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| Participant: | N |
| Researcher: | Elizna Grobler |

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| Researcher: | Me. Okay, hi. Firstly, I just want to thank you for being a participant in my research project. So just to give you a bit of background as to who I am Elizna Schulte. I am an people generalist at work. So I am doing my Masters, and I'm studying as well, and yeah, so thank you. As I said, Before we begin, I would just like to emphasize that this interview is voluntary. However, should there be any question that you are uncomfortable to answer? You are more than welcome to indicate that. Okay, so let's begin first things first, I would just like to know, are you familiar with the term work integrated learning? |
| Participant N: | I am a bit familiar from maybe from a theoretical standpoint, more than how it actually looks. So, yeah, just from my perception, I see sort of work integrated learning as well you are studying to have a bit more practical and more stuff that you're actually doing work and not actually just theory, yeah, I think that's my perception or understanding of it. |
| Researcher: | Yeah, and that's 100% correct. I especially agree with you that you said it's not just theory, it's actually where you get a bit more practical exposure to the work itself. So in essence, my study's vital is the social integration of work, integrated learning from a postgraduate perspective. So that basically means how you have experienced your exposure to work, integrated learning. And I would just like to provide you a like a scholarly definition of it. So basically, it's an umbrella term that approaches, that refers to approaches and strategies where theory is combined with practice within a purpose, purposefully designed curriculum which stretches further than traditional education, and it enables students to receive exposure to real world work environments. So work integrated learning can be anything such as internships, project based learning, service learning, practicums and placements. So for this interview, we are going to focus on your community project of your honors year. So I'm just gonna ask you a few questions about that. So if you can just indicate to me what did your community project require of you to do last year? |
| Participant N: | Okay, so our community project, our group, specifically partnered with career services, and then what we did is, by far, partnering with them. We had, we conducted these sessions where we teach the students how to basically write the CVS and how to Yeah, so it was online meetings where we just taught students how to write their CVs. And then we also attended the career fairs, the career services offered. So at the career fairs, we just told the students about Career Services that ta [specific University] offers, and we just told them about, like, what they can look at so for example, is the ready for work program that the university offers sort of assist with that that gets you ready for work? So yeah, we had to advertise that. But mostly it was about teaching them how to how to write their CVs and how to sort of adjust it to the job that they are applying. |
| Researcher: | Okay, now that sounds very interesting, and what inspired you as a group to partner up with career services? |
| Participant N: | I think that Career Services, I think it's such a great department at the [specific University], and I don't think there's enough sort of highlight or you know, not everyone knows what they offer, so I think that was quite a nice thing. Or what we would also want to do is sort of getting that exposure to actually see what they do. And it was, it was also this actually a recommendation from the professor that we partner with career services. So that was also reason why we went with them. And it was also practically very easy to schedule time and get, you know, those hours that you have to gather. So they also helped a lot with it was easy to get the hours. |
| Researcher: | Okay, no. Thank you so much for sharing that. And my other question would be, how did this community project that you guys did, what come what skills or competencies Have you acquired while participating in this community project? |
| Participant N: | I think that something that was quite nice as presentation skills, because you're joining like with the students of [a specific University] and you want to explain to them easily. So maybe not presentation skills, but sort of talking with people, presenting, actually, I think that was big thing, communicating clearly, explaining to them, making sure they understand everything that we're saying. So that was, I think, still gaining the confidence to talk in such in such a manner to a lot of people. So I think that was good exposure. And then also, what is it sort of, I want to say, like time management skills, because you had to schedule with, for example, we worked with the thesia, she was one of the heads at Career Service. So it was sort of like you had to schedule times. You had to say which sessions you have, volunteers for to attend. So you had to schedule time with her, and then you had to stick to your bed night and come into that session and communicate with her which sessions you are willing to and things like that. So, but sort of that logistics aspect of it organizing, I think it can also fall under that as like sort of organizing and time managing between studies and work and everything, what time you can fit it in and how many sessions even need to do to reach that hours. So I think our planning skills as well. Yeah, so I think communication, presenting and sort of like organising. |
| Researcher: | Okay, no, that makes sense. So in a nutshell, do you think that you have learned a bit more soft skills rather than actual IOP or HR skills. |
| Participant N: | That’s very true. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay, no, perfect. And regarding the community project, how did it allow you to engage with your community? |
| Participant N: | I think what we just want what was quite nice for my side, is when I would do a session with the students, a lot of them would afterwards, okay, maybe not a lot, maybe, like five afterwards, started following me on LinkedIn. Two people actually reached out to me to ask follow up questions. So I think that was quite nice, facilitating that discussion between them, seeing the student that joined the session, how they sort of follow you and talk to you and try to ask for additional advice. So I think that was quite nice in some instances. And then at the Career fair,you gain, you work a lot with the people in the Career Services Department. So that was also nice to learn them, the acting manager, Mrs [Name and Surname], she even was like, participated in my master's research study when I needed a participant. So that was also very nice to know the people in the department specifically and who worked in career services. And, for example, Miss [Name and Surname] as well. She's also so nice. So I think that sort of is how it's not a huge, like a big community, but the few little people and the students connected to that was quite nice. |
