##### Researcher

So obviously I've had a look at your profile. So I do know a bit about you, but I guess kind of in your own words, can you tell me about your background in terms of your career to date and your current role, please?

##### Participant 36

Okay. My academic career?

##### Researcher

Yeah.

##### Participant 36

Because after my undergrad - I did all my schooling in [home country] - but after my undergrad, I went to [foreign country] and worked there for four years, before coming back and doing my MBA. During my MBA, I was really inspired by my [current discipline] lecturer, and he suggested, why don't I go and do a PhD? So I did it with him. And then through some conferences I met the head of [discipline] at [current institution], and basically I moved here in [year], and I've been working at [current institution] ever since.

##### Researcher

Excellent. And you said you spent four years in [foreign country] in industry. Obviously, you said you were inspired by a specific lecturer - what was it that, I guess, sort of inspired you to move away from practice and into academia?

##### Participant 36

I mean, I don't know. I just thought, because my supervisor, he's a very famous researcher, and I really looked up to him. And I never really thought of becoming an academic. When I was a kid, I didn't think "I'm going to be a professor". But I also have a personality that likes to do things that are sort of spontaneous.

##### Researcher

OK, that's interesting. And your studies before your PhD, was that based within business or was that a different kind of topic?

##### Participant 36

Yeah, my MBA was in general management, but my bachelor's was in [undergraduate discipline]. Which a lot of people think is the same, but it's not. I know that a lot, in the UK, they have [undergraduate discipline] attached to the business school. But at least at my university, it was definitely a different... it was part of [another faculty], it was concerned with [topics]. It was very much more theory based and not really applied at all. And actually, the funny thing is, I went in as a business student. So in [home country] we have a four year system, and the first year is kind of a common year. So you don't really specialise. You do take at least one subject in the area that you went with. But I also took this [undergraduate discipline] class, and I did very well in it and got an invitation to their honours programme. So I just thought, okay, I want to learn more than just sort of the applied nature of business. But then when I worked for some time, I thought, actually, I need that sort of structure, that framework. And a colleague of mine described it as what we give in our master's classes, even in our undergrad classes, is that picture of the puzzle, right? So by yourself you can try to put together those puzzle pieces and you're going to make a lot of mistakes and whatever. And you can come up and have a very successful career. But what business school does, it offers that vision, that perspective that I didn't really understand until I did my MBA. And then I was like, "oh, that's why that strategy worked". So, it really did put together that bigger perspective.

##### Researcher

Yeah. That's really interesting. Thank you. Definitely. So, yeah, in terms of I guess what you're doing at the moment, obviously, you said in [year] you started at [current institution], so about [years] now. So what are your kind of current, I guess, kind of responsibilities in terms of research, teaching, admin, that kind of thing? How are you kind of dividing up your time?

##### Participant 36

Yeah, I mean, so... you want it now versus when I joined?

##### Researcher

Well, both I guess, because obviously you moved from [previous role] to [current role] in your time there. So I guess it would be interesting to know how that's changed as well. And also, I guess the pandemic may have changed things as well. So if you can tell me about how it's changed from the start, that'd be interesting.

##### Participant 36

Yeah. When I came here, I was still doing my PhD. I was sort of a part time PhD student. I had a lot of publications. I'd been very productive within my PhD and since then as well. So that's why [current institution] sort of took a risk and hired me. And then it was pretty difficult trying to complete my PhD, move to a new country, and also start teaching new classes I'd never taught before. I did have some teaching experience in [home country], but it was very challenging. And also the pay is really... it is not so good at the very beginning of an academic career. It does get better as you go on. But I really struggled for the first two years here. And trying to manage that research stream as well as completing the PhD and doing everything else was very challenging. But after the PhD was finished I felt - and you'll feel it as well soon, hopefully - great relief. But that doesn't mean I work less. I felt a little bit more sure of myself, for sure. But I probably work on average about 6.5 days a week, and that's been the same over the last eight years. I say 6.5 because some weeks I take a day off - not every week. And you think it'll get easier, but... it's also sort of a love of research and a love of just seeking out new perspectives. And sometimes it's through conversations with other people, be that co-authors, friends, family, master's students or my PhD students. I guess the biggest difference between [previous role] and [current role] is... is very, I guess, the service roles become more onerous on your time. So you do get paid more money. And that does help quite a bit in terms of, I mean, I just bought a house which I could never have done on a [previous role] salary. But they're quite onerous. Where before I used to be just an admissions tutor for our [programmes], now I'm actually directing one of them. That's sort of the progression. What else would you like to know?

