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| Participant: | R |
| Researcher: | Elizna Grobler |

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| Researcher: | Okay, so thank you so much for participating in my research. Just to give you a bit of background to who I am, I am your listener. I am a people generalist, and I'm also doing my master's this year. So my study relates to the social construction of work, integrated learning, a form of community engagement from a postgraduate perspective. So basically, what that means? It just it aims to what's the word, to see how the postgraduates have experienced their form to work, integrated learning. So I also want to just explain this research interview is voluntary, and should I ask any question that you may feel uncomfortable with. You are more than welcome to to indicate and then yeah, we won't continue further. So yes, my first question for you would be, do you understand the term work, integrated learning? And if so, please provide an example. |
| Participant R: | I'm not too familiar with it, but I think it's got something to do with practical exposure. I don't know. You can probably elaborate a bit more on it. Yeah. |
| Researcher: | So that's basically it. So I'm just going to read you the definition from my studies. So basically, it's an umbrella term that refers to approaches and strategies where theory is combined with practice within a purposefully designed curriculum, and it enables students to then receive exposure to real world work environments. So basically it can be in the form of internships, work placements, practicums, project based learning as well as service learning. So for this specific research interview, I am going to ask you a bit of questions regarding your community project. So if you can just start to indicate what you did for your community project. |
| Participant R: | Okay, so we, I was in a group with [group member names], and did a community project on what was it like? We did a recruitment drive for rural communities where we, like, took them in, we did CV scanning, we did interview techniques and training with them, and we kind of just facilitated the whole recruitment process for these different communities. And we actually ended up getting all those people employment after three months, everyone was put into a position. So it was quite it was quite rewarding, I must say, but we really enjoyed it. |
| Researcher: | Yes, I can believe so. Thank you for providing your answer. So regarding this, the community project, did the community project allow you to combine your academic knowledge that you have obtained within practice? |
| Participant R: | yes, to some extent, obviously, in IOP, we don't focus that much on HR related aspects, but especially from undergrad, I think that kind of knowledge came to play in our community project More so than our Honors did. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay. And getting back to the community project, you did mention that you did a few interviews and things like that, but what specific skills or competencies have you acquired whilst participating in the practicum? |
| Participant R: | Um, so definitely, I think the interviewing thing we've practiced, we've like done in all our modules. So to learn the interview techniques on how to approach people, how to like actively listen to people and really try and get the right information out of them, I think that's something we took, well, I took away for everyone else, but that I took away from the whole process in applying it in our practicals. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay.And how has this community project allowed you to engage with your community? |
| Participant R: | So I think because our community project was targeted at so many different rural communities, we really got a perspective from many different people that were really in need kind of targeting the lower income or lower skilled blue collar workers. So to get that kind of perspective is very different to what we're normally used to, because obviously being in university, you targeted at the same kind of people. So it really allowed us to interact with people from all sorts of spheres of life, which was quite exciting, |
| Researcher: | okay, and a follow up question on that, how did this practicum allow you to engage with industry partners? |
| Participant R: | So I'm assuming this is now the organization we work. Yeah, yeah. So that it was quite hands on experience, stuff we don't really get exposure to like through our modules, obviously. So it was definitely a whole, like a new thing that we were exposed to and trying to connect with the organization as well. I think it was very just, very different. They were very helpful in trying to, like, implement our knowledge into the practical part of our degree. |
| Researcher: | Yes, definitely does. So pertaining to that, I have obviously now done a lot of research interviews with other participants. How did you obtain the organization to conduct a recruitment drive within their company? |
| Participant R: | So [Group member] actually worked there full time at the at the time, she doesn't work there anymore. So we kind of use our personal contacts, which really helps, because I think it's just us to just go out and find someone willing to help you and take the time to, like, teach you their way of work. So having her inside the organization already really helps. |
