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| Transcription: | 13 |
| Date: | 10 June 2024 |
| Participant: | M |
| Researcher: | Elizna Grobler |

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| Researcher: | Record, nevermind. Okay, perfect. Thank you so much for joining my research and for participating in it. I really, really appreciate it. So just to give you a bit of background as to who I am, I am Elizna Schulte. I am currently working as an HR graduate. So basically I'm doing recruitment and other HR administration. And luckily I'm in my second year of masters. So I'm very glad about that. |
| Participant M: | Congrats. |
| Researcher: | Record, nevermind. Okay, perfect. Thank you so much for joining my research and for participating in it. I really, really appreciate it. So just to give you a bit of background as to who I am, I am Elizna Schulte. I am currently working as an HR graduate. So basically I'm doing recruitment and other HR administration. And luckily I'm in my second year of masters. So I'm very glad about that. |
| Participant M: | Um, yes I think I am familiar with that. |
| Researcher: | Okay. Can I just perhaps elaborate a bit more on the definition? |
| Participant M: | Sure, yes please. |
| Researcher: | Perfect. So, basically it is an umbrella term that refers to approaches where theory is combined with practice with a naive purposefully designed curriculum, and it stretches further than traditional education. And it allows the students to receive exposure to real world, real world work environments. And basically examples of this includes internships, work placements, practicums as well as service learning. So this is where you come in. I don't know if you can remember that you had a practicum last year? |
| Participant M: | I can remember it. I just want to recall the exact topic but yes, yes, I can remember. |
| Researcher: | And can you perhaps explain to me what was required of you to do in that practicum? |
| Participant M: | Sure. Um, so if I do remember correctly, it was a group assignment that we had to do. And the content of the module was based on another module, which was [Module Code]. Okay. And what we had to do in that practicum was I'm just trying to recall, it's difficult to recall, especially because I'm doing honours again this year. So the different practicums confused, but, um, I believe we had to do an interview. We had to do an interview with an organisation about, so last year the topic was the new world of work or the new world of work being like, time now up until 2035. Okay, and that we had to do an interview with an organisation based on how they how they view and how they how prepared they are for the new world of work. |
| Researcher: | Okay, no that's very good to hear. If I can summarise and you must say if you agree with me, it basically equipped you with soft skills needed to successfully navigate through the world of work. |
| Participant M: | Yes, yes. |
| Researcher: | And I just want to open my questions here. |
| Participant M: | Sure. |
| Researcher: | Then you say that you learned interviewing skills and that you also learned report writing, but what aspects of the practicum do you believe should be adjusted to align with industry standards? So for example, let's say you are currently doing payroll at your work, I don't know if you're doing it but it might be lacking in the curriculum that the HR students doesn't get exact exposure to the physical and practical things of HR. So what do you think can be adjusted to align with the industry standards from your own experience in the world of work? |
| Participant M: | I think payroll is definitely a big thing. Even now that you've mentioned it, from university level, I don't think we had any exposure to payroll in the HR function. Payroll is a it's a big area of the job. It's something that you focus on and it's something that you work on quite a bit. I myself am in recruitment, but on the other side of things within my colleagues in the HR side, the more operational HR side of things, they work with payroll a lot, and it's not something that we are introduced to. Or even have any exposure to, on university level. And I think another thing would be performance management, because as much as we touch on career management as a whole, when working with HR you do deal with performance management a lot, and how to go about a performance management process, how to be managed, how to manage performance. It's something that you do deal with a lot in the daily or in the working world as an HR practitioner, but it's not something that is introduced or that you work with on a practical side of things from a university theoretical standpoint. |
| Researcher: | Okay, and then I get that and on that note, since you're doing recruitment, I'm not sure what type of recruitment platform are you using currently? |
| Participant M: | We are using direct hire. |
| Researcher: | Okay, so, in terms of that, do you think perhaps the university can include within the practicum perhaps just a training session on how to use recruitment systems or perhaps the best practices that needs to be followed when recruiting people? |
| Participant M: | Um, yes, definitely. Especially because there is elements of the modules that do cover the new world of work, but more on a broader sense, but the university doesn't really touch on the new world of work from an HR perspective and especially in recruitments wherever you go in an organisation most medium to large organisations are using a type of ATS, which is something, even if they are different there are some similarities, which is something that we could have been exposed to more because even though we are taught briefly about HRIS and the requirements it's really given practical exposure on what an HRIS or an ATS is. |
