|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Transcription: | 15 |
| Date: | 4 July 2024 |
| Participant: | O |
| Researcher: | Elizna Grobler |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Researcher: | Okay, perfect. So I firstly, would like to thank you for participating in my research. I really appreciate it. So before we begin, I would just like to give you a bit of background as to who I am, as well as a bit of background to my study. So I am your small shelter. I am a people generalist. I do recruitment and general HR administration, and my study pertains to the social integration of work, integrated learning. No, the social construction. Sorry, from a postgraduate perspective, and that basically just means how the students have experienced the community project or practicum that they had. So I would just like to also confirm that this research is voluntary. However, should I ask any question that makes you feel uncomfortable, then you are more than welcome to not answer the question. |
| Participant O: | Sure, okay. |
| Researcher: | So first things first, I would just like to know, are you familiar with the term work, integrated learning? |
| Participant O: | Um, yes I am, but I think I'd like to be more enlightened on the topic. |
| Researcher: | No problem. Okay, so basically, Work Integrated Learning is an umbrella term that refers to approaches and strategies where theory is combined with practice within a purposefully designed curriculum which stretches further than traditional education, and it allows the students to receive exposure to real world work environments and basically further on work integrated learning can be on campus as well as off Campus, and it takes place in the form of internships, work placements, practicums, project based learning as well as service learning. So you're on that note to just give you a bit more detail as well. So basically, I am just going to ask you a few questions regarding your community project as that is also for a form of work, integrated learning. So to start things off, what did you What did your group do for the community project? |
| Participant O: | So our group, we actually went along recruitment in the form of online interviews. When we conducted like a mini study on it, we found that a lot of people, when it comes to interviews, they're not really equipped with the necessary skills to be able to conduct themselves in an online interview. So with that, we came up with an intervention to basically help students, mainly third years, who have completed like you know, their degree, who would like exposed or going into the workplace. So we that was our main focus, and then we basically trained them, and we helped about 80 plus people with our intervention on how to conduct themselves and basic online interview etiquette and what are the things that they should look out for, and stuff like that. So, yeah, it was really helpful. And even to us as the postgraduate students, it also helped us because we didn't know, like, you know, some of the things that were important for and online. Because, you know, we a lot of the times we get to, we get to experience so much nervousness and stuff like that, and eventually the interview doesn't end up going so well. So we just thought that that would be really helpful to the community. And, yeah, |
| Researcher: | okay, no, your 80 people is quite a large number, and it sounds like a very interesting community project. On that note, I would just like to know that you do the community project through a company, or, for example, through Career Services. |
| Participant O: | Yeah, so we actually collaborated with career services, and we got our training from them. |
| Researcher: | okay, now that sounds very interesting. And as you've mentioned that the people that have got exposure to this online interviews, they might have learned a lot from you guys, but I want to know what practical knowledge or things have you learned whilst conducting the Community Project? |
| Participant O: | Um, I think you know, for me, something that really stood out was that, as much theory and knowledge that you can grasp from, you know, everything that we've come across, it isn't enough, you know, for what compared to, like, real life context, situations and experiences that happen in the workplace. So during this whole process of our online interview training, I think it really showed me that apart from just, you know, being given a set of notes and then being told, okay, this is what you need to do to prepare. This is how you need to conduct yourself, like something just to read by the book. It was more than just that. And I think the actual engagement, because there were times like the whole training revolved around, like the whole practical aspect of it. So for instance, we would have a participant that we would train, and we would give them the set of notes, and we would work through it with them. So it wasn't just a thing of, okay, we mean to you what you need to do, step by step. We basically asked them the questions, as if we were the potential employers. I don't know if you understand what I'm trying to say. So it was very practical based, and I think that stood out to me, because that was like the main issue that we targeted is that not many people have had this type of training. It's always just a matter of, okay, being given a set of notes, and then this is what you have to do and read through. But there's never that practical aspect to say, okay, like we're actually conducting an interview, you know, |
| Researcher: | No, definitely. And I think it's good that you have mentioned it, because I think if you are in the field of IOP or HR, you definitely also need to have those interviewing skills. |
| Participant O: | Yes. |
| Researcher: | Okay and my other question would be, as I may deduct from your answers that the community project helped you to engage with your community, which is the students, as well as the Career Service, but then it allow you to engage with inter with industry partners? |
| Participant O: | Well, in our case, not so much, because I think we just purely focused on, like undergraduates or postgraduates, and we didn't get to go that far out, but there were. Our sample also consisted of like, students that were like, already working, but we're still students, but we're working. And like, you know, for instance, they would apply, they were still, like, in the process of applying for jobs and stuff like that. So I think, I'm not sure as far as, like, reaching, like, parts of the industries and stuff. I don't think too much, but I think it did help a few participants, because there was one participant who actually mentioned that the training really helped, because she applied for a job overseas, and with the help of our training, she eventually got the job in whatever industry she was heading to. |
