced the propensity for introducing social pension. Precisely, the study conducted by Rudolph (2016) found that the existence of previously enacted contributory pension is positively related to the propensity of social pension adoption. Böger and Leisering (2017a) concluded that countries with a privatised pension are equally more likely to introduce social pensions. In the case of Botswana, the existing pension program did not contribute to the enactment of present programs. Instead, the failures of the existing anti-poverty program and not the existing pension programs were cited as one of the major influences in introducing social pension in Botswana.

4.3.2.4 International Influences

While the factors identified in the orthodox model explicated by Gough (2008) are predominantly internally defined, external factors can also be germane in the decision to introduce social protection programs. Examining how external influences contribute to the decision to introduce social pension is pertinent to the global South because of the multiplicity of influential international organisations working in social protection in the global South and the availability of imitable models of social pension from the global North.

As stated earlier, the distribution of policymaking powers in Botswana is restricted, and policies often reflect the priorities of the upper echelons of the dominant political party-the BDP. However, these restrictions did not preclude the inputs of outside actors regarding social protection programs in Botswana. In Section 1 of the chapter on Botswana, I showed that successive governments of Botswana often sought the assistance of outside actors in mitigating the successive droughts after independence. Regarding social protection programs for old

persons, there is no substantiating evidence to suggest that the BDP sought the assistance of outside actors.

The closed policymaking environment of BDP led governments has not precluded inputs of outside actors regarding recommendations of what should be done to tackle welfare problems facing old persons in Botswana. A prominent example was the gathering of international experts to explicate the social and economic problems facing old persons in Botswana in 1994. The research workshop titled 'The Situation of the Elderly in Botswana: Proceedings from an International Workshop' brought together stakeholders from and outside Botswana. The researchers' results showed that the social and economic plight of old persons in Botswana was worsened by changing structures of societal relations and the breakdown of the idea of intergenerational solidarity (Coombes et al. 1994; Bruun et al. 1994; Ingstad et al. 1992).

One of the experts' major conclusions was that a social cash transfer program would go a long way in easing the income problems facing old persons in Botswana (Bruun et al. 1994; Ingstad 1994). There is no evidence that the inputs from these outside actors were influential in the decision to introduce social pension in Botswana in 1996.

The substantial encouragement and participation of powerful ministries may have provided the BDP-led government more information regarding the social and economic issues facing old persons in Botswana. Seekings (2017a) speculated that the workshop and the lessons from the workshop might have spurred the subsequent government inquisition regarding the welfare issues of old persons, and subsequently the inclusion of the prospect of introducing social pension.

Concepts of policy diffusion, policy learning, and policy transfers may hold considerable sway in the decision to introduce specific policies. Pelham (2007) asserted that social welfare policies enacted in country A can have 'knock on' impacts in country B either by a desire for equity or for political calculations. This knock-on effect can also emanate from subscriptions to global-level conventions, policy influences from regional and culturally linked countries.

There is no corroborating evidence that the adoption of universal social pension in Botswana was influenced by global level conventions on social security or ageing. These conventions are not common in policy discourses of the BDP but are often used by political parties and interest groups to score political points against the dominant BDP. Besides, Botswana has shown considerable restraint in subscribing to global level conventions that encourage the adoption of social protection programs.

As of the time of writing this dissertation, Botswana has yet to subscribe to C102 - Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention. Alongside newly independent South Sudan, Botswana is yet to ratify or sign the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Although, Botswana has subscribed to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Botswana's reticence to conventions on social security is not restricted to global level conventions. Alongside Angola, Botswana is yet to sign the Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of the Southern African Development Community. These conventions encourage the state to pay close attention to welfare issues of social groups like old persons, and some of these conventions urge the enactment of the type of programs discussed in this dissertation.

On country-to-country influences, there is considerable evidence that the pension system in Botswana at the time of independence has its roots in Britain's colonial rule. However, as it concerns the development of universal social pension in Botswana, there is no evidence that the mechanism of horizontal diffusion, learning or transfer was at work when the BDP elected to introduce universal social pension in 1996. This observation concurs with conclusion reached by Bonnerjee (2003) that the introduction of social pension in Southern African countries appears to be endogenous and independent of each other. Although, Pelham (2007) disagreed with these conclusions on the grounds that the proximity and cultural linkages of the Southern African countries refute these isolationist conclusions and suggested that a domino effect may be likely explain the institutionalisation of social pension in Southern Africa.

These arguments can be valid in some countries. For example, Pelham (2007) noted that the desire to emulate South Africa spurred the old age pension in Lesotho. In contrast, I found no validating evidence that the desire to emulate other Southern African countries prompted the introduction of social pension in Botswana. Besides, the discussion for old age pension had been going on well before 1996 in Botswana. As it can be recalled, the idea of old age pension was discussed as early as 1988 in Botswana.

Gough (2008) noted that the external environments that developed in the 20th century pose significant constraints on policy development in the nation-state, especially global South countries. He posited that an analyst should investigate the impact of globalisation, global civil society, global governance, and global epistemic communities and how they structure domestic policy decisions.

There are two chief arguments as regards the effect of globalisation on the adoption of basic provision programs. On the one side, it is thought that the exigencies that emanate from opening

a domestic economy to the world markets would necessitate the development of social protection programs. Hanlon et al. (2010) concluded that the exigencies of globalisation, in no terms, played a role in the development and expansion of social cash transfers in pioneering countries of South Africa, Brazil and Mexico. Tillin and Duckett (2017) concluded that the need to ensure that the integration of global South economies into the global markets does not lead to domestic disintegration and has encouraged the expansion of social protection programs in the global South. On the other side of this argument rests the notion that the need for global competitiveness encourages global South countries to move towards a ‘market conforming’ stance regarding economic and social policy. This stance demands a reduction in the role of the state and an efficiency-driven approach to public expenditure. In a nutshell, expenditures on social protection programs are discouraged for economic efficiency and foreign capital.

Evidence suggests that there is no consensus on the direction of the impact of economic globalisation on social policy development (Tillin and Duckett 2017). Per the speeches of the finance ministers of Botswana, there is considerable evidence that economic globalisation and the need for global competitiveness played a role in the thinking of policymakers regarding social protection programs in the 1990s. One of the significant findings in the earlier sections is that the need to diversify Botswana’s economy and encourage foreign capital dominated public policy discourses in the 1990s. The themes of austerity and tight fiscal controls were noticeable in the budget speeches of finance ministers in Botswana (Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996). Nevertheless, these demands did not preclude the introduction of Botswana’s universal social pension.

4.2.3.5 Ideas

Ideas represent the fifth-factor bundle identified by Gough (2008). Ideas deal with how the values, beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge of actors affect policy development. They are often treated as a subordinate determinant of policy development and under-researched in social policy literature. Advocates of ideational analysis argue that such endeavour can provide sophisticated insights as to why some programs are enacted because material interests do not solely drive policymakers, and the importance of interest in policy development often depend on knowledge and ideas that actors use in legitimising their interests (Lavers and Hickey 2016; Leisering 2019; Béland and Ridde 2016). In this dissertation, ideas are examined from a macro

perspective via the ‘Five Is’ model. The Onion Skin model provides a roadmap for examining Ideas from a micro perspective.

Macro Ideas and Social Pension Development in Botswana (Ideas from the ‘Five Is’ model)

Gough (2008) suggested that social policy analysts should examine the influence of cultural systems, dominant ideologies, epistemic communities and policy transfers on the decision to introduce social protection programs. I have touched upon some of these suggestions earlier. For instance, I showed that given the nature of Botswana’s policymaking apparatus, it is unlikely that epistemic communities were influential in the decision to introduce social pensions. I showed that the reticence of Botswana regarding international conventions about social issues provides the insight that the BDP is unlikely to be open to outside ideas about social protection issues. The BDP has welcomed outside suggestion in areas of education, disability, and drought. There is no evidence to suggest that the BDP was influenced by outside ideas regarding the introduction of the universal social pension in Botswana.

There is the need to qualify this conclusion. Earlier, I mentioned that a group of social scientists carried out surveys on the welfare of old persons in Botswana and made recommendations to the government regarding how to augment the welfare of old persons in Botswana (Bruun et al. 1994). The research papers from these social scientists suggested that a social pension program should be instituted. The workshop titled ‘The Situation of the Elderly in Botswana: Proceedings from an International Workshop’ was organised by the social scientists, and was widely attended by bureaucrats and executives in powerful ministries such as Botswana’s Ministry of Health. Though, there is no evidence suggesting that the inputs from these social scientists influenced the decision to introduce the universal social pension program. Nonetheless, the new information provided by the social scientist cannot be discounted in how political and bureaucratic elites in Botswana understand the welfare of old persons within their territory.

In Section 1, I showed that the BDP did not embrace any broad, identifiable ideology. Instead, it sought to ground public policy and public life in locally inspired ideas such as Kagisano and

Botho. These ideas were adjudged to be the guiding ideology of the BDP since the independence of Botswana in 1966.

Regarding dominant ideas, the BDP prided itself as a party of fiscal responsibility and sound economic management. Despite strong economic performances in the late 1980s and 1990s, the party emphasised thrift and austerity (Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996). Discourses from the budget speeches in the 1990s and the party's election manifestos stressed the need for eschewing social protection programs and advised that emphasis should be placed on programs that augment collective welfare, e.g., economic growth. The party was of the position that redistributive programs are detrimental to economic growth (BDP 1989). In this way, it is difficult to posit that the ideological disposition of the BDP regarding social protection programs prompted the introduction of social pensions in Botswana.

Micro Ideas and Social Pension Development in Botswana (The Onion Skin Model)

As stated earlier, the 'Five Is' model is geared towards providing institutional insights into how social pensions developed in Botswana. The Onion Skin model posits that the development of social programs are products of latent ideational factors that pertain to how elites and wider society perceive welfare issues. Although, preference is accorded to the perspectives held by the elites in this dissertation. It pertains to how specific welfare problems are viewed and framed, the position of certain groups in the hierarchy of deservingness. Answers to these questions are discernible by examining the historical discourses about welfare ideas relating to the group under investigation. In turn, they can provide deeper insights into the analysis carried out using the 'Five Is' model. This section is structured as follows: I enumerate the framing of social welfare issues concerning old persons in Botswana and the framing that surrounded the introduction of social pensions in Botswana. I explicate ideas about collective responsibility and welfare boundaries viz-a-viz old persons and social pension. I identify and explicate how the problems facing old persons were defined. This analysis is expected to illuminate the undercurrent that contributed to the development of social pension in Botswana.

Frames

Social protection programs like social pension are rarely discussed in singularity. Actors refer not only to the program's utility but also the broader implications of a program in areas that transcends the program. For instance, I showed in the analysis of Nepal (Chapter 5) that the adoption and subsequent expansion of social pensions and social protection programs were linked to broader discursive areas of state-building and national reconciliation. As illustrated here, linking the individual utility of a social program to broader discursive areas is what Kaufmann (2012) termed collective utility of a social program.

In linking the individual utility and the collective utility of a program, actors employ frames. Frames allow actors to articulate their suppositions and provide a roadmap for understanding the issue under discussion. These frames could be positive frames-frames that provide support for a policy or negative frames that opposes a policy. In Botswana, both frames were obtainable in the adoption of the universal social pension program introduced in Botswana in 1996.

I highlighted earlier that the discussions around the introduction of social pension started as early as 1988 when a BDP parliamentarian Clara Olsen brought the issue to the Parliamentary floor in April 1988. The crux of her argument for the introduction of a cash transfer for old persons in Botswana was not just about the material upliftment that such cash transfers might offer. She framed the need for such a program in a language that evinces the present generation's moral obligation to look after the welfare of the older generations-an argument grounded in Tswana teachings and culture. In her bid, she enjoined the parliamentarians not to view themselves not as parliamentarians but as sons and daughters with obligations to cater to their forbearers' welfare. She remarked that,

'that this Hon. House requests Government to introduce old age pension. Children should look after their elders; the pension would pay for basics, and "it is up to the children to provide the many extras in life that are required to make our older citizens enjoy a full and satisfying life, including love and warmth' (Olsen 1988; Seekings 2016b, p. 19).

'Old age pension will be a recognition of our full obligation for the care of our parents and must be considered an urgent priority in our scheme of things... This is a moral obligation' (Olsen 1988; Ulriksen 2010, p. 141).

The BNF framed the clamour for the introduction of social pension not in narrow terms. The party argued that the introduction of social pension must herald a universalistic and holistic approach to social protection programs. It stated in its 1994 manifesto that,

‘The Botswana National Front Government shall study all problems of social security for all communities. The BNF Government shall introduce a comprehensive social security legislation which provides for (a) Old age pension (b) Dependent and orphans benefit (c) Contributory pension and unemployment benefits. (d) Pre-school facilities for working parents’ (BNF 1994, p. 7).

While the framing of social cash transfers as a moral obligation garnered cross-party support, dissension to the idea of social cash transfers for old persons in the 1988 debate was linked to broader areas beyond social pension. The counter-frames linked the dissension to the fiscal health of the state. The Finance Minister, Peter Mmusi stated that,

‘The financial implications should be taken in-to consideration [...] Government must always have it in mind that we should ultimately get to this, but of course it is very important to say what at this stage is our financial position’ (Mmusi 1988; Ulriksen 2010, p. 141).

In the years leading up to the enactment of social pension, the reticence of the BDP regarding social protection programs centred on similar sentiments raised by the Peter Mmusi in 1988. The BDP, in its 1989 election manifesto, charged that redistributive programs are detrimental to the long term fiscal health of the country and in the budget speeches of the early 1990s, cost-cutting and reducing state’s expenditure for the sake of economic diversification and growth were recurring themes (BDP 1989; Mogae 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996). These frames persisted after the program was introduced in the budget speech of 1996. Festus Mogae cautioned against expansive government spending in his budget speech and admitted that the government was conducting studies into how it would fund the newly introduced social pension program (Mogae 1996; Seekings 2016b, p. 24).

It is reasonable to suggest that the counter-frames employed by the leading figures of the BDP most likely stemmed from the conclusion reached in Section 1 that the BDP's approach to welfare enhancement privileges long-term welfare enhancement through economic growth rather than the immediate welfare enhancement inherent in social protection programs.

Collective Responsibility

The idea of collective responsibility for social issues predates Botswana's statehood. In Section 1, I found that the idea of collective responsibility in Botswana has its roots in the Tswana traditions and the notions of reciprocity and solidarity underpin this responsibility. I found that there is a shared responsibility between the private sphere (family and kin networks) and the public sphere (the chiefly authorities) in the provision of sustenance in times of adverse welfare. Although, there is a hierarchy in this responsibility that places the private ahead of the public.

This idea was not jettisoned in the new state. Indeed, after independence in Botswana, collective responsibility for social issues shares resemblances with the old Tswana ideas. However, this notion was not translated into the new institutions of the state, i.e., the notion of state responsibility was socially understood but was not codified in legal documents of the state. The collective responsibility idea continues to take a cultural and political character instead of a legal character in the new state. Seekings (2017a) speculated that the political elites of the BDP eschewed the idea of legal codification of social welfare because of the angst that such codification may generate a sense of entitlements to the beneficiaries.

Outside of drought times, the nature of state responsibility for the welfare of the citizens of Botswana was one of a collective character, i.e., there was a proclivity by successive BDP led governments to focus on programs and policies that are aimed at enhancing the collective welfare of the citizens of Botswana. With this perspective, the question of who should be responsible for old persons' welfare remained a private matter.

From the beginning of the 1980s, the consequences of a modernising country, rural emigration, inserted the state into a welfare boundary that had chiefly been occupied by kin and family relations. The BDP led government created the National Destitute Policy in 1980 upon learning that the welfare questions regarding old persons were not adequately tackled by the private sphere. It noted that the failure of the private sphere as regards the augmentation of the welfare of old persons in Botswana necessitated the actions of the state (Republic of Botswana 2002).

The National Policy on Destitutes defined the welfare problems facing old people in terms of poverty that was brought about by the depreciation of certain welfare necessities like food and productive assets like livestock (Republic of Botswana 2002, p. 2). Consequently, in-kind transfers in the form of food were deemed the most appropriate instrument for enhancing old persons' welfare.

Clara Olsen-the backbencher that introduced the bill for the introduction of social pension in 1988- leaned on the idea of private and public responsibility for the welfare enhancement of old persons as the main argument for the introduction of social pension in Botswana. Her arguments blurred the moral obligation associated with the private sphere and with the obligation of the public. Her arguments evinced that the moral obligation to take care of old persons should not be restricted to the private sphere. Instead, the moral obligation to take care of old people as found in the private sphere must also be applicable in the public sphere. She argued that the bulk of the responsibility for the welfare enhancement of old persons in Botswana still rests with the family. Nonetheless, the state must share some of these responsibilities.

As I indicated earlier, the motion passed with support from the BDP and opposition parties in the parliament. In a sense, one can infer that there is a general recognition in the parliament of Botswana at the time that the notion of welfare responsibility for old persons was not only a matter for the private sphere. Also, it would have been impossible to ascribe a social problem character and propose a policy solution to a problem that was to be solved in private. The elevation of a problem to the public sphere and the legitimacy it garners cannot be underestimated if, eventually, a public solution is given to the social problem.

Due to the paucity of data, it is hard to gauge why pension (cash) was favoured by Clara Olsen. Although, from the excerpts from the biography of Quett Masire and the results from the research of international and local experts, cash was viewed as a better alternative to in-kind transfers in respect to the flexibility it offers the beneficiaries (Masire and Lewis 2007; Bruun et al. 1994; Raditladi 1994). Explanations from the national development plans in Botswana also show that defining the problem facing old persons as an income problem may have influenced the choice of cash instead of other forms of entitlement transfer. According to accessible data, it is possible to understand how the welfare problem facing old persons was defined. The 9th Development Plan of Botswana defined the welfare issues facing old persons in Botswana in terms of poverty precipitated by lack of income (Republic of Botswana 2003, p. 350).

4.3.3 Summary

This section aimed to explicate the drivers of the introduction of the universal social pension in Botswana through a multidimensional framework that consisted of the ‘Five Is’ model and the Onion Skin Model. The summary of the findings is below.

By the 1980s, the exigencies of a rapidly changing societal structure were becoming evident in Botswana. Robust economic growth drew out younger generations to urban centres in search of economic and educational opportunities. This, in turn, contributed to the fracturing of traditional structures that were usually responsible for old persons’ welfare (in non-drought years). The recognition of this problem through learning and the legitimisation of the welfare problems that old people faced in Botswana precipitated the path that eventually drove the institutionalisation of universal social pension in Botswana in 1996.

The National Destitute Policy was created in 1980 to tackle the recognised welfare problems brought out by changing structural conditions of rural Botswana. However, through policy learning, electoral imperatives, changing ideas of how to respond to welfare issues of old persons, the Old Age Allowance was instituted in 1996 to ease the welfare problems of old persons in Botswana. The historical analysis of the adoption of social pension in Botswana shows that the maxim that ‘politics and institutions matter’ is undisputedly applicable in the adoption of social pensions in Botswana. Thus lending credence to the hypothesis by Hickey (2008) that politics is central to social welfare development, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

While discourses of thrift, austerity, and fiscal discipline dominated the political-economic discourses in Botswana in the early 1990s, the shock results of the 1994 elections showed that political pressures and incentives mediate economic and fiscal imperatives for the introduction of the universal social pension in Botswana. It also gives credence to the idea by Blyth (2002) that political actors are more likely to adopt or show a proclivity for new ideas and programs when the equilibrium in which they operate is altered. For the BDP, it is within reasonable bounds to speculate that had the party not lost in the manner in which it did in the 1994 elections, it would have continued to pay lukewarm attention to the prospect of introducing a special cash transfer for old persons.

The ‘Five Is’ model aided the analysis that yielded the insights explicated here. The Onion Skin Model provided valuable insights into subterranean ideational factors that contributed to the introduction of the social pension program in Botswana. I showed here that ideas and answers

to important questions of who is responsible for the welfare of particular groups, the recognition, framing and the definition of the welfare problems associated with that a social group are important undercurrents in the process of adopting a program like social pension in Botswana. I showed that while the welfare problem facing old persons was recognised and legitimised with the introduction of the destitute policy, the re-legitimisation, re-recognition, re-definition, and reframing of the welfare problems facing old persons heralded new ideas about how welfare issues surrounding old persons should be tackled in Botswana. The destitute policy framed old people's welfare problem as an inevitability that the state had tackle. Conversely, reframing the idea of social pension in terms of moral responsibility illustrated the necessity of a different program for old persons in Botswana.

Examining social protection development in southern Africa and the global South via a multi-dimensional perspective as employed in this dissertation is rare. Extant studies in sub-Saharan Africa and the global South concentrate more on the policy output, the design and impact of the social protection programs, while little but growing attention is paid to the factors that mattered in the introduction of a social program. Combining the 'Five Is' model and the Onion skin model permitted the enumeration of a robust yet nuanced picture of social pension development in Botswana. From this perspective, the analysis conducted here lends credence to the hypothesis from authors like Ulriksen (2012), Kpessa and Béland (2013), Gough (2008), Hickey (2008), Lavers and Hickey (2016) that factors identified in the global North welfare state literature as drivers of social protection programs are likely applicable and valuable in the global South. However, by examining actors' discourses about welfare issues and social pension, I conclude that these factors' effects are not actor-free arenas. Actors interpret, negotiate and contest social welfare issues relating to old persons in Botswana, and these interpretations, negotiations, and contestation intertwine with how institutions and actors define their interests and mode of action.

The analysis carried out here brings the concept of universalism into a sharper focus. Universalism, as often discussed in social welfare literature, often revolves around the juxtaposition of universalism with means-testing. This academic literature reveals a bias towards institutionalised program because universalism (as I showed here and in Section 1) cut across dimensions that are not often discussed in social welfare literature. I showed in Section 1 that the accepted responsibility of the state for the welfare of all people after the independence of Botswana is a form of universalism (a cultural and abstract form of universalism) that is often taken for granted in social welfare literature. I showed here that policy entrepreneurs in Botswana

framed the need for social pension in culturally understood responsibility for the older generations.

In the analysis conducted here, I found that universalism on the program level does not necessarily connote universalism on a social problem level. The within-category exclusion character of the social pension program evinces this conclusion. One cannot say old persons are universally covered since the program summarily excludes a substantial section of persons defined as old.

As hinted earlier, Botswana is one of the very few countries in the global South that operates a universal social pension program. This analysis shows that the uniqueness of the social pension program in Botswana has less to do with espoused hypothesis like weak bureaucracy as concluded by Brooks (2015) or a tool of showing state responsibility as I showed with the case of Nepal. The universal character of the program had more to do with how politicians and the beneficiaries viewed the program. The views are inherently historical, and the discovery of these perspectives as essential elements in the introduction of social pension in Botswana authenticates this dissertation's arguments that micro-level ideas of collective responsibility, frames, and identified problems are essential underpinnings for the development of social protection programs.

Chapter 4: Botswana

Section 4: From Program Universalism to Systemic Universalism

4.4.1 Introduction

In Section 1, the ideational underpinnings of social welfare were traced in Botswana from 1966 to 1999. One of the germane conclusions the ideational tracing is that state's accepted welfare responsibility in Botswana can be construed as a form of universalism since the responsibility of the state covers all persons in Botswana. The responsibility is not of a legal character, but it is culturally understood among the elites and the Botswana's population.

In Sections 2 and 3, one of the program manifestations of state's accepted responsibility came in the form of a universal social pension program for old persons. Section 3 presented evidence that showed that the development of the program was not only a product of structural considerations. I showed that ideas about collective responsibility, the definition of the problems facing old persons are underpinnings that were important in the introduction of social pensions in Botswana. The findings from Section 3 lends credence to the main arguments of this dissertation that social protection programs like universal social pensions are not just products of political and economic considerations.

Among others, I found, and in contrast to major debates in social welfare literature, universalism as an idea and as a concept transcend the often discussed debates around the merits and demerits of means-tested programs and non-means-tested programs (Hanlon et al. 2010, p. 94; Cruz-Martinez 2016; Brooks 2015; Devereux 2016; Korpi and Palme 1998). As highlighted by authors like Franzoni and Sánchez-Ancochea (2014), Leisering (2019) and Anttonen and Sipilä (2014), universalism as an idea and as a concept is versatile.

Botswana's social protection framework has been touted as one of the most extensive in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of program coverage (Seekings 2017a). However, in Section 2, I showed that the benefit that accrue to old persons from the universal social pension program is residual. From the analysis of authors like Seekings (2017a) and Bar-On (2001), the residuality of the social pension program is characteristic of the entire social protection program, i.e., the benefits from the social protection programs in Botswana is meagre.

Notwithstanding, this section, i.e., Section 4, seeks to understand if we can speak of a meso form of universalism in Botswana, or in technical terms, it investigates systemic universalism of the social protection framework in Botswana. It seeks to understand the true extent of social protection in Botswana through the entitlement analytical approach. It asks which groups are

covered and who has been left behind? To what extent do these programs contribute to coverage of all persons in Botswana i.e., how have they contributed to systemic universalism in Botswana.

This section embeds the universal social pension program in the social protection framework in Botswana. It examines if the program contributes to the systemic universalist character of the social protection framework in Botswana. Systemic universalism denotes the extent to which individual programs contribute to the universalist coverage of all persons within a territory.

Successive governments in Botswana have differed to social cash transfers, in-kind transfers, public works programs, nutritional and food distribution programs as paradigms for answering these questions drought and poverty in Botswana. Social insurance programs also play a role in the architecture of social protection programs in Botswana. These schemes include Pensions and Provident funds, Workmen Compensation Act, Maternity benefits, Maternity benefits, and Health Insurance schemes. The roles of these schemes are limited and fragmented (World Bank 2013, pp. 36–37). More so, the role of the state in these schemes vary. For example, the state play a significant role in the healthcare sector and only a slight fraction of Botswana’s population have health insurance schemes, mainly those in the formal sector (Seboni 2013, p. 33). Similarly, the state plays a significant role in the pension sector with the provision of universal social pension, and it used to be the most important provider of pension benefits (formal sector) in Botswana.

4.4.2 Analytical Approach

This sections' analytical approach borrows from Leisering (2019), who transposed the entitlement typology popularised by Sen (1983) into the study and description of social protection programs. Although, the entitlement approach as used by Leisering (2019) appears limited in that it focuses exclusively on legal sources of social sustenance while ignoring other possible sources of social sustenance outside of markets or state transfers. Nonetheless, the entitlement approach provides a comprehensive framework for describing all legal sources of social protection programs.

As Leisering (2019) argued, entitlements are often taken as foregone conclusions and are not adequately scrutinised in research and practice. The entitlement approach to the description and analysis of social protection programs posits that since program's labels presuppose the question of who is covered, proper scrutiny of these presuppositions is often taken for granted and ignored in research and practice. Essentially, the entitlement approach goes beyond the label to understand who is covered by a program. The entitlement approach predicts that a careful analysis of the entitlement aspect of social protection programs will produce a more nuanced and complex picture of the characteristics of social protection programs and frameworks.

While this section shares the stance of Leisering (2019) stance on entitlement, it differs from his use of the entitlement approach by including 'own-labour' based forms of entitlement in conjunction with transfer-based entitlements. The inclusion of 'own-labour' based entitlement in the analysis of the social protection programs in Botswana stems from the fact that public works and food for work programs are a case of own-labour entitlement, and they form a crucial core of the social protection programs framework of Botswana.

Similarly, the conceptualisation of transfer entitlements by Leisering (2019) ascribed a hierarchy to transfer entitlement programs like cash transfers and in-kind transfers in how they engender entitlement relations. He posited that cash transfers have an advantage of securing effective entitlement relations than in-kind transfers. This section agrees with this sentiment. However, the superiority of cash transfers in securing effective entitlement and entitlement relations should not distract from the fact that other forms of transfer entitlement like in-kind transfers connote a sense of recognition of welfare claims. As such, the ensemble of Botswana's in-kind transfers will be included in this analysis. Besides, excluding certain entitlements categories is tantamount to a defeat of the goal of explaining all legal sources of social protection in Botswana.

4.4.3 Social Protection Programs in Botswana

The history of social protection in Botswana predates its statehood. Social systems of *Mafisa*, *Majoka* were used by people in pre-colonial and colonial Botswana to combat adverse welfare, especially in times of bad harvest and droughts. Indeed, some of these social systems are still in operation in many parts of Botswana today (Tesliuc et al. 2013, p. 63). The ideas of reciprocity and solidarity underpinned these systems, and the extended family networks and traditional authorities were at the centre of these provisions (Ntseane 2007). The concepts of *Mafisa* and *Majoka* provide credence to von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann (1994) arguments that in traditional societies, notions of social protection exist notwithstanding the non-existence of functionally differentiated national institutions and agencies dedicated to the execution of such ideas in these societies.

As shown in Section 1, upon independence, the state took over the responsibility of providing welfare while recognising the influences of traditional systems (Republic of Botswana 1966). In the first development plan-Bechuanaland Protectorate Development Plan (1963-1968)- the state acknowledged that customary laws and traditional support systems were crucial to combating adverse welfare issues in Botswana (Ntseane 2007; Khama 1966). The defining social and national questions of independence, poverty and drought evinced this balance to a great deal in the years following the independence of Botswana.

In particular, the exigencies of drought foisted upon the state a need to institute social protection programs as traditional welfare systems were crumbling due to the severity of the drought encountered in the earlier years of independence of Botswana (Seekings 2016a, p. 2). With the help of international agencies like the World Food Programme (WFP) and financing from Britain, the first social protection program was instituted in Botswana. This drought relief program had a three-fold approach that employed a combination of own-labour entitlement and transfer-based entitlement approach. The program divided the population according to people who can provide for themselves through their labour and who are incapable of augmenting their welfare through their labour. For the able-bodied working persons, food was provided in exchange for work. The latter group consisted of children, old persons, lactating mothers, pregnant women, Tuberculosis patients and other poor persons without family support systems. Food was transferred to the members of these groups.

More importantly, on an ideational level, the institutionalisation of the drought relief in the 1960s allowed the BDP to put forward and cement its approach to social protection in Botswana. It equally provided the utmost evidence that collective responsibility for welfare issues was now the purview of the state, that a collective welfare norm that transcended sub-national identifiers of tribe was taking hold in Botswana. In accepting the welfare responsibility for the welfare of the denizens of the territory, successive BDP led governments privileged a growth mediated approach to welfare enhancement while individual welfare policies were to be instituted when all other avenues of welfare enhancements had failed, i.e., the state is the last resort of individual welfare enhancement in Botswana.

4.4.4 Entitlement Approach to Social Protection Programs Analysis in Botswana

The architecture of social protection in Botswana employs an *individualised and uniform mode of entitlement*, i.e., programs that make-up the social protection framework of Botswana comprises programs that employ means-testing (individualised) and programs that can be referred to as ‘universal’ (uniform). Interestingly, people that are designated as old are one of the groups that have a uniform mode of entitlement. In contrast, benefits for other social groups are individualised, i.e., they are means-tested. Table 10 provides information regarding the timeline of social protection programs in Botswana and entitlement category.

Table 10: Timeline of Social Protection Programs in Botswana

Name of Program	Year of Introduction	Category of Entitlement	Target
Labour based drought relief programs (till 2008) Morphed into Ipelegeng Programme (after 2008)	1965 2008	Own-labour entitlement Own-labour entitlement	All citizens who are 18 years and above
Vulnerable groups and school feeding programs	1966	Transfer entitlement	Public secondary and primary school students and people defined as vulnerable
National policy on Destitute	1980	Transfer entitlement	All citizens that meet the state’s definition of a destitute
Labour based drought relief programs (introduction of cash).	1982	Transfer entitlement	All citizens who are 18 years and above
Old Age Pension	1996	Transfer entitlement	All citizens that meet the program’s definition of old age

World War 2 Veteran Allowance	1998	Transfer entitlement	All citizens that meet the definition of World War 2 veteran
Orphan Care Program	1999	Transfer entitlement	Orphans below 18 years old
Revised National Policy on Destitute (revised)	2002; 2008	Transfer entitlement	All citizens that meet the state's definition of destitute
Disability Allowance	2015	Transfer entitlement	All citizens with severe and profound disability

Social protections programs in Botswana have divergent *scopes of entitlements*, and these scopes have evolved. For example, upon the introduction of social protection programs for people designated as destitute in 1980, the scope of entitlement of the program was protection-universal, i.e., all citizens of Botswana can benefit from the destitute policy if they meet the qualifying criteria of destitution. When the policy was revised in 2002, destitution took on a new categorical definition in which a person can be either a permanent destitute or a temporary destitute. The revision subsumed protection categoricity under protection universalism, i.e., while the destitute policy grants benefit to all citizens of Botswana when they meet the criteria for destitution (protection universalism), it also graded these benefits into categories of destitute (protection categoricity).