| Researcher: | Okay, okay, now that's very interesting. And then a follow up question on that. So as you've mentioned, it allowed you to engage with your community, which are the students and the other university departments. And on that note, how did this practicum or community project allow you to engage with industry partners, such as other IOP related firms or companies actually |
| Participant N: | [answer was very soft and the software I used, did not pick it up] |
| Researcher: | Okay, and do you think it would be beneficial to perhaps have a community project which is structured in a way where you get a bit more exposure to industry partners? |
| Participant N: | Yeah, definitely, I think that would be that would be amazing to get that networking, to be able to more IOPS. Definitely, we did, sorry I forgot to mention at the career fairs, sometimes it's the marketing and HR departments like advertisers, but then we just sort of started talking to HR A bit more and finding out about low powers and it like that? But that was outside, okay, sort of focused around, |
| Researcher: | okay, now that's very interesting, and I would actually like to ask you a follow up question on that you have mentioned networking, so I have conducted a few interviews. So my voice is just going away now, I've conducted a few interviews with a lot of the students, in your honours of last year, and some of them, they had very diverse community projects. But do you believe that having a network allows you to choose a partner better for the community project? If my question makes sense. |
| Participant N: | So sorry, I don’t think I understand. |
| Researcher: | Okay, so let's say, for example. I'm not going to use a real example, but let's say one, one group, decided to partner up with an IOP firm, and then they shadowed a bit. And then they through that firm, they were provided an opportunity to perhaps provide feedback to candidates or things like that. Okay, no wait, let me just rephrase So basically, what I want to know is, do you think having your own personal connection with other people like in IOP firms help you to choose your partner for the community project such as career fair, or perhaps an other company. |
| Participant N: | Yeah, I think, so yeah, because I think they would be able to sort of, I hope I answered this correctly, but I think it would be helpful if you, if you have someone like that to guide you and sort of help you, choose someone that will have, I want to say, like sort of contribute to your growth as well, so Someone can help you on that right path. |
| Researcher: | Okay, yeah, basically, that's correct. And then I also would like to know you are currently working, if I'm not mistaken. Okay, do you believe that the community project contributed to your employability, and if so, please elaborate. |
| Participant N: | I think that, I think maybe to an extent, because we had the training career services provided, we also had training on [unclear]. Okay, that was one aspect theoretical training and the university's CV training was really good, so I think that I still do today or not today, But I just use that as well when I am sort of creative. So I think that that helped as well, first part of the screening and the first part of the process of increasing my own capability, or something like that. |
| Researcher: | Okay, and do you think if the community project perhaps allowed you to learn a bit more practical things about IOP or even HR, do you think that would contribute to your employability a bit more? |
| Participant N: | think that, I think that, looking  back, I would have more IOP  relatedly, exposure in the IOP field already.  So how do I want to say this? So, yes, I think that. Sorry, yeah. So sorry. So let's say the community project provided you with a bit more practical things regarding IOP or HR. Would you think that would contribute to your employability a bit more?  Sorry,so I think that the community project what I wanted to say, but then I got sidetracked. I as students who don't have a body working experience to actually gain support. And if you can get that work experience in the field, in IOP or HR, I think it will contribute so much. |
| Researcher: | Okay, that's very good to hear. And then I would also like to ask you a few things regarding your master's studies. So as I have noted that you guys have like practical training sessions at certain companies. Have you found them to be beneficial experience? |
| Participant N: | Psychometrics. We had psychometrics training, and that was in person, and that was quite nice. I really enjoyed that. We also had psychometrics training, and that was also very nice and interesting, but it was online to follow along with. Wasn't that? Along. I really liked the fact that they did it and that we had that training, but I do think that IOP is maybe a bit more wide than just the psychometric training. So it would have been nice to maybe have Training Management, having companies actually show us how. So while we got psychometrics and training, and I'm very thankful for that, and it was amazing. I still think it's just that one aspect of my opinion, training, so I think a bit more in the different aspects, like look, bit more into different aspects, like conversational development. Okay, no, no, I get that, and that would actually be all of my questions. So is there anything else that you would like to add to the topic? One more thing, Elizna, no problem, okay, sorry, okay, what I would like to add is, I think that this study is very interesting, and I really like that you're sort of thinking about the community projects, and how would you contribute to work integrated learning. So as I understand it, I think it's more than enough. Very good idea. And good idea in the IOP space. |
| Researcher: | Thank you so much. I really appreciate it. And should I don't know what your study topic is for your mini dissertation, but if I meet the requirements, you are more than welcome to use me as a participant as well, just to return the favor. |