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Students' Experiences Regarding Diversity and Their Academic Self-concept in a South African Institution

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ABSTRACT Being exposed to different cultural diversity during the transition from high schools to higher institutions has been found to impact students' performance. Despite this, diversity and academic self-concept have received little consideration. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' experiences regarding diversity and their academic self-concept in a South African institution. This qualitative study adopts an interpretive research design. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 9 registered honours students of North-West University since they represent different provinces in South Africa. They were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide, and data analysis was done using a thematic technique. Themes and sub-themes that emerged show that culture, family background, religiosity/faith in God, family socio-economic status, language diversity, peer interaction, previous high school, and students' social interaction were responsible for academic self-concept. It is recommended that policies and programs to support students' academic progression should be incorporated into the academic curriculum.