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## Incivility Within and Beyond Classrooms: Exploring the Perceptions of Targets, Instigators, and Observers

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### Abstract

This study aimed at understanding the perceptions of female students who had experienced or witnessed incivility by faculty, and instigated incivility in or out of the classroom and how it affected them. Through the application of a phenomenological and qualitative approach, data were collected from eight (8) female business administration students from public sector universities of Quetta, Pakistan. The findings of the study revealed that female students experienced and witnessed faculty incivility within and beyond the classrooms, which included harassment, character assassination, and humiliation characterized as intense behaviors of faculty. These encounters of faculty incivility resulted in psychological distress like depression, interrupted sleeping patterns, and fear. Furthermore, the findings concerning instigated incivility exhibited that those female students who misbehaved with their instructors were distressed and wanted to quit their studies. The results of this study would be helpful for the university administration to develop policies to combat incivility in educational institutions.

### Keywords

classroom incivility, faculty incivility, experienced incivility, witnessed incivility, instigated incivility, phenomenological analysis, thematic analysis

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# **Incivility Within and Beyond Classrooms: Exploring the Perceptions of Targets, Instigators, and Observers**

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This study aimed at understanding the perceptions of female students who had experienced or witnessed incivility by faculty, and instigated incivility in or out of the classroom and how it affected them. Through the application of a phenomenological and qualitative approach, data were collected from eight (8) female business administration students from public sector universities of Quetta, Pakistan. The findings of the study revealed that female students experienced and witnessed faculty incivility within and beyond the classrooms, which included harassment, character assassination, and humiliation characterized as intense behaviors of faculty. These encounters of faculty incivility resulted in psychological distress like depression, interrupted sleeping patterns, and fear. Furthermore, the findings concerning instigated incivility exhibited that those female students who misbehaved with their instructors were distressed and wanted to quit their studies. The results of this study would be helpful for the university administration to develop policies to combat incivility in educational institutions.

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## **Introduction**

Civility in society is an ethical issue related to a society's well-being and includes politeness, courtesy, manners, and good citizenship (Forni, 2010). In developing a civilized society, education plays a prominent role not only by nurturing an individual's personality but also affects society by assisting it in becoming more civilized. Education teaches how to maintain a sense of normalcy and become grounded civilians. People learn to follow the ideas and maintain their society unified through education. Higher education plays a more critical role in creating a sense of social responsibility and civic learning to contribute to the collective good (Brooks & Boyer, 2019).

Incivility is a growing concern that has been investigated in different settings (Lim & Cortina 2005; Lim & Lee, 2011; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Incivility incidence is common, and it is happening near or in homes, in public places, workplaces, and classrooms (Ferriss, 2002). Specifically, higher education institutes are not free from the act of incivility. The definition of incivility in academics is broad that can be interpreted openly. It is defined as any act that is rude, impolite, bad manners, or inappropriate (Berger, 2000; Ferriss, 2002). In contrast, incivility outcomes were highlighted as "any action that interferes with a harmonious and cooperative learning atmosphere" (Feldmann, 2001, p. 137).

Classroom incivility has become a big challenge in higher education institutions (Bjorklund & Rehling, 2009). Both faculty and students contribute to classroom incivility, creating a climate of disrespect (Knepp, 2012). The quality of academic services production is related to the student's corporation. Students' behavior can affect the quality production of educational services and uncivilized student behavior is harmful to academicians (Nawaz & Makhdoom, 2018). Luparell (2003) found that the faculty encountering incivility from students reported losing sleep, having disrupted sleep patterns, and experiencing a variety of additional unpleasant reactions to such behavior. Some professors tweaked their methodology and grading procedures to avoid more conflict with students. Moreover, many teachers had doubts about their ability to teach, and they took a lot of the blame for what happened.

Boice (1996) used the term "classroom terrorists" for the students who are unpredictable and highly emotional outburst that makes the whole class tense and described those uncivil behaviors are occurring in most classrooms.