##### Researcher

So I guess, in [current institution] do you have a workload allocation model or something which kind of defines how much time you're supposed to spend on each thing? I mean, it sounds like, six and a half days a week, you're probably going way over that workload allocation in terms of the time you're spending. But what are the kind of expectations in terms of, obviously, you engage in, you have your directorship role of that programme, you have your teaching responsibilities. And obviously you're also expected to do research. Do you dedicate a majority of your time to any one of those, or does it change throughout the year? What's that kind of situation?

##### Participant 36

We do have the WAM. And it's actually changed this coming year. It's very basic, in a sense that it's broken down into... well, the thing is, the reason why it's changed is because we've created this new pathway, the education pathway, which is for people that have less research interest. Well, not, I shouldn't say that... they're more geared towards education versus research. They still have to do some scholarship. It could be in business education scholarship or writing case studies or stuff like that, right? It's less time spent on pure research. But that's a new thing and that's why we're introducing a new model next year. But our essential model is 100 hours, so we can almost think of it as 100%. Right. Of someone that is a research academic here. I teach generally about 60 hours, lecture hours, right. So it's about two classes. So that brings me up to 60. And my directorship is worth 30 hours. So I'm up to 90. And then I also supervise some PhD students, I am on some committees, and I have research grants and everything. So I'm actually way over as well. But that's basically how we stack it up, right? And it becomes a little bit inequitable when we're hiring these people on the new track that are, I mean, they obviously have to teach more, but how much more do they have to teach is actually a question. And we started at 120. So the hours were spread into 120. Then we went to 150 for the education pathway. And then this last year or maybe two years ago, we went to 200. But then do we really think that they should be teaching 200 or, like, double what a researcher should be doing? So it actually was a very interesting question and actually a very complicated question. I don't really fully understand our new WAM because I don't have that lived experience to talk about. But the general consensus was that we need to be not just measuring research time but also rewarding it. I don't know about rewarding it, hopefully rewarding it in the future. But, yeah, it is just about accounting for people's time. And so before it was sort of a fantasy world that we actually only spend 60 hours on education in a year, which is ridiculous. And then there was no accounting for service outside of formal roles, like service to the academic community or to broader society.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. So in terms of, I guess, sort of movement sort of up the ranks a bit, so going from [previous role] to [current role], you mentioned taking on the director of that programme role was fairly important for that. What other aspects were particularly important for you to get that kind of progression? Was there any kind of certain activity that was kind of prioritised in terms of what was expected of you?

##### Participant 36

Here, it's only research. I mean, the education is like a hygiene check, right? So do you have adequate levels of teaching performance? And they do celebrate exceptional teaching performance, and in the actual documents, they say, you know, not one of these things is more favourable than the other, and they want this balance scorecard. But let me tell you, in practice, it's just about research. Really, in the past few years, I've seen colleagues that have performed well on just the research category and managed to jump up in the promotion scheme. There is some talk about reforming that, but I don't think so. I actually just applied for [the next role up] so I'm waiting for that as well.

##### Researcher

And when you say that research is sort of the priority, the main importance for that kind of progression, is that sort of measured through, you know, publications? Is there a certain kind of research output that is more favoured? Is there any kind of metric that you're supposed to hit? What's the kind of situation there?

##### Participant 36

We use the ABS list religiously. Can I share our promotions framework with you?

##### Researcher

Yeah, of course.

