Masters of Health Candidature

Indigenous Students Experience of University Education

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Abstract

This research was conducted in a cultural safety context for the Indigenous participants. The study explored qualitatively the issues for Indigenous students in tertiary health studies in an effort to add to the body of knowledge around issues of retention of Indigenous students in health studies.

The findings of this qualitative study described two major themes for the participants as they described their tertiary educational experience. The main theme has implications for educational institutions for cultural safety. These proved to be pivotal moments which jeopardized continuing studies rather than academic failure or difficulty.

The second theme of personal resources, described new issues then previously described in literature. Motivators for achieving qualifications proved to be different for the general population. But outstanding was the documentation of previous academic success in educational pathways and that all of the participants already work in health. These two findings have positive implications for employers striving to grow an Indigenous workforce.
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