Moreover, it is evident by past research that the instructors were also responsible for the increased student's uncivil behavior in the classroom. The student-faculty relationship's nature was considered reciprocal (Alberts et al., 2010; Boice, 1996; Clark, 2008b; McKinne & Martin, 2010). The students can respond with more incivility if they face any uncivil behavior by faculty such as threatening students' grades, treating them with contempt, grade bias, abusing students verbally, and inattentive planning, etc. (Bjorklund & Rehling, 2009). A survey was conducted at Indiana University to gather information on experiencing incivility and almost 48% of the faculty respondents accepted that they might be the reason for incivility within the classrooms (Royce, 2000).

The concept of classroom incivility from the perception of female students had been rarely studied in the literature. In Pakistan, only one study had paid attention to classroom incivility but in medical institutes (Rauf, 2016b). The study of classroom incivility and its effects on individuals has been overlooked. This suggests a gap in the literature on how experiencing, witnessing, and instigating incivility can affect female students in Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs) of Pakistan. The nature of the study enables to conduct qualitative research to better understand the perception regarding incivility. Therefore, this study investigated female students' perspectives and responses to the understandings of experienced, observed, and instigated incivility in HEIs. The research will be helpful for educational policymakers to address the issues of classroom incivility.

## **Literature Review**

The literature has revealed several definitions of incivility. In general, incivility is often described as any action or conduct that disrupts the work, social, personal, or educational environment (Taylor et al., 2012). Luparell (2005) asserted that incivility typically recalls acts of rudeness, disrespect, or other breaches of courtesy's standard rules.

A standard defining attribute noted in all definitions of incivility was that rude, disrespectful, and discourteous behavior is inflicted on an individual. This behavior can be physical, verbal, or non-verbal, and direct or indirect. Also, uncivil behavior can vary in degree of severity. Specifically, in the academic environment, this behavior is inflicted upon an individual in the academic setting.

Faculty incivility is a dominant problem in classrooms that have adverse effects on students. Studies have revealed different types of behavior exhibited by faculty members that were perceived to be uncivil by students, including judging, treating students subjectively, humiliating students, and pressuring students (Clark, 2008c; Clark, 2008; Holtz et al., 2018; Stork & Hartley, 2009). Students felt powerless, and the reason contributing to faculty

incivility was rankism, i.e., abuse of power by faculty (Clark, 2008c). Moreover, students' perception of outside the class uncivil behavior by faculty was associated with students behaving in an uncivil manner inside the classroom (Chory & Offstein, 2017). According to the student's perception, faculty behavior is one of the reasons that escalates incivility in classrooms and creates tension in an environment (Altmiller, 2012; Clark & Springer, 2007a).

The consequences of experiencing incivility are reported by Clark (2008b) that students who were the victim of faculty uncivil behavior have the implications of being "traumatized, powerless, helpless, and angry" (p. 459). As a result, most of the females remain silent about the act of incivilities. Still, there is some evidence that demonstrates the disadvantage faced by female students in the classroom (Tannen, 1991 as cited in Alberts et al., 2010).

Past researchers have studied different dimensions of classroom incivility like gender, race-ethnicity of faculty and students (Alexander-Snow, 2004; Lampman, 2012), intentional and unintentional incivility (Farrell et al., 2016), and generation comparison (Baker et al., 2008). The uncivil behavior in educational institutions have been studied from different dimensions, for example, comparison of behaviors faced by teachers and students (McKinne & Martin, 2010; Nutt, 2013; Rauf, 2016a), factors of students and faculty incivility in nursing education (Clark, 2008a), types of faculty incivility (Holtz et al., 2018), and examination of uncivil behaviors from social norm perspective (Segrist et al., 2018). This study aims to understand the perceptions of female students who have witnessed, experienced, or instigated faculty incivility in the classroom.

Incivilities in higher education have affected the retention rates that result in the reputation of an institution (Feldmann, 2001). Students who quit their regular academic activities due to incivility in the learning environment results in the tarnished reputation of the former college (Nordstrom et al., 2009).

Students' perception of faculty incivility includes covert criticism, shaming, rude behavior, exclusions, lack of dedication to teaching, and excessive use of technology (Anthony & Yastik, 2011; Hyun et al., 2018; Thomas, 2018). The impacts of faculty incivility have been highlighted in the literature. Students perceived faculty incivility was associated with student dissatisfaction (Marchiondo et al., 2010), student communication satisfaction, student participation, and cognitive learning (Goodboy & Bolkan, 2009).