In Botswana, in-kind benefits play a more prominent role than pure cash transfers. Persons designated as old are the only social group that enjoys the discretion of enjoying the benefit that accrues to them. They are the only group that have pure cash transfers accorded to them. While cash is dispensed to other social groups, members of these groups do not have the discretion as to how they spend the money. The use of cash by the beneficiaries is externally determined. For example, the Revised National Policy on Destitute Policy recognised that cash is integral to tackling destitution and that individual needs differ (Republic of Botswana 2002, p. 7). However, persons designated as destitute do not have the discretion on how they spend the cash from the program. The revised policy provided a list of 'personal items' that may be purchased using the money that accrues to such person (Republic of Botswana 2002).

Given the dimensions enumerated above, it is possible to group Botswana’s social protection programs into the following varieties of basic security as enumerated by Leisering (2019):

Protection-Categorical Programs: These programs are means-tested social protection programs that are directed to the individuals or groups that fall under poverty.

Benefit-Categorical Programs: They are programs that bestow benefits to a category of persons or social group regardless of poverty or need.

Protection-Universal Social Assistance: These are means-tested programs that accord benefits to all members of a polity when they fall into poverty.

Benefit Universalism: In this variety, citizens are entitled to benefits irrespective of poverty or need.

Table 11: Varieties of Social Protection Programs in Botswana

		Modes of Entitlements	
		Individualised (means-tested)	Uniform (not means-tested)
		Protection-Categorical Social Assistance	Benefit-Categorical ‘Universal’ Programs
Scope of entitlements	categorical	Disability Allowance, National policy on Destitute (after 2002) Vulnerable Groups Feeding Program, Primary and Secondary School Feeding Program, Ipelegeng Programme.	Universal Social Pensions, World War 2 Veterans Allowance, Orphan Care Program.
	population-wide (non-categorical)	Protection-Universal Social Assistance National policy on Destitute (till 2002)	Benefit Universalism

Table 11 enumerates the varieties of social protection programs in Botswana. This enumeration of the social protection programs in Botswana highlights its comprehensiveness in that it contains population-wide programs and myriad categorical programs that cover the entire lifecycle of the citizens of Botswana. Notably, the destitute program (before the 2002 reform) in Botswana was the quintessential protection universalist program in that it ensures that all persons in Botswana

are provided with a modicum of sustenance when they need it. This is especially important for persons that are not covered in the main social assistance program of their social group. Take the Old Age cash transfer program as an example. The old age cash transfer program provides steady and periodic cash to people who are 65 years and above. However, the retirement age in Botswana is 60. So if, for instance, an individual, age 62, falls into poverty, he or she is not able to claim any benefit of the Old Age Program, but he or she is able to claim benefits that accrue from the destitute program provided that he or she meets the criteria for destitution in Botswana.

4.4.5 Ensemble of the micro-structure of Social Protection in Botswana

Table 12 provides a schematic overview of social protection programs in Botswana. It examines actual members of categories covered by targeted programs because the label of a program does not necessarily give an insight to actual persons that the program covers. It begins this task by initially examining how these groups are covered institutionally. It explicates different programs and delineates answers to the question of the extent of the institutionalisation of the different programs in Botswana. With the question of institutionalisation, the legal basis, source of funding, and program administration are examined. Similarly, it investigates who is entitled to what by looking at the programs and the target categories and subcategories of the programs. Lastly, the conditions of entitlement and the benefits standards of the programs are to be enumerated.

Table 12: Social Protection Framework in Botswana

Who is covered?			Conditions		Institutionalisation		
Cognitive categories	Name of Program	Benefit Type	Benefits	Eligibility conditions	Funding	Administration	Legal standing
Quasi Biological Category	Orphan Care Program	Cash and In-Kind transfers	Pocket money, Food basket, school uniforms, travel allowance	Vulnerable or Orphan children below 18 years of age	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Local Government's Department of Social Protection, Division of Child Services	Not based on legislative act
Quasi Biological Category	Primary school feeding program	In-Kind transfers (conditional)	Meal equivalent to 1/3 of children daily nutritional needs	All children attending public primary schools (benefits are implicitly conditioned on attendance).	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Local Government's Department of Local Government Finance and Procurement, Division of Food Relief Services (DFRS) in collaboration with other departments and ministries.	Not based on legislative act
Quasi Biological Category	Secondary School Feeding Program	In-Kind Transfers (Conditional)	Benefits similar to Primary school feeding program, Although, boarding house students receive 3 meals a day	All students attending public secondary schools and boarding house students in special education schools (benefits are implicitly conditioned on attendance).	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Education and Skills Development	Not based on legislative act
Quasi Biological Category	Old Age Pensions	Cash Transfers (Unconditional)	300 Pula/month (29 USD)	A citizen of Botswana that is 65 years and above	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Local Government, Department of	Not based on legislative act

						Destitute persons and Old age pensions	
Quasi Biological Category	Vulnerable Group Feeding Programme	In-Kind Transfers (Unconditional)	Take home food rations	Children, pregnant and lactating women	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Local Government's Department of Local Government Finance and Procurement, Division of Food Relief Services (DFRS)	Not based on legislative act
Quasi Biological Category	Disability allowance	In-Kind Transfers and Cash Transfers (Means Tested)	300/Pula and Food Basket	People with severe disability.	The Government of Botswana	The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	Not based on legislative act
Socially defined groups	World War II (WWII) Veterans Allowance	Cash Transfers (Unconditional)	420 Pula/month (46 USD)	Spouse (that did not remarry), Orphans of/ or citizens of Botswana that participated in 1st or 2nd World War	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Local Government, Department of Destitute persons and Old age pensions	Not based on legislative act
Economically defined categories	Ipelegeng–Public Works	Food/Cash for work (self-targeting, Lottery draw in times of excess demands)	580 Pula/month (76 USD)	Eligible persons must be 18 years and above with a national identity card	The Government of Botswana	Ministry of Local Government Development Planning, Community Development	Not based on legislative act
Needs defined categories	Destitute Persons' Allowance	Food/Cash Transfers (Unconditional), in-kind transfers, Burial services and Housing.	Food rations, cash allowance (230 Pula/month),	Degree of destitution adjudged by a social worker	The Government of Botswana.	Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Destitute persons and Old age pensions	Not based on legislative act

Source: World Bank (2013) and various government documents

4.4.6 The Institutionalisation of Social Protection in Botswana

Legal basis of social protection in Botswana

Leisering (2019) noted in his analysis that the non-legalisation of social protection programs is commonplace in the global South, and he ascribed this to the nascent nature of democratic rule in the global South. He found in his analysis that the legalisation of social protection programs may also depend on which social group a program is addressing. He found that programs addressing disability and old age are more likely to have statutory standings than programs addressing children. For Botswana, these postulations do not hold.

Despite being the oldest continuous democracy in Africa, none of the programs in Botswana social protection framework is grounded in legislative statute. Social protection programs in Botswana are enacted through administrative directives and executive orders. It is possible to postulate why this is the case in Botswana. I made the argument in previous sections of the Botswana chapter that it is likely that the non-legalisation of social protection in Botswana may likely may be ascribed to Botswana's old constitution and the general reticence of the BDP against social protection programs. Seekings (2017a) shares this stance and asserted that the lack of statutory legislation on these programs reflects the ideational slants of the BDP. He hypothesised that the angst of the BDP that creating a legislative basis for these programs may generate a sense of entitlement have likely precluded the legalisation of these programs. For instance, the Revised National Destitute policy document confirmed these postulations by stating that beneficiaries are not in any way right holders and 'any assistance provided under this policy is not an automatic entitlement' (Republic of Botswana 2002, p. 6).

Funding

Notwithstanding the non-legalisation of social protection programs in Botswana, successive governments of Botswana have demonstrated commitments to these programs via budgetary allocations. Botswana is one of the richest countries on the continent and it finances all its social protection programs from national budget allocations. Although, broader social policy areas of education and health dominates aggregate social spending in Botswana. Expenditure on these social protection programs amounted to 4.4% of the GDP in recent years (World Bank 2013), and over the

past 30 years the expenditure on these social protection programs steadied around 5% of the GDP (Jefferis 2016, p. 18).

It must be noted that the funding of social protection programs in Botswana does not often reflect benefit or adequacy concerns. Rather, the questions of affordability and financial resources have historically dominated the financing discourses associated with these programs. Given that the modus operandi of the BDP is to privilege growth mediated approach to welfare enhancement, the concerns of successive BDP led governments was to make sure that the financial health of the country was sound enough to support its privileged set of policies. To this end, individualised programs are perceived as expensive and detrimental to the country's financial health. This perspective was quintessentially encapsulated by the parliamentary exchanges that greeted the first debates about the provision of social pensions in Botswana in 1988. The political parties in Botswana's parliament (opposing parties and the BDP) agreed to the appropriateness of the idea of cash transfers for old persons in Botswana. The issue of the affordability of such a program was the central dissenting theme of the parliamentarians that spoke against it (Mmusi 1988; Ulriksen 2010, p. 141).

Administration

The story of the administration of social programs in Botswana is the story of its economic progression and state-building process. As highlighted in the earlier sections, the exigencies of droughts were one of the main drivers of the first set of social protection programs in Botswana. At this time, these programs were administered with the help of international organisations like the World Food Program (WFP). As Botswana progressed economically to a middle-income country, the government of Botswana took full responsibility for these programs. Through its ministries and bureaucratic apparatus, the government of Botswana manages and administers the myriad social protection programs in Botswana. As highlighted in Table 12, the Ministry of Local government administers most of the programs. The Ministry of Education and a host of other ministries manage other programs. The programs are coordinated at the central level; different administrative structures and accountability structures are responsible for the delivery of these programs at the local level.

4.4.7 Who is Covered?

The framework of social protection programs does cover the entire lifecycle of citizens living in Botswana. In this way, it is possible to ostensibly conclude that Botswana’s social protection framework is of a systemic universalist character. However, this coverage is broken down by target categories. Botswana has instituted social protection programs for persons designated as children, old, destitute and people of working age. Broadly, social protection programs in Botswana according to the age and social characteristics of beneficiaries. The tables below (i.e., Table 13 and Table 14) provides a classification of these programs according to the social and age character that they cover.

Table 13: Social Protection Programs based on Social Characteristics

Social Character	Name of Program
Disability	Disability Allowance
Orphanhood	Orphan Care Program
Destitution	Destitute Persons Allowance
Veteran	World War 2 Veteran Allowance
Unemployment	Ipelegeng Public Works
Vulnerability	Vulnerability Group Feeding Program

Table 14: Social Protection Programs based on Age

Age Character	Name of Program
65+ Years	Old Age Allowance
School Age	Primary and Secondary School Feeding program

It is commonplace for members of the BDP to tout the comprehensiveness of social protection in Botswana. For instance, in the 2014 BDP election manifesto, the array of social protection programs that target several social groups in Botswana was touted as evidence that the BDP was tackling questions relating to destitution and poverty (BDP 2014). However, what is seldomly discussed by the BDP is the within-category exclusions that beset some of these programs and the residual nature of the benefits from the programs. A typical example of this exclusion can be observed with the old age pension program in Botswana. With the program’s label and distributive character, it is assumed

that it covers all old persons in Botswana. However, the definition of old age as per the program excludes individuals that are deemed old enough to exit the labour force in Botswana. Accordingly, this exclusion and the general inadequacy of program benefits has been used by the opposition parties as talking points for reforming the social protection framework in Botswana.

The within-category exclusion of the social protection programs in Botswana are examined below. It looks at who benefits and how they are defined viz-a-viz the category that they purport to cover.

Children

In Botswana, the school feeding program and the orphan care programs are the most important programs directed exclusively to persons defined as children. The feeding program's policy goal is to alleviate hunger to improve learning and encourage school attendance and school retention (Moepeng 2013). While the government of Botswana posits that the program is *protection-categorical*, i.e., benefit for all members of a category who fall into poverty, it must be noted that the program's definition of a child takes into consideration the type of school that a child attends as a condition from the benefiting from the program. In this case, a child who attends a private primary or secondary school in Botswana cannot benefit from the program. In a way, the program has two conditions of entitlement. First, there is an implicit means-test accorded to the program. Second, the condition of school attendance may be problematic for the children of nomadic tribes in Botswana (called the Basawara) who reside in the sparse deserts of the Kalahari. With this tribe, informal education is privileged over formal education, and Basawara children are often unfamiliar with the language of instruction of primary and secondary schools in Botswana (Setswana and English) (Le Roux 2002, p. 11).

The Orphan Care Program was introduced in 1999 to soothe the exigencies of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Botswana. The program's stated policy goal is 'improving the quality of life orphans and vulnerable children by ensuring they receive optimal care and support' (MLGRD 2015a, p. 10). The program is *benefit-categorical* in that it provides in-kind benefits, food baskets, private clothing, payment of school fees, among other benefits to all individuals under the age of 18 that meet the definition of an orphan in Botswana (World Bank 2013, p. 22). Although, from the national definition of orphanhood in Botswana within-case exclusion is non-existent. Nonetheless, the program employs a narrow definition of an orphan as a child that who has lost either one parent or both parents (if they are married) whether they are biological or adoptive parents.

Other programs that address persons defined as children include the Vulnerable Group Feeding Program and the Destitute Persons Program. The Vulnerable Group Feeding Program has a policy goal of providing food and nutritional supplements to people at risk of undernutrition. The definition of persons that is vulnerable in this program vary from the wider definition of established categories in other social protection programs. While the definition of a child in various legislative statutes in Botswana is an individual that is 18 years or under, this program defines a child that is vulnerable to undernutrition as all individuals aged 5 and under. At the same time, a child that is 18 years and under but pregnant can also benefit from this program. As such, unpregnant children and children from ages 6 to 18 are excluded from this program and implicitly adjudged as not vulnerable to undernutrition or malnutrition. This exemplifies a case of within-category exclusion in Botswana.

Equally, this program's scope of entitlement also depends on whether the country is going through drought. In times of drought, a *benefit categoriality* approach is employed, i.e., all children in the qualifying age in Botswana are provided with supplementary feeding. Conversely, during non-drought years, the scope of entitlement shifts to protection-categoriality, i.e., the program takes into consideration the weight of a child before he or she can benefit from the program and preference is accorded to underweight children.

Lastly, the 'poor persons' character of the National Policy Destitute allows for the inclusion of individuals defined as children. The Destitute policy takes a broader definition of a child as an individual who is 18 years old and below. But the child must pass specific needs and care criteria before he or she can benefit from the destitute policy. In a sense, a nested scope of entitlement is peculiar with the destitute policy.

Working Age

There is an ablest definition of a working person in Botswana in that a working person is equated to an 'able-bodied' person. Social protection programs that cover persons defined as working age have been part of Botswana's social protection architecture since the independence of Botswana. The Labour Based Public Works Schemes comprises of labour-intensive rural roads program and the drought relief program in Botswana. These schemes were responses to the drought of the 1960s. The programs' stated policy goals were to mitigate the exigencies of the drought while also providing labour for developmental projects in Botswana.

Prior to 1982, programs had relied on food for work as the main modus of payment. However, the program was plagued with logistical difficulty and other problems associated with transporting food (Drèze and Sen 2004, p. 153). Consequently, and with the suggestions from outside consultants in epistemic communities, the programs took on a new problem definition and paradigm with the introduction of cash in place of food as payment for work by non-disabled persons (Holm and Morgan 1985). The problem definition in drought times was that destitution in drought times was not a question of food shortages but a question of the incomes available to persons during times of drought. As such, the political leaders perceived that the relief program could supplement rural income through wage employment to working people affected by drought. The relief effort was redesigned and framed to tackle income problems instead of consumption problems, indicating a paradigm shift that morphed antidrought policy into income security policy.

The current form of the drought relief program was introduced in 2008, and it was made a permanent antipoverty program rather than a seasonal antidrought program. The new program took on the twin goals of poverty alleviation and employment creation. The program is self-targeted and *protection-universal* in that all persons 18 years and above are entitled to participate.

Disabled Persons

The National Policy on Care for People with Disabilities is one of the few directives in which the government of Botswana expressly admitted that global and regional level ideas and conventions were influential in its definition and ideation of disability in Botswana (MOH 1996, p. 1; MLGRD 2015b, p. 1). Though, it should be noted that Botswana is yet to ratify or accede to important global conventions for disabled persons like the UN Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

The government of Botswana posited that its responsibility to look after the welfare of persons with disability prompted the introduction of the Disability Allowance in 2015. It stated that the cash and food-based Disability Allowance program is geared towards enhancing the autonomy, dignity and well-being of disabled persons in Botswana in 2015 (MLGRD 2015b, p. 2). The program is called the Disability Allowance. The program employs a *protection categoriality* approach to the scope of entitlement in that all disabled persons that fall under the poverty threshold of less than 300 Pula in a month qualify for the program. In addition, the program allows for an overlap of benefits. For example, if an individual is 66 years old, he or she is entitled to benefit from the old age cash transfer.

If the same individual has a profound or severe disability, he or she still qualifies for benefits under the Disability Allowance Program in Botswana.

Poor Persons

In the global South, social protection programs covering all persons that meet a certain poverty threshold are rare. This is not the case in Botswana. In 1980, the government of Botswana introduced the National Destitute Policy in Botswana to provide minimum sustenance to persons that qualify as destitute. This program can be thought of as general household assistance in that its targets children, disabled persons, terminally ill persons, working-age persons (they are defined as Temporary Destitute) and old persons. The program, at its inception, was non-categorical since it targets all social groups in Botswana. While it may seem that the program is protection-universal, scrupulous analysis of the revised version of the policy in 2002 and 2008 showed that the programs have evolved to become a protection categorical program because it was decided that able-bodied persons of working age should be moved out of the destitute program into the public works Ipelegeng program (Matambo 2010).

The shift from protection universalism to protection categoricity was borne out of ideational and economic efficiency concerns. The BDP led government was concerned that the number of destitute was posing significant fiscal pressure on the government's purse, and it was becoming economically unsustainable (Matambo 2010, p. 25). Equally, an ideational concern was also cited as the inspiration for the shift away from the protection universalism character of the destitute program. The BDP led government were also concerned that the destitute policy was fostering dependency on the state, and the increasing number of destitutes was presented as evidence of this dependency (Seekings 2017b). Consequently, it was adjudged that a shift to the Ipelegeng program will reinvigorate the self-reliance traits of non-disabled working persons in Botswana (Matambo 2010).

Old Persons

The 1990s were a period of consolidation of public transfers to people defined as old in Botswana and it marked a gradual shift towards an individualised understanding of questions of poverty and destitution in Botswana. The decade started with the process of shifting the responsibility of public pensions away from the state towards the individual with the privatisation of public pensions and passage of the Pension and Provident Funds Act of 1987. The shift in the responsibility of public

pensions away from the state did not democratise access to pensions; it only solidified the position of privileged civil servants who had pensionable positions. Conversely, the shock of the 1994 elections and structural conditions of demography and migration partly prompted the BDP-led government to enact social pensions in Botswana in 1996. This was followed by the reintroduction of social cash transfers for citizens of Botswana that participated in the 2nd World War in 1998.

The privatisation of Botswana's public pensions envisaged a shift from a direct benefit system to a direct contribution system. This shift was completed in 2002. While other programs in Botswana employ own-labour and in-kind transfer entitlement approaches, the social protection programs to old persons in Botswana departed from this trend by employing a transfer entitlement approach with pure cash transfers. What is more is that these cash transfers do not use means-testing as it is with most social protection programs in Botswana. The old age pension program and the veterans cash transfers are benefit categorical in nature, i.e., they are universal. This is significant in the context of the broader framework of social protection in Botswana in that it not only recognises the welfare needs of old persons, but it also bestows on old persons the autonomy as to how they can meet their individual needs. This contrast with other programs in Botswana in which cash is provided to individuals, but this use of the cash is externally determined by the state.

In a sense, social protection programs for older persons in Botswana can be viewed as a conduit for understanding the legitimacy of public transfers in Botswana. The use of cash transfers and the non-use of means-testing suggest that the BDP's angst of dependency is not perceived as an issue among old persons and that old persons, irrespective of their income status, have legitimate claims to social protection in Botswana. This legitimate claim to social protection programs can also explain their exemptions in the social welfare reforms carried out in the late 2000s. All in all, old persons appear to be the most privileged social group that benefits from social protection in Botswana.

Despite the apparent privileged status of old persons, within-category exclusion persists in these programs. For instance, the old age cash transfers program in Botswana presents a classic case of within-category exclusion. While the name purports old persons as targets, scrupulous analysis of the qualifying criteria indicates that the definition of old according to the program does not march the 'normal' definition of old persons in Botswana. As an illustration, an individual who is 62 is not allowed to participate in the labour market because the age of retirement in Botswana is 60. However, he is not entitled to benefit from the program because the qualifying age for the old age pension program is 65. In short, persons between the ages of 60 and 64 are statutorily excluded from the old age cash transfer program.

4.4.8 Summary

This section set out to understand if we can speak of a meso form of universalism in Botswana, i.e., if the ensemble of the social protection in Botswana adds up to cover all persons in Botswana. This section paid close attention to programs directed to old persons in the framework of social protection programs in Botswana. The entitlement approach was employed to aid the description and analysis of the social protection programs. This approach goes deeper into the analysis of social programs by examining how the actual legal beneficiaries of a program are socially defined.

The analysis and description of the social protection of Botswana as done in this section confirms the conclusion of studies from Devereux (2007), Garcia and Moore (2012), Ulriksen (2011), Hickey (2011) that the social welfare framework in Botswana is extensive and comprehensive. However, these studies fail to point out the nuances of the comprehensiveness of Botswana's social welfare framework, as done in this section.

In the investigation carried out in this section, I found that superficially, the social protection framework of Botswana has a systemic universalist since it possesses a cradle to the grave character. It has programs for life circumstances such as poverty at every life stage, i.e., programs for children, non-disabled adults, disabled persons, and old persons. However, the framework is characterised by categorical fragmentation. In addition, it is impossible to characterise the social protection framework of Botswana as systemic universalist because significant gaps exist between what the labels of programs purport to cover and the actual definition of who can benefit from such program.

The analysis conducted in this section shows that due to economic efficiency and ideational concerns, there has been an intensification of fragmentation of Botswana's social protection framework since the beginning of the 2000s. In conceptual terms, the framework of social protection in Botswana is moving towards what Anttonen and Sipilä (2014) referred to as de-universalisation, i.e., a state in which the universalism character of social protection systems is diminishing.

With the analysis carried out here, I found support for the arguments from Anttonen and Sipilä (2014), Leisering (2019) and Franzoni and Sánchez-Ancochea (2014) that universalism transcends the narrow arguments of the merits and demerits of means-testing and universal social protection programs. Indeed, Anttonen and Sipilä (2014) and Leisering (2019) argue that when we speak of universalism, we should speak of the varieties of universalism instead of a singular coherent idea. The

conclusions by these scholars regarding universalism is supported by the analysis carried out in the chapter on Botswana.

Table 15: Forms of Universalism in Botswana

Universalism	<p>Broader Form of Universalism</p> <p>Cultural/Political accepted welfare responsibility (in contrast to the legal and constitutionally accepted welfare responsibility of the likes South Africa and Namibia.</p>
	<p>Aggregate program/System Universalism?</p> <p>Fragmented Universalism and De-Universalisation</p>
	<p>Program Universalism</p> <p>Universal Social Pensions</p>

In the analysis of Botswana as a case study, I found that the idea and concept of universalism can be observed in three levels in Botswana. On these levels, universalism take different forms., On the broader levels, universalism is embodied in the state accepted welfare responsibility that takes a political and cultural form (see Section 1). The BDP consistently interpreted this responsibility by placing emphasis on developmental universalist programs. Social protection programs are embraced by the BDP but only when other agents of welfare production have failed. The character of the accepted responsibility may be considered weak given that it is not of a legal or constitutional form as it is with peer countries like Namibia and South Africa. Although, one can reasonably argue that the non-legalisation of welfare responsibility can be ascribed to the stability of the polity of Botswana and the fact that social rights and its constitutionalisation was not of widespread when the constitution was written in 1966. This contrasts with the newer constitutions of Namibia and South Africa, both of which were written in the 1990s decade-a decade that coincided with a period of rapid inclusion of social and economic rights in national constitutions (Jung et al. 2013).

On the level of program, universalism can be found regarding cash transfers directed to persons designated as old in Botswana. In Section 2 and 3, the evidence presented shows that universalism needs not be obtainable in all dimensions related to the program. With the help of the Onion Skin Model, I showed that while the social cash transfer for old persons is universal on a program level, it

is not universal on a problem definition level because the definition of old in the program does not cover all persons that are socially defined as old in Botswana.

Here in Section 4, it is impossible to speak of universalism as per the framework of social protection in Botswana. As I showed, the framework exhibits a lifecycle orientation, but fragmentation characterises the social protection framework and not all the target categories of social protection programs are inclusively covered.

The argument by Anttonen and Sipilä (2014) that universalism as an idea and concept is not static; it changes over time and one can find varying degrees of universalism in a polity. These arguments aptly apply to Botswana. While social cash transfers to old persons (Old Age Pensions and Veteran Allowance) are underlined by universalism logic, the notion of welfare statism underpinned by universalism has never been enthusiastically embraced by the leading political party in Botswana, at least not in the context of welfare benefits nor has it been an overarching rationale in the development of social protection framework of Botswana.

Chapter 5: Nepal

Nepal Case Study: Research Agenda

The introduction and evolution of social protection programs are linked to Nepal's struggle for a stable governance system. Historically, the governance system in Nepal is characteristically fragile compared to Botswana-the comparative case in this dissertation. Hence, questions of state-building and political stability consistently occupy a higher stratum in the priorities of political elites in Nepal since the 1950s.

In general terms, social protection programs were perceived as an essential constituent for broader goals of state-building and political stability of Nepal. This conclusion was true when Nepal opened its shores to external influences in the 1950s, and it was also true when democratic governance returned in 1990. In the First-Five Year Development Plan of Nepal (1956-1961), social policies centred on developmental areas of health and education because the two policy areas were deemed to be critical to economic growth and, broadly, the political stability and state-building objectives of the political elites (Kingdom of Nepal 1956, p. 1). In the Eighth-Five Year Development Plan of Nepal (1992-1997), social policies, especially social protection programs, were recognised alongside economic growth as viable instruments against identified social problems of poverty and inequality in Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 75).

Since the 1990s, there has been a gradual expansion of the state protection programs in Nepal. Special programs are directed to social groups like old persons, disabled persons, children, women, and persons of working age. This dissertation examines the social protection program directed towards persons designated as old in Nepal. The program is essential in Nepal because it formed the bedrock of the subsequent expansion of state protection in Nepal. This dissertation investigates the drivers of the universal social pensions introduced in December 1994. It endeavours to investigate the ideas that underpin social welfare in Nepal; it analyses the institutionalisation and introduction of the universal social pension in Nepal and the social protection framework in Nepal.

As stated in the literature review chapter, this dissertation's logic is that social protection programs like social pensions are not just products of political, economic, and structural considerations. They are similarly determined by Ideas that political elites and wider society hold regarding social protection issues. Although, in this dissertation, preference is accorded to Ideas held by the elites in Nepal. Ideas, as construed in this dissertation, differs from extant political-economy literature in that Ideas are not only taken from a macro-perspective. They are not perceived as secondary tools that political elites use in justifying public action. Instead, they are fundamental elements that help actors

shape and articulate their interests. Ideas, as interpreted here, are crucial in determining which problems are defined as social problems and what social groups are accorded public attention. Ideas are equally crucial in shaping the solutions to social problems.

Most importantly, I submit that ideas as perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs are fundamental linchpins to the emergence of social protection programs like social pensions. Construing ideas in this way allows for deeper analytical insights beyond the macro-perspective suggested by Gough (2008)'s 'Five Is' model. Thus, Ideas are taken from an actor-centred, constructivist and historical perspectives via the Onion Skin Model deepens the Ideas factor bundle of the 'Five Is' model.

In the breath of this thought, this dissertation conceives the ideational underpinning of social protection programs under the rubric of answers to questions that germinate from the Onion Skin Model. It concerns itself with the questions of collective welfare responsibility and its distribution between the spheres of welfare provision; it examines questions of recognised social groups and social problems, the preferred solutions to the identified social issues, and how these social problems are prioritised viz-a-viz other societal questions and concerns.

The chapter on Nepal is structured as follows:

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1950-1999)

This section traces the evolution of ideas relating to social welfare issues in Nepal. Specific attention is paid to ideas relating to the welfare of old persons in Nepal. This ideational tracing covers discourses attached to social welfare from 1950 till 1999. In this exposition, the evolution of ideas on collective responsibility, recognised social groups and social problems, and frames attached to social welfare issues are explored. Importantly, this section endeavours to inquire how the evolution of these ideas shape political leaders' thoughts in the introduction of Nepal's universal social pension in 1994.

This section follows the footsteps of the Botswana chapter by dividing the span of analysis into manageable sections. Unlike the Botswana chapter, there are scholastic reasons for sectionalising the analysis. This chapter is divided into three sections. Each of the sections represents a period of significant political experiments in Nepal.

Part A examines the ideas about social welfare issues from 1950-1960. This period was critical in the history of Nepal because it ceased to be a hermit kingdom in the 1950s; the new political elites usurped power from the hereditary and autocratic regime that ruled Nepal for 104 years. In this period, Nepal experimented with democracy and enacted a development plan.

Part B covers Nepal's Monarchy's autocratic rule, i.e., between 1960-1990.

Part C investigates ideas about social welfare after the return of democracy in 1990. As specified in the introduction section, the tracing of ideas stops in 1999 because the program under investigation was adopted in the 1990s decade.

Section 2: The Description of Universal Social Pension Institutionalisation in Nepal

This section introduces Nepal's universal social pension program. It investigates how the program is funded, administered, and institutionalised. Further, it describes the benefits, coverage, and the extent of within-category exclusions of the program.

Section 3: The Adoption of Old Age Allowance Social Pensions in Nepal

This section's overarching task is to provide a mid-range explanation for the introduction of Nepal's social pension program. As with the Botswana chapter, a multidimensional framework of the 'Five Is', and the Onion Skin Model is used in answering the question posed in this section. More so, it leverages the insights from Section 1 to achieve the task of this section.

Section 4: From Program Universalism to Systemic Universalism

This section examines the framework of social protection in Nepal. It investigates if the social protection framework cover all persons in Nepal, or in technical terms, is the framework of social protection in Nepal systemic universalist? It explores coverage beyond the labels of programs, and it examines the extent of within-category exclusions in these programs.

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1950-1999)

Important Events in Nepal 1950-1999

Part	Year	Event
A	1950	The Nepali Monarchy allied with opposition forces led by Nepali Congress against the autocratic Rana regime.
	1951	The monarch-King Tribhuvan- returned as the centre of power and proclaimed Nepal as a democracy.
	1955	King Mahendra ascends to the throne upon the death of King Tribhuvan.
	1959	First elections in democratic Nepal.
B	1960	The Monarchy usurped power, suspends parliament.
	1980	Referendum for political reform. The result of the referendum favoured the status quo of absolute monarchy.
	1989	A trade dispute with India resulted in a border blockade of Nepal by India.
C	1990	Pro-democratic forces launched protests against Nepal's autocratic system; The Monarchy acquiesced to the demands of the democratic forces; Nepal becomes a constitutional monarchy polity.
	1991	Nepali Congress wins first democratic elections
	1994	Nepali Congress loses parliamentary confidence vote; United Marxist Leninist (UML) Communist party formed a new government.
	1994	Universal Old Age Pension is introduced.
	1995	Communist Party falls apart; the commencement of Maoist led civil conflict against the Nepali state.