##### Participant 36

I have it somewhere. So, basically, to be confirmed like through your probation at [current institution], you need to show some sort of, some sort of... it will be easier, actually, if I send the document, because then you can really see the difference between the education track and then the research track, because they have very different sort of criteria. The other one is called [research pathway]. But, for example, so I just sent that to you. Where it says lecturer, that's actually for people to be confirmed in that lecturer post, right? Or someone that wants to make the jump from teaching fellow to lecturer, they have to satisfy these criteria. So as you can see, it's not massive, but they do expect three publications in ABS journals, at two to four star, although at least one has to be rated three or more. So, it is pretty strict for, I mean, this is only three years, right? So in three years you have to have three publications and at least one in an international leading journal. And then the other stuff is very descriptive of, it's actually less important. And I think for confirmation, you don't really... I mean, like I said before, it's kind of a hygiene check. If someone is not successful with education or not really being a good academic citizen, there will be procedures in place to support those individuals. But really, for researchers, it is basically that research element. When you get to senior lecturer the minimum is eight publications, but then that ABS two rank disappears. So it needs to be focused on threes, fours, or four stars. And then for a readership it's twelve publications, and there has to be a four or a four star in those twelve publications. And of course, as you can see, it goes down, you have to have successful grant applications, you have to have supervised PhD students, so there's all these roles.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. And I just want to ask as well, you are a director of that master's programme. I guess what I want to know is, is that something that you kind of wanted to do or is that something that you kind of felt you needed to do in terms of sort of getting to the next stage?

##### Participant 36

It was clear that I had to do something. And I helped develop this master's programme that we teach only on the weekends and actually for extra money, the teaching is extra money. So I don't make extra money because I'm directing it. But I thought that programme offers a window into people that are working in practice. I love that sort of external relations role, right? So I thought that rather than manage one of our huge full-time programmes, which, to be honest, it's probably about the same amount of work, but this work is much more, I don't know, it's much closer to my interests. I mean, I teach on both programmes, on the full-time programme and on the executive programme. So, I'm definitely involved with the full-time programme as well. But I do like the fact of this connection to industry. And actually another role that I took on this year is the [local engagement role], so I sit on [local committee] that's is chaired by the [vice principal]. It's basically focused on external engagement, but at the local level, which is pretty interesting with all of the things that we're trying to do as a faculty. And I also took that role on in preparation for my promotion application. I knew that I needed to have something broader and more in tune with the wider faculty, rather than just something within my subject group specifically or even within the school. But again, it sort of has that connection to industry, that connection to the local environment that I like.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. And you mentioned you do really like that kind of external relations aspect of things. I wanted to move on and talk about impact. So we've actually sort of moved into that, talking about that a bit. Is that something, that kind of love for it, is that something that you feel is kind of shared by the business school generally? Is there sort of a focus on external impact that feeds into your role and everyone's kind of attitude?

##### Participant 36

Yeah, I think that, especially, I mean, impact in a broader sense than just research impact. I think there's, sort of, impact is almost turning into a dirty word in a sense that people just think that, oh, my research has to have a wider impact. And that's great. If you have a REF case that you submit, that's fantastic, right? And actually that's even evaluated, you get time off on our workload model to develop cases, research cases or research impact cases. But I think that especially ever since sort of the Black Lives Matter movement and different other movements, they have really impacted the business school. And we've really focused on that widening participation and diversity and inclusion as a primary mandate of the faculty, but also the business school. I think actually the business school is almost leading the way, which might be a little strange for some other institutions where other aspects of the university are sort of leading change. But I do think that, I think our dean has a fantastic vision for diversity and inclusion, for sustainability, for something wider than just that focus on research. I don't know if I made sense there.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Definitely. That's really interesting. And so you talked about kind of the progression, you're going for [role], and you talked about the kind of publication requirements for different promotions. In terms of impact, and impact can be defined in different ways I suppose... obviously there is REF case studies, but there are other forms of impact that aren't so clearly defined which you've touched on, mentioning widening participation and other aspects. I'm just wondering, you know, in that kind of progression route, is there any sort of expectation for you to have engaged in impactful activities with external stakeholders? I'd be interested to know.