This study seeks to provide support for uncivil behavior by explaining the rational choice theory (Akers, 1990). The rational choice theory proposes that people engage in inappropriate actions by a logical decision-making process. The rational choice theory studies the reason for avoiding inappropriate behavior and concentrates on the punishment of behaving negatively, although the potential reward of negative behavior is also added (Akers, 2013). The theory explains faculty's uncivil behavior by incorporating that cost and benefits analysis is performed before indulging in such behavior. For example, faculties must prepare themselves for the lectures and focus on research publications as well. Therefore, the study addresses the following research objectives:

1. To understand the perception of faculty incivility that is experienced, witnessed, or instigated by female students.
2. To understand the reaction of female students that have experienced, witnessed, or instigated incivility.
3. To understand the consequences of faculty incivility behaviors on female students who have experienced, witnessed, and instigated incivility.

## **Role of Researchers**

This research study is conducted by H. Zaheer, B. Sarwar, Z. Bibi, and N. Muhammad. H. Zaheer is the main investigator of this research, who is a Ph.D. scholar at the Institute of Management Sciences, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan. She has a prior experience of researching experienced incivility by faculty in Higher Education Institutions during her Masters' thesis under the supervision of B. Sarwar, who is the corresponding author of this research. H. Zaheer has published an article from her MS thesis with B. Sarwar and N. Muhammad, as co-authors. H. Zaheer is also working on Incivility for her Ph.D. research work. B. Sarwar has a Ph.D. in Management and currently working as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Management Sciences, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), Quetta. Z. Bibi is a Professor at the Institute of Management Sciences, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan actively involved in research works in the context of incivility and has published several research papers focusing on workplace incivility. Finally, N. Muhammad is an Associate Professor at the Department of Management Sciences, BUIITEMS, Quetta. This research was conducted to understand the dynamics of classroom incivility in the public sector universities of Quetta to help stakeholders to prevent classroom incivility specifically towards female students.

## **Method**

### **Study Design**

#### ***Research Philosophy***

For research to be valid, some underlying philosophical assumptions serve as a base for developing knowledge. The research aims to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied. The more open-ended the questioning, the better, as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Bell, Bryman, and Harley (2018) suggested the interpretivist approach. The researcher studies the object in its natural environment to achieve an understandable view of the theory, in this case, reasons and reactions of classroom incivility.

#### ***Research Approach***

Deduction and induction are the two main research approaches that are available options for this research study. However, the researchers adopted the induction approach. Creswell and Clark (2017) define inductive researchers as working "bottom-up, using the participants' views to build broader themes and generate a theory interconnecting the themes" (p. 23). Saunders et al. (2009) suggested that the most important criteria for selecting a research approach depend on the research and the nature of the topic. This research is based on an inductive approach for understanding the nature of the problem.

#### ***Research Strategy***

This research study utilized phenomenology as a research strategy to get responses from the target respondents i.e., female students. According to Welman and Kruger (2001), the phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of people involved" (p. 189).

### ***Sample***

To understand, describe, and explain classroom incivility phenomena, qualitative methods were used in this study. Phenomenology was used as a method of qualitative research. In phenomenology, the researcher focuses on understanding the perspective of people involved in any psychological or social phenomena (Welman & Kruger, 2001). The participants in this study include female students of business administration departments and institutes in public sector universities of Quetta, Pakistan. Several researchers concluded that females are the ones who experience more discrimination or incivility in various institutes (Chui & Dietz, 2014; Cortina et al., 2002; Kabat-Farr & Cortina, 2012). A study conducted by Vogt, Bruce, Street, and Strafford (2007) discussed that bullying, incivility, and harassment are all more common among women working in male-dominated industries. The reason women reporting more incivility, bullying, and harassment is due to the sociocultural status which devalues racial minorities and females.

### ***Sampling Technique***

The researchers have adopted a non-probability sampling design to obtain reflective responses. Purposive sampling was applied based on the characteristics of participants, nature of phenomena, and the nature of the study (Bell et al., 2018). The following are the inclusion criteria for the selection of the participants:

1. The student must be a female business administration student from any of the three public sector universities of Quetta, Balochistan.
2. The student must have experienced or witnessed incivility by faculty and instigated incivility in or out of the classroom.