| Researcher: | okay, yeah, I get that. So it's actually good that you mentioned HRIS because I think that's where all of that data of an HR department lies and it's important to know how it works and to keep the information confidential and things like that. |
| Participant M: | Yeah, I agree. |
| Researcher: | Okay, and then, so I'm not sure if you're all familiar with the IOP career path, but basically, after the second years, while in the second year of masters, they need to conduct a internship programme, where they get a bit more exposure to all of the functions of an IOP. Would you say that this form of well the structure can also apply to HR students, and perhaps help HR students to navigate what HR is actually about and to learn what you like and what you don't like? |
| Participant M: | I definitely think so. I think the field of HR could use something similar to that type of structure because once you or let me say the career path of an IOP is so much more defined, and there's a lot more structure put into it, but as an HR practitioner, there isn't much guideline given. Because the route isn't clearly defined. It's like after your undergrad, you can then basically continue working or even after your honours you can like basically just find a job anywhere in HR. But whereas from an IOP perspective, it's sort of a requirements and I think most universities do help you get that placement to get that internship done, which is something that I think HR could greatly benefit from because especially because there are so many different functions within an HR space. Having, I don't know what the word is, but like having a not a mandate, but having a required year internship to do would be beneficial towards helping you discover which pot which areas of HR to actually enjoy doing but it also help you learn a lot more about the different HR areas. After you graduate, it's basically just you left on your own so go and explore the working world but not really given any sort of guidance in terms of what areas to look for an HR a path like that with an internship for definitely help in the HR field. |
| Researcher: | No, I 100% agree with you on that. Just to get back to the practicum I would just like to know, you've mentioned that you've interviewed a lady from your mother's personal connections. So that was a form of contact with the industry or an industry partner, but did the community, ag, did the practicum allow you to engage with your community or not really. |
| Participant M: | At the time, not really. What I do find interesting especially because we are I'm doing my, so last year I did my honours in HR and then this year I'm doing [another degree]. Yeah, I couldn't I couldn't get enough of the university. I had to go back. What I do find interesting is that from my understanding that IOP students had a necessary oh, like it was a part of the requirements to do a community project. Yes. From an HR side last year, there was no requirement to do a community project or anything so which I did notice has changed this year. So even the HR students are also doing the community project but last year when I did the practicum module the community project wasn't a thing. So there wasn't really much interaction with the greater community from an HR side last year. |
| Researcher: | Okay, so that's very interesting. I'm actually very glad to hear that they are implementing the community project to the HR curriculum as well. And it's amazing that you're doing your [degree] as well.  So, I'm glad you brought it up. Are you currently doing your community project as part of your [degree]? |
| Participant M: | Yes, yes, we are. A few weeks ago, we had presented our proposals to the supervisors and then now we are sort of in the action phase, okay. |
| Researcher: | And if I might ask, what is your community project about? |
| Participant M: | So our community project is about career, almost career information and career readiness, but more specifically focused on sort of career readiness and information for high school students, specifically in more disadvantaged areas, so we want to educate the youth, especially because we noticed that in more, excuse me, in more disadvantaged areas, there isn't much education given on the different career paths and possibilities available. So our community project is sort of to run career information workshops. |
| Researcher: | Okay. And on that note, how did you decide that you want to be an HR or in IOP? |
| Participant M: | That's a good question. I think from the beginning, my first goal was to I think, become a lawyer. But that was, I think, I watched too much "Suits" as a child. And then when I entered the university, well, I sort of learned that being a lawyer isn't exactly like suits, to sort of have to rethink and restrategise. But within that first year, especially that first six months, because everything you do is so general, you get a little bit of exposure onto the different areas that you could possibly pursue further. And through that, I realised that I didn't really like accounting. I didn't really like stats or maths, which is funny since at this level you do a lot of stats now. But at the time, it's so those sort of areas didn't call for me and then I did a little bit more research and then I've sort of fell into the industrial psychology field because the university only offers HR at an undergrad level to the HR route and then from there, then we specialise at honours level. |