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1950-1999)

PART A: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1950-1960)

5.1.1 Constructing Collective Responsibility: (1950-1960)

Pre-revolution years (-1950): Reclusivity and irresponsibility of the Nepali state

The evolution of the answers to welfare responsibility questions in Nepal is tied to religious teachings, social demarcations, and Nepal's turbulent political history. Before 1950, Nepal was effectively a hermit territory. Autocratic nativist rulers called the Ranas successively ruled it. The Rana regime's hold on power was partly sustained by its systematic rejection of foreign ideas about education, economics, and policies that could have improved the exposure and living conditions of the people within the territory (Oberst et al. 2018). The Rana regime's rule was patrimonial, and the state was construed as the personal property of the rulers (Kumar 1967, p. 87; Bista 1991, pp. 101–102). The regime made no concerted effort towards building the state's capacity, and it spent little on public welfare during its 104-year rule (Devkota 2005, p. 3).

The first display of state welfare responsibility was the creation of a provident fund (named Sainik Drabya Kosh) for the members of the military in 1934. The fund was created to palliate the financial destitution of retired army personnel (Rana 2012, p. 11). The provident fund scheme was later extended to public sector workers, including the police. The pattern of the establishment of welfare responsibility for these privileged social groups may likely be ascribed to these groups' strategic importance to the Rana regime's survival. It gives empirical credence to the hypothesis that countries are more likely to initially introduce social programs for strategically important social groups like the armed forces and the police because these groups are crucial to the survival of the ruling class (Leisering 2019, p. 350).

For old persons outside these privileged social groups, non-state avenues chiefly held the responsibility for answering adverse welfare questions because, during the Rana era, such questions were not construed as public questions worthy of state intervention (Kumar 1967, p. 132; Poudyal 1984, p. 94). In Nepal, religion and social relations were non-state channels for idealising and conceptualising welfare responsibilities and social concerns. Hindu and Buddhist concepts such as Dāna and Islamic concepts like the Zakat are important religious and socially embedded concepts that spell out the welfare responsibility of the society to the poor. These concepts detail the gratuitous transfer of wealth to the less privileged. Dāna (unlike Zakat) is not mandatory. It nevertheless constitutes important pillars regarding what it means to be pious in these religions (Majumdar 2014).

This is especially important in Nepal, a country where religion permeates all aspects of public and private life (Pearce et al. 2015).

Precisely for old age welfare, religion and family networks provided a channel for answering welfare responsibility questions. In Hindu teachings, the idea of intergenerational reciprocity is a moral-religious duty that compels the young to take full responsibility for the welfare of the old (Lamb 2019, 2009). The Hindu code of law-Manusmriti-codified this idea by stating that,

‘The trouble that a mother and father endure in giving birth to human beings cannot be redeemed even in a hundred years. He should constantly do what pleases the two of them’ (Manu 1991, p. 227).

In Nepal, particularly among Nepali Hindus, the children of the elderly and the family members (sons and daughters-in-law especially) bear the utmost responsibility for the welfare of old persons (Bista 1991, p. 61; GCN 2010, p. 15; Thapa 2017, p. 4). This is because old persons are perceived as valued and respected ‘gods’, capable of contributing to their communities in their later years (Parker et al. 2014, p. 238). Among Muslims, the burden of the welfare of old persons is shouldered by adult children of the old (Gangopadhyay and Samanta 2017, p. 345).

It should be noted that how the questions of welfare responsibility for old persons are answered is also mediated and fragmented by the divisions prevalent in the Nepali society. For instance, how an upper-caste Hindu would execute the old age welfare ideas in the Hindu Code of Law cannot be the same as how a practising Muslim in Nepal would interpret the Quran’s teachings regarding old people and their welfare. The answers to the questions of old age welfare for women and old people from the Dalit caste (the lowest caste in the Nepali caste system) are also different as these groups are perceived as subordinate and are marginalised in societal relations (Parker et al. 2014).

During the Rana regime’s reign, it is not possible to discern a collectivist idea of welfare. Thus, one cannot speak of collective welfare responsibility. The fragmented nature of religious and kin-based constructions of welfare and welfare responsibility differentiates it from a national or state construction of welfare and welfare responsibility. In the former, the construction of welfare and welfare responsibility is demarcated by sub-national groupings that are often not obtainable on the national level. Conversely, welfare responsibility constructed at a national level, to a substantial extent, disrupts and undermines these sub-national constructions as it connotes a sort of collectivity that transcends sub-national groupings. Often laws, regulations, and constitutions provide roadmaps for

all denizens under the umbrella of the nation-state. Welfare responsibilities derived from these national-level instruments fulfil a generalised perception that the state is a locus of welfare provision. This idea of universalism, i.e., a nationally constructed welfare responsibility of the state for all denizens of a country, would underpin how welfare responsibility questions were answered after the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1951.

Post-Revolution Nepal: New Constitutionalised Welfare Responsibility of the State

The Nepalese Revolution of 1951 altered the ruling coalition that governed Nepal. The revolution did not entirely dislodge the Rana regime's power structures because members of the aristocratic regime continued to hold considerable economic, military and bureaucratic power in Nepal after the revolution. Brown (2002, p. 23) argued that the revolution was more of an elite reshuffle than a fundamental modification of Nepal's social, economic, and political structures.

Nonetheless, the revolution birthed the search for a governing equilibrium that would accommodate monarchical and democratic institutions in Nepal. Importantly, the revolution provided a channel for public answers to welfare responsibility questions that had been previously answered by other avenues of welfare production like kin relationships. The interim constitution promulgated after the revolution stated that the state welcomed its cultural and legal responsibility for the welfare of the people of Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal 1951). Without any references to a particular mould of welfare provision or program, the discourses of the directive principles section of the 1951 Constitution positioned the state as a responsible pillar of societal relations that must strive to provide a level of sustenance to all the citizens of Nepal. The constitution stated that,

'His Majesty's Government shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting effectively as it may, social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the National life' (Kingdom of Nepal 1951, p. 1).

Similarly, in the immediate years after the revolution, the monarchy demonstrated a welfare consciousness that was absent in the Rana years by stating that it had the ambition of a 'welfare state' in Nepal (Pant 1956, p. 1; Regmi 1976, p. 11; Wildavsky 1972, p. 508). Most striking in the post-

Rana regime welfare responsibility discourses was the idea that national progress and state's collective welfare responsibility were inevitably interlinked (Kingdom of Nepal 1956, p. 1). The First-Five Year Development Plan of Nepal invariably framed the welfare responsibility of the state as a nationalist endeavour of the new political dispensation (Kingdom of Nepal 1956).

More importantly, progressive ideas about recognising social problems and deserving social groups became prominent within the discourses of the new polity. India's role in forming the new political dispensation in Nepal did not end with Nepal's imitation of its neighbour's governing and administrative structures (Brown 2002, p. 29). In drafting the interim constitution- the Nepal Interim Government Act- in 1951, the new political elites borrowed from the language and spirit of India's Constitution of 1949. Notably, the two constitutions have similar clauses and sections that relate to the social recognition of the welfare needs of particular social groups.

The Indian Constitution of 1949 stated that,

'The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want' (Republic of India 1949, p. 20).

Nepal's Interim Constitution of 1951 stated that,

'His Majesty's Government shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to educate and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want' (Kingdom of Nepal 1951, p. 2).

The borrowed constitutional idea of universalism (state responsibility for all) and the social recognition of the welfare needs of specific groups was a signifier of Nepal's political evolution. It was also a marker of a higher form of cultural and legal understanding of a national welfare philosophy not in existence in the Rana era.

These aspirations were framed not only as a reflection of new abstract philosophies of welfare universalism-i.e., the welfare responsibility of the state for all denizens of Nepal. The aspirations were

also couched in discourses that reflect the reality of the financial and human resources underdevelopment fostered by the Rana regime. Consequently, the new welfare aspirations of the state for all persons and the welfare needs of particular groups would be realised gradually and not immediately (Kingdom of Nepal 1951, p. 2). The progressive approach adopted by the new leaders of the post-Rana regime may likely explain the bias of planning programs in favour of developmental universalism in the First-Five-Year Plan of Nepal (1956-1961).

In sum, the acknowledgement of state's responsibility for the welfare of its denizens and the envisaged social protection programs for recognised social groups were constitutive elements of the departure from Nepal's autocratic's past. It was a valid expression of a new welfare relationship in which the state takes on an active role in the production and delivery of welfare for all Nepalis.

5.1.2 National Questions and Policy Paradigms: Donors and New Ideas

The 1950s in Nepal was a period of political reflection about the backwardness fostered by the Rana regime and contemplations of Nepal's future. Consequently, the questions of economic growth and poverty were conceived as significant ingredients for national goals of nation-building, social cohesion, and extra-national goal of international legitimacy (Kingdom of Nepal 1956, p. 1). Per the first national plan of Nepal, these questions and goals were intrinsically essential and were framed as vital elements for the modernisation and progress of Nepal.

Given the underdeveloped nature of Nepal's bureaucratic capacity, it was inevitable that the post-Rana regime would have to borrow ideas and techniques necessary for marshalling its stated aspirations from outside sources. Naturally, the cultural, geographical, and religious proximity with India produced a close relationship. It provided a blueprint for emulation in several areas of the new political dispensation, including bureaucratic modernisation and constitutional constructions.

However, Nepal's relationship with the outside world transcended India. The reopening of Nepal and the communist revolution in neighbouring China rekindled the attention of global powers to Nepal (Basu and Riaz 2010, p. 96). From the 1950s, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China contributed to developmental activities in Nepal (Adhikari 2014). The political elites in Nepal enthusiastically welcomed these efforts to diversify external influences beyond India (Basu and Riaz 2010, p. 93; Khadka 2000, p. 78). As a result, these outside influences had significant influences on the policy paradigms for tackling the burning national and social questions of the 1950s in Nepal.

The influence of the United States was pertinent given that it was the first country to establish an economic assistance program with post-Rana Nepal (Skerry et al. 1991, p. 3). In addition to budget support and aid, the United States was influential in the programs and ideas present in the First-Five Year Plan of Nepal (1956-1961). The United States argued that the underdeveloped nature of Nepal's bureaucratic capacity necessitated its influence. In a review of United States' developmental efforts, USAID, the international development arm of the United States government, stated that,

'In 1956, the Ministry published Nepal's First-Five-Year Plan. At the time the plan was formulated, most of the prerequisites for comprehensive planning were lacking, including statistics and the agencies for gathering them, manpower information, needs and goals, and coordination and control of planning by HMG rather than by donors..... HMG's priorities at the time mirrored those of the donors, as it was forced to rely on their data collection and field activities for planning information. As the primary donor to Nepal, USAID strongly influenced early HMG development priorities in the First Plan' (Skerry et al. 1991, p. 12).

Table 16: Onion Skin Model (1950-1960)

Theoretical concepts	
Frame	Progress and Modernisation impulses and the desire to transcend the reclusiveness and backwardness of the Rana Regime. Global frames: Increased assistance from outside actors for the purpose of capitalist development and state-building
Social responsibility	Universalism couched in accepted constitutionalised welfare responsibility
Social/National question	State Building and Capacity Development, Economic Growth, Poverty.
Policy paradigm	Supremacy of Growth-mediated approach over support-led approach to welfare enhancement; Social recognition of special social groups deservingness of welfare programs (old persons were included)
Welfare institutions	No special welfare programs for old persons; extensive focus on infrastructure development and macro-economic concerns

In the 1950s, the dominant paradigm for economic growth and development was an approach that emphasised the prerequisite role of investments in critical economic sectors (Rostow 1956; Rosenstein-Rodan 1943). These paradigms aggregated growth (via the GNP), conceived

industrialisation as essential in the quest for growth and the advancement for other sectors of the economy (Thorbecke 2006, p. 5; Tedesco et al. 2015, p. 16). This ‘industrialisation first’ paradigm favoured investments in infrastructure, industry and knowledge transfer.

Elements of the dominant paradigms of the 1950s were visible in the First-Five Year Plan of Nepal. The Plan posited that rapid augmentation of the productive capacity of Nepal’s economy and investments in transport infrastructure was the preferred route to capital accumulation and market development (Kingdom of Nepal 1956, p. 1). The United States Operation Mission³² justified this approach on the understanding that in order to address Nepal’s development needs, it must fix some of the missing pieces in Nepal’s development capacity (Skerry et al. 1991). It stated that the nature of the United State’s assistance in Nepal would entail knowledge transfer, infrastructure development, and capacity development (Skerry et al. 1991, pp. 7-10). One crucial result of the approach employed in the development plan was the establishment of Nepal’s Ministry of Planning and Development (Skerry et al. 1991).

In this way, the plan’s approach was concerned with setting the foundation that would foster long-term growth, and thus, the long-term welfare enhancement of the denizens of Nepal. This long-term view is what Leisering (2019) referred to as a developmental universalist approach to welfare enhancement.

In sum, the quests and questions of national development, state-building, and economic growth defined public action and public policy in the immediate years of the post-Rana era. Although, new ideas of accepted welfare responsibility of the state and the social recognition of the welfare needs of social groups like old persons were welcome progress given the Rana era. Nonetheless, the paradigm for tackling the questions of the 1950s privileged a focus on economic growth and the structural sectors of Nepal’s economy. Hence, it was not surprising that old persons and other socially recognised groups were not accorded any planning priority in the development plans of the 1950s. With these developments, it is possible to fit the ideas about social responsibility, social questions, and policy paradigms into the Onion Skin Model. Table 16 clarifies the welfare developments in Nepal from the perspective of the Onion Skin Model.

³² The mission was part of the Point Four Program overseas development program.

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1950-1999)

PART B: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1960-1990)

5.1.3 Return to the Old? From Constitutionalised Universalism to State Sanctioned Patrimonialism

The death of King Tribhuvan in 1955 paved the way for the accession of his son Mahendra to the throne of the Kingdom of Nepal. In contrast to his predecessor, King Mahendra was not an enthusiastic supporter of the political structures ushered in by the 1951 revolution. In Mahendra's view, the ideas of democratic governance and its inherent institutions were incompatible with the traditions and cultures of Nepal, and he argued that political parties were detrimental to the unity of the country (Rose 1963, p. 16; Joshi and Rose 1966, pp. 384–388). Mahendra argued that the institution of monarchy represented the best channel for governance and that all decisions and ideas about public policies, including social policies, must reflect the preferences and perspectives of the monarchy (Joshi and Rose 1966; Rose 1963).

By 1960, Mahendra's frustrations with the democratic institutions in Nepal had reached a climax. Consequently, he dissolved the democratically elected government and banned all political activities in Nepal. Within ten years, Nepal's democratic aspirations had evaporated, and Nepal had reverted to complete absolutism. The jettisoning of Nepal's democratic structures came in sync with the revision of how welfare issues were constructed. The new constitutions introduced in 1959 and 1962 discarded the ideas about state's collective welfare responsibility. It abandoned the aspirations of social protection programs and the special recognition of the welfare needs of specific social groups as contained in Nepal's Interim Government Act 1951.

Instead, these ideas were replaced with ideas of monarchical supremacy in all areas of public life. The primacy of mythical Hindu ideas on governance was affirmed. The population was divided into distinct class organisations, and the traditional form of village and caste rule called the Panchayat was firmly institutionalised. The people of Nepal were no longer citizens of the country but subjects of the Monarchy (Kingdom of Nepal 1959, 1962). Social protection programs were no longer constructed as an activity and responsibility of the state but as gifts from the Monarchy (Basu and Riaz 2010, p. 48). In other words, the foundation of social protection programs was not to be grounded on the ideas of citizenship but on the patrimonialism of the Monarchy.

In a way, Mahendra's actions against Nepal's democratic institutions lend credence to the suggestion by Brown (2002) that the revolution of 1951 was entirely an elite affair that did not dislodge the reactionary powers of the Rana regime. The Royal takeover reinforces the notion that the inorganic nature of the 1951 revolution and the mere transmission of external ideas about democracy were not

enough to germinate and sustain democratic institutions. Notably, the transmission of the external ideas mentioned here was not enough to sustain the universalist ideas about social welfare as contained in the 1951 Constitution. The activities of Mehandara lend an empirical stance to the hypothesis forwarded by Leisering (2019) that welfare ideas similar to the ideas in the 1951 Constitution are challenging to build and tedious to sustain.

In programmatic terms, the change in Nepal's governing structure did not alter the prevalent paradigms to economic and social questions. Khadka (1986) argued that this was expected because the Monarchy had not formulated nor advanced any discernible strategies regarding social and economic issues in Nepal. Like the politicians in the hitherto years, the monarchy employed a growth-mediated approach to questions of economic growth and long-term improvements in the standard of living of the denizens of Nepal. (NPN 1965). Public policies under Mahendra focused extensively on centralised planning that would develop the structural capabilities of the Nepali economy (NPN 1965). Mahandara's administration emphasised the need to scale up education and health infrastructures, reform land ownership systems and, develop the transport and communication facilities for the purpose of augmenting economic growth (NPN 1965).

The Third Development Plan of Nepal (1965-1970) acknowledged that income and land questions were at the heart of the 'social justice' goals envisaged by Monarchy (NPN 1965). However, public programs and answers to the income and land questions must prioritise the 'entrepreneur class'. In prioritising this social class, the Third Development Plan (1965-1970) posited that the goal of developmental universalism could not be achieved by emphasising fairer distribution of income in Nepal as this would discourage entrepreneurship and depress economic growth (NPN 1965, p. 10). It stated that,

'By initiating programmes in regions, the benefits would also be dispersed geographically. Over-emphasis on equitable income distribution may discourage potential entrepreneurs and restrict the economic growth of the nation. Emphasis must be placed on expanding opportunities for all citizens of Nepal' (NPN 1965, p. 10).

In a way, the Plan expressed a negative frame against fairer income distribution of income for the greater purpose of accomplishing better collective welfare outcomes manifested in economic growth. The recognition and emphasis on the entrepreneur class's economic and social concerns appear to

be premised on the idea that this group, as opposed to other social groups, represents the best route towards developmental universalism and long-term welfare enhancement.

In sum, despite the setback of the democratic experiment, the silver-lining of the new absolutism in Nepal was that its construction of welfare responsibility did not mirror the previous epoch of absolutism in Nepal because the writings and expressions of the absolute Monarchy reflected a new but entrenched notion of the state, embodied by monarchical institutions, as a locus of welfare enhancement. Although, the strategy that ground these ideas differed from that of the democratic experiment. For example, the political leaders and the constitution during the first democratic experiment did not view the citizens as subjects, and the provision of social sustenance was not framed as a gift to the denizens of Nepal (Basu and Riaz 2010).

5.1.4 New Ideas and new Foreign Actors: Poverty as a distinct Social Question and the Paradigm of Basic Needs

The priorities and ideas that informed government action since the 1951 revolution mirrored the development objectives of donors in Nepal. To a great extent, Nepal's reliance on external assistance allowed foreign actors to wield disproportional influence on domestic policymaking (Basu and Riaz 2010; Brown 2002). From the 1950s to the middle of the 1960s, the United States was Nepal's most significant donor (Khadka 2000). Table 17 details the contribution of international actors to development plans in Nepal. This position allowed the United States to influence the ideas and developmental priorities of Nepal's first national plan.

Following China's rapprochement by the United States in 1971 and the reduction of tensions between China and India, the strategic utility of Nepal to these powers diminished (Basu and Riaz 2010). Accordingly, India replaced the United States as Nepal's largest donor, and foreign assistance from the world powers diminished. Crucially, from the 1970s, the nature of foreign aid shifted away from bilateral assistance in favour of development assistance from multilateral institutions and private development foundations (Nowak 2014). Basu and Riaz (2010) noted that from the 1970s, aid from multilateral institutions took the place of bilateral aid in Nepal. Thus, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) became influential in directing developmental programs in Nepal from the 1970s.

Table 17: Aid contribution by global powers to Nepal under successive development plans in Nepal (in Million Nepali Rupees)

Three- and Five-Year Plans	United States Aid	Soviet Union Aid	India Aid	Chinese Aid
1962-65 Development Plan	198.0(46%)	57.0(13%)	110.0(25%)	45.0(10%)
3 rd Five year Plan (1965-70)	207.0(23%)	19.0(2%)	513(57%)	153.0(17%)
4 th Five Year Plan (1970-75)	165.0(14%)	8.0(1%)	596.0(50%)	213.0(18%)
5 th Five Year Plan (1975-80)	281.0(11%)	0.0(0%)	638.0(26%)	308(13%)
6 th Five Year Plan (1980-85)	321.0(6%)	0.0(0%)	755(13%)	251(5%)
7 th Five Year Plan (1985-90)	707.0(7%)	0.0(0%)	1251.0(12%)	607(6%)

Source: Khadka (2000)

With the coordination of the World Bank and Nepal's reliance on external assistance, it is of little wonder that global level paradigms made their way into the planning documents of Nepal. Of relevance was the Basic Needs approach to poverty alleviation.

From the 1970s, the Basic Needs approach to poverty alleviation gained currency in development discourses. The approach emphasised the promotion of employment, food, and shelter. Moreover, it stepped away from the aggregation that characterised development thinking of the 1950s and 1960s by recognising the productive and participatory capacity of the poor (ODI 1978; Streeten 1979). Notably, the World Bank-the most influential donor agency in Nepal- was among the leading donor agencies that showed the most enthusiasm for the Basic Needs approach (ODI 1978).

The change in how global actors viewed social welfare issues had effects on the planning direction of Nepal. Until the Sixth-Five Year Development Plan (1980-1985), state's effort had focused exclusively on enhancing the welfare of Nepalis through growth-mediated strategies that diverted financial and human resources towards industrial production, trade, and state capacity development. However, the Sixth-Five Year Plan altered the hitherto strategy because poverty alleviation became a distinct objective of state planning (Kingdom of Nepal 1980, p. 1). This alteration was partly because of the frustration that the growth-mediated approach to welfare enhancement income did not improve the standard of living of Nepalis (Kingdom of Nepal 1980, p. 1).

The importance of individual welfare enhancement rather than an acute focus on economic growth was acknowledged in the plan. It envisaged that questions of social welfare, particularly poverty questions, must be accorded the same priority as questions of economic growth (Kingdom of Nepal 1980).

In tackling the question of poverty among Nepalis, the plan remarked that government effort must be directed at meeting the minimum needs of the people of Nepal. It identified a basic basket of needs that would fulfil this purpose. Old persons were not singled out as deserving, and indeed no special groups were accorded special preferences. The plan stated that,

‘Another objective of the Sixth Plan is to provide to the people such basic minimum requirements like food grains, fuel (firewood), drinking water, basic health services, primary, vocational adult education, and basic transport facilities. During the Sixth Plan period, efforts at governmental or collective levels will be made to set in motion such programmes as are connected with these basic needs and facilities, with particular emphasis on bringing them within the reach of the low-income rural community’ (Kingdom of Nepal 1980, p. 5).

Specific programs that carried on the minimum needs approach were mostly geared towards the agricultural sector. Preference of the agricultural sector was premised on its vital role in the provision of employment and income in Nepal. The Integrated Rural Development, one of the flagship national-level policies, aimed to provide a minimum level of relief to peasant farmers by making agricultural credit and extension available. The program stated goal was,

‘Agricultural credit, inputs and extension services will be brought within the reach of the majority of peasants. Priority will be given to those projects and programmes which are designed to meet the minimum needs of the maximum people and which are likely to promote local production and employment’ (Kingdom of Nepal 1980, p. 21).

The Seventh-Five Year Development Plan (1985-1990) was the last plan before the return of democratic governance in 1990. It was the first plan to dedicate a separate chapter to social protection issues in the history of planning in Nepal. The plan followed the footsteps of its immediate predecessor by maintaining a minimum needs approach towards the social questions of poverty and

poverty alleviation. Most significantly, it stressed that the non-governmental sector would have to play a role if poverty in Nepal was to be eradicated. Unlike the sixth plan, it transcended sectoral focus and got specific about the goals that it aimed to achieve in terms of providing minimum needs for the people of Nepal. It stated that,

‘During the Seventh Plan period also, it is necessary that the following be viewed as the minimum basic needs and that all attempts be centred on meeting them: Food grain; Clothing; Fuelwood; Drinking water; Primary health cares and sanitation; Primary and skill-based education and Minimum rural transport facilities’ (Kingdom of Nepal 1985, p. 52)

In addition to accentuating the minimum needs approach, the Seventh Plan framed social protection programs in relation to broader areas of individual independence and cultural modernisation. The Plan argued that social protection programs could serve as a means of instilling a sense of autonomy in the poor (Kingdom of Nepal 1985, p. 468). To achieve its welfare enhancement goals, the Plan, for the first time since the years of the democratic experiment, individualised poverty. It placed social recognition on special groups that were deemed vulnerable. As such, it specifically identified old persons as one of the groups that deserve to live a life of dignity and respect. It stated that the capacity of old age homes created by the government of Nepal in 1976 would be enhanced to afford poor old persons in Nepal a life of dignity and respect (Kingdom of Nepal 1985, p. 469).

5.1.5 Summary

Part B tried to understand the ideas that underpinned social welfare issues during the autocratic reign of Nepal’s Monarchy. Table 18 summarises the Onion Skin Model layers as per the answers to the questions of collective welfare responsibility, the questions (social and non-social), the paradigm employed against the identified social questions, and the welfare institutions that emanated from them.

Table 18: Onion Skin Model (1960-1990)

Theoretical concepts	
Frames	Autonomy of the poor (from the 1980s).
Social Responsibility	Social Responsibility grounded in monarchical patrimonialism.
Social/National question	National unity via the monarchy, Economic growth, Poverty (From the 1980s).
Policy paradigm	Growth-mediated approach to welfare enhancement (developmental universalism), Individual welfare entitlement grounded in the basic needs approach.
Welfare institutions	Nursing homes, special programs for the Agricultural sector.

The broader conclusion that can be drawn is that the volatility of Nepal's governing structures influenced the answers to questions of collective welfare responsibility questions, and to a lesser extent, the strategies against recognised social and non-social questions identified.

During Nepal's first democratic experiment, social protection programs were perceived as one of the characteristics of a modern state and a marker of the relationship between the governed and the government. The monarchy's reign perceived these questions differently. The state, embodied by the monarchy, did not perceive social protection programs as part of the state's activity. Instead, they were perceived as an indicator of the patrimonial relationship between the monarchy and the people of Nepal.

Substantial efforts focused on privileged mass welfare programs through economic growth, and specific social groups were not accorded any special recognition. Although, in years leading to the demise of absolute Monarchy in Nepal (1980-1990), the activities of foreign actors and changes in global ideation on how to tackle social welfare questions rekindled attention towards special social groups. Alongside children and women, people designated as old were adjudged to be deserving of basic needs in the Seventh Development Plan of Nepal (1985-1990).

The recognition of social groups and the elevation of social protection programs as viable instruments for tackling welfare questions resulted in limited social programs in the period analysed. Instead, the autocratic period was characterised by an irresponsive state apparatus and economic stagnation. The questions of political representation and the state's inability to answer questions of economic growth and tackle problems of poverty became the driving themes of the domestically-inspired agitations

against the monarchical state in the late 1980s. Part C investigates the questions pertinent in the Onion Skin model from 1990-1999.

Section 1: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1950-1999)

PART C: Ideational Underpinning of Social Welfare in Nepal (1990-1999)

5.1.6 Antipoverty Ideas, Policies, and Strategies after the return of Democracy in 1990: Defining New Collective Welfare Responsibility

In Part A, I showed that despite the revolution in 1951 and the influx of foreign ideas regarding collective welfare responsibility and social recognition of special groups like old persons, ideas that thrived during the Rana regime were not jettisoned. The institution of monarchy amplified these Rana-esque ideas with its autocratic takeover. I showed that the institution of monarchy inhibited the development and fortification of the universalistic welfare values that were envisaged in the 1951 constitution of Nepal.

In its argument against democratic forces, the monarchy argued that democratic institutions were dangerous for the unity of Nepal. Hence, it sought to create an imagery of unity in Nepal. However, the monarchy purported a unified state without the requisite recognition of the plurality of language, religion, and caste cleavages in social, political, and economic relations in Nepal (Basu and Riaz 2010). This facade came under intense scrutiny in the 1980s. The result of the sustained strains against the Hindu ethno-religious construction of the state culminated in the negotiation of a new political settlement that removed the absolutism of the Monarchy, and in its place, a constitutional monarchy that vested political power in the hands of the people of Nepal.

The toppling of absolute monarchy by pro-democracy movements in 1990 was different from its 1951 predecessor in that the former sprouted internally while the latter can best be described as an elite-only project supported by foreign actors. The 1990 revolution was championed by student groups, urban middle-class groups comprising of traders, artisans, and professionals (Basu and Riaz 2010; Brown 2002). The Communist Parties and the Nepali Congress-the premier parties in the political arena of Nepal-set aside their respective disagreements to forge a common front against the forces of absolute Monarchy (Brown 2002; Basu and Riaz 2010). The result was the latest attempt in Nepal's search for a stable political order.

The negotiation of the new political dispensation attempted to plant the seed for a social community by recognising the plurality of ethnic and religious cleavages in Nepal. This attempt declared Nepal a multi-ethnic, multilingual, democratic, independent, indivisible, sovereign Hindu, and constitutional monarchical kingdom (Kingdom of Nepal 1990). The recognition of the plurality of social groups in Nepal, although not perfect, was an essential step in placing the state as a unifier of different elements of the Nepali society.

Naturally, the constitution drafting process was dominated by national and political questions of identity, language, the position of the Monarchy in the new political arrangements (Hutt 1991). However, the negotiation was also crucial for ideas about social welfare, the welfare boundary between the state and other agents of welfare production, and the social recognition of special social groups.

In the 1990 Constitution, Article 25 defined Nepal as a welfare society in which the state acknowledges and accepts its responsibility to cater to the welfare of all citizens of Nepal. It also placed the state at the locus of welfare production in Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal 1990). The acceptance of its welfare responsibility can be construed as universalism in its broader sense, given that the responsibility refers to all denizens of Nepal irrespective of sub-national level identifiers like caste or religion.

The 1990 Constitution represented a new struggle for political order in Nepal. However, it was seen, especially by older veterans of Nepal's political establishment, as part of an unfinished business of the 1951 revolution and constitution (Basu and Riaz 2010, p. 51). This notion is valid for the 1951 Constitution and the 1990 Constitution in that both constitutions recognised that some social groups require special social programs. However, the character of the state's welfare commitment as contained in the 1990 Constitution differs from the 1951 Constitution; the former was specific about the state's responsibility in denoting that the state would be responsible for the social security needs of the socially recognised groups. The constitution stated that,

'The State shall pursue such policies in matters of education, health and social security of orphans, helpless women, the aged, the disabled and incapacitated persons, as well as ensure their protection and welfare' (Kingdom of Nepal 1990, p. 8).

The accepted responsibility can be construed as a microcosm of the spirit of the 1990 Constitution in that both represented a response to the questions of the time. In the years leading to the return of democracy in 1990, the themes of the popular movement against the autocratic rule centred on the need for popular representation and a responsive state (Basu and Riaz 2010; Brown 2002). The denizens of Nepal rebelled against the inability and disinterest of the monarchy to solve the deteriorating socio-economic problems of Nepal. The leading parties blamed the non-participatory nature of the Panchayat system as the root of the nation's problem and adjudged that the installation of a multiparty democracy was the best solution to the identified social questions.

5.1.7 New Dawn of Welfare in Nepal? Balance Responsibility between the Private and the Public Sphere

The return of democracy widened the political space for more actors in Nepal; it also raised the expectation of a better standard of living for the Nepali population. The protests in 1990 ushered in a period that was expected to lead to a more democratic Nepal. To manage the transition, an interim government that consisted of members of the main political parties was formed in April 1990. The interim government (April 1990-May1991) was charged with the responsibility of restoring the rule of law and marshalling the transition period towards a general election. The interim government outlined its economic and social policy preferences. However, none of these aspirations came to fruition in the transition period, mainly because it lacked the requisite mandate for any meaningful change in the short period with which it was in power.