### ***Procedure***

The researcher approached the university administration to get the target sample. For this, any complaints by students were checked, and those students were approached through the university's department. After explaining the purpose of the study, consent was taken from the students to start data collection. A semi-structured interview guide was developed to take interviews with selected students. The first part of the guide consisted of the participant's demographic information, while the other parts consisted of experienced, witnessed, and instigated incivility questions. Before beginning the interview, consent was taken in writing from participants. Face-to-face interviews lasting about an hour were conducted with students at their convenience. First, the interviewer introduced herself to develop a rapport. The objective of the study and its importance was explained in detail, and confidentiality was ensured. The interviews were recorded first and then transcribed in a word document.

### ***Sample Size***

The sample size of the study consists of eight respondents (i.e., female business administration students). For qualitative research, the concept of "saturation" is mostly used, which is where no new information emerges in the data. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) suggested that almost six interviews can reach 80% of theoretical saturation. However, they argued that theoretical saturation could be contacted within 12 interviews if the participants' characteristics are homogenous. Therefore, researchers followed this criterion and stopped taking further interviews when there was no new information from the data.

## Analysis

The data were analyzed using phenomenological and thematic analysis, for which the Urdu recorded interviews were transcribed first into English language and sorted into different sheets. Thematic analysis is a method to analyze data by identifying, evaluating, and reporting themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the qualitative data analysis, the steps of phenomenological analysis proposed by Creswell and Poth (2016) were applied. This starts with the bracketing process which is a phenomenological inquiry approach that entails consciously setting aside one's own beliefs about the phenomena under study or what one already knows about the subject before and throughout the phenomenological research (Carpenter, 2007).

The next step was to get familiar with the data (horizontalization of data) in which each statement was treated with the same worth. Horizontalization is a step in the phenomenological analysis in which the researcher values all the participants' statements equally. All repeated statements, as well as those that are unrelated to the study questions, are removed by the researcher (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). The transcripts were read multiple times with an open-ended reading that employs the idea of openness intending to allow the reader's mind to be opened to the text and its implications. Each case was analyzed by sorting, coding, and generating themes by ensuring the responses' uniqueness. The researcher utilized the steps of thematic analysis which are based on transcendental phenomenology by Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, and Palmér (2019). Central themes were manually sorted through reading and re-reading of transcripts twice to ensure their validity.

### *Trustworthiness*

To ensure the credibility of the study, a member checking technique was utilized, which involves testing the findings and interpretations with the participants. Further, confirmability of the study findings was prioritized through rigorous record-keeping and ongoing review of findings. The researcher addressed their subjectivities as well as putting aside past knowledge of the phenomena to enhance reflexivity. Because the member check employed in this study allows participants to react to any flaws in the transcripts and analyze data, it reduces researcher bias.

Finally, generalizability can be achieved in qualitative analysis, from the perspective of transferability, by considering the possibility that knowledge and expertise obtained from an in-depth examination of a particular situation or occurrence can be extended to another situation (Merriam, 2002).

### **Ethical Consideration**

In a qualitative study, ethics plays an important role therefore, discussion of ethical consideration deems necessary. Throughout the research process, ethical considerations are required, such as negotiating entrance to the field location, involving participants in the study, obtaining personal information, and asking people to devote a significant amount of time to a project (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Participants in this study were handled following the American Psychological Association's ethical criteria.

## Findings

The findings are based on semi-structured interviews with female respondents who described their various classroom incivility experiences. They exposed how they responded



to such acts and their unfavorable psychological effects on them. The themes and sub-themes of the data resulted in the areas discussed below.

## Faculty Incivility

Several studies have studied faculty incivility and the impact of such behaviors affecting students physically and psychologically. Such action leads to disruption in the learning process (Altmiller, 2012; Clark, 2008a, 2008b; Clark & Springer, 2010). The following themes were identified from the collected data.

### *Experienced Incivility*

In this section, the respondents explain the recent uncivil behavior they have experienced in university. The respondents were asked to tell in detail about the incident, how they respond to such a situation, and how such behaviors affect them. According to the results, all the students have faced incivility by the teachers. They stated that it was disturbing to confront such behavior from a teacher. The themes identified from the data are listed in Table 1.