##### Participant 36

Yeah, I think that, I mean, we have that impact and innovation aspect of all levels of the promotion scheme, right? And it becomes much more salient as you go up. So as a reader for example, you should have some sort of demonstrable interaction with the wider community. This could be, you know, media reports, or maybe you're on some sort of local council or you present - I mean, I myself presented at [industry association conference] which is a very big [topic] organisation. And that is an essential focus of the promotion scheme, but more at the senior level. I mean, it's fine. A lot of, some of our junior staff have impact as well, but it is something that you sort of develop over time, right? I mean, you're developing your research stream and hopefully over time that becomes more impactful as well.

##### Researcher

Okay, thank you. And I wanted to also ask about the effect of the pandemic on your work because the move to online teaching has been quite significant across a lot of universities and business schools. It's been very different and I'm just basically wondering, how has your kind of work been affected by that? In terms of your priorities and your sort of the main things that you're working on, what you're having to direct the most of your attention to, has that changed in the past year, since March last year?

##### Participant 36

Yeah, in my schedule, I teach solely in the autumn. Because we had this massive increase in student numbers, I actually had to teach three cohorts worth of students. So, the only thing I could do last term was teach. So usually we teach in three hour segments. That includes the lectures and the tutorials. But we made the decision to offer this sort of flexible blended delivery where all our lectures were online. And then we offered tutorials. So I had nine tutorials on one day from 08:00 am to 06:00 pm. It's got to be breaking some sort of law, haha, I don't know. But believe me, it was on a Friday and then the next two days I was basically just dead. I almost didn't even leave my bed. I was so zonked I just watched Netflix for the whole weekend. Maybe that's also about the lockdown as well. But that was just the teaching time. And then I was also preparing for the next week. And then I tried to take the focus off of myself in my tutorials, so my students were constantly presenting stuff or leading discussions of a certain case study, or something like that. And so of course, they wanted to meet me earlier in the week. So every week I had probably 8 hours of office hours, and then trying to manage all of that and then also manage the programme. And I think I probably submitted two papers, but definitely research was not a priority there. But sometimes you have an R&R and you're going to miss out on the publication chance if you don't pay attention to it. It was really a tough time, last term. This term is a little bit different. I'm really catching up on a lot of my service responsibilities in terms of my [local engagement role], but also I've really been catching up with my research as well.

##### Researcher

That's interesting. And, obviously, you said you're applying for the [next role up] and you're thinking about the future, I guess. A bit of a two parter question. A, on a longer term basis, what's your kind of aspiration, where would you like to get to in terms of your kind of career and where you want to be? And B, do you sort of have, like, a strategy in mind for how you would go about getting there in terms of what you might have to prioritise, what you might have to maybe surrender or sacrifice or however you may see it? In terms of, you wear a lot of different hats, you have lots of different aspects to your job, the sort of, the [local engagement role], teaching, research, programme directorship, there's a lot of different facets to that kind of role. And you mentioned kind of the workload, working six and a half days a week, is something that you have to do at the moment. I'm basically just wondering, what kind of strategy, how do you kind of navigate this environment with that kind of intense workload with regards to future ambitions and aspirations?