The tenure of the interim government ended with the May 1991 legislative general elections. 20 political parties in Nepal contested the 1991 elections, but only the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), National Democratic Party (NDP) were organised enough to compete for the most number of electoral seats in the elections (Khadka 1994). Poverty, economic development, and land questions make up the policy priorities of the political parties after the return of democracy in 1990. The Nepali Congress ostensibly advocated for a mixed approach that privileged state and private sector activities for economic growth and development (Hachhethu 2002). The party argued for an activist state in land redistribution questions and promised social protection programs for groups that were deemed as disadvantaged in the Nepali society. Per the Nepali Congress, these groups comprised women, children, the disabled and the people of remote areas (Hachhethu 2002, pp. 219-222). On the other hand, the UML took a nationalist stance towards economic growth; it promised extensive land reform and pledged to institutionalise social protection programs for children, the old and the disabled (Hachhethu 2002, pp. 223-227).

The Nepali Congress won the election with 37.75% of the votes and 110 seats out of the 205 seats in the Nepal House of Representatives. The Nepali Congress claimed a mandate to form a government and subsequently drew up the Eighth-Five Year Development Plan (1992-1997). The Plan gave greater details of the intentions of the Nepali Congress Party. The Plan emphasised that the burning economic and social questions facing Nepal centred on questions of economic growth, unemployment, and poverty (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a). It posited that a growth-mediated approach

was required to enhance the welfare of Nepalis. The Plan noted that a growth-mediated approach to welfare enhancement must be complemented with social protection programs because a sole focus on the former would lead the new government into the policy errors made during the autocratic period. The national plan was of the position that due to changing global ideas about how countries can achieve economic growth, the state would act as a facilitator of private and foreign capital in its quest of achieving higher economic growth.

For social protection programs, subtle nuances tinged the approach of the new government. It stated that the private and public spheres must handle the responsibility for the provision and administration of envisaged social programs for recognised social groups like the old persons, children, women, and people from the lower caste. Specifically, for old persons, the state acknowledged its welfare responsibility for the provision of welfare programs and certified that it would create a requisite program that would enhance their welfare (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 382). For people from lower caste and backward areas of Nepal, it was envisaged that the state, alongside private markets, would be responsible for the welfare enhancement of these social groups (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 382).

While the Nepali Congress party was keen on showing that the state could be a responsible organisation capable of improving the welfare of specially recognised social groups in Nepal, the frames attached to the intentions of the party counteracted the spirit of the 1990 Constitution. The constitution framed social protection programs for socially recognised groups like old persons, children and the disabled as a responsibility (Kingdom of Nepal 1990). Meanwhile, in the Eighth-Five Year Development Plan (1992-1997), social protection programs for social recognised groups were framed as a humanitarian measure. The Plan stated,

‘The government sector will take effective measures to safeguard and promote social security of the handicapped, the children, the aged, the youth and the physically disabled people. Such humanitarian measures will ensure a normal and decent life for the weaker sections of our society’ (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 382).

The concern for old persons as a unique group that deserves social palliative programs was reiterated in the Social Welfare Act, 2049 of 1992. The legislative act stated in its preamble that universalism, i.e., a state in which all Nepalis have some form of social sustenance, is the supreme goal of public policy in Nepal and that individualised programs for recognised social groups represent an

indubitable path towards the goal of universalism (Kingdom of Nepal 1992b). The legislative act reiterated the place of old persons in the priority of social welfare provision in Nepal. However, it framed envisaged social protection for old persons (and other social groups) as humanitarian gestures that are geared towards enhancing the status and respect of old persons within their communities (Kingdom of Nepal 1992b).

The first four years of the new democratic rule were disappointing as the Nepali Congress led government failed to initiate policy programs as promised by its manifesto. It also failed to sufficiently answer the questions of economic growth and poverty in Nepal. Pertinently, the failure of developmental universalist programs as a means to welfare enhancement was revealed during the reign of the party. The Nepali Congress claimed that Nepal's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 5% during its tenure (Hachhethu 2002, p. 223). Nonetheless, poverty and unemployment remained a reality for many Nepalis. The precarity of the living standard was worsened by the aggressive economic liberalisation policies employed by the Nepali Congress. Prices of day to day utilities like drinking water, telephony, and petroleum product increased sharply, thus aggravating the low standard of living of a large number of Nepalis (Poudyal 1995; Hachhethu 2002; Bhattachan 1994).

While the Social Welfare Act, 2049 of 1992, and the Eighth-Five Year Development Plan (1992-1997) imagined a special program for old persons, the Nepali Congress-led government did not institute any social protection programs during its three and half years reign in power. Instead of governing and fulfilling its stated promises, political instabilities that was all too familiar in Nepal marred the reign of the largest political party in Nepal. The reign of the Nepali Congress was beset with struggles with the monarchy and resolute opposition forces that were willing to test the boundaries of parliamentary democracy and the rule of law. Significantly, internal battles dominated the reign of the Nepali Congress government, and the dynamics of these internal instabilities brought down the Nepali Congress-led government in 1994 and resulted in the ascension of the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) to the treasury benches after the 1994 elections.

5.1.8 The Communist Party of Nepal and New Paradigm of Social Welfare

The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) defied the prevalent political tide of the early 1990s by becoming the first self-declared communist party to hold the treasury benches in Nepal. The party

positioned itself as the party of the poor in the 1991 and 1994 elections and identified unemployment and poverty as the most critical social problems facing Nepal (UML 1994, p. 16; Hachhethu 2002). It reiterated that developmental universalism driven by nationalist capitalist must be accorded equal priority as individualised welfare programs because certain socially recognised groups had been excluded from development planning. Further, it argued that the hitherto state structures had not looked after the welfare of these social groups (Adhikari 1994). The party posited that an acute focus on developmental universalist programs would leave these social groups at the mercy of the market. Thus, it advocated that the state must take up an active position in improving the welfare of Nepali by instituting social protection programs for these groups (Brown 2002, p. 200).

In the suppositions of the party, old persons, alongside the disabled and backward communities were social groups that required special welfare attention and programs (UML 1994; Adhikari 1994). The UML was of the position that programs that augment individual welfare were required alongside developmental universalist programs in answering the questions of poverty, economic growth, and unemployment in Nepal (Adhikari 1994). In a way, the UML recognised the agency of these social groups and their potential in contributing to tackling the recognised social questions in Nepal. The recognised social group contrasts the findings in the early periods of the autocratic era in which the entrepreneur class was the only social group that was recognised as capable of contributing meaningfully to the goal of economic growth.

In the electoral campaign of 1994 and subsequently in government, the UML was more specific regarding the paradigm and solutions that individual welfare programs would entail. Its approach isolated what the party thought was essential for the welfare enhancement of each social group (Adhikari 1994). It posited that vocational training was necessary for beggars, the blind, and the disabled. It asserted that economic growth was significant for overall welfare enhancement and employment for Nepalis; it equally noted that food for work programs was necessary for answering the unemployment questions facing Nepal. The UML stated that ration cards were essential for alleviating increasing income and food poverty in Nepal (Adhikari 1994, p. 14). It stated that cash transfers are appropriate avenues to improve the livelihood of the poor and, specifically, poor old persons in Nepal (Adhikari 1994).

In the Budget Speech that introduced the pension program, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) deviated from the stance of the Nepali Congress by framing social protection programs dedicated to old persons not as a humanitarian gesture but as part of the obligation of the state towards old persons (Adhikari 1994). In other words, social protection programs in the form of

social pension was a marker of the accepted state responsibility for welfare as stated in the 1990 Constitution of Nepal. In the 1994 budget speech, the sitting Finance Minister, Bharat Mohan Adhikari, stated that,

‘A special program will be prepared in this fiscal year to provide vocational training and fellowships to the blind, disabled and beggars. Necessary funds have been allocated to provide Rs.100 to 1,875 disabled poor persons, 25 persons from each district as a disability pension. Steps will also be taken to ensure a minimum of livelihood to poor and helpless senior citizens as a part of state obligations towards them’ (Adhikari 1994, p. 8).

The tension between advocates of individualised welfare (UML) and developmental universalism (Nepali Congress) was palpable during the nine months reign of the UML. The UML was accused of squandering the country’s resources on programs for social groups and was short-sighted regarding the welfare enhancement of the people of Nepal (Brown 2002, p. 224). The critics framed social protection programs as wasteful and posited that the country’s limited resources should be spent on developmental universalist programs (Hachhethu 2002, p. 236).

The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) lasted for only nine months. Despite attacking the social welfare programs enacted by the Communist party as wasteful, the Nepali Congress-led government that came immediately after the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) did not jettison the universal old age social pension program. In fact, Mr Rabindra Nath Sharma, the Finance Minister of the succeeding coalition government, noted that it was in the interest of appropriateness and social justice to continue the social pension program initiated by the previous Communist government. He stated that,

‘The coalition government will continue social security programs initiated in the past such as senior citizen allowance and helpless widow allowance in the coming fiscal year as well. It seems appropriate from the point of view of social justice to provide such allowances to helpless, poor and deprived community of people’. (Mr Rabindra Nath Sharma, Finance Minister, 1997-98, as cited in (Irudaya 2003)).

As the 1990s progressed, noticeable changes were observable in the frames and definition of the state's responsibility regarding social protection programs. The class of social groups recognised as deserving of social protection remained the same throughout the decade. Old persons, the disabled, women and children were adjudged as social groups deserving of social protection programs from the state.

The frames attached to the prospect of social protection programs changed towards the end of the 1990s decade. In contrast to the humanitarian and state responsibility frames used by the Nepali Congress and the UML, social protection programs for groups identified were framed in terms of rights. The state was viewed as the guarantor of the rights. The Ninth-Five Year Development Plan (1997-2002) dedicated a special chapter to the welfare needs of these groups and noted that,

'The state will protect the rights of old, helpless and disabled citizens by providing essential service and facilities; and their valuable experience, skill, knowledge and capability will be mobilised for national development. The state will guarantee social and economic justice to these people' (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, p. 687).

The Plan singled out old persons, widows, and disabled persons as groups that can contribute to national development and enjoined that social protection programs from the state for old persons must be used to enhance the dignity and secure the rights of old persons in Nepal. It stated that,

'Senior citizens are assets of the nation because they carry social values, tradition and culture. The state will properly honour and protect senior citizens, helpless widow and disabled citizens together with mainstreaming their capability, experience, knowledge and peculiarities in national development' (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, p. 687).

'Necessary laws will be promulgated for guaranteeing the rights and ensuring economic, and social security of senior citizens, helpless widows and disabled people' (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, p. 687).

As the 1990s progressed, there was a change in the conception of the collective welfare responsibility of the state. The Ninth-Five Year Development Plan stated that the state's goal was to become a welfare state in which the state fully embraces its welfare responsibility for the recognised social groups. In its argument, the plan stated that the changes in the conception of collective responsibility

could be traced to the social questions of a responsive state carried on by the protest movements that brought down the autocratic regime in 1990. The changes in the conception of collective responsibility were also linked to external ideas. The Plan posited that a full embrace of welfare responsibility is a hallmark of a modern state, and the changes in the conception of social rights on the global level partly inspired its adoption of rights perspective in the context of social protection programs (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, p. 686). The new ideation was important in the 1990s as new social protection programs were created for the disabled in 1996 (Disability Allowance), the Helpless Single Women Allowance and the Rural Community Infrastructure work program were created in 1996.

5.1.9 Summary

There is little doubt that politics and power dynamics after the overthrow of Nepal’s absolute monarchy were tumultuous. Interparty and intraparty animosity evinces this conclusion to a large degree. Notwithstanding the chaos of politics, one is inclined to conclude that the institutionalisation of democracy had been an essential vehicle for defining welfare boundaries between the public and private spheres in Nepal. Table 19 summarises the Onion Skin Model layers as per the answers to the questions of collective welfare responsibility, the social questions that preoccupied the elites of Nepal, the paradigm employed against the identified social questions, and the welfare institutions that emanated from them.

Table 19: Onion Skin Model (1990-1999)

Theoretical concepts	
Frame	Humanitarian welfare gesture vs Constitutional responsibility of welfare, social welfare as rights (from the 9 th Five Year Plan).
Social responsibility	Constitutionally accepted welfare responsibility as a marker for democratic governance.
Social/National question	Political representation, a responsive state, economic growth, poverty and unemployment.
Policy paradigm	Developmental Universalism/ Growth-mediated approach to welfare enhancement. Welfare for deserving groups (including old persons).
Welfare institutions	Old Age Social Pensions, Disability Allowance, Helpless Single Women Allowance, Rural Community Infrastructure work program.

Through democratic processes like elections, political parties became willing to note the welfare-enhancing capacity of the state. From the discourses that surrounded the campaigns and rhetoric of the UML and the Nepali Congress Party, one can infer that a welfare society was taking roots in Nepal, i.e., that accepted responsibility no longer represents not just an expression in the constitution

(reminiscent of the 1951 Constitution) but a cultural and legal understanding that the state, through democratic institution, can anchor its legitimacy on fulfilling these welfare responsibilities.

In the following sections (i.e., Sections 2 and 3), I show how these ideas of social recognition, welfare responsibility, and social problems formed a definite undercurrent in the process of enacting universal social pensions in 1994. I show that structural and institutional factors can contribute to the adoption of universal social pensions. Although, and as I argued, micro-level ideas like those enumerated and traced here are equally important in the process of introducing social pensions in Nepal.

Chapter 5: Nepal

Section 2: The Description of Universal Social Pension Institutionalisation in Nepal

5.2.1 Universal Social Pension in Nepal: Eligibility Criteria and Coverage Rate

One of the overarching themes of the protest movement that led to the fall of the absolute monarchy in Nepal was the question of a responsive state capable of marshalling the welfare needs of the people of Nepal. Consequently, the 1990 Constitution recognised the welfare needs of special groups that comprised old persons, orphans, helpless women, disabled persons and incapacitated persons (Kingdom of Nepal 1990, p. 10). The manifestoes of the parties that contested the 1991 and 1994 elections contained promises of social protection programs for these groups (Hachhethu 2002, pp. 218-230). The introduction of the universal social pension program³³ in 1994 can be interpreted as a response to the recognised income problems of old persons in Nepal and, broadly, a response to broader questions of a responsive state.

At its inception, the social pension program provided predictable cash transfers to all persons in Nepal that have achieved the age of 75 and above (National Planning Commission 2012, p. 14). Changes in the political climate in the late 2000s allowed for a reduction of the qualifying age of the social pension program to 70 years (Khanal et al. 2013, p. 18). Close examination of the qualifying age of the program suggests that the program, at the time of its introduction and subsequent evolution, suffer from within-case exclusion despite the label of universalism attached to the program. This conclusion is reached because of the discrepancy between the definition of the qualifying age of the social pension program and the definition of an old person according to Nepal's statutes. The Senior Citizens Act, 2063 (2006) defined an old person in Nepal as an individual that has completed 60 years and above. The discrepancy means that the social pensions program does not inclusively cover old persons in Nepal.

What is more is that the hidden exclusion appears to be by deliberate design. Analysis of the discourses in the Ninth-Five Year Plan (1997-2002) shows that old persons in Nepal are graded by age brackets of 5 (i.e., a class of old persons from 70 to 74 and 75 and above). The age demarcation of old persons informs the eligibility for the social pension program. The plan stated that,

'Senior citizens will be categorised in two classes; people falling between 70 to 75 years age group will be taken for participation, and people above 75 years age group will be provided security' (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, p. 688).

³³ I interchangeably refer to the universal social pension program as Old Age Allowance or OAA

Nepal’s qualifying age of 70 is unusual in the context of social pensions in the South Asian region and the global South. Alongside Nepal, Argentina, El Salvador, Indonesia, Lesotho, Myanmar, Zanzibar, Tuvalu, Uruguay, and Vietnam are the only countries in the global South to have 70 or more years as the qualifying age for social pension. In the south Asia region, Nepal’s qualifying age of 70 is the highest in the region. Table 20 below provides the information on the qualifying age of counties in the South Asian region.

Table 20: Social Pension South Asia

Country	Year of Introduction	Qualifying Age
Afghanistan	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Bangladesh	1998	65(Men), 62(Women)
Bhutan	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
India	1995	60
Nepal	1994	70
Maldives	2010	65
Pakistan	No Social Pension	Not Applicable
Sri Lanka	No Social Pension	Not Applicable

Source: Pension Watch (2018)

Notwithstanding the within-case exclusion, the program has a substantially high coverage rate of the eligible population. The coverage rate of the universal social pension program has increased significantly over the decades of its existence. In 1996, the program reached just over 161,000³⁴ old persons in Nepal, it reached about 640,119³⁵ in 2010, and the number of covered old persons rose to 80% of the eligible population as of 2018 (Pension Watch 2018).

Comparatively, the coverage rate of the pension program in Nepal is the second-highest in the south Asian region. The social pension program in the Maldives covers 95% of the eligible beneficiaries. In Bangladesh and India, the coverage rate is 35% and 18%, respectively³⁶.

³⁴ Irudaya 2003.

³⁵ Social Assistance, Politics and Institutions (SAPI) Database Index of Programmes in Asia <https://www.wider.unu.edu/sites/default/files/Data/SAPI-IndexAsia.pdf>

³⁶ Coverage figures were sourced from HelpAge International Pension watch database.

The single criteria for benefiting from the OAA is the age of the beneficiary. The beneficiaries must present the local administrative arm of the government (Village Development Committee) with their citizenship cards which is then used to verify the beneficiary's age. It should be noted that citizenship cards are ubiquitous among old persons in Nepal. Irudaya (2003) noted that more than 80% of old persons in Nepal possess the required citizenship card, and the government of Nepal has consistently made it known that old persons need to have the document as it is also needed for civic duties like voting.

5.2.2 Funding

Two of the most fundamental questions asked when a country introduces or expands social protection programs are, 'what is the financial consequences of such program and how can it be funded'? As highlighted in the literature chapter, this question is pertinent for universal social pensions and low-income countries.

This question is especially relevant for Nepal given its long history of budgetary support from international actors. Regardless of the influences of external actors, Nepal has demonstrated through its constitutional commitments and development plans that social protection issues, including the financing of such programs, are within the purview of the state of Nepal. The commitments of the state to social protection programs were further amplified by the civil conflict between 1996-2006. The political settlement and constitutions negotiated after the civil conflict accorded some special groups with social rights. It also reiterated that the provision of social protection programs to deserving social groups is an express responsibility of the state.

Nepal has demonstrated that the financial incidence of social protection programs need not to be 'budget-bursting' and countries can easily fund such programs³⁷ if there is a political will and commitments to carry on such programs. Despite its immense fiscal challenges, Nepal is an exemplar country as regards how low-income countries can finance special protection and social cash transfers. Nepal prides itself in the fact that most of the social protection programs in Nepal

³⁷ Although, Nepal prides itself as the sole funders of social welfare programs in Nepal. Sentiments from Nepal Rastra Bank (Nepal's central bank) raised the concern that the pattern of expenditure and taxes in Nepal raises questions of fiscal sustainability of programs, including social welfare programs (Nepal Rastra Bank 2017).

are financed through general taxation³⁸. Precisely, the government of Nepal provides more than 95% of the funds for the social welfare programs in Nepal and grants and loans from external actors accounts for a minute proportion of the social welfare protection budget in Nepal (Upreti et al. 2012). Estimates from Nepal's Ministry of Finance indicate that the OAA is entirely funded by the tax revenue from the government of Nepal (Ministry of Finance 2010, 2014b, 2015). To further highlight the commitment of the state, the OAA is accorded with the topmost categorisation in the budget priorities of Nepal (Ministry of Finance 2015).

As with many countries of the global South, accurate comparative data to facilitate a robust description of programs like OAA is very scarce. However, figures culled from various editions of the Nepali government budget show that the OAA represent an important pillar of the social protection framework of Nepal-from a financing point of view. For example, in 2016, expenditure for the social pension program made up 44% of Nepal's total social cash transfer budget³⁹.

5.2.3 Administration of Nepal's Universal Social Pension

The administration of the OAA as a pilot program was the responsibility of the Nepali Ministry of Education and Sports in 1995. The ministry coordinated the delivery of the program with the local Village Development Committees in Nepal (the VDC is the lowest administrative unit of the Nepali Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development). The Nepali Congress-led government in 1996 shifted the responsibility for administering the OAA from the Ministry of Education and Sports to the Ministry of Local Government. The ministry coordinated the distribution and administration of the program with ward offices in urban centres while the village development committees distribute in the rural areas (Irudaya 2003).

Currently the administration of the OAA is separated between policy and implementation, i.e., two different ministries take care of policy relating to old people and OAA, and the implementation of OAA.

³⁸ It should be noted that tax collection in Nepal is not broad. The government of Nepal relies extensively on indirect taxation to fund social welfare programs (Yadav et al. 2015). Direct taxes in Nepal contributes less than 5% to the GDP of Nepal (Nepal Rastra Bank 2017). The Nepal Rastra Bank alluded that the tax system in Nepal is incompetent on the collection and usage sides (Nepal Rastra Bank 2017).

³⁹ Figure culled out of the 2016 yearly budget speech.

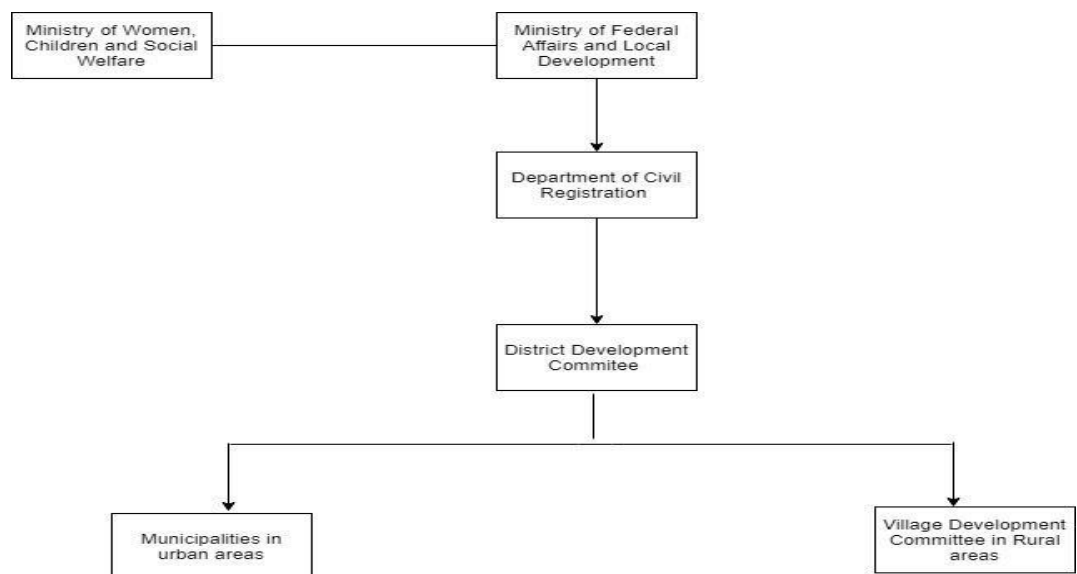
The Nepali Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare manages the policy facet and other issues relating to old persons in Nepal. To be more precise, the policy aspect of the OAA is managed by the Policy, Planning and Administration Division of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. In respect to the implementation of the OAA, the Nepali Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development⁴⁰ administers and implements the program via its Department of Civil Registration; at the district level, the District Development Committee (DDC) and the village level, the VDC. In addition, the Department of Civil Registration is saddled with the responsibility of updating and preparing demographic data collected at the municipal and district level to aid the distribution of OAA at the municipal level by the ward offices and village level by the VDC.

The operating manual for the administration of the cash transfer stipulates that the money for the program must, ideally, be disbursed to the beneficiaries three times a year- in mid-January, mid-May and mid-September (National Planning Commission 2012). The money for the program is collected from the DDC by the VDC secretary, and the authorisation for the receipt of the money by the secretary is confirmed. The money is then distributed to the beneficiaries in person from the respective VDC offices in rural areas. In urban centres, commercial banks pay the beneficiaries upon the presentation of a pensioner's card. Although, they are required to pay a deposit sum of 1000 Nepali Rupees to open an account. As part of the process of administering the OAA, the beneficiaries are required to provide a thumbprint recorded in a logbook. The record of the transactions as well as the amount paid is compiled and sent to the DDC. The DDC, in turn, collate the number of old persons that benefitted from the OAA in the batch of payment and report it to the Department of Civil Registration (National Planning Commission 2012).

Figure 7 provides a schematic description of the current administration of OAA. It alludes to the explanation of the differentiation of duties among ministries and agencies involved in the delivery of social pension in Nepal. The Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare takes care of policy issues that relate to OAA while the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local government, in conjunction with other local agencies, implement the OAA.

⁴⁰ The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local government has the most extensive reach of all federal ministries in Nepal and they are often saddled with the responsibility of carrying out the programs of other ministries at the local level.

Figure 7: Current Administrative Structure of the OAA



Source: Author's research

For efficiency and the streamlining of the OAA, the Nepali government, in 2008, introduced Social Security Program Operation Work Procedure (Manual) 2065. However, several reports by donors and the Nepali government maintained that the administration of the OAA lacks in areas that concern the data collection of beneficiaries (World Bank 2014). The fact that the information needed for the administration and delivery of the OAA is recorded manually compounds duplication and weak oversight of the program. Notably, in a 2014 study conducted by the World Bank, it was reported that the administrative shortcomings of the OAA resulted in an under-coverage of eligible old persons and widows' pension by about 40% exclusion error (World Bank 2014, p. 2). Also relating to the issue of poor data collection and administration, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) concluded that it was not uncommon to have situations in which the recorded number of old persons benefiting from OAA in a village is greater than the number of old persons living in that village thereby resulting in substantial inclusion errors in the administration of the OAA (Roelen et al. 2016).

To address this issue of exclusion and inclusion errors, the deputy Prime minister and sitting Finance minister, Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara announced a policy initiative in the 2017 annual budget. In the speech, he called for government collaboration with financial institutions for the effective delivery of OAA. He stated that,

'I have given continuity to the social security allowance provided to the citizens like senior citizen, single woman, disadvantaged groups (dalits), endangered indigenous people/ ethnic groups, helpless and physically challenged people. I have allocated Rs. 36 billion for this purpose. Special precaution will be taken to ensure that no beneficiary will be deprived from receiving the social security allowances. Such allowances will be distributed through banking channel by institutional strengthening and making monitoring more effective' (Mahara 2017, p. 37).

Further addressing issues of exclusion and inclusion errors of OAA, the Nepali Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration, the Ministry of Finance, the Department of Civil Registration, the Ministry of Home Affairs all committed to assistance from the World Bank to manage information and grievance management system not only for OAA but also for other social protection programs in Nepal (World Bank 2018).

In sum, despite being decentralised, the administration of the OAA suffers from the more significant problem of modernisation of civil registration. Although, critical steps have been taken to redress the problem of civil registration in the delivery of social cash transfers in Nepal. A collaboration between the World Bank and the Government of Nepal for more efficient delivery and administration of the social cash transfers in Nepal marked an unprecedented step towards reducing errors in the programs' administration. On December 2, 2016, the board of the World Bank approved a loan of 150 Million USD for the expansion and modernisation of civil registration for the administration of social protection and cash transfers in Nepal (World Bank 2016). The project aims to improve the administration of OAA and promote the universality of the program by reducing exclusion errors while maintaining oversight over the OAA and other social protection programs in Nepal⁴¹.

⁴¹ It should be noted that the substantial progress has been made as regards the installation of a new information system for social welfare programs in Nepal. Reports from the World Bank team noted that digitization of social security data had been expanded to 61 of 77 districts of Nepal. Similarly, online civil registration now cover 1960 wards out of 6,684 wards in Nepal(World Bank 2018).

5.2.4 Legal Base

The OAA was introduced via administrative fiat and not via legislative act. Although, a program like the OAA had been envisaged in the state policy directive section of the 1990 Constitution of Nepal. When the program was introduced in the 1994 Budget Speech, the Finance Minister for the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) alluded to the spirit and the language expressed in the 1990 Constitution by noting that the OAA was part of the obligation of the state towards senior citizens in Nepal (Adhikari 1994). There is no special legislative act for the OAA program. However, a few legislative instruments have been used to augment and reinforce the provisions in the OAA. For instance, the Senior Citizens Act, 2063 (2006) stipulated the definition of a senior citizen in Nepal and the legal rights of senior citizens in the legislation (Kingdom of Nepal 2006). The Interim Constitution of 2007 and the 2015 Constitution of Nepal provided a base for the OAA. In both constitutions, social allowance programs for old persons were stipulated as a right (Republic of Nepal 2007, 2015).

In addition, the Nepali government uses international conventions and agreements to underpin changes and improvements to the OAA. Nepal has subscribed to several international conventions that are geared towards improving the social conditions of old persons. For example, the Government of Nepal formulated the 2002 National Plan of Action in Aging following the Madrid Plan of Action (GCN 2010). Notwithstanding the absence of a direct legislative instrument for the OAA, constitutional and international commitments provide a solid legal base for the OAA in Nepal. Besides, social welfare programs are entrenched in the peacebuilding process in Nepal and are adjudged to be critical to ridding Nepal of structural inequalities and social exclusions (Drucza 2017; Khanal et al. 2013; Koehler et al. 2009; Koehler and Mathers 2017).

5.2.5 Benefit Levels and Adequacy of Universal Social Pension in Nepal

In the literature that concerns social policy and social protection in the global South, two relevant indicators answer the question of ‘what do people get’? Leisering (2019) noted that the level of benefit as well as the standard of benefit are the most relevant indicators to answer this question. The benefit standard of a program is defined relative to a broader standard of reference. For instance, to know the benefit standard of a public works program, references are usually made to how much the benefit of the program compares to the general minimum wage. In similar vein, the level of benefit often

refers to the generosity of benefits from a program. It refers to the amount that is accorded to the beneficiaries of a program.

In the budget speech that introduced the social pension program, the UML party indicated that the program was geared towards ensuring the minimum livelihood of old persons in Nepal (Adhikari 1994). At its outset, the benefit level of the program was 100 Rupees per month (2 iUSD)⁴². In contrast to Botswana, increases to the benefit levels of the social pension program in are not indexed with inflation (Khadka 2017, p. 24). Instead, increases in the benefit of the programs have been framed as responses to prevailing domestic and international ideas about old age welfare. The first benefit increase of the program was in 1999. The benefit was increased to 150 Rupees per month (2.19 iUSD). The Finance Minister of the Nepali Congress-led government framed the benefits increase in terms of the principles of the International Year of the Elderly. He stated in the budget speech,

‘To honour the International Year of the Elderly, I have proposed an increase in the allowance to 150 Rupees from 100 Rupees being provided to senior citizens above the age of 75, widows and helpless people’ (Acharya 1999; Irudaya 2003, p. 17).

The benefit of the program was increased in 2004 to 175 Rupees per month (2.30 iUSD). The increase was framed as part of the desire to honour old persons in Nepal. The finance minister stated in his 2004 budget speech that,

‘Honoring the senior citizen of the country I had started to provide allowances as a first step toward social security to them through the budget of FY1994/95. Expressing the satisfaction on the continuation of this program I have made this allowance to be Rs. 175.00 with an increase by Rs. 25.00 as a token’ (Adhikari 2004, p. 32).

A similar frame was employed in the latest increase to the benefit of the program. In 2019, the benefit of the social pension program was increased to 3000 Rupees (26.6 iUSD). The increase was framed in normative terms of respect and responsibility. The program was also framed as a crucial element

⁴² International Dollars Conversion rate was sourced from Penn World Tables version 10.0

in the desire for a systemic universalist social protection framework in Nepal. The Finance Minister, Dr. Yuba Raj Khatiwada stated in the 2019 budget speech that,

‘All citizens will be affiliated with social security covering their lifecycle from conception till old age while building a welfare state for attaining prosperity with social justice..... I have raised the monthly social security allowance for all senior citizens above age of seventy from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 3000 in accordance with our firm belief that senior citizens should be respected and protected’ (Khatiwada 2019, p. 9).