| Researcher: | Okay. No, that's very interesting, and I just want to draw a comparison between... I just need to gather my thoughts now. If you think about the community project, as well as the HR practicum, do you think that there is a need to connect a bit more with industry partners so that the students can also begin to start building a relationship or their own personal network as well with people in HR and in IOP? |
| Participant M: | Um, yes, yes, I definitely think so. Because, as much as it is... it gives you as much as the community project gives you an opportunity to reach out to your community and practice or execute a project based on one of the HR functions and areas, I think it would be beneficial if there was an opportunity to better connect with industry partners, because that way you are able to start forming a network, meeting individuals who can possibly mentor you where you can possibly learn from, even if you don't necessarily go and work for them immediately. It gives you that opportunity to connect with individuals who are already in your field versus having to, I want to say almost starts from scratch once you've done study and connect on LinkedIn and hopefully be able to match with people in your field. I think having that. Always a given on Slack, community projects less practicum level will help increasing the level of interaction in the placement between us as students and industry partners. |
| Researcher: | Okay, and then on that note, I have one last question for you. So in terms of the industry partners and personal networks that is very important for your career. Do you think the university plays a big role in this? Let me explain. Do you think they can perhaps engage with industry partners as well and perhaps hear who will be interested in partnering with the community project? As you've mentioned, perhaps they can be mentors or things like that? |
| Participant M: | I think so. I think, for example, now, I think last year was SIOPSA we had two sessions, which was a nice initiative from them, and this year, it's nice to see an increase. So we have four SIOPSA sessions this year, which is a nice opportunity to meet and connect with SIOPSA partners and be able to network with them and learn from them and learn from the experience and stories. So it's nice to be able to like sort of have a chat and network with them. But I think from a, I wanna say practicum side, I think the university, it would be a great help and it would be of great benefits if the university could reach out to more industry partners to get involved and sponsor the initiatives. Maybe we can collaborate almost with some of the partners and run initiatives that way. And I also think, because if they make a structure like that available, we'd be able to have a lot more impact on impact and success with the community projects and practicums, as we would be able to learn more from people in the industry, which would be nice collaboration from the theoretical side that our professors and lecturers give us. And then a collaboration with that and the industry partners based on what they actually do, because I feel like that way, the practicum can be more aligned with the structure of what you, what you can expect in the world of work because to link back to that question that you had asked earlier about is the practicum representative of what happens in the working world. I feel like with with that type of collaboration, the industry partners can help better guide the lecturers on how to collaborate and make projects that are better representative, or a better representation of what we can expect and then also help us as students gain actual insights and experience on the HR space within an organisation. |
| Researcher: | I completely agree if I think now, I have seen on LinkedIn a few times that for example the people that their honours in marketing, normally a company would come to the lectures and then the company is involved within the project. And now that you have mentioned it, do you think perhaps, for example, a company can come to the university and say this is our company, we require of the HR students to establish an HR department within our company. Do you think that might also help to connect with the industry partners? |
| Participant M: | Um, yes, definitely. I definitely think that will and it's actually funny just to compare it with where I work now. We are sort of a [type of firm] and within some of what we do, we do like, I want to say, partner with universities to sponsor some of their projects. And that way, some of the people within the accounting space on our team, help collaborate with the managers and with the sorry with the lecturers too. Design the projects and make it so that the work is actually meaningful and representative. So I feel like if an initiative like that was executed from the HR side, it would definitely help us better understand what the world of work would look like. And not just from sort of reading textbooks and reading articles because it's not the same as actually practically getting that experience. |
| Researcher: | Okay, no, thank you so much. I believe this is all questions from my side. And then no, do you have anything else? That you would like to add to this topic? |
| Participant M: | Um, no, no, I think I've, I think I've shared everything that I have on my mind regarding that topic. Yep. |
| Researcher: | Okay, perfect. I'm just going to stop the recording then, I am going to stop it just now. |