| Researcher: | That's very, very cool. Congratulations. |
| Participant O: | Yeah, okay, and just again, onto the topic again regarding the industry partners. So would you think that the community project would be a bit more beneficial if it would allow you to engage with other people that is an IOP, or other companies that do IOP or HR? |
| Researcher: | I think, yeah, that would be like a great thing, because, you know, it would help extend this intervention in the industry and help those you know who are in need. I think that would be a very helpful thing, not only to for businesses, but also for the people themselves, because I think it also adds to, in general, people's mental health and, you know, just helping them feel at ease so that They can perform to their best, you know? |
| Participant O: | Yeah, no, I get that, and then I would just like to know, are you currently working? |
| Researcher: | And okay, would you say that the community project project contributed to your employability? |
| Participant O: | Yes, definitely. So when I applied for this job, it's been a month now, when I applied, yeah, I basically went through the whole process. So whatever notes I had and whatever knowledge I gained from our community project, I basically applied the exact same thing, and I went through my notes. I I prepared really well, and that helped me to actually get the job, because I know from for this position that I'm in, there were three other candidates, and yeah, and I got chosen for it. So I could definitely say that it prepared me well enough to be able to be confident in that interview. And, yeah. |
| Researcher: | Okay. |
| Participant O: | It ended up being successful. |
| Researcher: | No, that's amazing. Congratulations once again, and all the best working while studying. It can be done. And then I would also like to ask you regarding your studies now you are doing your masters, if I'm correct. |
| Participant O: | No, no, I've chosen to take a gap year this year. So, yeah, I'm just working at the moment. |
| Researcher: | Okay? No, that's that's not a problem. I usually ask follow up questions for the master students because they receive a bit more practical training. But yes, that's basically all questions from my side, and these interviews are not really very long. But is there anything that you would like to add to the topic? |
| Participant O: | I just think that it's a very great topic, you know, and the fact that it's been surfaced, I haven't heard much about it in the past few years, but now that it's been surfaced, and that it is like a topic to be spoken about. I think it can be a very valuable thing to a lot of people, because when you look at the rate of employment now and the way things are like the whole system, it just makes you think that you know, how are you supposed to get a job if you have no experience? And I think with work integrated learning, it could be a really valid so many looking for experience, but we as students who want to like enter the workforce are looking for experience ourselves. So it's just this constant conflict. And I think work integrated learning is like the common denominator where everything could potentially work together, you know, it's like integrating us into the workforce, and also it would show potential employees and companies and stuff that, you know, we have some type of experience, and we could be like more potential candidates. So I think it's a really great topic. |
| Researcher: | I really agree with you, and as you were talking now, I have actually a bit more few questions for you now that you have mentioned it, so I've actually spoke to my colleague yesterday, and I told him, if it wasn't for my personal connections I wouldn't have been able to get a job. So do you feel like the community project can be like a good starting point to build personal connections with industry partners? Do you notice to get a foot in the door when looking for employment? |
| Participant O: | Yes, definitely. I think, as much as we say that networking is very important, I think that this type of work, integrated learning is just as important, because you don't just want to get to the top through people you know, and then not have any background. Or, like, you know, proper experience at the center, or some type of experience you know, like, you need to have some type of experience to be able to and then, like, obviously, networking is number one. But also, I think, with work integrated learning, it's just as important, yes, so that's basically the starting point where you can get both experience and also to establish those connections. Yes. I would also like to ask you just one more thing regarding the community project. |
| Researcher: | So do you feel like there should be a bit more guidelines to allow the students to, let's say, do a bit more IOP focused practical things. Or your what would you suggest to align the community project with industry standards? |
| Participant O: | I think, from my experience last year with the community projects, it was very broad based. I think it was around, like, mental health. It was around training and development, stuff like that. And I think, you know, redirecting it and like aligning it with, well, of course it was, it could be aligned to IOP, because IOP is all about, you know, helping people in the work environment and stuff like that. But I don't think I have any suggestions. |
| Researcher: | No, that's very that's no problem at all. But thank you so much. I think that's all from my side, and I wish you all of the best with your new job. And should you, one day do your masters and require participant, I would also volunteer so you can always message me. Or should you have any questions? You're more than welcome to reach out. |
| Participant O: | Ah, thank you so much. I really love to chat. Also, I've been actually waiting, you know, for time, because I have heard like about your study and stuff like that. I just felt like, like you would be the best person to talk about masters and stuff when I do start, hopefully next year. |