Notwithstanding the discourses of ‘honour’ and international ideas about the welfare of old persons, it must be noted that the benefits standard of the OAA has historically been low by Nepali standards. In arriving at this finding, the minimum subsistence level culled from three editions of the Nepali Living Standard Survey indicate that the adequacy of the benefit of the OAA has consistently fallen below the monthly minimum subsistence levels in Nepal. The first Nepali Living Standard Survey⁴³ conducted in 1995-1996 calculated that the poverty line per person was 424.08 Rupees per month. The benefit of the social pension program at the time was 100 Rupees. A figure that amounts to 23% of the poverty line figures. A similar conclusion can be reached with the 2004 survey. The benefit level in 2004 was below the 641 Rupees per month poverty line in the 2004 survey. This reflects a low benefit standard of the social pension program. The increase in the program benefit in 2015 to 1000 Nepali Rupees was below the 1605 Rupees per month poverty line calculated in the 2011 edition of the Nepali Living Standard Survey. It is reasonable to suggest that the recent benefit increase of 3000 Rupees per month may likely surpass the poverty line threshold in Nepal. A definitive conclusion cannot be reached here, given that the latest attempt to capture living standards in Nepal was recently abandoned due to extenuating circumstances (The World Bank 2020a).

Despite the residual nature of the program, the benefits are esteemed in Nepal. A qualitative study conducted by HelpAge International concluded that old people in Nepal deem the benefits very important despite the modesty of the benefits (HelpAge International 2009). However, the modest nature of the benefit can only allow for the purchase of basic things like foodstuffs, medicine, clothing,

⁴³ The Central Statistics Bureau of Nepal used the cost-of-basic-needs approach to arrive at these poverty line figures. 1995-1996 and 2004-2005 figures were sourced from CBS 2005 2011 figure was sourced from Atkinson 2019, p. 268; NPC and OPHI 2018, p. 1.

and general household needs. This indicates that OAA, conceived as an individual benefit, can become a collectivised transfer that benefits other members of the beneficiary's household. The study from HelpAge found that the importance of the program also varies given the geographical location of the beneficiary. The study concluded that old persons in rural areas attach more importance to the benefit than those living in urban centres mainly because old persons are more likely to use the benefit for household essentials in rural areas compared to urban centres (HelpAge International 2009).

As mentioned in the literature section, social policy literature is littered with arguments for and against universal and means-tested social programs. One of the main arguments forwarded by proponents of universal programs is that such programs tend to be more generous compared to means-tested social programs as the latter is likely to deliver fewer economic resources to beneficiaries (Brady and Burroway 2012). Specifically for social pension, Cruz-Martinez (2016) argued that universal social pension represents an effective instrument for tackling poverty questions while pointing out that means-tested pensions are associated with residuality.

With the explication of the benefit standard of the universal social pension in Nepal, it is difficult to reach the same conclusion as the authors stated above. Simply, the universal social pension program is characterised by residuality. Therefore, the findings here meshes with the conclusions reached by (Böger and Leisering 2017a, p. 49) that 'that universal pensions on average have lower benefits than means-tested pensions'.

5.2.6 Summary

This section describes the universal social pensions in Nepal. It describes how the program is institutionalised, how it is funded, the legal basis, and the level/standard of benefits of Nepal's universal social pension. The insights generated from the description of the social pension program is summarised as follows:

First, despite being one of the poorest and one of the most politically unstable countries in the global South, Nepal is a pioneer regarding the institutionalisation of a nationwide social pension program in the south Asia region. As I showed here, the institutionalisation of the social pension program in Nepal is not grounded in the individual utility of the program. Political actors reference the collective utility of the program to embed the social pension program. Actors refer to broader discursive areas

of constitutional responsibility, cultural ideas of respect and honour and international conventions to fortify the state's commitment to the program. It is within reasonable bounds to conclude that Nepal's social pension program is firmly institutionalised, given the collective and individual utility of the program. Besides, as the program evolved and as Nepal evolved politically, old persons have been accorded the social rights to social protection programs.

Second, the universal label of the social pension program in Nepal does not give an accurate picture of the nature of social pension coverage and benefits in Nepal. Like Botswana, the social pension program in Nepal suffers from within-case exclusions. It fails to cover a large section of old persons that Nepal's government defines as old, i.e., not all old persons defined by legal statutes are inclusively covered by the program. Similarly, the program can be characterised as residual given the low level and standard of the program

Lastly, and relating to the concept of universalism in Nepal. The idea of universalism permeates the social pension program in Nepal. I showed here and in Section 1 that the UML partly underpinned the introduction of the program on the collective welfare responsibility of the state. I described this responsibility as a cultural or value-laden universalism. The social pension program is ostensibly universal because it does not apply means-testing. However, as I show here, the program excludes a large section of old persons in Nepal. This indicates that on a problem definition level, i.e., the income problem of old persons in Nepal, the program is not universal. The nuances of the analysis carried out here show the need for a thorough analysis of what it means for a program to be defined as universal. The following section, i.e., Section 3, analyses the introduction of the universal social pension program in Nepal. As stated in the introduction chapter of this dissertation, a multidimensional framework comprising the 'Five Is' and Onion Skin Models is used to understand the introduction of the universal social pension program in Nepal.

Chapter 5: Nepal

Section 3: The Introduction of Social Pension in Nepal: A Mid-Range Explanation

5.3.1 Introduction

This section is geared towards providing a mid-range explanation for the development of Nepal's universal social pensions. Before answering this research question, the adopted analytical approach is briefly enumerated.

In the Literature Review chapter of this dissertation, it was stated that a multidimensional framework that combines the 'Five Is' Model from Gough (2008) and the Onion Skin Model propounded by Leisering (2019) is used in answering the research question posed in this section. The three justifications for employing a multidimensional approach are that: First, single, grand theories are less helpful in answering the research question posed in this section. Second, this dissertation takes Ideas seriously. In this way, this dissertation follows a growing but circumscribed literature in which social protection programs in the global South are analysed via an ideational perspective. In taking Ideas seriously, it is postulated that ideas are not just tools that elites use in blustering support for their interests. Instead, Ideas are taken as critical elements that underpin the development of social protection programs and are constitutive of other determinants of social protection programs (e.g., Interests and Institutions). Thirdly, this dissertation eschews a fixation on broad ideas, e.g., liberalism, communism, and social democracy. Instead, ideas are also viewed from an actor-centred perspective regarding questions of collective responsibility, social questions, social problems, and the frames attached to social welfare in Nepal. The ideational perspective employed in this section is such that the Onion Skin Model deepens the Ideas factor bundle of the 'Five Is' Model.

As such, this section enumerates the drivers of the universal social pension adoption in Nepal using the 'Five Is' model. This is followed by the ideational explanation for social pension introduction through the Onion Skin Model. A summary section follows this analysis.

5.3.2 Explaining the introduction of Social Pension in Nepal through the ‘Five Is’

5.3.2.1 Industrialisation and Other Macrosocial Changes as drivers of Social Pension in Nepal

Industrialisation

Upon the return of representative democracy in 1990, Nepal’s economy was in an unenviable position of decline (Brown 2002). The 30-year reign of Nepal’s autocratic regime did nothing to augment the economic stagnation of Nepal (Khadka 1991). Conservative estimates indicated that 8 million of the 19 million of the population in Nepal in 1990 lived in absolute poverty⁴⁴ (The World Bank 1990, p. 1).

Nepal went through a political revolution in 1990. The impregnated inequality in economic, social, and political power distributions contributed to the dissolution of the autocratic system and the absolute monarchy political systems that supported it. In addition to the internal contradictions of absolute monarchy in Nepal, the crux of the 1990 revolution was that the state appeared unable to adequately answer questions about economic growth, poverty, and inequality in Nepal (Brown 2002; Basu and Riaz 2010).

The enormity of poverty and the reality of economic stagnation brought about by the Panchayat regime was one of the defining questions for the political parties that took the reins of power after the collapse of absolute monarchy in 1990 (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a; UML 1994). Hence, the concern for the welfare enhancement of the people of Nepal preoccupied the priorities of Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) after 1990. In their respective manifestos, both parties advanced the idea that collectivised and individualised approaches were appropriate against the question of welfare enhancement in Nepal (Hachhethu 2002, pp. 219-229). The parties stated that their public policies would be geared towards welfare enhancement through growth-enhancing programs and social protection programs for deserving social groups.

⁴⁴ The definition of absolute poverty in by the World Bank in Nepal was having incomes below the level required to support a minimum daily calorie intake (about US\$100 p.a. per capita).

However, Nepal was operating with a tight fiscal space that would not have encouraged the expansionary budgets that were envisaged by the political parties. The economic crisis of the 1980s had decimated Nepal's public finances and increased the roles of external financial actors in Nepal. Consequently, the increased role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in macroeconomic management in Nepal meant that the victorious party in the national elections of 1991 would unlikely be able to embark on policies that these external actors deemed expansionary and detrimental to the public budget (Brown 2002, p. 173). Moreover, these external actors had prescribed structural adjustment programs that emphasised the control of recurrent expenditures and tighter fiscal controls (The World Bank 1987).

The Nepali Congress, upon its win in the 1991 elections, did not resist the conditionalities imposed by the World Bank and the IMF (Hachhethu 2002). On the contrary, the party conformed with the suggestions of these actors by stressing the need for thrift and economic sacrifices (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 1). The Nepali Congress actively privileged a collectivised approach to welfare enhancement of Nepalis; it pursued structural-developmental programs and was preoccupied with the integration of the Nepali economy with the world markets (Hachhethu 2002).

Although real GDP grew by 5% on average during the stint of the Nepali Congress Party (IMF 1997, p. 2), the embrace of liberal market programs for economic growth by the Nepali Congress and the insistence of external financial actors on tighter fiscal controls contributed to the failure of the Nepali Congress regarding its promises to institute individualised welfare enhancement programs for recognised social groups. Indeed, the party's efforts were directed towards removing government subsidies, and it largely failed to keep up with its promises of enacting programs that would provide immediate economic and social relief for the people of Nepal (Hachhethu 2006). For the Nepali Congress, the primacy of economic growth and the need to keep the donors satisfied trumped other considerations in its approach to welfare enhancement. The familiar political turbulence in Nepal contributed to the fall of the Nepali Congress-led government in 1994.

The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) took a different approach to social protection and poverty alleviation compared to the Nepali Congress, but it did not entirely deviate from the donor-prescribed policies employed by its predecessor (Brown 2002). It reintroduced the subsidy program that the Nepali Congress abandoned; it introduced universal social pensions and embarked on expansive government spending (Hachhethu 2002). The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) posited that in a resource-constrained and chronically poor country like Nepal, an acute concentration on a collectivised and long-term approach to welfare enhancement was untenable given the severity of poverty. Correspondingly, the UML argued that individualised social protection programs must be

regarded as essential instruments for tackling questions of poverty and economic growth in Nepal (Adhikari 1994; Brown 2002, p. 200).

It argued that individualised and collectivist approaches to welfare enhancement were crucial to answering the dual questions of poverty and economic growth (UML 1994). It essentially overturned the policy paradigm championed by its predecessor by declaring that the utility of social protection programs transcended the material upliftment it offers its beneficiaries. The UML argued that social protection programs have a collective utility in that the programs would spur demands for goods and services and, in that way, expand economic growth (Adhikari 1994). Thus, the party framed social protection programs as fundamental to the growth and development of Nepal's economy. As part of this economic thinking, the UML introduced Nepal's universal social pension in 1994.

Economic considerations regarding the ability of the state to finance the creation of social protection programs like universal social pensions were pertinent with the political parties. However, the potential of social pensions and other social protection programs to improve the material conditions of beneficiaries and spur local economies were justifying reasons employed by the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) for the introduction of these programs during its stint in power.

These aspects of social protection programs are often understated in established literature. Often social protection programs are touted for their ability to reduce vulnerability and poverty of direct beneficiaries, while the abilities of these programs to improve local economies and spur economic growth are often overlooked. Barrientos and Scott (2008) and Barrientos (2012a) argued that social protection programs like social cash transfer programs are able to lift credit constraints on poor people, which in turn allow these individuals to take more risks and increase their productive capacity.

The perspectives held by the UML viz-a-viz the introduction of the social pension program lend credence to one of the fundamental arguments of this dissertation that the development of social programs cannot only be ascribed to political, economic, and institutional considerations. That, ideas, particularly, the perspective held by political elites (and broader citizenry) play significant roles in the introduction of social protection programs. Here, I showed that the idea that individualised social protection programs have collective utility beyond its beneficiaries constitutes an essential element in introducing the universal social pensions program in 1994.

Other Macro Factors

While Nepal's population is currently greying at a fast pace, senior citizens in Nepal in the 1990s were only 5.5% of the total population of Nepal (Central Bureau of Statistics 2014). In consonance, 90% of Nepalis resided in rural centres in 1994. Consequently, it is within reasonable limits to suggest that old persons in Nepal at the time of the introduction of social pensions had familiar and kin support for the welfare. Besides, a 2010 report commissioned by the government of Nepal suggested that more than 80% of senior citizens in Nepal resided with kin and family in 2010 (GCN 2010, p. 9). With these figures, it is unlikely that demographic and crumbling kin ties mattered for the adoption of social pensions in Nepal in 1994. Mainly, the notions of respect, constitutional responsibility and intergenerational solidarity were referenced as the main reasons for introducing the program (Adhikari 1994; UML 1994). Besides, senior citizens had been adjudged as deserving of a special social protection program in the 1990 Constitution of Nepal and far back as the 1951 Interim Constitution. While these demographic distribution figures indicate that the welfare issues concerning senior citizens in Nepal cannot be adjudged as an objective social problem that precipitated the introduction of the social pension program, the prominence of old age welfare issues in public discourses and national documents reflect its embeddedness in societal relations in Nepal.

5.3.2.2 Interests

Party Interests and Reputation

Before introducing social pensions in Nepal in 1994, the aspirations of creating a special program that would augment the welfare and material well-being of senior citizens in Nepal had been discussed during Nepal's first democratic experiment in the 1950s. The 1951 Interim Constitution of Nepal accorded senior citizens in Nepal with the right to public assistance (Kingdom of Nepal 1951). As shown in Section 1, preferences for a collectivised approach to welfare enhancement, political instability during the early democratic experiment and the subsequent coup by the monarchy in Nepal halted the progress towards the fulfilment of the programmatic aspirations and the state's accepted welfare responsibility contained in the 1951 constitution.

The return of representative democracy in 1990 generated an expectation that the state would be responsive to the plight of the citizens of Nepal. Indeed, state responsiveness and the desire to transcend the socio-economic stagnation engendered by the 30-year autocratic reign of Nepal's monarchy was one of the defining themes of the popular movement that fought for the return of representative democracy in 1990.

To this end, major political parties in Nepal laid down an array of promises that included the creation of individualised social programs for social groups recognised as deserving social protection (Hachhethu 2002, 2007, 2006). Indeed, the parties viewed social protection programs as evidence of a responsive state, and these promises were standard in the political manifestoes of major parties in the 1991 and 1994 elections.

Unfortunately, the Nepali Congress failed to introduce promised social protection programs during its tenure from 1991 to 1994. Conversely, the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) introduced the promised social protection program dedicated to old persons in Nepal in 1994 by invoking the constitutional responsibility of the state towards senior citizens in Nepal (Adhikari 1994).

The introduction of the social pensions program cannot be viewed only from the perspective of ideas of fulfilling constitutional responsibilities or a response to electoral pledges. The introduction of the program was also a response to changing domestic and international political climate that was prevalent in the early 1990s.

The détente between the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) ended after the return of representative democracy in Nepal. The aftermath of the 1990 revolution had installed the Nepali Congress party at a privileged position as the champion of democracy in Nepal. The party attempted to consolidate this position by attacking the Communist Party (UML) as a party that wanted a one-party state similar to China. The Nepali Congress alleged that the Communist Party of Nepal was anti-social, anti-elderly, anti-religious, and violence-prone (Hachhethu 2002, p. 229). The negative propaganda against the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) was further buttressed by the spectacle of falling Communist regimes in Eastern Europe.

Hence, the introduction of the social pension program and other social programs instituted by the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) were symbolic and demonstrative measures to counter the party's perceived negative image as an uncaring, anti-old, anti-religious political group that is bent on usurping established traditions and culture (Hachhethu 2002). The latter of these points were significant as regards why social pensions was introduced in Nepal in 1994. An observer noted that the party introduced the social pension to gain the support of senior citizens because this section of the population was enamoured with established tradition and culture in Nepal, and the UML were keen not to be perceived as a political party that was willing to jettison established culture and tradition (Hachhethu 2002, p. 229).

In addition to the reputation argument, the fragility of UML's minority government and the political environment that it operated in played a substantial role in incentivising the establishment of social protection programs, including the social pensions in 1994. The UML's government was operating in an environment where it had to please actors with radically divergent interests. On the one hand, due to Nepal's substantial reliance on external actors for budgetary support, the UML had to placate the anxiety of these external actors. The upper echelon UML had pledged that its government would not enact radical macroeconomic policies and it would engage in minimal reforms that reflected prevalent political and economic reality (Brown 2002, p. 199; Hachhethu 2007, p. 149). Consequently, the UML's government continued the liberalisation and privatisation policies programs of its predecessor with subdued vigour (Hachhethu 2006, p. 35; Poudyal 1996, p. 210; Brown 2002, p. 200). The UML stated that it would pursue selective privatisation and liberalisation of the economy of Nepal. On the other hand, it had to pacify the rank-and-file members of the party who were more interested in the institutionalisation of the idealistic and radical policies that the party promised in the 1994 elections.

Consequently, the desire to thaw the disappointment of the rank-and-file members giving the continuation of Nepali Congress programs resulted in the expansion of public budget for social

protection program. In a way, the establishment of social protection programs, including social pensions, were part of a bigger political ploy to augment the communistic credentials of the party among the party faithful and strengthen the position of the political party.

The introduction of the universal social pension program was a response to the political environment that was prevalent in the 1990s. First, by invoking the collective responsibility clauses of the 1990 constitution, the party was demonstrating its responsiveness to the social questions and aspirations that was envisaged in the national constitution. Second, the program was a response to the perceived bad reputation and minority status of the party in the 1990s. The introduction of social pensions in Nepal gives some credence to the empirical predictions in social pensions and social protection literature that left-leaning political parties are more likely to introduce programs like social pensions. The explanations lend empirical credence to the conclusions of Keefer and Milanovic (2014) and Rudolph (2016) that left-leaning governments favour the provision of redistributive programs compared to right-leaning governments in developing and transitioning countries.

Other Interest-based explanations

Another strand of argument that may explain the development of social protection programs like social pensions is the influences and activities of trade unions and interest groups in the adoption process. Using this line of argument for the introduction of social pensions in Nepal can be tricky because trade union membership is restricted to a small minority of workforce in the formal sector.

The 1990 revolution reopened the space for trade unions to participate in policy activities in Nepal. The largest trade unions in Nepal are affiliated with the major political parties. The Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC) is affiliated with the Nepali Congress; the All Nepal Trade Union Federation is affiliated with the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), and the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) is associated with the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) (ICTUR 2005). While these unions are affiliated with these parties, they are not entirely controlled by the political parties, and the scope of their activities revolve around protecting the interests of their members (Drucza 2016). Specifically, they restrict their activities to areas relating to social security for workers and not to general social welfare programs in Nepal (Drucza 2016). Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that these unions were influential in the introduction of social pensions in Nepal in the 1990s.

5.3.2.3 Institutions

The last strand of the orthodox factor bundles for explaining the emergence of social protection programs are Institutions (Gough 2008). This line of thought suggests that bureaucratic legacies, the capacity of the state, the structure and policymaking procedures of the state and the nature of rights in national constitutions play a significant role in the introduction of social protection programs. Institutional explanations examine the distribution of policymaking powers between the arms of government and how the institutional setup of a country provides for the influence of special interests groups (Maioni 1997).

The process of state-building has had an impact on the trajectory of social protection development in Nepal. Marshall (1950) remarked that the creation of social protection programs is a reflection of growing state's responsibility and a crucial precipice for the development of social rights. For Nepal, the responsibility of the state and the development of social rights have been dependent on its historically turbulent governing structures. I showed in Section 1, that the overthrow of the Rana regime and the subsequent democratic experiment (1951-1960) fostered ideas of state welfare responsibility that had not been present in the Rana era. These ideas were made possible through the adoption of democratic institutions that allowed for a universalistic recognition of the state's welfare responsibility for the people of Nepal. While the 1951 Constitution recognised old persons as deserving of social protection, the dominance of a collectivised approach to welfare enhancement in the planning discourses of Nepal precluded the introduction of special welfare programs for old persons in Nepal during the first democratic experiment.

The royal overthrow of democracy in 1960 also came with its constitution. However, constitutional responsibility for the welfare of denizens of Nepal was absent in monarchical constitutions of Nepal. Instead, public policies were grounded in the patrimonialism of the monarchical institution (Basu and Riaz 2010).

The overthrow of absolute monarchy and the return of democratic governance in 1990 marked the re-emergence of state responsibility for social issues in Nepal, especially for senior citizens. Democracy, through its inherent institutions of periodic elections and constitution, increased the visibility of the welfare issues facing old persons in Nepal. As a ploy to get more votes in the 1991 and 1994 elections, political parties in Nepal promised the institutionalisation of social protection programs for deserving groups that consisted of old persons in Nepal. Similarly, the constitutional clauses on social welfare issues as contained in the 1990 Constitution placed a burden on

policymakers to ensure that welfare issues for social groups like old persons were not ignored in Nepal. Consequently, it was not surprising when the UML justified the introduction of social pensions in Nepal on the constitutional clauses that maintained that the state must be a responsible partner in organising the welfare of old persons in Nepal. The UML stated that,

‘Steps will also be taken to ensure a minimum of livelihood to poor and helpless senior citizens as a part of state obligations towards them. Such a program for the time being will be launched on pilot basis in 5 districts to benefit senior citizens aged 75 years and above. This scheme will be extended to all districts of the Kingdom based on the experience achieved’ (Adhikari 1994, p. 9).

In this sense, it is within reasonable bounds of available evidence to suggest that democracy and its integral institutions of periodic elections and national constitutions are incontrovertible factors in the introduction of social pensions in Nepal. These findings on democracy and its inherent institutions mesh well with the hypothesis forwarded by Haggard and Kaufman (2008) that democracy and its constitutive features of elections and interest groups (political parties), mediated by the economic and fiscal circumstances of the state, can spur the expansion of welfare entitlement and, can foster a new social contract between the state and the governed.

In consonance with constitutional commitments to social welfare, the capacity of the state constitutes an essential determinant for not only the establishment of social protection programs; it is also crucial for how these programs are implemented (Babajanian 2012). The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) did not give an explicit rationale for adopting universal social pensions over a means-tested social pension. However, the lack of technical expertise and bureaucratic sophistication likely contributed to its decision to eschew a means-tested approach. This insight is grounded on the fact that the governments that ruled Nepal after the 1990 revolution inherited a weakened bureaucratic system that was corrupt, low in capacity, inefficient, and lack commitment to implement the programs from the executive (Bista 1991). The combination of this fact and the institutionally demanding nature of the design, implementation and enforcement of means-tested social pensions may have played a role in the thinking of the policymakers that introduced social pensions in Nepal. Moreover, empirical

findings from Brooks (2015) does give some credence to this speculation that developing countries with weak bureaucratic capacity are more likely to favour a unconditional cash transfers design over other designs.

5.3.2.4 International Influences

The factors highlighted above emphasised the influence of domestic factors on the introduction of social pensions in Nepal in 1994. The influence of external actors on domestic policymaking is especially important given that Nepal had always relied on external actors and multiple development agencies for budgetary support (Brown 2002; Hachhethu 2002).

In Section 1, I showed that despite the ideational aspirations for an individualised approach to welfare enhancement in the 1951 Constitution, the influence of external actors and the prevalent global paradigms on how to enhance the welfare of a population primarily allowed for the triumph of a collectivised approach to welfare enhancement in the first attempt at planned development in Nepal. The influences of global paradigms and external actors were discernible in how Nepal approached the questions of poverty in the 1980s. The embrace of a minimum needs approach to the questions of poverty and the recognition of the potential of the poor in the planning documents of the 1980s were also shared by the dominant external actors in Nepal. The timing of the adoption of the global paradigm of minimum needs approach suggests that a vertical diffusion mechanism was likely responsible for the adoption of the ideas in the 1980s.

The precarity of the economic prospect of Nepal in the late 1980s and early 1990s forced Nepal to acquiesce to the demands of external financial actors in all facets of public policy, especially in areas that concern macroeconomic management (Parajulee 1999, pp. 222–295). On the insistence of these actors, successive governments of Nepal adopted a liberalised approach to open the Nepali economy to the world markets. The actors equally insisted on fiscal consolidation of government expenditure as part of the conditionality of the loans offered to Nepal in the 1990s.

Given the insistence of these actors on consolidation of government expenditure, it was unlikely that the mechanism of vertical policy diffusion of social pension ideas from these international actors were influential in the decision to introduce social pensions in Nepal. Besides, the expansionary nature of government expenditures and the perceived lack of fiscal discipline by the Communist Party of Nepal

(UML) was cited as one of the main reasons for terminating key partnerships with the World Bank in 1995 (Brown 2002, p. 225).

Ideas and conventions from global and regional levels actors have been influential in the expansion phase of social pensions in Nepal. For instance, the tenets of the International Year of Old Persons were used to justify the increase in the benefit of the social pension program in 1999 (Irudaya 2003). Similarly, global level tenets of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing of 2002 and international conventions like the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights were used to formulate domestic legal instruments for protecting the interests of old persons in Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal 2002).

Arguments from the policy learning and policy transfer literature thus suggest that the adoption of a policy may be conditioned on the existence of a similar policy in another country. The timing and the pattern of adoption of social pensions in the south Asian sub-region thus suggest that it was unlikely that Nepal adopted social pensions due to similar policies in other south Asian countries. The introduction of social pensions in 1994 was pathbreaking regarding national cash transfers programs for senior citizens in the south Asian region as Nepal was the first South Asian country to introduce a national social pension program.

Although, there is a long history of sub-national introductions of social pensions in India dating back to the 1960s (Gulati and Gulati 1995). In particular, the Indian state of Kerala instituted its first social pension scheme for destitute old and disabled in 1960, and it expanded these pensions schemes to other classes of old persons in India. Indeed, Kerala is a pioneering state within India, and some of the pension programs were emulated by the central and other state governments in India (Sato 2004). However, there is no evidence to suggest that the UML was emulating Indian states with the institutionalisation of social pensions in 1994.

The question of the influence of external ideas in the development of social policy and social protection has recently germinated considerable debates in the literature that investigates social protection in the global South. Leisering (2019)'s book on the 'Global Rise of Social Cash Transfers' maintained that global ideas, actors, conventions were influential in the rise of cash transfers in the global South. Similarly, the edited book from Schmitt (2020) tackles the question of the extent of the

influence of international factors in social policy development, especially in the global South. The edited volume's conclusion that external actors-mainly international organisations and cold-war superpowers-have been influential in the economic and political affairs of dependent countries is well-founded given the analysis conducted in this section and the first section on Nepal. However, Chinyoka and Ulriksen (2020) dissented by suggesting that the influence of external actors is mediated by the dependence of countries on the external aid. I showed here that the dependence of Nepal on external actors and the insistence of these actors on budget consolidation and austerity did not preclude an expansionary budget that led to the introduction of social protection programs like the universal social pension in Nepal. In this way, it is possible to conclude that the influence of external actors on public policy in Nepal is conditional on the synchronisation of the objectives of domestic actors and the interests of external actors. I showed here and in the preceding sections that the Nepali Congress did not introduce the social protection programs that it promised in its 1991 and 1994 manifesto because intrinsically, it favoured a collectivised approach to welfare enhancement, and it largely agreed with the ideas of external actors that Nepal must prioritise growth and austerity. Conversely, the UML placed equal importance on individualised and collectivised approaches to welfare enhancement, and its government did not blatantly embrace the ideas of external actors.

5.3.2.5 Ideas

One of the central arguments of this dissertation is that structural, political, and economic considerations are important for the introduction of social protection programs. However, Ideas should not be discounted as a crucial determinant of these programs. In fact, this dissertation takes ideas seriously by examining what ideas mattered and how these ideas mattered in the adoption of social pensions in Nepal. Hence, Ideas are conceived from two perspectives. Ideas are examined from a macro perspective via the 'Five Is' model. The Onion Skin model provides a roadmap for examining Ideas from a micro perspective. Ideas from a macro perspective examine broad ideologies and how they provide insights for the adoption of social protection programs. Ideas taken from a micro perspective adjudge that ideas-defined as the sum of values, perceptions and beliefs held by the political elites (and wider society)-are important factors in the introduction of social welfare programs like social pensions; that ideas are subterranean factors that permeate all phases of policymaking, the interest of policymakers and broader institutions.

Macro Ideas and Social Pension Development in Nepal (Ideas from the ‘Five Is’ model)

The dominant parties (the Nepali Congress and UML) that took the reins of power after the overthrow of absolute monarchy in 1990 described their respective ideologies as either Democratic Socialism or Communism (UML 1994; Adhikari 1994; Hachhethu 2002, 2006; Kingdom of Nepal 1992a). Although and as noted by Leisering (2019), these macro-level ideologies are likely to provide little insight as to how they influence the development of social policy. The weak explanatory powers of these macro ideologies are compounded by the fungible nature with which the political parties in Nepal adhere to their stated ideology.

The Nepali Congress campaigned as a party with a democratic socialist ideology that largely favoured strong state intervention in social and economic policies (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a). Once it achieved power, the party jettisoned its stated democratic socialism ideology (Hachhethu 2002, p. 213). The party wholly embraced the idea that private markets should take precedence in the quest of improving the welfare outcomes of Nepalis and that the role of the state was to be a facilitator of private markets (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a). The party’s modus operandi privileged a market-driven approach to welfare enhancement over individualised welfare entitlements. Given this preference, it was of little surprise that the party did not institute the individualised social protection programs (including social pensions for old persons) that it had promised during its stint in power from 1991 to 1994.

While it is tempting to state that the communist credentials of the UML may have influenced its decision to introduce social pensions, one must modulate this urge because the UML largely modified its communist stance once it got in power in 1994. Its quest to pose as a non-radical party willing to adhere to donor suggestions and prevalent ideas in the international political economy checked its radical stance on economic and social policies (Hachhethu 2002; Brown 2002).

The party’s leader and later Prime Minister of Nepal, Man Mohan Adhikari confirmed the fungibility of UML’s espoused ideology by noting that communism as the ideology of the party was more of a label than an operating philosophy with which the party would govern (Lawoti 2005, p. 46). The stance is aptly captured in the interview that Mr Adhikari gave to the Newsweek magazine on the 28th of November 1994. He stated that the UML would,

'take cautious steps, with a minimum reform, a minimum change. Our economic and political program is adjusted to the present reality' (Hachhethu 2002, p. 229; Brown 2002, p. 199).

Although, and in contrast to the Nepali Congress, the party posited that while the markets are indispensable in improving economic growth and the welfare outcomes of the people of Nepal, the state cannot play be a mere facilitator, and the state cannot let market exchanges solely determine the welfare outcomes of Nepalis (Brown 2002, p. 200). Thus, it requires that the state provide social protection programs for the upliftment of the poor (Brown 2002, p. 200; Adhikari 1994). The ideological slant explicated here gives a hint as to why the UML was willing to employ the machinery of the state in improving the welfare outcomes of Nepalis by introducing an array of social protection programs (including universal social pension) during its short stint in power.

Micro Ideas and Social Pension Development in Nepal (The Onion Skin Model)

The enunciation of the macro-ideational determinants of social pensions in Nepal provides a partial picture of the ideational determinant of social pensions in Nepal. Specifically, and as argued in this dissertation, social pensions are policy manifestations of more profound ideas that centres on the distribution of welfare responsibilities, framing, social recognition of social groups and what sort of problems that society deemed worthy of public attention. Answers to these questions are critical in understanding the introduction of social programs like social pensions. Besides, they deepen the ideational insights obtained from the 'Five Is' model. As stated earlier, the Onion Skin Model, as propounded by Leisering (2019), provides a roadmap with which these questions can be analysed. The rest of this section will examine these layers and how they influenced the adoption of social pensions in Nepal in 1994.