| Researcher: | Okay, now that's actually good that you've mentioned your that you need to have personal contacts. So regarding this, let's, well, let me rephrase what I want to ask you. So with the community project, do I understand correctly that it provides the students with a lot of autonomy, you do not have specific guidelines as to what you need to do? |
| Participant R: | No... ? Well, yes, you're right in what you're saying. So the university was pretty much like, just do something in your field, related to HR, related to IOP, that you can really integrate your your learning from, and everything was left up to ourselves. So we had to find out what we're doing, get in contact with the right people. I know a lot of our groups really struggled and honest to, like, find someone, especially because they didn't have the right contact. So I think the university did allow us to, like, take full control of it and all the responsibility with it, which is fair enough, but it was quite difficult without if you didn't have contact. |
| Researcher: | Okay. On that note, do you think the university can provide a bit more guidance, perhaps, let's say they have relationships with industry partners, introduce the students to the industry partners for the community project. |
| Participant R: | Definitely, I definitely think that would help, especially because I know a lot of our lecturers actually are in the industry, and they do have so it would really just ease the process, because I think it adds a lot of stress now, on top of our honors and trying to get into masters and also, a lot of people worked, so now we also have to, like, it's like an extra thing we have to worry about. |
| Researcher: | Okay, I get that. So on that note, did the community project, if I understand correctly, it placed a bit more strain on the students, not finding the organizations or things like that. |
| Participant R: | Yes, obviously I can't speak from it for everyone, but I think there was one or two groups that really struggled, and they had they kept having to redo their proposal because they couldn't find anyone. So that was a lot for them. |
| Researcher: | Okay, I can just imagine that. Then I would like to ask you so regarding your employability, as I understand correctly, you are currently working now? |
| Participant R: | Yes I am. |
| Researcher: | And would you say, after your honors year, were you employable? |
| Participant R: | Yes, I think so. Obviously, I mean IOP, as you know, it's quite difficult because you need to register and do your masters and really use your skills in the field. But I was really lucky enough that this year, in the beginning of the year, I managed to get a job under working under a registered industrial psychologist. So also me, then most of my peers, I managed to get like, exposure into IOP, and not just which was really, really nice, but that's very difficult without having completed your master's first to really like focus on those extra or other IOP related fields. |
| Researcher: | Okay, well, congratulations for managing to get a job. That's amazing. No, I can, I can imagine. So, since you are currently working, would you say that the community project equipped you for the world of work? And if yes or if no, please elaborate on your answer. |
| Participant R: | Okay, I think what we did is very applicable to the HR field. So if I was put in any organization they told me to do the recruitment, I'd be like, cool, yes. So I definitely feel that that exposure helped with that aspect of our degree. However, I don't think it's necessarily helped for where I want to go, yeah, yeah, so, but it definitely did equip me with the skills I would need to, like, actually applying an organization, so can't fault them there. |
| Researcher: | Okay,no, that is good to hear. And then I would also like to hear you did mention now, but that the back the community project was very rewarding, but what from the community project was very insightful that you have learned during that time? |
| Participant R: | Oh, that's quite a tricky one, because there's obviously so much that you learn, especially with regards to recruitment. I mean, it's not something we are exposed to every day, and it's a very difficult task in general to just to find the right people. So I think me, I really learned that there's so many people out there with so many different skill sets, and it's trying to find where they are going to excel the best or perform the best for both like the organization and themselves. So I think that, for me, was the most insightful is really like some people can flourish in some areas if they put in the right place, obviously. |
| Researcher: | Okay. No, I I understand that. So basically, if I understand correctly, it allowed you to gain a bit more realistic view of recruitment, other than just learning from of learning of it from a textbook. |
| Participant R: | Yes, 100% I feel like you don't, you don't know how to interact with people like that, just from what you study. I think being exposed to it in person and really in the situation you learn. So I feel like I'm the person that learns more by doing. So the practical exposure taught me a lot more than than our textbooks did. |
