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Chile

Female Students Occupy Chilean Universities Demanding End to Gender Violence

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SANTIAGO – The occupation of about a dozen Chilean universities by female students demanding an end to harassment, machismo and sexist education is going on its fourth week.

Southern Chile's Austral University has been occupied by thousands of young women looking to end the "cover-up" for professors accused of gender violence following a series of unresolved accusations against school staff.

"We are tired of violence against women," read the banners displayed at the Valdivia campus, where reports exceed 100 a year but dismissal of culprits is seldom enforced.

At the University of Chile's law school in Santiago, a "feminist seizure" has been in effect since April 27 after a case of alleged harassment by Prof. Carlos Carmona.

Eight months into an internal investigation, the female students "started making waves," after which they convened an "emergency assembly," the movement's spokeswoman Danae Borax told EFE.

The Carmona case "Resulted in a series of complaints to which a blind eye has been turned," she added. "We are being harassed, abused and assaulted in our own spaces and that cannot be allowed."

The University of Chile reported more than 20 complaints of harassment, abuse and other types of gender violence in 2017 from female students, teachers and officials.

However, the heads of the movement acknowledge that there are an unknown number of unreported or unresolved instances of violence, which would increase the actual number of unpunished cases.

Official gender violence figures show a "normalization" of all types of machista violence in Chile and a study that carried out between 2004-2017 showed that some 77.4 percent of women perceive a rise in such practices.

The survey also showed that as many as 90 percent of women have faced a situation involving sexual harassment at some point in their lives.

Source [Latin American Herald Tribune](#).

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