**Intimidation.** Students experiencing incivility by faculty comprise intimidation that includes humiliation, character assassination, and harassment. As one of the students reported: "... The teacher was so rude towards me and pointed me out and started shouting. The teacher was talking about my character to another teacher" (p. 4). Another student reported being harassed by a teacher and narrated that: "... A teacher came close to me to ask a question to help another student there. He was so close that I was not even able to speak" (p. 5).

**Table 1**

*Themes of Experienced Faculty Incivility*

Theme	Categories	Codes
Experienced faculty incivility	Intimidation	Humiliation
		Harassment
		Character assassination
		Withholding information
Experienced faculty incivility	Subjective Evaluation	Teacher's bias
	Student response	Shocked/Remain silent
Experienced faculty incivility	Consequence	Depression
		Interrupted sleeping pattern
		Uncomfortable at university
		Cried

**Subjective Evaluation.** Students perceived the teacher's favoritism or teacher's bias as uncivil behavior. This theme discussed the subjective evaluation experienced by students. As one of the students narrated:

...I asked her to give me one extra mark so my grade will change, but she was reluctant to extend this favor. Consequently, I misbehaved with her as she gave 6 to 8 extra marks to others to improve their grades, whilst she is not giving me just one mark. The teacher was all the time smiling sarcastically. (P8)

**Response.** Students shared their experiences and how they responded when they experienced uncivil behavior. This theme mostly includes students who remain quiet or were in shock after experiencing such behavior. As the participants explained: "...I was so shocked that I couldn't even speak; this was not expected from a teacher" (P5).

Students also explained that they reported the act of incivility to the discipline committee of the university. The students narrated: "...I was shocked when he said as my other fellows were also there and felt ashamed of what he said. But later, an application was forwarded to get the teacher changed" (P1).

**Consequences.** The impact of experiencing uncivil behavior was asked from the students, including depression, interrupted sleeping patterns, crying, and uncomfortable at university. Most of the participants were in depression or frustrated by experiencing incivility from a teacher. Students explained how the teacher's attitude had affected them mentally: "...As I told you, I was mentally frustrated because of this incident. Teachers carry their grudges further, and I couldn't clear my exam for three semesters" (P2).

Students also explained that how the uncivil behavior of a teacher disturbed their sleeping patterns.

...I got depressed because of this attitude; I could not sleep properly after that. But eventually, I learned that no one has the right to talk inappropriately with a female, even if that person is older than her or even a teacher. (P1)

### ***Witnessed Incivility***

Participants were asked to describe any incident they witnessed in university and how that incident affected them. One of the students said that she had never witnessed any incident of incivility. The themes generated from the collected data are presented in Table 2.

**Intimidation.** Participants who witnessed incivility were categorized as experiencing incivility, including humiliation, harassment, and character assassination. Most of the respondents narrated that they had witnessed teachers that were humiliating students.

... The instructor who had acted unethically with me was the one who was on duty at the time, but I had already seen him act unethically with another student before. While the student was crying, the teacher shouted at her and forbade her from entering the campus since she was not dressed appropriately for class. (P4)

Students also reported observing character assassination in the category of witnessed incivility. The student explained what she witnessed: "...Hmmm okay, so a teacher pointed out the student who was not abiding institution's dress code shoes, and as soon as she stood up for herself, the professors at the university began to discuss her character" (P2).

**Observer's Response.** Students that had witnessed incivility explained that they felt pity, were frightened, remained silent, and motivated the target to report the act of incivility. As the students narrated: "...I felt bad for the girl as the teacher was getting personal and attacking her character" (P3). Students explained how they motivated the target to report the incident: "...I talked to that girl and convinced her to go and report this incident" (P2).

**Consequences.** Consequences of witnessed incivility theme are comprised of: students get disturbed and more careful. Students witnessed a teacher using inappropriate words for a female student and narrated that: “I was shocked and thought that I could not concentrate on my lectures that day, wondering how a teacher could say these things to a girl” (P7).

**Table 2**  
*Themes of Witnessed Faculty Incivility*

Theme	Categories	Codes
Witnessed faculty incivility	Intimidation	Humiliation Harassment Character assassination
	Observer's response	Felt pity Remain silent Motivated the target to report the incident Frightened
	Consequence	Disturbed More careful None

### *Instigated Incivility*

Participants were asked to recall any incident that they had instigated an act of incivility. Only two participants reported instigating incivility.