| Researcher: | I understand, yes, I must also say, from my perspective, I did know about recruitment, but I didn't know the best practices. Or it might sound silly, but the importance of professionalism, because you are still representing the company, so you're 100% okay? And then I would also like to know, what aspects of the community project, from your perspective, do you think can be adjusted a bit more to align with community standard, with industry standards. |
| Participant R: | With industry standards, could you like explain a bit more what you are looking for. |
| Researcher: | Yes, okay, let me think of an example. So basically, you are now currently working under a registered industrial psychologist, so you have had a bit more exposure to the industry. And based on that exposure, how do you think can the community project be adjusted to align with more IOP specific standards. |
| Participant R: | Um, so that's obviously, I think would come with best practice. Because I think we, especially as IOPS, or in general, anyone, they kind of just go with what feels best, but you forget the nitty gritty behind things. So maybe like to follow more of a like a procedure, a specific procedure, what to say, what not to say, like, what to avoid in certain situations, you have help, because I think your emotions, well, speaking for myself, my emotions tend to get in the way of my community project. So obviously I was just worried about getting everyone a job, because they're obviously trying to provide and I think, I think that's where it gets a little bit finicky, because you need to align to your industry and know you actually the best person for the job. You don't just need someone to fill a position, you know. So to really align it to an organization's goals, like what they what they're trying to achieve, I don't know if that's on the right back. |
| Researcher: | Yeah, no, definitely. So on that note that you said to align it to an organization's goal, do you think the university can provide a bit more guidance with the community project? If my question makes sense. |
| Participant R: | yes, I think, I mean, I know we were each given a supervisor, like each group was given a supervisor, obviously, with our community project specifically, it was a lot easy to navigate through, but maybe the supervisors can provide more guidance and to say, okay, these are the best practices. This is what you can do with your organization. Make sure that what you're doing aligns with what they want from you. Um, essentially, I think your supervisor can maybe give a little bit more input there. |
| Researcher: | Yes, okay, no, that makes sense, because since you, since some groups might be working with an organization, obviously you want to put your best foot forward, because you never know what happens in the future. Perhaps they might offer you a job opportunity and things like that. |
| Participant R: | You want to make a good impression. I feel like networking is really important. So you want to come off as professional, like you said. With regards to professionalism, you want to know that you are there to make some sort of a difference in their lives and someone else's life. So to make their life easier, you have to meet certain life requirements. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay, no, that's good. And then I would just like to ask you are currently doing your masters now? Yes, okay, and I have seen on LinkedIn that you guys have received a bit of more practical training from certain companies. Would you say that also allowed you to learn a bit more about IOP and how to do the physical IOP things? |
| Participant R: | Yes, definitely. So we went through a lot of psychometrics training. I don't know if I'm allowed to mention companies, or if you take that out, we did a lot of psychometrics training, and this is something obviously we not familiar with until we actually in the field with our internship, and obviously after we registered, because we're not allowed to, but it definitely helped in analyzing, like from an IOP perspective, it's very different. So it really gave us that exposure into applying those little tests and really understanding the security behind what those numbers mean, essentially, I think it really does help. In terms of IOP, it really gave us the exposure we needed. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay, no, that makes sense. And on that note, you do not have to mention the company's names, but was it like a valuable opportunity also to make connections with those companies and to get a bit more industry insights. |
| Participant R: | Yes, definitely. I feel like any sort of workshop or session that you do with a company is very valuable because it's kind of putting your name out there if you're there to learn, and it's that interaction that you really need? Yeah, I think so. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay, no. Um, this is all questions from my side. I don't know if you want to add anything else to the topic. |
| Participant R: | Um, no, just that. I think the work integrated learning more so the practical exposure to things is very beneficial. I think people really need to be able to apply their knowledge going into the workforce, because I know how daunting it can be, like your first job out and you have no idea what to do. So universities as well, I always like to say the practical side really helps you prepare for when you you leave to work. Yeah. |