



RESEARCHING STUDENT STORIES OF RESILIENCE

Linking student experiences with student retention

Judy Wright

Principal Researcher/Student Counsellor

Renee Goosen

Co-Researcher/Student Counsellor

Joanna Callaghan

Co-Researcher/Student Counsellor



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PRESENTATION

Introduction

Research Questions

Method

Results

Discussion

Conclusion

Questions & Comments

INTRODUCTION

Clinical Experiences

- Noticing student stories were not in the public domain
- Acknowledgment and validation - achievements of these students
- Believing that students *can* contribute their knowledge for the benefit others
- Making transparent the contribution of Student Services, to student retention



Empirical Evidence

- *Psycho-social challenges* faced by university students
(eg: Andrews & Chong, 2011; Rosenthal et al., 2006; Stallman, 2010; Vivekananda et al., 2011)
- *Resilience / Strengths*
(eg: Cavazos et al., 2010; Hartley, 2010; Ife, 2008)
- *Retention*
(eg: Elliott et al., 2009; Norton, 2010 ; Woodbridge & Osmond, 2009)
- *Narratives / Story-telling*
(eg: Deitsch et al., 2010; Thomas, 2010; Wingard & Lester 2001)

GAP

- Less Qualitative research
- Very limited published research on student stories using students' actual words
- Minimal evidence of use of direct student advice

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What supports students to continue studying?
- What words would students use to attribute meaning?
- Do students regard what they have done as ‘resilience’?
- What advice might students have for others?

METHOD

- Research Design
- Participants
- Measures
- Procedure
- Analysis
- Validity

“The significance of this study is embedded in the participants’ accounts”

Deitsch et al (2010) P.3



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RESULTS

- Emergence of dominant theme
- Student Services contribute to retention
- Participants welcome giving advice
- Participants benefit from research participation

I keep reminding myself, I am not a quitter.

It's well worth it in the end.

It has been good to have someone to talk to.

I would say I'm a determined person.

I have gained knowledge that I can use in the community.

I've come a long way in the last year.

Making it better for them than it was for me.

What has kept me going is the desire to succeed



Zoe Friend: *Sticks and Stones, may break my bones, but your unkind words will never break my spirit."*



Kartic Krishna: *Bliss*



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DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

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Student Stories of Resilience

RESULTS

- Participants welcome giving advice

Personal Encouragement: *“Never give up. Just Keep going. You are put in certain situations for a reason” - Hourii*

Practical Strategies: *“There are websites that can help with anxiety and depression (eg: www.beyondblue.org.au)” - Gabriella*

- Participants benefit from research participation

“It allowed me to reflect on what had happened and remember that I’ve come far”

EVALUATIONS

- Reader Evaluations
- Utilization / Usefulness/ Encouragement

www.acu.edu.au/determined_to_succeed

DISCUSSION

- Clinical application of findings
- Relationship to resilient paradigm
- Limitations of the research
- Future research

CONCLUSIONS

- The word ‘Determination’ is the preferred word used by students.
- Student stories and advice are an invaluable resource.
- Online versions of DTS Book increases accessibility & sustainability.
- Student Services contribute to student retention.



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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

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