**Aggression.** This category comprises students behaving aggressively with teachers. A student explained that she was not allowed to sit in exams, and she misbehaved. The respondent narrates:

...I was late for my class as I went to the hospital I was not feeling well. The teacher asked me to submit a fine as I was late. But I refused to give it as there were times, many of the class fellows were late, but he didn't ask them for it, leading to an intense situation as he asked me to leave the class, and I left in anger. (P8)

**Table 3**  
*Themes of Instigated Incivility*

Theme	Categories	Codes
Instigated incivility	Aggression	Misbehavior
	Response	Misbehavior/ rude
	Consequence	Disturbed/wanted to quit

**Response.** Both the students explained that the faculty was rude to them, and in response to their behavior, the students misbehaved. Student narrated: “...When they didn't allow me to sit in the exam, then I misbehaved. I know it is not right, but if I behave like this, I can expect that other people will behave any differently” (p. 2).

**Consequences.** The respondents describe that they were disturbed after the incident and wanted to quit their studies. The respondent explains: "...I regretted that as a student, one is always disadvantaged in terms of grades. I was the one who scored lowest in his paper. I was depressed the whole semester and wanted to quit" (P8).

## **Discussion**

The interview results showed several insights into the student's perspective and reactions to faculty incivility, as well as providing answers to some of the little-studied elements of classroom incivility. In contrast to the wider body of research that focuses on an empirical analysis of different elements of incivility in different settings, this study uncovers an in-depth understanding of three aspects of incivility focusing on female students' perspective, their reactions, and its consequences. This research contributes to a better understanding of the specific experiences of classroom incivility that can help in a developing civilized environment for learning in educational institutions.

In this study, female business graduate students in Pakistan discussed their experiences of faculty incivility. Although the participants' uncivil encounters with professors varied, and most of them felt emotionally scarred, embarrassed, and belittled. The female students reported their perceptions of faculty incivility that they had experienced, witnessed, or instigated within educational institutions. Students reported experiencing incivility of high intensity which includes humiliation, harassment, and character assassination. These findings are consistent with prior studies on the psychological discomfort experienced by students who were exposed to uncivil instructor behavior (Altmiller, 2012; El Hachi, 2020; Holtz et al., 2018).

Furthermore, female students also reported experiencing subjective evaluation and withholding information from their instructors. Receiving an unjust grade or being subjected to an unfair evaluation that did not correspond to the taught materials was regarded as uncivil by students. Although earlier research has documented biased assessment or faculty using their position inappropriately to manipulate students' grades as examples of injustice (Knepp, 2012; Rad et al., 2017), the unjust evaluation sub-category in the current study was a novel notion that directly questioned faculty evaluation methods. Students' lack of knowledge of evaluation goals and criteria may influence their views of evaluation fairness. Students frequently regard evaluations as subjective and prejudiced, believing that they deserved higher grades and readily overlooking their flaws.

Unfair treatment of students is one of the most common uncivil behavior by faculty members (Small et al., 2019). It can happen when professors are unaware of their own biases or how their actions are viewed by students. As a result, it is suggested that faculty members should reflect on their teaching habits and identify their prejudices. Student evaluation or class management rules or criteria should be implemented uniformly and without personal prejudice.

Rad, Ildarabadi, Moharreri, and Moonaghi (2015) in a study on incivility in the Iranian nursing education system, pointed out that faculty members serve as role models for students, and therefore their disrespectful, rude, or inappropriate behavior might influence students' behavior. The results show that students' negative perceptions regarding the faculty contributing to incivility within and beyond classrooms are consistent with the previous findings of (Clark & Springer, 2007b; Luparell, 2003). Students reported they got depressed, distracted, experienced interrupted sleeping patterns, felt uncomfortable at the university, and some cried. Previous studies have explained that students felt psychological discomfort when they experienced incivility from their teachers (Clark, 2008; El Hachi, 2020).

Students who have witnessed incidents of incivility explained a wide range of faculty incivility behavior. The students were found to observe faculty behaviors like humiliation, harassment, and character assassination of the female students by faculty members. The students reported witnessing incivility that was also experienced by a female student. Thus, suggesting that females are more prone to experience incivility in educational institutions.