Frames

The dominant frame that guided all spheres of public life in the years leading to the institution of Nepal's universal social pensions was the frame of 'radical change'. Upon the Nepali revolution in 1990, the main political parties-Nepali Congress and Communist Party of Nepal (UML), invoked powerful ideas of the revolution to illustrate their respective social protection policy plans for the new political dispensation. The Nepali Congress promised an 'economic revolution' while the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) promised a 'radical change' to illustrate their economic and social policy plans (Hachhethu 2007, p. 140, 2002, p. 212). These terms were constructed to emulate the yearning for a departure from the stagnation that characterised the autocratic era. They were also used to project an era in which the state would be responsive to the welfare needs of the population.

The explication of the ideas of radical departure from the past differs immensely between the main political parties. The Nepali Congress's idea of a radical departure entailed the full embrace of the ethos and ideas championed by the party during Nepal's first democratic experiment of the 1950s (Hachhethu 2002). For the Nepali Congress, economic revolution meant democratic socialism, which translated to rural development, mixed economy, the upliftment of the poor, equal dignity and rights to all people, government service to oppressed and poor people and social security for the elderly (Hachhethu 2007; Kingdom of Nepal 1992a).

For the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), the 1990 revolution was the beginning of a new revolution. The party campaigned vigorously on rapid, radical, and revolutionary change in Nepal (UML 1994; Adhikari 1994). Like its rival, UML campaigned on the idea of a radical departure from the autocratic history of Nepal. In the 1991 and 1994 elections, it framed its policy commitment concerning social protection, land reform and the social recognition of the welfare needs of special social groups as part of the effort to break from Nepal's autocratic past (Hachhethu 2002; UML 1994; Adhikari 1994).

After the UML assumed control of the treasury benches in 1994, the frame of radical change greeted the envisaged social protection programs of the new government. The party posited that social protection programs for old persons (social pensions) and other social groups were not just about the material upliftment it would provide for these social groups but a manifestation of the spirit of the 1990 revolution (Adhikari 1994). The party framed social protection programs, including social pensions, as important manifestations of what the country had fought for in the 1990 revolution. It equally framed social protection programs as conduits for enhancing not only the standard of living of beneficiaries but also a signal of the birth of a welfare-responsible and democratic state.

The framing of the introduction of social pensions in terms of broader ideas like a political revolution buttresses the postulations that social protection programs rarely enjoy singularity legitimacy. Policymakers attach broader positive or negative frames to a program to enhance or inhibit the legitimacy of its introduction. For UML, framing the introduction of social pensions in terms of the 1990 revolution can be construed as an attempt at providing legitimacy for the program in the eyes of reticent external actors and party faithful who had been wary of the subdued approach taken by the party in economic policy.

The political revolution was a positive frame that augmented the legitimacy of the introduction of social pensions in Nepal. The discourses that emanated from the Nepali Congress during its 3.5-year stint can help garner insights into the party's failure regarding its campaign promise to institute social protection programs for old persons in Nepal. The party in the Eighth-Five Year Plan of Nepal framed its approach to economic and social policy in terms of thrift and economic sacrifices (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 1). According to the plan and party, there was the need to reduce the role of government and its expenditure and augment the role of private markets in the economic and social policies in Nepal. Given this ideational stance, it was unsurprising that the Nepali Congress failed to institute the social programs as promised in its 1991 campaign manifesto.

Defining Collective Responsibility

The answer to the question of who is responsible for the welfare enhancement of a particular group gives insights into the introduction of a particular social program. The welfare responsibility for social groups is usually distributed between the public and private sphere. For instance, in agrarian societies, the welfare responsibility of, say, old persons and children are handled by family and kin relationships. Private market exchanges primarily provide the avenue for the welfare enhancement of persons of working age.

The welfare enhancement responsibility of social groups only becomes a public issue when societies determine that the welfare questions of particular social groups are too great to be left alone to the markets or family relationships (Kaufmann 2012). The expansion of welfare boundaries in which the public (state) takes up the welfare responsibility of a particular group is not an ad-hoc process. It is deliberate, and the extent of this responsibility changes with time. In this sense, it does not matter if quantitative evidence suggests the presence (or absence) of a problem. A problem only becomes worthy of public attention if a society or its decision-makers adjudged that it was a social problem worthy of public attention.

The question of welfare responsibility for the welfare of old persons is especially pertinent in the introduction of social pensions in Nepal, given the long monarchical rule in Nepal. The long history of monarchical rule in Nepal had often placed the responsibility of social welfare issues with the King. Social protection programs were not constructed as a responsibility of the monarch towards the people of Nepal. Instead, public welfare programs were perceived as a gift from the monarchy (Basu and Riaz 2010, p. 48). In this way, programs for welfare enhancement were neither viewed as an activity of the state nor a responsibility of the state.

The 1990 revolution ended the autocratic era. It restored popular democracy that grounded sovereignty in the hands of the people of Nepal. It changed the status of the people of Nepal from subjects to citizens capable of challenging the direction of the state via elections and other democratic institutions. Naturally, the revolution was accompanied by a renegotiation of the relationship between the state and the people of Nepal through a constitution.

The 1990 Constitution differed from its predecessors (the 1959 and 1962 Constitutions) by not only affording excluded social groups the opportunity to petition the state; it also recognised the welfare needs of certain social groups that included senior citizens in Nepal. The constitution placed the

responsibility of providing social sustenance for all the citizens of Nepal on the shoulders of the state. It accorded special attention to marginalised and disadvantaged social groups, including women, the disabled, senior citizens and children (Kingdom of Nepal 1990). The nature of the accepted responsibility present in the 1990 Constitution evokes a value-laden version of universalism that connote an engendering of collective welfare norm in Nepal. This contrast the patrimonial welfare norm that was prevalent in the autocratic era (1960-1990) in that the acceptance of collective responsibility is not tied to one individual (i.e., the monarch), and public goods are not a question of charity or gift but a matter of responsibility of the state.

Crucially, the elements of democratic governance, i.e., political parties, played a fundamental role in manifesting the universalist intentions of the state. For Nepal, the political parties fuelled this construction of the state by carrying on a discourse that moulded the state as an activist and omnipotent state capable of providing for all citizens' needs (Hachhethu 2007). Thus, the idea of the state as a collective agent through instruments of laws and administrative fiats capable of altering the welfare outcomes of the people of Nepal was a crucial plank in the approaches of the main parties in Nepal. Although the Nepali Congress largely jettisoned this stance once it got into power, the UML, on the other hand, reiterated the welfare responsibility of the state when it got into power.

The idea of the universalism of state welfare responsibility for these social groups permeated the discourses of the UML, and it became a crucial plank for the introduction of universal social pensions in 1994. The UML justified the introduction of Nepal's universal social pensions and the expansive budget on social protection programs on the idea of constitutional responsibility expressed in the 1990 Constitution. It argued that the party's desire to transcend the irresponsiveness of the autocratic regime to the welfare needs of old persons and other groups in Nepal prompted the introduction of myriad social protection programs it instituted. In the 1994 budget speech, the sitting Finance Minister for the UML stated that,

'Therefore, the development efforts of the CPN (UML) will be focused on all round upliftment of resource less poor people put aside by the state. The large part of this group consists of rural and urban landless' and marginal small farmers, agricultural labourers, very small cottage industries entrepreneurs and Kamaiyas. Lower-level public servants and teachers, native tribes, and the helpless, old and disabled are also in this group. Nevertheless, we have a responsibility towards the justice loving patriot and true democrats who underwent unlawful suppression and whose voices were suppressed for decades' (Adhikari 1994, p. 2).

'Steps will also be taken to ensure a minimum of livelihood to poor and helpless senior citizens as a part of state obligations towards them. Such a program for the time being will be launched on pilot basis in 5 districts to benefit senior citizens aged 75 years and above. This scheme will be extended to all districts of the Kingdom based on the experience achieved' (Adhikari 1994, p. 9).

Constructing Social Problems/ Problem Definition

Leisering (2019) referred to the social questions of a polity as generalised social problems accompanied by solutions. In the years leading to the enactment of social pension in Nepal, the supreme social questions articulated by the political actors at that time was the poverty among Nepalis and the exclusion of certain sections of Nepal from political and economic opportunities. The main political parties intertwined the social questions of poverty and exclusions to broader national questions of democracy, state-building and responsibility.

The Nepali Congress reiterated the importance of poverty and social exclusion to the national questions explicated above. It defined the poverty and exclusion questions in terms of the deficit in the structure of Nepal's economy fostered by the autocratic regime and suggested that tackling the recognised deficits was crucial to economic growth and welfare enhancement of the people of Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 11). The party had recognised that special social groups deserved social protection in its 1991 and 1994 manifestos (Hachhethu 2002). However, it maintained a stance that privileged a collectivised approach and avoided recognising these groups in the Eighth-Five Development Year Plan that it developed. The plan largely focused on enhancing the structural capabilities of Nepal's economy through the provision of small business loans to low-income groups (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 16). Hence, how the party defined the problems of Nepal underscored the solutions directed at the recognised problems.

The discrepancy in the national plans and the manifesto of the Nepali Congress suggests that how a problem is defined and the prescribed solution to recognised problems largely depends on the audience that a discourse seeks to address. The special recognition of old persons and other groups in the 1991 and 1994 manifestoes can be construed as a vote-getting ploy that the party was not genuinely committed to. The discrepancy expressed by the Nepali Congress is evocative of what

Leisering (2019) described as 'double-talk'. Doubletalk occurs when there is a divergence in what an actor says and the subsequent action of the actor.

The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) linked the question of poverty and exclusion in Nepal to social exclusion and state apathy fostered by the autocratic period. It defined social protection programs in terms of the collective utility of such programs in tackling broader questions of economic growth and state responsibility. The party argued that due to the neglect of certain groups in Nepal, it was necessary to bring these groups into the economic mainstream so that the previously neglected group can contribute to economic growth. The party delineated its construction of the recognised social problems in the budget speech of its government in 1994 by stating that,

'Growing poverty and unemployment problems are the most challenging and serious concern to us. The old thinking that the fruits of development can permeate the lowest levels of people and region with the achievement of high economic growth rate has proved to be wrong. Accordingly, the one-sided approach of undertaking all development activities by the governments has also turned out to be a failure. In a resource constrained country like Nepal where growth rate of labour force is high and a large proportion of the labour force is dependent on agriculture, special programs on poverty alleviation and employment generation that involve people themselves for the task of development have to be implemented. By doing so, it is our belief that exploited and tortured people can be relieved and their socio-economic status could be lifted up' (Adhikari 1994, p. 5).

The pronouncement from UML's Finance Minister, Bharat Mohan Adhikari, at the introduction of the social pension program, showed how the UML constructed the usefulness of social protection programs to the problems of economic growth and poverty presaged their embrace of social protection even in an uncondusive macroeconomic environment. These constructions lend credence to the argument forwarded by Leisering (2019) that how a problem is constructed determine the solutions that would be accorded to it.

5.3.3 Summary

This chapter analysed and explained the determinants of social pensions in Nepal. I showed here that structural and ideational factors are critical for the introduction of social pensions in Nepal. Specifically, I showed that micro-level ideas were essential for understanding why the universal social pension program was introduced. From the analysis conducted here, I found that the following factors were important for the introduction of social pensions in Nepal:

- Social Pension was not a product of expanded government fiscal space. That is, economic growth did not facilitate the introduction of social pensions in Nepal. This contrasts the influence of economic growth in Botswana, where the boom in diamond sales in the 1990s created the fiscal space that allowed for the introduction of social pensions.
- At the time of the introduction of social pensions in 1994, the population of old persons was objectively not severe enough to create a demographic burden that would have necessitated the intervention of the state in the provision of social protection. In consonance, rural-urban migration drift was not severe enough to indicate the breakdown of traditional social security networks. Yet, the welfare of old persons remained a priority in the discourses of political parties, and old persons and their welfare were explicitly recognised in the national constitution of Nepal. The conclusion that can be drawn here is that the prominence of the welfare of old persons is linked to how political actors perceive the welfare of old persons in Nepal.
- Institutions of democracy were crucial factors in the introduction of social pensions in Nepal. Democracy gave the political actors a chance to contrast democratic governance with the autocratic regime that lasted 30 years in Nepal. Social programs like social pensions were touted as evidence of what democratic governance could provide in Nepal.
- Importantly, I show here that micro-ideas about who is responsible for the welfare of old persons, the dominance of poverty questions in the political discourse of Nepali policy actors, the social recognition of the welfare issues of old persons and the framing of welfare programs in terms of broader ideas of the political revolution were key ingredients in the introduction of social pension in Nepal. In consonance, I showed that there are different levels of universalism in the social pension discourses of Nepal. First, the more abstract universalism discourse that pertains to the acceptance of collective responsibility for the social welfare of all Nepalis by the state and the second, universalism that pertain to the delivery mechanism of the social pension program.

Chapter 5: Nepal

Section 4: From Program Universalism to Systemic Universalism

5.4.1 Introduction: Mapping Social Protection in Nepal

In the preceding sections, I identified two levels of universalism as per social welfare and social pensions in Nepal. First, I identified universalism embodied in the collective welfare responsibility of the state for all the citizens of Nepal. This is the broader, cultural, value-laden form of universalism in Nepal. This universalism is evinced by the social clauses in the constitution of Nepal (not only in the 1990 Constitution but also in the 2007 and 2015 Constitutions of Nepal). The ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1991 also evince the commitment of Nepal to the idea of universalism as per social welfare in Nepal. Second, an institutional form of universalism that pertains to the target mechanism of the social pensions program in Nepal was identified.

In the broader form of Universalism in Nepal, there has been a steady progression in the strength of the commitment/responsibility of the state to welfare issues. The nature of recognition of social issues was a constitutional expression in Nepal's 1951⁴⁵ and 1990 Constitutions. The idea that the state is the centre of welfare production and distribution was reaffirmed in Nepal's 2007 and 2015 Constitutions. Also, the 2007 and 2015 Constitutions bestowed the right to social security on Nepalis, and it equally recognised the welfare rights of social groups such as old persons, exploited castes, disabled persons (Republic of Nepal 2007, 2015).

The evolution of the nature and strength of accepted welfare responsibility of the state cannot be divorced from the need to correct the instability of politics, economics, and social life in Nepal. The affirmation of the social rights of the groups mentioned hints at the nature of questions that the accepted welfare responsibility tries to answer. Per the language and discourses employed in the development plans, budget speeches, party manifestos, these questions revolve around recognised social problems of poverty, inequality, broader problems of social cohesion and social inclusion, economic growth and caste discrimination (UML 1994; Hachhethu 2002; Kingdom of Nepal 1997, 2002; Republic of Nepal 2015; Ministry of Finance 2015).

In a sense, the constitutionalised recognition of social welfare issues in Nepal, through its iterations, is an attempt at universalism in Nepal. An attempt to indicate that while the country is ethnically diverse, state's effort at improving the welfare is aimed at all denizens of the country while at the same time recognising that some sections of the country are special and deserves welfare recognition.

⁴⁵ The Constitution stated that 'His Majesty's Government shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to educate and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want' Kingdom of Nepal 1951.

In this chapter, universalism, as espoused in the accepted social welfare responsibility of the Nepali state, is assessed. Given the state's commitment to ideas of universalism and social protection, to what extent are these commitments concretely manifested?

As argued by Anttonen and Sipilä (2014), universalism analysed on a program and policy level should equally consider universalism in services. I agree with these authors' argument, but the scope of the analysis of concrete manifestation of abstract ideas of constitutionally accepted responsibility of welfare will be limited to social protection programs (similar to the analysis of Botswana). Consequently, I pinpoint the societal categories covered by social protection programs in Nepal, I assess the institutionalisation of these programs and investigate the extent of within-category exclusions prevalent in the social protection framework of Nepal.

5.4.2 Analytical Approach

Since the introduction of the universal social pension in 1994, Nepal has instituted myriad forms of social protection programs that ostensibly give a ‘cradle to the grave’ character to the social protection framework of Nepal. This section investigates the framework by going beyond the labels of programs to understand the coverage of the social protection programs.

As with the Botswana case, this section employs Leisering (2019)’s entitlement approach. I will briefly sketch the entitlement approach here. The entitlement approach, as proposed by Leisering (2019), takes a different perspective at investigating social protection programs. The entitlement approach examines how beneficiaries of social protection programs are defined in the regulations and statutes. The entitlement approach argues that labels on a program do not always provide a sophisticated picture of program coverage. It hypothesised that an entitlement-based approach to the analysis of social protection programs is likely to yield a more complex picture of coverage of such programs. The approach lends itself to a fine-grained analysis of the state’s commitments to social protection and recognition of social groups. It allows for noting privileged groups as regards social protection programs, which may, in turn, give a hint of how society perceives the deservingness of recognised social groups.

Although the entitlement approach concentrated on social cash transfers, here, I will investigate not only the cash transfer framework of Nepal but also other forms of social welfare enhancement programs. I investigate both transfers entitlement programs and own-labour entitlement programs.

5.4.3 Social Protection in Nepal

With divergent but coherent goals of fulfilling constitutionally accepted welfare responsibility, social protection programs are becoming germane instruments in the overall social policy architecture of Nepal (Koehler 2011; Khanal et al. 2013). These programs have been established to provide answers to social questions of poverty, inequality, social cohesion, and economic growth (Adhikari 1994; Bhattarai 2008; Pandey 2010; Ministry of Finance 2014a; Paudel 2016; Mahara 2017; Raj Khatiwada 2019). The growth of the entire framework of social protection in Nepal has been remarkable given turbulent political transitions from absolute monarchy in the 1990s and the effect of a 10-year civil conflict that ended the 200-year reign of monarchical power in Nepal.

Nepal, through its constitutions (1990, 2007, 2015), development plans and budget speeches, committed to the development and strengthening of social protection programs and social cash transfers. The commitment of the Nepali state and elites is epitomised by the visibility of social protection programs in yearly budget speeches and the manifestoes of major political parties. More specifically, the commitment is further exemplified in how the social protection programs are financed in Nepal. Successive governments have shown that social protection programs are priorities with substantial budget allocations. For instance, I showed in Section 2 that the government of Nepal shoulders the responsibility of financing the universal social pensions. This also applies to other social protection programs in Nepal.

The commitment of successive Nepali governments is also reflected in the administration of the social cash transfers and social protection programs in the country. Although donors and international NGOs are present in the social protection and social cash transfer sector, the government of Nepal, through its ministries and administrative units, takes more responsibility in the delivery and administration of these programs. The illustration of the commitment of the Nepali state via these three indicators of institutionalisation (financing, administration, and depth of institutionalisation) show that the Nepali state takes its welfare responsibility role seriously.

A close analysis of the National Living Standard Survey of Nepal that was conducted in 2011 attests to the significance of the social protection framework in Nepal. The survey indicated that at least one individual in every household and people in all income brackets in Nepal benefit from social protection programs (Sijapati 2017). Current data from the University of Manchester Social Protection Database⁴⁶ indicate that more than 11 million Nepalis benefit from various social

⁴⁶ The database can be accessed via this link-http://www.socialassistance.manchester.ac.uk/?page_id=223

protection programs in Nepal. The expansive nature and its significance have inspired some adulatory commentary from observers. For instance, Mathema (2012) posited that with the expansive nature of social protection in Nepal, the polity is shaping up to become a social welfare society. Koehler (2011) and Sijapati (2017) went as far as labelling the social protection framework of Nepal as one with a universal character. This chapter goes beyond the labels of the programs in the framework to evaluate the true nature of their coverage.

5.4.4 Entitlement Approach to Social Protection in Nepal

Historically, special societal groups in Nepal have been accorded with social protection programs. These special groups were powerful social groups from the military and civil service. Pension for members of the military was introduced in 1934 and all employees of the civil service in 1940 (Harris et al. 2013). The institutionalisation of these early social protection programs reflected state patrimonialism, the closeness of these groups to political power and the desire for power preservation by the autocratic Rana dynasty that ruled Nepal until 1950.

However, in the last 30 years (1990-2020), there has been a steady expansion of social protection programs in Nepal. The Seventh and Eighth-Five Development Plans (1985-1997) had emphasised the need for welfare programs for special groups beyond privileged groups of public servants. The welfare recognition of these social groups became studier with changing ideation regarding how the state should tackle social questions of poverty-a question that only became a distinctive objective of the state from the 1980s.

In Section 1, I showed that it was only in the Sixth-Five Year Development Plan (1980-1985) that poverty became a distinct objective of the state. The ideation about poverty in the Sixth plan recognised the agency of the poor and indicated a notion that the poor needed to be provided with adequate tools that would allow them to escape poverty. The quotes from the Eighth- Five Year Development Plan (1992-1997) aptly summed the thinking of the planners and elites in Nepal regarding the questions of poverty in Nepal.

The plan stated that,

‘The government sector will take effective measures to safeguard and promote social security of the handicapped, the children, the aged, the youth and the physically disabled people. Such humanitarian

measures will ensure a normal and decent life for the weaker sections of our society' (Kingdom of Nepal 1992a, p. 382).

Till date, successive governments of Nepal have steadily built a social protection framework with programs that employ a mixture of individualised and uniform modes of entitlement. That is, some programs rely on means-testing (individualised mode of entitlement), and others in the framework do not make use of means/needs test (uniform mode of entitlement). Curiously, the first social protection program in Nepal was the social cash transfers program for old persons in Nepal. The Old Age Allowance program formed the bedrock for the expansion of social protection programs, and it ostensibly adopted a uniform approach mode of entitlement.

Table 21 below provides information regarding the timeline of social protection programs in Nepal and the category of entitlement.

Table 21: Timeline of Social Protection programs in Nepal

Name of Program	Year of Introduction	Category of Entitlement	Target
Old Age Allowance	1994	Transfer Entitlement	All citizens over the age of 70; All citizens age 60 from the Dailit caste, and residents of the Kanali region of Nepal
Helpless single woman allowance	1996/97	Transfer Entitlement	Single women that have completed the age of 60; single women that have not completed the age of 60 but have no source of income to make a living.
Disability Allowance	1996	Transfer Entitlement	Citizens with total disability.
Rural Community Infrastructure Work	1996	Own Labour entitlement	Employment as security against food insecurity.
Aama Surakshya Programme	1998	Transfer Entitlement	Civil Registration and Safe Child Delivery.
Karnali Employment Programme	2006	Own Labour entitlement	Working-age persons in the Karnali region of Nepal
Endangered Indigenous Group Allowance	2008	Transfer Entitlement	Citizens from tribes that are on the verge of extinction
Nepal's Child Grant programme	2009	Transfer Entitlement	Destitute Children (5 or under) from disadvantaged families, Terai-Madhesor, Karnali regions and the Dalit Caste

In Nepal, a social protection program with ‘Program Universalism’, i.e., a single program covering all citizens of Nepal, is non-existent. Instead, several programs with differing scopes of entitlement characterise the social protection framework of Nepal. In particular, categoriality as a scope of entitlement is prevalent in the social protection framework of Nepal. The nature of categoriality in the framework speaks to broader questions than standard question of poverty. In Nepal, social protection programs are perceived not only as instruments for tackling poverty, they are also viewed as instruments for tackling questions of social cohesion, caste and tribal inequality, constitutional responsibility, and post-conflict settlement. These broader questions dictate constituent sub-categories within standard categories of social protection. For example, Nepal’s social pension is universal. However, under the same program, and due to caste and tribal inequality, a sub-category of beneficiaries from the Karnali region and Dalit caste enjoy different entitlement rules compared to other old persons. Instead of 70 years age requirement, old persons from the Dalit caste and Karnali region qualify for the program when they clock 60 years.

Notwithstanding, the social protection programs framework of Nepal can be grouped into the following basic types:

Protection-Categorical Social Assistance: They are means-tested basic provision programs that are directed to individuals or groups that fall under poverty.

Benefit-Categorical ‘Universal’ Programs: They are programs that bestow benefits on a category of persons or social groups regardless of poverty or need.

Protection-Universal Social Assistance: These are means-tested programs that accord benefits to all members of a polity when they fall into poverty.

Benefit Universalism: In the social assistance of this variety, citizens are entitled to benefits irrespective of poverty or need.

Table 22 group the social protection programs of Nepal into the categories highlighted above.

Table 22: Varieties of Social Protection in Nepal

		Modes of Entitlements	
		Individualised (means-tested)	Uniform (not means-tested)
		Protection-Categorical Social Assistance	Benefit-Categorical 'Universal' Programs
Scope of entitlements	categorical	Helpless single woman allowance, Rural Community Infrastructure Work, Karnali Employment Programme, Endangered Indigenous Group Allowance, Child nutrition allowance.	Old Age Allowance, Disability Allowance.
	population-wide (non-categorical)	Protection-Universal Social Assistance	Benefit Universalism

5.4.5 Ensemble of the micro-structure of Social Protection in Nepal

The makeup of the social protection framework in Nepal is embryonic in its development, and the programs are riddled with shortcomings relating to inclusion, exclusion errors and corruption (Bhandary 2017, p. 10; Adhikari et al. 2014, p. 42; Jones and Bhatta 2009). Nonetheless, the depth, development and commitment of successive governments to social protection in Nepal have prompted conclusions by authors like Sijapati (2017), Koehler (2011), Koehler and Mathers (2017) that the social protection framework in Nepal is extensive and it possesses a universalist character. Some have gone as far as labelling Nepal as a ‘nascent welfare state’ (Khatiwada and Koehler 2014). The following analysis of the microstructure of the social protection framework in Nepal will provide empirical standing that would allow for the qualification/affirmation of the purported universalist character of the social protection system in Nepal.

Initially, the depth of institutionalisation of the programs is explicated. This explication will shed light on the legal basis of the social protection programs, the administration of programs, and how the programs are funded. The last point is especially important given the multiplicity of non-Governmental organisations into the provision of non-state provided social welfare services and programs.

Table 23: Social Protection Framework of Nepal

Who is covered?			Conditions	Institutionalisation		
Name of program	Benefit Type	Benefit ³⁷	Eligibility criteria/Conditions for entitlement	Funding	Administration	Legal standing
Nepal's Child Grant programme	Cash Transfers	1600 Nepal Rupees (every Four months)	Children Under 5 in disadvantaged families in all regions of the country ³⁸ . Program is unconditional.	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Implemented by The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development oversees the Grant (MoFALD) and delivered by Village Development Committees (VDC). Coordinated by Ministry of Women, Children and Social Citizens.	2015 Constitutions, Child Protection Grant Guidelines 2009, The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018), The Act Relating to Children, 2075 (2018).
Helpless Single Woman allowance	Cash Transfers	1000 Nepal Rupees per month.	Single Women 60 or older. Single Women of all ages with no source of income to make a living ³⁹ .	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Implemented by The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development oversees the Grant (MoFALD) and delivered by Village Development Committees (VDC). Coordinated by Ministry of Women, Children and Social Citizens.	2015 Constitutions and The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018)
Old Age Allowance (OAA) or Senior Citizen's Allowance	Cash Transfers	2000 Nepal Rupees per month.	Senior Citizens 70 and above; Age requirement for Dalit senior citizens and senior citizens in the Karnali region is 60 years+	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Implemented by The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development oversees the Grant (MoFALD) and delivered by Village Development Committees (VDC). Coordinated by Ministry of Women, Children and Social Citizens	1990, 2007, 2015 Constitutions; Senior Citizens Act of 2006 and 2008; The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018)
Full Disability Allowance	Cash Transfer	2000 Nepal Rupees per month.	Individuals that need help for everyday activities	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Implemented by The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development oversees the Grant (MoFALD) and delivered by Village Development Committees (VDC).	1990, 2007, 2015 Constitutions. Local Self-government Act 1999.

					Coordinated by Ministry of Women, Children and Social Citizens	
Partial Disability Allowance	Cash Transfer	600 Nepal Rupees per month.	Disabled individuals that can do without the help of others for daily functioning.	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Implemented by The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development oversees the Grant (MoFALD) and delivered by Village Development Committees (VDC). Coordinated by Ministry of Women, Children and Social Citizens	1990, 2007, 2015 Constitutions. Local Self-government Act 1999. National Planning and Plan of Action on Disability in Nepal 2007
Endangered Indigenous Group Allowance	Cash Transfer	2000 Nepal Rupees per month.	People belonging to endangered tribes in Nepal.	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Department of Civil Registration (DOCR) under the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD).	2015 Constitutions, The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018)
Aama Surakshya Programme	Cash Transfer	Benefit depends on location of beneficiary	Women throughout Nepal that deliver their offspring in certified health institutions ⁵⁰ .	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Department of Health Services under the Ministry of Health	2007, 2015 Constitution of Nepal, The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018)
Kamali Employment Programme	Cash Transfer	250 NPR base benefit. Beneficiaries are entitled to mode depending on their respective work output.	People of Working Age in in the Karnali Region	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD).	2007, 2015 Constitution of Nepal, The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018).
Rural Community Infrastructure Work (RCIW)	Cash and Food Transfer	4kg of Rice;0.5 Kg of Pulses OR 130-140 NPR per day	People of Working Age in all food insecure areas of Nepal.	The Government of Nepal Budget allocations.	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD).	2007, 2015 Constitution of Nepal, The Social Security Act, 2075 (2018).

Source: Compiled by author from various national and international documents.

⁴⁷ <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/2-3-million-to-get-social-security-allowance-this-year/>

⁴⁸ Khatiwada 2019, p. 10.

⁴⁹ Republic of Nepal 2018, p. 3.

⁵⁰ Government of Nepal 2020b, p. 6.

Table 23 above maps the architecture of social protection in Nepal. Departing from the usual unit of analysis in social protection literature, it uses target groups as the primary unit of analysis and tries to answer the question of who is covered, the benefits, the conditions of their coverage and the extent of the institutionalisation of the programs. The table confirms the special recognition of special groups stated in the various editions of the Nepali Development plans and Constitutions. The table shows that children, women, old persons, persons with disabilities and persons of working age are accorded with deservingness of social protection in Nepal. Superficially, the makeup of the target categories of the framework of Nepal indicates a life-course approach to social protection. Consequently, it is reasonable to state that, ostensibly, the social protection framework of Nepal is systemic universalist in character.

5.4.6 Institutionalisation of Social Protection in Nepal

Legal Basis of Social Provision

In the last three decades, the institutionalisation of social protection programs cannot be divorced from broader processes of state-building, national reconciliation, and democratisation in Nepal. The return of democracy and the subsequent promulgation of the 1990 Constitution of Nepal kicked started a new era of legal entrenchment of social protection in Nepal. As I showed in Section 3 on Nepal, the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) posited that the introduction of social pensions was not only about income poverty facing old persons in Nepal. I demonstrated that framing the program as a consequence of constitutionally imposed responsibility was equally crucial in the introduction of the program.

The use of constitutions as the legal basis of social protection programs has evolved in Nepal. When the UML evoked the responsibility clauses in the 1990 Constitution to frame the necessity of a social protection program for old persons, the party was speaking from a perspective that viewed such a program as one of the responsibilities of the state. Since the abolition of the monarchy in 2008 and the promulgation of the 2007 and 2015 Constitutions of Nepal, social protection programs for recognised social groups are not only viewed from the perspective of state responsibility, they are viewed in terms of social rights. The 2007 and 2015 constitutions contained extensive social rights to social protection programs against questions of poverty, inequality, social cohesion, caste discrimination and economic growth.

Social rights have been interpreted by legal scholars, and the apex constitutional court in Nepal has been indispensable in making sure that the state abides by these constitutional commitments (Langford and Bhattarai 2011). The strength of the embedded legal basis of social protection in Nepal was further demonstrated in 2010 when the social right clause of the 2007 Constitution was used as the foundation of ‘universalising’ the previously ‘age-limited requirements of the Single Women Allowance of Nepal (The Himalayan Times 2010; Pandey 2013).

As Drucza (2016, p. 264) showed, social protection programs in Nepal are routed via the budget process instead of the legislative process because there are fewer veto points in the

budget process. This peculiarity of Nepal's policymaking process may likely explain why most social programs in Nepal do not have a distinct legislative act. As I showed with the case of the introduction of social pensions, successive governments in Nepal tend to announce the introduction of social protection programs in budget speeches and are more likely to defer to the constitution to provide a legal foundation for social programs.