##### Participant 36

Okay, so, how I kind of keep sane is by having lots of video calls and working with co-authors. Sometimes we even have Teams or Zoom on while we're working on a paper together. I use Dropbox paper quite a bit, and in that way, it doesn't seem so lonely. So, they're on Zoom. But then I am working on the paper and then we can go back and forth between, you know, what about this sentence or something like that. I have two screens, that's what I'm pointing to. I think that social interaction, that's really what I'm missing. The thing is, before, in [city], house prices are insane. And before I had a very small one room apartment, a one room flat. And that was fine because I basically almost lived at the office. We have a very beautiful building in central [city] and, you know, free heat, free electricity, haha, all of that stuff. And you get to see all kinds of people, even on the weekends. Often my PhD students are there. And so we'll work on projects and stuff in my office. I also have access to other people's offices. So sometimes I'll just open some of them so students can work there - PhD students. But, yeah, so, I really miss that aspect, the social aspect. And I tried to sort of supplement that with distance meetings. But, yeah, you're talking about how to sort of position myself for promotion or my "end game". But it's actually changed since I've been here. I thought I might be here for maybe two years, maybe three years. But I think it did change, and I thought it was just a very interesting place to be. Like the city. But also my department has really changed a lot. And I think we have a really great group of colleagues. And we don't really, I mean, there's friendly competition, I think. But we're more collegial than that. Whenever someone gets a publication, we always pop some bubbles and celebrate. Yeah, I think that's really important for that. In terms of where I think I'm concerned, I think that probably within [years], I'll be a professor. Yeah, [current institution] is really conservative because they really don't look kindly on double jumps, where you sort of skip one thing. So, I mean, right now, I probably have enough for the first level of professor - we have three levels. That document tells you what the differences are. But there's level one and I probably have enough for that. But it's sort of risky. And then [current institution] has this sort of antiquated notion that if you are unsuccessful with a promotion, you can't apply next year. And two years of your life, it basically, yeah, I just don't... anyways. The biggest thing for me, I believe, is getting that four star, because that's really what you need to be very certain that you get a professorship, a chair. But, I think I check a lot of the other boxes, if not double check. But it's very difficult to publish in a four star journal, but that's the bar that is being set unofficially. If you look at the regulations, it doesn't say that, but that is what it is. But I also am of the view that I don't want to just focus on promotion and on the REF. I do research because I like it, I'm interested in things, and I take up opportunities where I can, right? And as you can see, I have some publications in lower ranked journals, and, you know what? I'm so proud of those. So if someone were to ask me - I just published a perspectives paper on [topic] in [journal] which is an ABS two - and if someone were to ask me, I'd say, well, first of all, it was an invited paper. And second of all, I wanted to get something out on [topic] early because I wanted to help shape the initial conversations about how that is impacting our field. And I'm sorry, the [example four star journal] or any kind of other four star journal, it's just not going to offer those kind of opportunities to someone like me. I'm not saying they don't do it, but it's very much about who you know, right? And I'm just not there in my career to develop those networks to that extent. The other thing, I know we're almost out of time, is about networks. The world works on networks and academia even more so. Because it really is about who you know. And this is not just about the UK. This is about the global network. I mean, if you're more in management, management is a much bigger, bigger community. But [current discipline] is quite, well, it's still big, but it's very focused. And so, we just know, we read other people's research, and we know who's doing what. And sometimes you read a four star paper by a really significant scholar, and you're like, how did this get published? Because if I submitted that, it would definitely get rejected. So, I don't say that it's an unfair game, I don't think that's true. I do think that academia in business is based on merits, and it's as close to a meritocracy as possible, but it is about finding the right co-authors to achieve those higher level publications and sort of secure your promotion to professor.

##### Researcher

Okay. Yeah. That's really interesting. Thank you. I think in terms of my questioning, that's probably everything I want to cover, which is good, because we've made good time. So I won't ask you any more questions or keep you any longer, unless there's anything else off top of your head you can think of that you might want to add that you think is interesting or that I haven't asked about that might be relevant in this kind of environment and from your experiences. It's okay if not, but if there's anything at all that you might want to get off your chest or anything?

##### Participant 36

Yeah, I mean, obviously business schools are under a lot of pressure, especially through this pandemic, to basically fund the rest of the university that is really suffering, right? And I think some of the things we've talked about today, I'm a little bit concerned for how the balance between teaching, research and service will change going forward, because I do see that there's more pressure on us to do much more with teaching. And even with this additional teaching track, the education pathway, it's in the back of my mind that I think business schools in general have to be very careful not to become service faculties, in terms of just a money-maker - and usually of international students, at least at [current institution]. And so I do think that we need to keep our focus also on the research and not be... I don't know.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that makes sense.

##### Participant 36

Haha, I can't think of the word.

##### Researcher

Yeah, I understand what you mean. That's really important as well. And thank you for sharing that final comment. I really appreciate that. It's all been very useful. In that case, I'm happy to finish there. I don't have any other questions, and I don't want to keep you any longer, so I'll stop the recording.