Miner and Eischeid (2012) suggested that people who observe incivility against coworkers of the same gender reported experiencing more anxiety, fear, demoralization, and anger. In response to witnessing incivility, female students discussed that they felt pity for the target student, were frightened, remained silent, motivated the target student to report to the authorities. It reflects observers of incivility have more social considerations, which are expressed as emotions of warmth for the victims and leading to the deployment of emotional support to that person. This result was aligned with the findings of a prior study that was conducted on witnessing incivility (Lotz et al., 2011).

Finally, students were asked to explain an incivility incident that they had instigated. As the literature on incivility suggests that the perpetrator's power plays an important role in instigating incivility (Cortina et al., 2001). This supports the results of the study where the female students discussed that they had never instigated incivility with their instructor. However, a student reported instigating incivility by misbehaving with a teacher when the teacher withheld the information. Andersson and Pearson (1999) discussed that incivility is instigative in nature, as it encourages reciprocity and an increased spiral of negative behaviours which helps to conclude that incivility begets incivility. The findings revealed that experienced incivility is growing in higher education.

## Conclusion

This study represents the viewpoints of female students of Quetta, Pakistan regarding faculty incivility in academia. Interacting directly with female business administration students, interviews were conducted to explore the perceptions of faculty incivility victims, observers, and perpetrators. Additionally, the researchers identified the consequences of experiencing, witnessing, and instigating incivility. These interviews add to the body of knowledge about incivility by illustrating what female students see and experience daily, as well as how these encounters influenced them. It is concluded that most of the female students experienced psychological distress after encountering the act of incivility.

It is a matter of great concern for the educational institutions that faculty incivility of high intensity is happening with female students. Faculty incivility, as expected, endangers students' well-being, hinders their ability to study effectively, and led some students to consider quitting their education. The findings of the study and the related literature advocate a similar view that faculty incivility is experienced by all students regardless of their discipline. In conclusion, there are numerous probable explanations for growing classroom incivility.

Techniques for reducing disruptive behavior and promoting a climate of civility and mutual respect can be used with classroom management techniques and well prepared for their class. Colleges and universities should continue to recognize incivility in their campuses and seek out new and effective strategies to combat it.

## Implications

The findings from this study would be useful in providing insights into faculty-student relationships. This research can help educators understand the problems of female students and implement strategies that prevent incivility in higher education institutes. Education plays

a role in building values, morals, and ethics in students. If civility is to be learned by students, faculty must demonstrate it, as it is a learned behaviour integrated through repetition. The faculty must condemn such behaviour that is disrespectful or shows any bias against any person. Furthermore, to improve the teacher-student relationship, institutions must provide professional development sessions to faculty members. This can be done by conducting seminars or workshops regarding harassment, bullying, and incivility which must include awareness of institutional policies regarding such behaviours.

Students must be given more autonomy as they must learn how to deal with incivility from faculty members and resulting psychological discomforts. Universities should implement methods and processes that allow students to raise complaints without fear of reprisal from professors (Stalter et al., 2019). Faculty personnel, on the other hand, must be enabled to serve as mentors and role models for students (Clark & Springer, 2010). Empowering faculty members can be achieved through training or coaching programs in advanced social skills. Students and faculty members can both establish and discuss norms of behavior. Compliance with these standards, as well as the general civic culture of the university, should be evaluated.

The faculty may focus on the moral character building of the students which is lacking in educational institutions. Finally, much prior research has shown that faculty modeling of civil behavior is one of the techniques for fostering civility in education. The fight against incivility should begin within and beyond the classrooms.

### Limitations and Future Directions

The current study is not without its flaws as well. The use of a small sample and a specific demographic restricts the generalizability of our findings in this qualitative study. Furthermore, despite their best efforts, the participants may have expressed biased opinions or withheld facts that may have influenced the results. Future researchers may focus on the causes of classroom incivility, as well as the consequences. Additionally, to better understand the phenomenon of classroom incivility, future researchers should investigate incivility from both ends, (i.e., students and teachers). Future researchers should also consider a mixed-method approach for studying classroom incivility.

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