Another peculiar characteristic of the policy process in Nepal viz-a-viz legal foundation of social programs is the tendency to create an omnibus legislative act that tries to define and fortify the legal character of social protection programs in Nepal. The Social Welfare Act of 1992 and the Social Security Act of 2018 testify to this peculiarity of the policy process in Nepal. The preamble of the 2018 Social Security Act aptly captures the omnibus peculiarity. It stated that,

'Whereas, it is expedient to make necessary provisions on the protection of the right to social security of the indigent citizens, incapacitated and helpless citizens, helpless single women, citizens with disabilities, children, citizens who are unable to take care of themselves and citizens belonging to the tribes on the verge of extinction, in accordance with the Constitution' (Republic of Nepal 2018)

In addition to domestic instruments, political actors and successive governments in Nepal refer to international legal instruments like treaties and conventions as the legal basis for public action and social protection programs in Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, 2002; Government of Nepal 2007). Successive governments, through the language employed in the development plans, perceive the transposition of international conventions ideas to domestic policy as not only a way to demonstrate the genuine commitment of Nepal to these ideas; these conventions are equally perceived as roadmaps for the execution and legal fortification of social protection programs.

The Social Welfare chapter of the Tenth-Five Year Development Plan succinctly captures how the Nepali state views the issue of program legalisation. The plan stated that,

'The government by adopting positive in-discriminatory policies in an effort of equity-oriented development has implemented various programs and projects directed toward the development of women, children, physically and mentally challenged (disables), senior

citizens and socio-economically backward ethnic groups and people through the targeted plan and programs. These programs are launched in consonance with the commitments made by the government and they are related to different treaties, conventions and conferences⁵¹. The convention on abolition of all types of discrimination against women, convention on children's' right, conferences on social development, and the 1995 United Nations conventions are just a few to be mentioned.' (Kingdom of Nepal 2002, p. 516).

While the social protection programs are not grounded via distinct legislative acts, Nepal's constitution, broad legislative acts, and international conventions provide a strong legal basis for Nepal's social protection programs. Although, a fine-grained analysis of the social rights in the 2007 and 2015 Constitutions show that the constitutions do not entirely guarantee the rights, and the provision of social protection programs is contingent on the government's discretion. The consequences of the non-guarantee of the right to social welfare became apparent in Nepal when the government decided to suddenly stop paying out the benefit to single women and disabled persons in 2020. Although, the government reversed its decision after pressure from rights groups in Nepal (Ojha 2020; Shrestha 2020; Himalayan News Service 2020).

What this indicates is that while it appears that social protection programs in Nepal are firmly entrenched legally, in practice, the entrenchment of social protection is brittle at best and politically contingent at worst. Although, the activities of pressure groups, concerned citizens and the judiciary give hope that the social clauses in the constitution will be adhered to by subsequent governments in Nepal.

⁵¹ Author's emphasis.

Funding

Nepal has made a remarkable journey from its status as one of the poorest countries in the world at the time of the return of democracy in 1990 to its present status as a low-middle income country. Although poverty, social and income inequality, and unemployment still plagues a large section of the country, successive governments in Nepal, albeit with varying emphasis, view social protection programs as an indispensable part of the strategy against the questions of poverty, social and income inequality and unemployment. As I showed earlier, the idea of creating social protection programs had been part and parcel of political discourse, especially in the immediate years of the return of democracy in 1990.

Despite being reliant on external financial assistance, Nepal has demonstrated that its commitments to social protection programs cannot be described as ‘double-talk’ because the budget for these programs is financed through the government’s general revenues. Consistently, estimates from successive budgets of the Nepali government show that the government shoulders a substantial percentage of the expenditure on social protection in Nepal. For example, in the 2010s decade, estimates from available data on budgetary allocations show that, on average, 90% of the total expenditure on social welfare is shouldered by the government of Nepal while external grants and loans make up the rest of the expenditure on social protection in Nepal (Ministry of Finance 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2016).

As mentioned earlier, Nepal relies on external actors for budgetary support. For example, figures from Nepal’s Ministry of Finance indicated that external support amounted to about 1/5th of the domestic budget for the 2017/18 fiscal year (Ministry of Finance 2019, p. 9). Despite these external supports, the nature of the funding of social protection in Nepal reveals a sense of national ownership and strong institutionalisation of the social protection programs in Nepal.

Administration

Kaufmann (2012, p. 217) and Leisering (2019) argued that in addition to the legal base and funding, how social protection programs are administered are equally important when gauging the strength of social protection institutionalisation in a country. Social protection programs under the control of the state are considered firmly institutionalised, while those not under the control of the regular administration of the state can be assumed to be unstable (Leisering 2019).

In Nepal, the administration of social protection programs is shouldered entirely by the government of Nepal. Specifically, Nepal's Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Government is tasked with the responsibility of administering most of the social protection programs in Nepal.

Although the social protection framework of Nepal can be deemed as strongly institutionalised given the government's control of the program administration. Nonetheless, the depth of the institutionalisation as per the quality of the administration of the programs has been a subject of concern of domestic and external actors in Nepal. These concerns are related to the state's capacity and how this affects the administration of the social protection programs.

Koehler (2016) concluded that the social protection framework of Nepal is fragmented and scattered. Khanal et al. (2013) reached similar conclusions. A World Bank-led appraisal of the administration of the social protection programs in Nepal showed that the ecosystem of the administration of the programs is fragmented and have resulted in the duplication, leakages of funds, and rampant exclusion and inclusion errors (The World Bank 2016, p. 3; Khadka 2017). The appraisal indicated that the inclusion and exclusion errors are rampant irrespective of the target mechanism of the program. For instance- the universal social pensions program and the single women allowance- a program that employs some requirement tests suffer close to 40% in exclusion errors (The World Bank 2016).

5.4.7 Who is Covered?

As I mentioned earlier, the 2015 Constitution of Nepal adopts a rights perspective to the idea of social protection. In recent times, the idea of constructing a cradle to the grave welfare state as dominated the discourses of political elites in Nepal. Delivering the annual budget speech to the Parliament of Nepal in 2019, Dr Yuba Raj Khatiwada- the then Finance Minister of Nepal and a member of the ruling Nepal Communist Party announced that,

‘All citizens will be affiliated with social security covering their lifecycle from conception till old age while building a welfare state for attaining prosperity with social justice’ (Raj Khatiwada 2019, p. 9).

The coverage of the social protection is conditioned by target categories, and as I show below, the social protection framework of Nepal suffers from systemic exclusions that will likely preclude the envisaged goal of the Nepal Communist Party. In the tables below , I list the social protection program in Nepal based on social characteristics, age, and geography.

Table 24: Social Protection Programs based on Social Characteristics

Social Character	Name of Program
Disability	Full Disability Allowance; Partial Disability Allowance
Widowhood	Helpless Single Woman allowance
Motherhood	Aama Surakshya Programme
Unemployment	Rural Community Infrastructure Work (RCIW)
Vulnerability and Threat of Extinction	Endangered Indigenous Group Allowance
Old Age and Vulnerability (Dalits)	Old Age Allowance (OAA)
Children and Vulnerability in the Karnali Region	Nepal’s Child Grant programme

Table 25: Social Protection Programs based on Age

Age Character	Name of Program
70 Years	Old Age Allowance (OAA)
Children	Nepal's Child Grant programme

Table 26: Social Protection Programs based on Geography

Geographical Character	Name of Program
Extreme Vulnerability, Old Age in the Karnali Region	Old Age Allowance (OAA)
Children and Vulnerability in the Karnali Region	Nepal's Child Grant programme
Unemployment in the Karnali Region	Karnali Employment Programme

Despite the unequivocal universalism ambition, a close analysis of the social protection framework of Nepal suggest that the coverage of social protection programs is not as expansive as imagined by political actors in Nepal. The extent of within-category exclusions of the programs is examined below.

Children

The Child Grant Program in Nepal constitutes an important program in the social protection framework of Nepal because it is geared towards improving the nutrition of children (Government of Nepal 2009, p. 16; Khatiwada 2019, p. 10). From the program's label, it is easy to say that it targets children. However, the program only bestows benefits on a sub-category of children in Nepal and restricts the program benefits to a maximum of 2 children per mother.

The program benefits children that have not completed the age of five (Republic of Nepal 2018, p. 3). Conversely, the official definition of a child is an individual that has not completed the age of 18 (Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal 2018, p. 2). The contradiction in these definitions of who is considered a child indicates a case of within-category exclusion in the program, in that children age 5 to 18 are summarily excluded from the program.

Since 1990 Nepal has made giant strides regarding the nutrition needs of individuals below 59 months. The percentage of under-5 children suffering from malnutrition dropped to 24.3% in 2019 from a high of 43% at the beginning of 2000 (Government of Nepal 2020a, p. 31). The within-case exclusion in the Child Grant Program is especially pertinent given that a substantial percentage of Nepal children (0 to 18 as per national legislation) suffer from malnutrition. In the demographic and health survey conducted by the Nepali government in 2016, 37% of males age 15-19 are considered undernourished, 30% of women of similar age (i.e., 15-19) are considered undernourished, and 44% of women (15-19) are anaemic—a disease associated with poor nutrition (Ministry of Health 2017, pp. 223-237; Gyawali et al. 2019).

What these statistics indicate is that poor nutrition transcends the targeted sub-category of the social protection program. What is more is that, more often than not, the excluded categories of children tend to be masked in political discourses since it is always assumed that the program's label presupposes the program's coverage. This notion was evinced to a great deal in the 2019 Budget speech that expanded the program to all regions of Nepal. The Finance Minister stated,

'This Government strongly believes that not just senior citizens, but also children need state protection. Therefore, I have expanded the scope of child protection for the coming year to include children from families below the poverty line apart from Dalits and children from the Karnali Region, and Terai-Madhesh districts that lag behind in the Human Development Indicators' (Khatiwada 2019, p. 10)

Superficially, one would not be wrong to assume from the speech that the Finance Minister was referring to all children instead of a sub-category of the social group that he was actually referring to. All in all, it is within reasonable limits to suggest that within-category exclusion mars the flagship social protection program dedicated to children, and this form of exclusion is not visible in the political discourse of Nepal.

Single Women and Pregnant Women

The Widows Allowance introduced in 1996 was initially restricted to widowed women that are 60 years and above. Despite the promise to protect women's interests and welfare in the several iterations of the Nepali Constitutions and development plans, the program excluded widows outside the prescribed age bracket. Therefore, it had a within-category exclusion as per single women in Nepal at the start of the program in 1996.

In 2010, the age delimitation of the program was a subject of constitutional deliberation in the Supreme Court of Nepal. The plaintiff consisted of women's rights group in Nepal, and the core of their litigation against the state was that the age demarcation of the program represented a within-category exclusion that in turn violated the non-discrimination clause of the 2007 Constitution of Nepal and Nepal's commitment to the CEDAW⁵² convention (Pandey 2013). The apex court in Nepal sided with the plaintiffs by noting that the state violated its constitutional and convention commitments. Consequently, the court instructed the executive branch to remove the age demarcation and extend the program's benefit to women outside of the age bracket (The Himalayan Times 2010; Pandey 2013; WUNRN 2011).

As of 2020, the social protection program for single women does not suffer from a within-case exclusion pertaining to age. Although, the program employs a raft of requirements that would ensure that the program does not serve some women. These requirements concern the number of marriages, the ability to work and the level of income of potential beneficiaries (Republic of Nepal 2018).

Similarly, the cash transfers directed towards pregnant women are conditional upon using health facilities. Though the behavioural conditions can be lauded, the program uses geographical range to grade the benefit that accrues to pregnant women. In the Terai region of Nepal, pregnant women are entitled to 500 Nepali Rupees, while in the Hills and Himalayan region, pregnant women get 1000 Nepali Rupees and 1500 Nepali Rupees, respectively. As part of the program, free delivery benefits are only reimbursed if a pregnant woman comes from one of the 25 least developed districts in Nepal, thereby leaving women from other districts without this benefit.

⁵² CEDAW-Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Disability

The 1990, 2007 and 2015 Constitutions of Nepal specifically accorded all disabled persons in Nepal a special recognition that posits that the state shares the responsibility for their welfare enhancement (in consonance with other welfare production spheres, like, kin, extra-state organisations). The 2007 and 2015 Constitutions also accorded the social rights to social welfare to persons with disabilities. These constitutional rights currently provide the legal ground for the cash transfer accorded to disabled persons in Nepal (Republic of Nepal 2017). The cash transfer for this social group is geared towards enhancing the independence and contribution of disabled persons in Nepal (Republic of Nepal 2017, p. 15).

The allowance does not have age restrictions, i.e., adults and children are eligible for the program's benefit. The program grades benefit according to the severity of the disability. It stipulates that people with severe disability, i.e., people who cannot carry out daily functioning without help, are entitled to a higher benefit than individuals with mild disability, i.e., individuals with a disability but can still carry out daily functioning without the assistance of others.

A joint report commissioned by The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and Overseas Development Institute (ODI) noted that the most significant barrier to obtaining the benefit is the tedious application process for the disability card required (Holmes et al. 2018). The report noted that 83% of people who reported that they have a disability do not possess the card that would permit them to benefit from the program. Equally, only 14% held the necessary card that permits them to benefit from the program. Regarding the coverage of the program, the report indicated that of the disabled persons that hold the card for severe disability, 58% of this group are not receiving the disability allowance.

The above statistics show that the exclusion rate of the program is reasonably high. However, the report qualified its findings by noting that the data used is patchy. It noted that a similar evaluation of the program conducted by UNICEF in 2015 concluded that only 30% of cardholders are not receiving the allowance. Stemming from insufficient data, Holmes et al. (2018) also referred to another evaluation conducted at the behest of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The latter report evaluated the coverage of the disability program using Nepal's 2011 census data. The report concluded that 63% of people

with disability in Nepal do not hold the necessary disability card and the disability allowance only reach 12% of people with disability (Holmes et al. 2018).

From the above analysis, the within-category exclusion of the disability program is minimal. However, close analysis by non-Governmental Organisations (local and international) noted that the effective coverage of the program is inadequate and exclusion errors of the program are high.

Endangered Castes

The end of absolute monarchy in 1990 challenged the dominance of the Hindu-dominated facade perpetrated by the institution of monarchy in the hitherto years. The 1990 Constitution (and later, and to a deeper extent its 2007 and 2015 counterparts) shattered this façade by recognising Nepal as a multi-ethnic, multilingual entity and thus, increasing the visibility of caste discrimination fostered through Nepal's history (Hachhethu 2002). Political discourses and excerpts from development plans in Nepal all indicated that the non-visibility of some sections of the Nepali society has equally resulted in the abandonment of these sections regarding economic, social, and political opportunities (Kingdom of Nepal 1997, 2002; UML 1994; Hachhethu 2002).

The pursuant of these commitments have manifested in the institutionalisation of preferential social protection programs for these groups. For instance, social cash transfers for senior citizens in Nepal employ a different and lower age requirement (compared to the rest of Nepal) for senior citizens from these endangered areas and castes. Similarly, persons of working age from these endangered castes and regions are provided with public works programs that aim to spur economic activities and reduce unemployment issues in these regions and groups. Although, persons of working age in other regions and social groups are not accorded with any of these programs.

The Endangered Indigenous Group Allowance and the Karnali Employment Program provide targeted employment guarantees for members of these groups and regions. In turn, the participants are provided with cash and/or food transfers. The Rural Community Infrastructure Work (RCIW) provides cash to designated endangered groups in Nepal.

Looking at the beneficiaries from the perspective of ‘orthodox’ societal groups, it would be logical to say within-case exclusion is rampant because not all working persons in Nepal benefit from the programs. However, this perspective would likely be parochial in that these groups are viewed as distinct social groups that deserve social protection program. In sync, examining these programs indicate that it will be unreasonable to say that the program suffers from within-category exclusion because it covers the designated group. The Karnali Employment Program targets households and not individuals, and any household without a member in employment is eligible to participate in the program. Similarly, the Endangered Indigenous Group Allowance covers all state-designated endangered groups in Nepal. Although, a case of within-category exclusion can be levelled against the Rural Community Infrastructure Work (RCIW) because it covers only 21 districts of the Mid- and Far-West development regions of Nepal, even though the problem of food insecurity is not restricted to these regions of Nepal.

Senior Citizens

The analysis of the social protection program accorded to old persons is the crux of this dissertation. In the preceding sections on Nepal, I enumerated the ideas and the factors associated with the introduction of social pensions in Nepal. This section examines the within-category exclusions of the program.

Per the main legislative act that concerns the welfare of senior citizens in Nepal, a Senior Citizen is a citizen of Nepal that have completed the age of 60 (Kingdom of Nepal 2006). With the exception of Dalit senior citizens, the 70-year age requirement for the social pension program contradicts the definition of a senior citizen in Nepal. As such, individuals that are between the age of 60 to 69 (and not eligible for single women allowance) are summarily excluded from the program even though, per the definition from the state, they qualify as senior citizens.

This within-category exclusion represents one of the more severe and hidden forms of exclusion in the social protection framework of Nepal. As I quoted earlier, when the Finance Minister of Nepal talked about the provision of social cash transfers to senior citizens in Nepal, he rarely mentioned the within-category exclusion that beset the program. What this

indicates is that the exclusion errors of about 30%-40%⁵³ of eligible beneficiaries are not the only form of exclusion that beset senior citizens category. Equally, the definition of the category of beneficiaries and the legal definition of a beneficiary excludes a large swathe of senior citizens in Nepal.

⁵³ The World Bank 2016; Khanal et al. 2013, p. 5.

5.4.8 Summary

The search for a stable political settlement cannot be divorced from the development and subsequent evolution of social protection in Nepal. As I concluded in the earlier chapter on ideas of social welfare in Nepal, the year 1990 brought an end to absolute monarchy in Nepal, and it did set a strong precedence for state accepted welfare responsibility. The nature of this constitutionalised commitment to welfare is what I termed as universalism on a broader scale. This section, in turn, investigated Nepal's commitment to the ideas of universalism through its social protection framework, i.e., this chapter inquires if the social protection framework of Nepal does have a systemic-universal character by examining not just the labels of the social programs in Nepal but the definition of who benefits from these programs, and if the sum of the programs in Nepal covers all Nepalis.

Since the end of absolute monarchy in 1990, there has been a concerted effort by successive governments in Nepal to fulfil the universalism commitment by building a social protection framework that sought to answer questions of poverty, inequality, and social inclusion. Evidence from the budget speeches, budget plans, development plans, and the institutionalisation analysis presented here indicates that these tasks are taken seriously by successive governments and by interest groups in Nepal. The social protection framework occupies a favoured position in the state's priority such that Nepal is being envisioned as a welfare state by some of its elites.

I have shown here that the framework and the recognition of welfare deservingness prioritise some social groups. This priority is reflected in the programs dedicated to these groups and the rhetoric attached to their welfare issues. In this way, the social protection framework of Nepal is characterised by selective particularism.

One of the main conclusions that can be drawn as per the social protection framework of Nepal is that while the constitutional commitment to welfare can be lauded, deep fragmentation still characterises the framework. A large swath of Nepalis is excluded from social protection programs. The nature of the fragmentation that I refer to here differs from the fragmentation that is obtainable in the administration of the social protection programs in Nepal. The fragmentation here refers to bespoke programs attached to different social groups and the prevalence of within-category exclusion of the programs. While the cases of within-category exclusion vary, the exclusions are significant grounds to call into question the strength of the commitment of the Nepali state to the welfare ideas and accepted welfare

responsibility embodied in the constitution of Nepal. In other words, universalism on a (systemic) meso-level is not obtainable, given the shortcomings of the social protection framework of Nepal.

Chapter 6: Comparison and Conclusions: Putting the Cases in context

6.1 Findings from the Large N analysis of Social Pensions across the Global South

The primary argument of this dissertation is that an acute focus on structural explanatory factors such as economic development for the introduction of social protection programs will likely yield an incomplete account. Hence, this dissertation posits that an actor-centred, ideational, and historical approach to the analysis of social protection programs can deepen the insights generated from structural explanatory factors, thereby providing a robust account for the analysis and description of programs like social pensions. This argument anchors the research puzzle, questions, and the analysis of this dissertation.

This dissertation attempts to solve a research puzzle that centres on providing a mid-range explanation for the introduction of a social protection program with similar institutional characteristics in divergent institutional settings. Specifically, it attempts to explain the introduction of universal social pensions in Botswana and Nepal-two countries that have divergent historical, political, economic, and social trajectories. Yet, these countries instituted a similar variety of social pensions. In addition to this research puzzle, this dissertation employed an actor-centred to understand the rationale and goals for social pension; it also challenged the suitability of the dichotomous classification of universal and means-tested social pension in the global South (Large N quantitative chapter). In this chapter, I summarise the findings from the first phase of this dissertation. This is followed by the comparison of the conclusions of the second phase of this dissertation.

Chapter 3.1 investigated the policy goals and actors' rationales for social pensions from an actor-centred perspective. The primary premise for undertaking this research task is that social protection programs are underpinned by how actors perceive, interpret and construct issues that social programs endeavour to solve. Hence, understanding how actors define the goals and rationale for social pensions can lend crucial insights into why social pension has mushroomed in the global South. This approach represents a novel way of understanding social pensions in the global South because social protection literature tends to focus on structural factors such as the level of development of the economy and labour market formalisation when trying to understand the goals and rationale for social protection. By challenging this analytical bias, this

dissertation provided a richer understanding of not only social pensions across the global South, it also shows that a methodological approach that privileges the perspectives of real actors can advance our understanding of social protection. Of course, this conclusion does not preclude a total jettison of structural determinants of the goals and rationale of social protection. Indeed, one of the primary recommendations for further research on social protection is that an approach that combines structural and ideational perspectives can provide complementary, yet, robust insights into research questions on the goals and rationale of social protection programs.

Nonetheless, the primary message from the analysis of the goals and rationale for social pensions is that ideas must be considered if social protection programs like social pensions are to be understood. From the exegesis of policy documents produced by actors in the global South, I found that how social issues are constructed by actors also determine the goals and rationale ascribed to a program. I found that these rationales need not mesh with what is expected in extant literature. For instance, universal social pensions are connected with discourses of social rights. I found that country context determines the connection between social rights and social pensions, i.e., the fact that means-testing is a requirement for a social pension program does not preclude its association with social rights. I showed that the case of Guatemala exemplified how non-universal social pensions can carry on the rationale of social rights.

In literature and practice, social pensions are often grouped into universal and means-tested social pensions. This dissertation challenged this classification on the premise that how social pension is represented in literature may not necessarily reflect the nature of social pensions across the global South because the extant classification does not take into vital dimensions such as levels and standards of benefits, and the institutionalisation of social pensions.

The Cluster Analysis conducted in Chapter 3.2 contributes to a very small literature that examines the suitability of the dichotomous classification of universal and means-testing in grouping social pension in the global South. It explores how many families of social pensions can be observed in the global South when essential variables of coverage, benefit levels and standard, and the depth of institutionalisation of social pension are taken into consideration. The Cluster Analysis exercise produced clusters of social pension programs that transcend the existing dichotomous classification. The analysis produced 3 clusters. Each cluster contained countries that have universal and means-tested pensions. In other words, the distribution of social pensions in the global South goes beyond the narrow classification of universal and means-testing. Crucially, the analysis showed that social pensions across the global South are widely supported through legislative or constitutional instruments because the third cluster contained only 5

countries (out of 50 analysed) that have not supported social pensions with a legislative or constitutional instrument. The cluster analysis gives credence to the conclusion by Leisering (2019) that programs directed at old persons (and children) tend to be supported through legal instruments.

Importantly, the analysis conducted in the quantitative large N chapters provided more insights regarding the case countries of this dissertation. The analysis allowed for some insights into the characteristics of the social pensions in the case countries. Chapter 3 shows that Botswana and Nepal ascribe multiple rationales to their respective social pension programs. Actors in both countries see social pensions as instruments for combating poverty among old persons. In addition, Botswana perceives social pensions to be an instrument for meeting obligations that relates to intergenerational solidarity. Actors in Nepal see social pensions as important instruments for fulfilling the state's constitutional obligations towards old persons. The Cluster Analysis show that Nepal and Botswana belong to clusters that use social pension as the primary vehicle for old age income security. Interestingly, Nepal belongs to the cluster of countries that perform best in terms of the levels and standard of benefits that accrue from social pensions. Conversely, Botswana belongs to the cluster of countries that perform worse than other clusters in terms of the level and standard of benefit from social pensions. The depth of institutionalisation of social pension raises interesting questions regarding how the programs emerged in Nepal and Botswana. The result of the cluster analysis shows that Botswana belongs to the cluster of countries that have not underpinned social pensions in a legislative or constitutional instrument. The lack of legislative underpinning of the social pensions in Botswana brings the question of temporality into sharp focus. Given that the program has been established since 1996, it is then reasonable to suggest that other mechanisms may have sustained the program. The chapter on Botswana provides conclusive evidence that the popularity of the program among political actors have sustained the program since its introduction. On the other hand, Nepal grounded its social pension program in a constitutional instrument. The chapter on Nepal shows that the social pension program is viewed in broader discursive arenas that centre on state-building and constitutional imperatives.

6.2 Findings from the Small N study: Social Pensions in Botswana and Nepal

The research tasks carried out in the small N chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) employed a novel approach to the analysis of social protection. Indeed, I explained in the literature section of this dissertation that structural explanations dominate social policy and social protection literature. The Five 'Is', and the Onion Skin Models provided the analytical framework for investigating the adoption of social pension in the case countries. In this section, I compare the findings on the case countries using the analytical models.

6.2.1 Five Is: Structural Understanding of Social Pensions in Nepal and Botswana

Industrialisation: When Nepal and Botswana introduced their respective universal social pension programs, their economies were obverse. Botswana was regarded as a shiny example of sound macroeconomic management and had achieved middle-income status by 1989. In contrast, Nepal was regarded as one of the world's poorest countries, and external actors had imposed structural adjustment programs that centred on tighter fiscal and budget controls.

Despite the economic success of Botswana, the themes of austerity dominated the discourses of public policies in the years leading up to the introduction of the social pension program. Actors from the governing BDP argued that the state was not fiscally prepared for such a program. Nonetheless, one of the leaders of the BDP later stated that the program had been introduced because the state could afford it, given the revenues from the mining sector.

In Nepal, the Nepali Congress recognised that social protection programs were essential in answering poverty questions in Nepal. It even promised to institute special programs for social groups such as old persons. Upon attaining power, it argued that the state was in no position to afford social protection programs and that austerity was warranted for the broader goal of economic growth. The UML-the successor government of the Nepali Congress-acknowledged that the economy was not in an enviable position. However, it stated that economic growth cannot be attained by focusing only on macroeconomic programs. The party viewed social protection programs as crucial in the quest for economic growth.

Going by the arguments of the Logic of Industrialisation school, Botswana, and not Nepal should be able to afford such a program. What I found is that economic imperatives relating to

economic growth, government budgets do not have deterministic relationship with the decision to introduce social protection programs like social pensions. Economic imperatives are mediated by other factors. In Nepal, it was mediated by how actors perceived the utility of social pensions in the context of broader goals of economic growth, and in Botswana, interest-based imperatives augmented the introduction of the program.

Also, the industrialisation arguments enjoin an analysis of demographic structures to understand why states introduce social protection programs. In Botswana, I found that changes in the structure of the rural population altered traditional social security networks and increased the vulnerability of old persons. Consequently, the state introduced the social pension program to mitigate the exigencies of changing rural population structures in Botswana. When the social pension program was introduced, Nepal was still categorised as an agrarian society because 90% of its population resided in rural centres. Consequently, I posit that it was unlikely that the breakdown of rural societies, as witnessed in Botswana, prompted the introduction of Nepal's social pension program in 1994.

Interests: The BDP had been the dominant party since the independence of Botswana. It had produced all the presidents of Botswana since 1966. In the 1994 elections, it suffered its most significant electoral slump. Opposition parties made inroads into BDP's stronghold, especially in rural areas. Consequently, the BDP introduced the social pension program to maintain its rural support and solidify its reputation among old persons in Botswana.

The reputation of the UML spurred the introduction of Nepal's social pension program. In 1994, the fall of communist regimes around the world stained the reputation of communism as a bonafide governing ideology. Opposition parties in Nepal used the dwindling reputation of communism to paint the UML as a party that was not interested in democracy as in China; that the UML was anti-religious and was not to be trusted with Nepal's fragile economy and democracy. The social pension program and other social protection programs that the party initiated was a symbolic gesture to show that the party was capable of governing and could be trusted. It was also introduced to gain the support of older Nepalis, a social group enamoured with tradition, culture, and religion.

Regarding other interest-based factors that might explain Nepal and Botswana's universal social pension programs, I examined the influence of interest groups such as trade unions and other organisations. In both countries, there is no evidence to suggest that trade unions or any other

interest groups were influential in the adoption of the programs. I showed that in Botswana, the policymaking apparatus is closed and monopolised by the state executive. In Nepal, trade unions are organised along party lines and are more interested in social insurance pension arrangements than social protection programs like social pensions.

Institution: The quality of institutions also matters for the introduction of social protection programs. When Nepal introduced its universal social pension program, it was going through a period of state-building after 30 years of autocratic rule. The autocratic period fostered economic, political, and, importantly, bureaucratic stagnation. The administrative capacity of the Nepali state in the 1990s was weak. Although the UML did not provide concrete reasons for adopting universalism, I note that it is highly likely that the UML was cognizant of the weak capacity of the state to marshal the administrative necessities for a means-tested social pension. Hence, the party opted for a design that was simpler to administer.

Given its successful experiences in administering social protection programs and the general reticence of the BDP, one would have expected Botswana to adopt means-testing for the social pension program. Yet, this was not the case. Indeed, the ineffectual nature of the existing means-testing capacity of the state prompted the choice of universalism for the social pension program in Botswana.

Importantly, I found that in both countries, the institution of democracy and its inherent constituent elements such as periodic elections and constitutions were determinants of social pension. In Botswana, the electoral slump of 1994 prompted a previously reluctant BDP to institute social pensions. In Nepal, the UML employed the social pension program to solidify its reputation. Besides, the UML used the constitution- a critical element of democracy-to justify the introduction of the social pension program.

International Influences: Given Nepal's reliance on external actors for budget support, actors like the World Bank and the IMF have considerable influence on public policy in Nepal. These actors prescribed that Nepal must tighten its budget and concentrate on macroeconomic policies to enhance the welfare of the denizens of Nepal. The Nepali Congress shared the perspectives of these actors, and the shared affinity likely precluded the establishment of social pensions by the Nepali Congress. The UML also took on the advice of these external actors. It continued

with the privatisation of government agencies as prescribed by the IMF and World Bank. However, it did not follow the budget tightening prescriptions of these external actors. As such, the social pension program was introduced regardless of external prescriptions. I posited that despite the sway of these actors, domestic imperatives mediated their influences.

For Botswana, I show that the policymaking apparatus of the state is closed, and the executive branch controls all the spheres of policymaking. I did not find any evidence that international organisations played any role in the adoption of the social pension program. Although, I show that the government of Botswana was cognizant of a team of researchers that had carried out studies that sought to reveal the plight of old persons in Botswana at the beginning of the 1990s. However, there is no evidence that the social scientists influenced the decision to introduce Botswana's universal social pension program.

Ideas: I found that in both countries, the ideologies of the dominant parties provided a limited avenue for an ideological explanation for the introduction of social pensions. In Botswana, the BDP had not articulated a broad, western-inspired ideology. Indeed, it wholly rejected the notion of basing its governing philosophy on imported ideas or foreign 'isms'. Instead, locally-sourced ideas of Kagisano and later Botho has operated as the governing philosophy of the BDP since the independence of Botswana. According to actors in Botswana, these ideas carry a universalistic ethos, and they underpin all public policies.

In Nepal, the label of the Communist Party of Nepal may prompt a conclusion that communism inspired the introduction of social pensions. Caution must be taken regarding such a conclusion. While the UML considers itself a communist party, it quickly dropped the idea that communism would be the party's guiding principle when it governed. Indeed, the leader of the party posited that communism only amounted to a label rather than a governing principle with which it would govern Nepal. He maintained that once in power, it would follow a moderated approach to economic and social policy. Consequently, it is hard to conclude that the ideas of communism inspired the introduction of Nepal's social pension program.

It is the position of this dissertation that an ideational, actor-centered and historical approach can deepen the insights generated from the Five 'Is' model. As such, the Onion Skin Model was employed to examine micro-level ideas that can provide robust insights into the introduction of social pensions in the case countries.

6.2.2 The Onion Skin Model: The Role of Ideas- Nepal and Botswana Compared

The first finding garnered from the Onion Skin Model is that history mattered for the introduction of social pensions in the case countries. When the universal social pension programs were introduced in the case countries, the actors were not just responding to the prevailing imperatives of the time; their decisions were also shaped by historical antecedents.

The introductions of the social pension programs in Botswana and Nepal were underpinned on longstanding dynamic constructions of social welfare ideas. Their decisions were also built on the legacy of preceding institutions and the failures of earlier social protection programs. In Nepal, transcending the stagnation fostered by the autocratic regime of the monarchy was influential in the thinking of the UML. In Botswana, the failures of the destitute allowance brought about new thinking regarding how to tackle the question of poverty among old persons in Botswana.

Notably, I found that the idea of old age welfare is culturally embedded in these societies. Some of these constructions about old age welfare even transcend the period analysed in this dissertation. They are constructions steeped in the historical fabric of these societies. In Nepal, the recognition that the young must shoulder the responsibility for the welfare of the old is found in religious teachings. I showed that in Hindu religion-the dominant religion in Nepal-the teachings of intergenerational solidarity represent a crucial pillar in family and societal relations. In Botswana, the advocates of social pensions point to longstanding ideas about intergenerational solidarity of Tswana culture as reasons why the introduction of social pensions in Botswana is warranted.

Likewise, the articulation of the idea of old age welfare as a matter for the public sphere had an early start in the statehood of these countries. In Nepal, externally borrowed ideas of recognising the welfare responsibility of the state towards social groups like old persons formed one of the pillars of the state-building process after the revolution of the 1950s. Although, as I indicated, legislation geared towards such recognition was conspicuously absent in the early years of planning in Nepal. The welfare considerations of social groups like old persons were subjugated in favour of programs that would cater for the welfare of all Nepalis, i.e., there was a paradigmatic bias towards developmental universalism programs. In Botswana, the exigencies of drought in the early years of independence allowed the BDP to develop a welfare doctrine that effectively grouped old persons as a social group that deserve welfare programs from the state. Interestingly,

both countries share a similar idea regarding the deservingness of old persons. Nepal's 1951 Interim Constitution stated that old persons deserve social protection programs because welfare insufficiencies of old persons are underserved. In Botswana, the welfare doctrine of the BDP stated that old persons deserve social protection because they are incapable of augmenting their welfare through their labour.

It must be noted that despite the early recognition that old persons deserve social protection programs in Nepal, the intensity of the debates and programs dedicated to this recognition was tempered by political instability. During Nepal's first experiment with democracy, there was fervour for social protection programs, ideationally speaking. Even the monarch that eventually seized power proclaimed that he intended to turn Nepal into a welfare state. What I found is that during the autocratic reign of the monarchy from 1960 till 1999, debates over social welfare issues were subdued in favour of broader necessities such as the survival and the nourishment of the autocratic regime. Nevertheless, new ideas permeated welfare discourses in the last years of the autocratic regime. These ideas were primarily fuelled by changing global level ideas regarding the importance of the agency of the poor and the recognition of what they can contribute to society. It called for an individualised approach to social protection programs. Importantly, the 30-year reign of absolute monarchy produced limited social protection programs.

The introduction of social protection after the return of democracy was reinforced by the desire to transcend the institutional failures to answer social welfare questions by the preceding autocratic regime. Per the exegesis of policy documents by actors in Nepal, the introduction of the program was underpinned by the imperative to show that the state was an essential locus of welfare production given that in preceding political dispensations, attention to such area of state responsibility was lacking. In this way, the social pension program was regarded as a necessity towards answering national questions of a responsive state, democratic representation, and the social question of poverty.

Significantly, the actors that introduced the social pension program in Nepal did not only lean on the institutional failures of past regimes; they also borrowed ideas about social welfare from the past. The actors leaned on the idea of individualising responses to identified welfare problems—a theme that is reminiscent of the ideas of the Basic Needs approach present in the development plans developed in the 1980s in Nepal. These actors favoured directing bespoke programs to different social groups. For instance, vocational training for the blind and disabled, food for work for unemployed persons, and cash transfers for old persons.

For Botswana, the articulated drought and rural questions of the 1960s and the 1980s necessitated the expansion of social protection programs. That is, this class of public programs had been part of the policy paradigm against adverse welfare questions in Botswana.

For one, the terminology of destitute had its roots in the drought relief programs in the early years of independence. Poor old persons were subsumed into the category of destitute in the drought relief programs. The National Destitute Policy was created in the 1980s to cater to the drought question and its social exigencies-one of which was the crumbling of the rural population.

The rural question was perceived as significant by the leaders of the BDP because it threatened the idea of a society that they had envisioned. Consequently, the desire to maintain this rural ideation prompted the introduction of the destitute program. The universal social pension introduced in 1996 was also a product of Botswana's historical answer to the rural question. The leaders of the BDP posited that the failure of the destitute policy prompted the establishment of a separate program for old persons. It also prompted the universal character of the social pension program because the means-testing of the destitute policy was characterised as a failure.

Crucially, the Onion Skin Model provided essential insights into the historical development of social welfare ideas that underpinned the social pension programs in the case countries. Table 27 breaks down the insights generated from the historical tracing of welfare ideas in the case countries. The state-building questions are consistent with both countries. But it is pronounced in Nepal because of its consistent bouts with political instability. This dissertation treated the social questions layer meticulously. Nonetheless, the layer is extensive, and sometimes may even need a new dissertation to explore its depth and historical evolution. In both case countries, developmental universalism and individualised social protection programs and ideas are historically associated with how welfare questions were treated. Although, varying emphasis tinged the approaches used by actors throughout the timespan analysed here.

The layers of the Onion Skin Model captures frames attached to social protection, the historical tracing of welfare responsibility of the state, the social questions that the societies deemed important, and the policy paradigms/social problems layer. I found that the dynamics of the changes in these layers were crucial for the outermost layer-which is the universal social pensions in both countries. I summarise and compare the findings of the layers below:

Framing: The multiuse of Social Pension

A peculiar finding is the tendency of actors in both countries to employ the collective utility of social pensions to frame their support and dissension. Actors in Botswana and Nepal use social pensions as a microcosm of broader goals and objectives. In Botswana, when the idea of social pensions was first raised in the 1980s, advocates for the program framed the program in terms of the material upliftment it offers; they also framed the program in connection to broader social ideas of intergenerational solidarity prescribed by traditional Tswana teachings. Framing social pensions in terms of the individual (cash benefits) and collective utilities (intergenerational solidarity) it offers was shared by political elites in Botswana, given that the motion for the program was successfully backed by opposition parties and the BDP.

Similarly, actors in Nepal understood that social pensions was not just about given cash to older folks. The UML perceived the introduction of such social protection program as a reflection of the political changes sweeping through Nepal in the early 1990s. They saw social pensions as a means of demonstrating that the state was an important arm of welfare production, given that the autocratic monarchical state had employed a patrimonial approach to public policy and had largely neglected its welfare duties. Hence, the social pension program was framed in broader social ideas beyond social protection. The program was framed as part of the universalism embodied in the constitutional responsibility of the state towards old persons in Nepal.

Non-social frames linked to social pension was only about its adoption. For instance, the UML used economic frames that positively linked social protections programs like social pensions to economic growth. Non-social frames were also used to delegitimise the introduction of social pensions in both countries. When the idea of social pension was first raised in the parliament of Botswana, dissenters framed their aversion to the program in economic arguments that pertain to the fragile state of public finances as the primary reason not to introduce the program. A similar sentiment was raised by dissenters to the social protection agenda of the UML. In particular, the Nepali Congress echoed the prescriptions of international actors by stating that the state could not simply afford an expansive budget that would foster the introduction of social programs envisaged by the UML and that such programs would be detrimental to the future of Nepal's economy.

Collective Welfare Responsibility: A tale of Culturally and Legally sourced ideas of the state

The revolution of the 1950s brought new ideas about welfare responsibility in Nepal. Although, I argued that these ideas were not organic to the polity of Nepal. Instead, they were borrowed from neighbouring India. Nonetheless, the idea of state responsibility as contained in the 1951 Constitution placed the state at the centre of welfare production for the first time in the history of Nepal. Throughout the 1950s, the state embraced its collective welfare responsibility duties, but focus was placed on mass welfare over social protection programs. During the autocratic reign of the monarchy from 1960 till 1990, the state retreated from the provision of social protection. Importantly, the relationship between the state and the people of Nepal became patrimonial, as public programs were not viewed as the responsibility of the state but a benevolent act of the monarchy.

Table 27: Onion Skin Model for Nepal and Botswana

Onion Skin Layers	Nepal	Botswana
Frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional Responsibility • Universalism (cultural value) • Monarchical Patrimonialism (1960-1990) • Negative Frames: Fiscal constraints/discourses championed by international actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergenerational Responsibility • Universalism (cultural value) • Negative Frames: Fiscal constraints/discourses
Collective Welfare responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutionalised, borrowed (1951-1960) • Constitutionalised (1990-) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local ideas (Kagisano and Botho) (1966-)
Social/Societal Questions	<p>Social Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty Questions (1951-1960) • No Social Question in Autocratic years (eclipsed by regime survival objectives) 	<p>Social Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought Questions (1966-), • Rural and Destitute Questions (1980-) • HIV/AIDS Questions (mid-1990s)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty and Social Exclusion Questions (1990-) 	
	<p>Societal Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Growth and Development (1950-) State-Building (1950-1960) Regime Survival (1960-1990) State-Building (1990-) State Responsibility (1990-) 	<p>Societal Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-building (1966-) Economic Growth and Development (1966-) (Supersedes all social questions) Economic Diversification (1990-)
Policy Paradigms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developmental universalism (1950-) Social protection (1950-) (eclipsed by developmental universalism approach to welfare enhancement till 1994; on par with developmental universalism from November 1994) Basic Needs Approach to Poverty (1980-1997) Welfare recognition and deservingness of old persons (1950-) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developmental Universalism (1966-) Social protection (1966-) (eclipsed by developmental universalism approach to welfare enhancement) Welfare recognition and deservingness of old persons (1966-) The State as the last welfare resort (1966-)
Welfare Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal social pension (1994) Extensive, Residual but Fragmented Social protection regime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal social pension (1996) Extensive, Patrimonial, Parsimonious, but Fragmented Social protection regime

The return of democratic governance provided a new chance for the state to embrace and deepen its collective welfare responsibility role. The 1990 Constitution of Nepal evinces the idea that the state was ready to take on this responsibility. The new responsibility in the constitution took a universalistic stance in which the people of Nepal are citizens, and the state has a welfare responsibility for all its citizens. The political parties that took power after the return of democracy made the accepted welfare responsibility of the state a crucial plank of their appeals to the people of Nepal. Rhetorically, the premier parties of Nepal—the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), emphasised this responsibility in their manifestos. Notably, the appeal to the welfare responsibility of the state was used by the UML as the foundation for introducing the social pension program in Nepal. In this way, it is then reasonable to say that the universalistic ethos embodied in the collective welfare responsibility of the state underpinned the universal social pension program introduced in 1994.

In contrast to Nepal, Botswana has been a democracy since 1966, and the leading party in Botswana—the BDP—had developed a welfare doctrine in which the state accepts its welfare responsibility for social issues. Though, the welfare doctrine is one in which private gumption takes precedence over public responsibility. This is especially important for welfare issues for able-bodied persons in Botswana. For social groups that are not able to cater for themselves through their labour (notably old persons), the state accepts that this class of societal groups deserve social protection. Significantly, the welfare doctrine and the responsibility of the Botswana state is underpinned by locally sourced ideas. Ideas of Kagisano and Botho carry a universalistic ideation that places the welfare responsibility of the people of Botswana on the shoulder of the state. Since these locally sourced universalistic ideas underpinned public action in Botswana, it is within reasonable bounds to say that they also underpin the universal social pension program in Botswana.

Social/Societal Questions

In the case countries, several social and societal questions were articulated in the years preceding the introduction of social pensions. As mentioned in the introduction chapter of this dissertation, Nepal is politically unstable. Consequently, state-building questions were frequently superseded other social and societal questions. After the 1951 revolution, state-building imperatives preoccupied the new political elites in Nepal. Notwithstanding the importance of state-building questions, political actors also articulated social questions that reflected the reality of Nepal's underdevelopment and backwardness. In articulating these social questions, creating a welfare state was deemed as appropriate in tackling the identified questions of underdevelopment, backwardness, and general poverty of the population of Nepal. However, the advent of autocracy in Nepal was dominated by question of regime survival. This question eclipsed every other discernible social and societal questions during the reign of the autocratic monarch.

The return of democracy in 1990 allowed for the articulation of questions that were indispensable to the introduction of Nepal's social pensions. The primary societal questions of building a democratic, responsive state capable of answering questions of poverty, social exclusion and economic growth dominated the thinking of the political elites after the overthrow of autocracy. The return of democracy allowed the major political parties in Nepal to articulate their preferred answers to the social questions of poverty and social exclusions. Notably, social

protection programs and developmental universalism were privileged as appropriate against social questions of poverty and social exclusion. Importantly, the UML referenced the appropriateness of social protection and social pensions in the welfare questions that affect old persons in Nepal.

Comparatively, Botswana is a stable polity. Naturally, questions of state-building preoccupied the political elites when it achieved independence in 1966. It endeavoured to create a rule-based democratic state against the wishes of the traditional chiefs in Botswana. In consonance, with the societal question of state-building, drought questions became inevitable questions that the political elites had to answer in the immediate years of independence. The drought questions were tackled with social protection programs and a welfare doctrine that recognised the welfare deservingness of old persons.

The political elites that took on power at independence showed strong inclinations toward the question of economic growth and development. Expectedly, such questions were privileged in public programs. As shown in Section 1 on Botswana, these questions trumped other social and societal questions, and the BDP emphasised developmental universalist approach to tackle questions of economic growth and poverty. One of the consequences of the economic growth in Botswana, was the thinning of rural population which in turn raised questions that the BDP had to solve. The traditional support systems of rural Botswana weakened, and it necessitated the intervention of the state. Consequently, the National Destitute Policy was created in 1980 to partly answer the rural questions. The failures of the destitute policy ushered in the universal social pension program in 1996.

Policy Paradigm and Social Problem

The analysis carried out on the case countries suggests that the policy paradigms adopted by actors cannot be underestimated in the introduction of social pensions. In both countries, social protection programs are used in answering questions ranging from poverty to cultural responsibility and economic growth. Although emphasis placed on social protection programs in reference to recognised questions and problems vary. For instance, in Nepal, social protection programs are viewed as vital to addressing questions of poverty, economic growth and state responsibility. Comparatively, Botswana do not place such emphasis on social protection

programs. Instead, developmental universalism programs take precedence over social protection in answering questions of economic growth, and it is highly likely that the subordinate role of social protection programs explains the parsimony and patrimonialism of social protection in Botswana.

Notwithstanding, the varying priorities accorded to social protection programs, one common trend in both countries is the welfare recognition and deservingness accorded to old persons. These recognitions had been part of the state-building process of both countries. The 1951 Interim Constitution of Nepal accorded welfare recognition to old persons. Likewise, old persons were accorded priority in social protection in the drought of the 1960s in Botswana.

In the years leading up to the introduction of social pensions in the case countries, a paradigm that recognised the need for a bespoke social protection program given -poverty and social exclusion questions (Nepal), rural and destitute questions (Botswana)-became prominent with the advocates of social pensions in the case countries. The UML was foremost in its recognition that a one-size fit all approach to social protection is unlikely to answer the recognised questions. Hence, it defined the problem of poverty among old persons as an income problem. Similarly, cash was deemed more appropriate in Botswana because it offers more flexibility to old persons, than in kind transfers.

The primary message in the analysis of the construction of the policy paradigm and problem associated with the introduction of social pensions in the case countries is that how actors define and conceive social problems often presage the type of solutions that would be accorded to the recognised problem.

Welfare Institution

In the case countries, several welfare institutions have emerged in the period analysed. In particular, the 1990s were a period of welfare expansion in both countries. As shown in Section 4 on Nepal, the universal social pension program ushered in a period of welfare institutionalisation for other social groups. The same conclusion could be reached for Botswana. What is common with Botswana and Nepal is the dominance of social protection programs over other models of social welfare like social insurance. Social cash transfers and in-kind transfers are the dominant social protection models in both countries. Notwithstanding, my analysis on

social pensions and the social protection frameworks of both countries show shortcomings that relate to within-category exclusions of social groups and the residuality of benefits from programs. It is with these shortcomings that I submit that the social protection frameworks of the case countries are fragmented.

6.3 Universalism: Beyond Universal Programs

The social pension programs introduced in the case countries of this dissertation do not employ means-testing to target beneficiaries. That is, both countries have universal social pensions. This dissertation follows the prescription of Anttonen and Sipilä (2014) that when we speak of universalism as a concept, we should speak of it in terms of varieties. In extant literature, these authors note that universalism has been used to describe the guiding principle of Northern European welfare states; the concept was used to underpin post-war welfare state-building in Britain and its most recent conception, a principle that guides the recent surge in social protection introductions in developing countries. Leisering (2019) argued that the concept of universalism, as widely debated in social protection literature, represents just one of the stands of universalism. He posited that debates around universalism versus means-testing constitute the narrowest conception of universalism. In his postulation, he identified three general conceptions of universalism: First, universalism that concern a broader recognition that the state has a welfare responsibility for all persons in a country; Second, a universalism that concern the extent of coverage of the overall framework of social protection in a country; Third, universalism associated with single social protection programs.

In the analysis conducted in this dissertation, two of the three varieties of universalism, as identified by Leisering (2019), were obtainable. First, the universalism associated with the responsibility of the state was obtainable in the case countries. In Nepal, the return of democracy in 1990 brought with it new ideation about the responsibility of the state for the welfare of Nepalis. The constitution spelt out the welfare responsibility of the state and enjoined the state to provide social security programs for deserving social groups. The ideation of welfare responsibility in the 1990 Constitution was more specific than its 1951 predecessor; it was based on the idea of citizenship rather than the patrimonialism and paternalism, as obtainable during Nepal's monarchical ruling dispensations.

In Botswana, the idea of the responsibility of the state towards its denizens was integral to its state-building process. The political elites employed locally sourced and socially embedded ideas to ground the universalistic welfare responsibility of the state. Ideas of Kagisano and later Botho

placed the responsibility for the welfare of the people of Botswana on the shoulders of the state. Interestingly, this responsibility was not constitutionalised. I could not find the exact reason why this was the case. I speculated that the non-constitutionalisation is likely because such responsibility in national constitutions was not common when Botswana promulgated its constitution in the 1960s.

Regarding the universalism concerning the social pension programs, it is undisputed that the programs in these countries do not use means-test to exclude a certain class of old persons, i.e., old persons that do not meet the qualifying criteria. In this sense, the social protection program is universal in the narrowest sense. Nonetheless, it is essential to note that old persons are still excluded in these countries. This exclusion stems from the discrepancy between how old persons are defined and the qualifying age for social pensions. For example, in Botswana, 65 is the qualifying age for the universal social pension program. In contrast, when an individual clocks 60 years of age, he/she is mandated to retire from the labour market. Given the requirement of the social pension program, such a retired individual is not entitled to the social pension program until he/she meets the qualifying age of 65. This exclusion is what Leisering (2019) referred to as within-category exclusion.

Equally, within-category exclusion also plagues the universal social pension in Nepal. The legal definition of an old person is an individual that has clocked 60 years. Meanwhile, the qualifying age for the universal pension program is 70. Thus, a large swathe of individuals that are legally defined as old but are not old enough to qualify for the program is excluded. This exposition shows that care must be taken when universal social pensions are touted as the variants that are intrinsically equipped to cover more old persons.

The last variant of universalism concerns the extent of coverage of the entire framework of social protection. Leisering (2019) termed this form of universalism as systemic universalism. In this dissertation, I examine the social protection framework of the case countries and, special attention is paid to how the social pension program contribute to the coverage of the framework. What I found is that it is not possible to speak of systemic universalism when it comes to the framework of social protection in the case countries because the frameworks are characterised by categorical fragmentations, i.e., a large percentage of persons in Nepal and Botswana are still not covered by social protection. I mentioned earlier that within-category exclusions plague the social pension programs. This variant of exclusion also extends to other social categories like the disabled and working persons. Hence, the frameworks in the case countries are characterised by fragmentation in the categories targeted by social protection programs. The primary message

from the analysis of universalism on program and framework levels is that the case countries have not sufficiently fulfilled their universalistic welfare responsibility roles, and that necessary measures must be taken to ensure that these exclusions and fragmentations are mended in order to fulfil such responsibility.

All in all, given the histories of Botswana and Nepal, and the divergent incentives that faced actors in both countries, it is difficult to ascribe a single coherent argument as to the introduction of social pensions in these countries. Hence, the analysis of the case countries lends empirical credence to the hypothesis forwarded by Gough (2008) that a combination of factors are likely to give a robust explanation to the adoption of state-provided social protection programs.

Nonetheless, there are common trends that are observable in the adoption of social pensions in both countries. First, when the programs were introduced, actors in both countries were acting under the weight of their respective histories. Their perceptions, how they viewed the welfare of old persons, and the ability of social pensions to solve the identified issues were shaped by considerations that transcended the political, social, and economic imperatives of the 1990s. Thus, the histories of ideas about the welfare of old persons were influential in the adoption of social pensions in both countries.

Second, in both countries, social pensions were never viewed in a vacuum. The adoption of social pension was viewed in the context of broader, often non-social ideas and discourses. In both countries, the multiple functions that social pensions can perform were used to legitimise their introductions. The actors did not view social pensions from the narrow perspective of the welfare utility that they might generate. The multifaceted perception of social pensions by actors in Botswana and Nepal lends credibility to Kaufmann (2012, p. 234)'s suggestion that to succeed, actors examine the mutual complementarity of a program with broader discursive arenas to lend legitimacy to such program.

Third, undoubtedly, structural considerations like economic imperatives, political factors and institutional determinants were essential for the introduction of social pensions in the case countries. In Botswana and Nepal, the political interests of the actors trumped economic constraints that may have inhibited the introduction of social pensions. The subjugation of economic imperatives to political interest in both countries provides empirical standing to the hypothesis forwarded by Hickey (2008) that interests are central to the development of social pensions, and they often supersede other factors.

6.4 Implications of the Dissertation's findings for Social Protection Literature

The research findings of this dissertation have significant implications for social pension and social protection literature. While some of the conclusions of this dissertation mesh with the expectations of extant literature, other findings call into question some of the conclusions reached by broader social protection literature.

First, the extant literature relies on coverage to classify social pension. This classification has underpinned the study of social pensions, and international organisations often use the extant classification to underpin their advocacy. This dissertation understands the heuristic purpose of the dichotomous classification. The results of the cluster analysis conducted in this dissertation show the limitations of this classification. It showed that when other essential dimensions are considered, the family of social pensions as purported by the universal versus means-testing classification becomes unhelpful in gaining insights into similar and dissimilar social pension programs in the global South.

Second, there is a proclivity to rely on structural factors to understand why countries adopt specific social programs. If this dissertation had relied on the dominant approach in the extant literature, it would have ascribed the introduction of social pensions in Botswana solely to the electoral slump of 1994; it would have concluded that social pensions was only introduced by the UML to boost its image and electoral chances. While these conclusions would have permitted valuable insights into the introduction of social pensions, ultimately, it would have amounted to a partial picture. By introducing, an ideational and historical approach that seeks to understand how actors view welfare issues, this dissertation provided a fuller account for the introduction of social pensions in Botswana and Nepal. In essence, the approach adopted in this dissertation shows that an eclectic research strategy that bridges the structural and ideational explanatory approaches is necessary if the 'quiet revolution' in social protection is to be understood.

Finally, the analysis carried out in this dissertation has implications for the concept of universalism in the global South. So often, debates about the idea of universalism have centred on the merits of means-testing vs universalism. This dissertation shows that there is a need to branch out of these narrow confines, i.e., the examination of universalism in the global South should explore the concept of universalism beyond its programmatic relevance. There is a long tradition of a multifaced conception of universalism in global North welfare state literature, and the insights generated have contributed to a deeper understanding of programs, welfare systems and the ideational underpinning of public action in the global North. The exploration of

universalism in disparate countries of Botswana and Nepal show that the concepts can travel to southern countries, and examining how different actors conceptualise the essential core of universalism can yield a better understanding of social protection programs.

6.5 Future Research Avenues

While this dissertation provided a novel approach to the analysis of social pensions in the global South, several areas can benefit future research direction of social pensions and social protection in general. First, the quantitative Large N chapters examined the rationale for social pensions and the suitability of the dichotomous classification of social pensions. The chapters relied on imperfect data to answer these research questions. It was impossible to obtain reliable data on social pensions in some of the countries of the global South. In countries where data is available, inconsistencies beset data points. Hence, this necessitated extensive pruning of some countries out of the analysis. Future studies might focus on producing consistent and reliable data to aid the analysis of social pension in the global South. Databases such as HelpAge's Pension Watch, FLOORCASH-SocPen database and the ILO period data tables have made giant strides in this direction. Yet, there is a need for more robust data, especially as it concerns variables that relate to how social pensions are institutionalised and how they matter for the social rights of old persons.

Second, this dissertation made a foray into examining social pensions beyond star countries such as South Africa, Brazil, China and India. Future studies might want to investigate social pensions in other countries in the research periphery. In addition, future investigations should vary the pattern of investigations. For example, the introduction of social pensions in autocratic countries and why the idea of social rights abounds in countries with means-tested social pensions. Broadening the universe of countries for investigation will widen the understanding of the revolution in social pensions and social protection in the global South.

Third, this dissertation relied on documents that capture the thinking of the political elites in case countries. Primarily, the structure of the states in relation to the policy processes largely inspired the decision to focus on the elites. In Botswana, policymaking is monopolised by the executive. Thus, it makes sense to examine the perception of the executive concerning the subject under discussion. In Nepal, external actors such as the World Bank and the IMF are influential. Nonetheless, the policymaking process is dominated by political parties. As such, it is rational to examine the thinking of the political parties. The predicament of policymaking in the case countries of this dissertation may not be obtainable in other countries of the global South. Thus, future studies may want to examine the influences of organisations such as trade unions, business groups and advocacy groups and how they shape the development of social protection programs like social pensions. All in all, the analysis conducted in this dissertation yielded a better

understanding of social pensions in the case countries. I hope it also helps to inspire future research into social pensions and other social protection programs in the global South.

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Appendix

Quotes from Documents

Bolivia

ARTÍCULO 3. (BENEFICIOS DE LA RENTA UNIVERSAL DE VEJEZ).- La Renta Universal de Vejez es la prestación vitalicia, de carácter no contributivo que el Estado Boliviano otorgara a:

- A todos los bolivianos residentes en el país mayores de 60 (Sesenta) años, que no perciban una renta en el Sistema de Seguridad Social de Largo Plazo o una remuneración contemplada en el Presupuesto general de la Nación.
- A los bolivianos que perciban una renta del Sistema de Seguridad Social de Largo Plazo percibirán únicamente el 75% del monto de la Renta Universal de Vejez.
- A los titulares y los derechohabientes a los Gatos Funerarios.

Guatemala

EL CONGRESO DE LA REPÚBLICA DE GUATEMALA CONSIDERANDO: Que de conformidad con la Constitución Política de la República de Guatemala, corresponde al Estado la protección de la salud física, mental y moral de los menores de edad y de los ancianos, a quienes debe garantizar su derecho a la alimentación, salud, educación, seguridad y previsión social. CONSIDERANDO: Que las personas que corresponden al segmento de la población de la tercera edad, requieren de protección especial, toda vez que constituyen el sector que ha servido al país y que aún continúan participando en el desarrollo del mismo, por lo que es necesario y urgente proveerles las condiciones económicas que les permitan una mejor condición de vida, mediante el establecimiento de una pensión a cargo del Estado.

List of Documents

Country	Name of Document	Type of Document
Antigua and Barbuda (ATG)	The Social Security (Amendment) Act, 1993	Legislative document
Argentina (ARG)	Universal Pension for the Elderly	Website document from ANSES (Implementing agency).
Armenia (ARM)	Law of The Republic of Armenia On State Pensions	Legislative document (UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION)
Azerbaijan (AZE)	Entitlement for Social Allowances, Benefits and Compensations	Website document from Azerbaijan's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population (Implementing agency).
Bahamas (BHS)	Assistances	Website document from the National Insurance Board of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas Population (Implementing agency).
Barbados (BRB)	National Insurance Scheme (Pensioners)	Website document from Barbados National Insurance Scheme (Implementing agency).
Belize (BLZ)	Belize Social Security Act 2003 Chapter 44	Legislative document
Bolivia (BOL)	Law No. 3791 Law of November 28, 2007 Decree: Law of The Universal Income of Old Age (Renta Dignidad)	Legislative document

Botswana (BWA)	Documents analysed in case chapter of dissertation	Budget Speeches, Development Plans.
Brunei (BRN)	Pension Services	Website document from Brunei's Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (Implementing agency).
Cape Verde (CPV)	Pension of The Non-Contributive Social Security Scheme Designated by Social Pension Decree-Law No. 24	Legislative document
Chile (CHL)	Solidarity Pension System	Website document from Chile's Superintendency of Pensions (Implementing agency).
Colombia (COL)	Programa Colombia Mayor	Website document from Colombia's Pension solidarity fund (Implementing agency).
Cook Islands (COK)	Cook Islands Welfare Act 1989	Legislative document
Costa Rica (CRI)	Regulation of the Non-Contributory Pension Scheme: In accordance with article 2 of Law No. 5662,	Legislative document
Ecuador (ECU)	Non-contributory money transfers	Website document from Ecuador's Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (Implementing agency).
Fiji (FJI)	Social Pension Scheme (SPS)	Website document from Fiji's Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation (Implementing agency).
India (IND)	National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)	Website document from India's Ministry of Rural Development (Implementing agency).
Jamaica (JAM)	Public Assistance Programmes	Website document from Jamaica's Ministry of Labour and Social Security (Implementing agency).
Lesotho (LSO)	Poverty Reduction Strategy papers	National planning documents
Malaysia (MYS)	Financial Assistance for Older Persons	Website document from Malaysia's Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development
Mozambique (MOZ)	Basic Information on the Programmes of the National Basic Social Security Strategy 2010-2014	National planning documents
Namibia (NAM)	National Pensions Act 10 of 1992	Legislative Documents
Nepal (NPL)	Documents analysed in case chapter of dissertation	Budget Speeches, Development Plans.
Panama (PAN)	National Policy on Social Pension	Website document from Panama's Ministry of Social Development (Implementing agency).
Philippines (PHL)	Social Pension Program in Philippines	Website document from the Ministry of Social Services and Development of Philippines
Paraguay (PRY)	Law No. 3728 / Establishes the Right to Food Pension for Older Adults In A Poverty Situation	Legislative Documents
Swaziland (SWZ)	National Social Development Policy	National planning documents
Taiwan (TWN)	National Pension Act of 2019	Legislative Documents
Thailand (THA)	Elderly Person Act B.E. 2546 (2003)	Legislative Documents
Timor-Leste (TLS)	Decree-Law No 19/2008 Of 19 June Support Allowance for The Aged and The Disabled	Legislative Documents
Trinidad and Tobago (TTO)	Senior Citizens' Pension	Website document from Trinidad and Tobago's Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (Implementing agency).
Uganda (UGA)	The Senior Citizens Grant (SCG)	Website document from the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development of Uganda
Uzbekistan (UZB)	Off-budgetary Pension fund	Website document from Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Venezuela (VEN)	Value and Force of Law No. 8,694	Legislative Documents
Vietnam (VNM)	Law on The Elderly No: 39/2009/QH12	Legislative Documents