##### Researcher

Okay. So just to get started then as a first question, obviously I've kind of read your profile when I've had a little look at your kind of publications and your description and stuff on the website. But I want to kind of hear, in your own words, just sort of tell me about yourself in terms of your background, your career to date and your current role, please?

##### Participant 48

Yeah, I'm originally from [home country] and I did a PhD at a business school in [home country]. So before that I had a career in [sector]. So I got a job here as a [role] at the school after I graduated from my PhD studies. And that's how I got here. So, a little bit less than twelve years ago. I started out as a [role] and then I became a [role] and now I'm a [current role]. And I'm also picking up some admin role which is director of programmes at my department in the school. And director of programmes means I basically am the kind of guy who sort of like, looks at everything. So we have 15 programmes as a school ranging from MBA to EMBA and all the way to PhD and a whole bunch of Master's, for example. And every one of these programmes has a director, but I sort of like, I oversee them. So just in case they have any problems coordinating or there anything like rules to follow, how to make sure that everybody is on the same page, that sort of thing. So compliance with regulations, or, you know, where needed, coordinated actions. I will be involved. So let's say Covid-19, we have to have some sort of coordinated plan of how teaching will be delivered across the programmes. So I will work in those meetings. So in fact, I'm late today partly because of one of those meetings. So that is my role. As far as discipline, my discipline is [management sub-discipline]. So I did a [management sub-discipline] PhD. But on the other hand, actually a lot of my research is more general about [area], more general on that sort of front. So that kind of roughly describes what I'm doing in terms of teaching. I teach [management sub-disciplines]. So sort of almost like mapping onto my research areas. So that's briefly, a brief introduction about what I'm doing.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. Thank you. I was actually going to ask about your discipline because obviously you are a [role in management sub-disciplines], but I would say you have a very kind of multidisciplinary profile, like your research profile, you publish in lots of different kind of areas. Would you kind of define yourself as a [management sub-discipline] scholar or more kind of like, I don't know, do you choose not to kind of label yourself?

##### Participant 48

Yeah, I would like to call myself more like management science or behavioural science. But then in business schools, they do not have something like that. Some business schools have [another sub-discipline] department, but not all of them. And some of the [another sub-discipline] departments in business schools are actually more like something else, but then some have them in which I can sit comfortably. But a lot of business schools might just have a [management sub-discipline] department and I would find myself just happening to be in there because that is the other side of my research. Let's say even when I'm looking at [another sub-discipline] topics, my research questions are usually related to [management sub-discipline] in some kind of remote way. When I go to conferences, when I show up, people usually think that I'm from [management sub-discipline] anyway. So that's how it is. But then you're right. So actually I publish in very different places. And I would like to say actually I'm very lucky in working in this department because in this department they are a little bit more relaxed in terms of how you position yourself. Basically, the promotion criteria will be applied across the board. As long as you publish in a top journal or kind of decent enough journal, then they give you credit. And usually that's not very, you know, there won't be a question about, like, are you publishing specifically in this field, that sort of thing. And that really fits my kind of research interests very well. So I find that I am kind of like... and also the people I learned from over the years, this sort of approach sort of got passed on to me. Yeah.

##### Researcher

Okay. That's really interesting. Thank you. Could you tell me a little bit about sort of why you entered academia as a career? Obviously, like you said, you did a PhD. Was that kind of with a view to then become an academic? And if so, why was that your kind of choice of career?

##### Participant 48

That's a good point. So, I got into a PhD in a business school, really rather accidentally. So originally I was in [sector], I was a freelance writer in [home country] for some years. I like writing. So therefore I got into that field. For a while, I was working in a business school in the case writing unit in that business school. So as a case writer, business case writer. So they hired me not because I know anything about business, but only because I used to be a writer. And then I could write bits, so they hired me because I could write that sort of stuff for professors. I worked with professors, they gave me a brief, ideas, and then I did a bit of research in like business press, popular press, the kind of research that you need not for your kind of work, but more like writing a case study. And then I would write something up. So I got to know some [management sub-discipline] professors along the way and then we chatted and they found out my background and found that I may be academically suited for a research degree in that kind of thing. So therefore I went on to pursue a PhD in a business school. And as for why [management sub-discipline], I kind of like, at that point I think the professors that I talked to most were [management sub-discipline] professors. But then on the other hand I think I sort of looked at a few disciplines and I found that [management sub-discipline] seems to be the most fun. And then I went into that. Also I don't like a rather kind of structured sort of work life. I don't like nine to five kind of office life. I want flexible working hours. So therefore I thought, you know, if you're an academic you teach, but otherwise you can do things in hours that you like. And it turns out to be actually like, I don't need to follow any fixed working hours, because every hour is a working hour in a sense. I'm so busy. So I work on Sundays. Okay. So actually indeed, so I managed to achieve my goal of having flexible hours because basically I work all the time. So it's very flexible, haha. So, they were the motivations. So that was almost like a little bit, you know, fortuitous. It just happened. But I kind of enjoy academic life now because originally I thought it would be a job that would appeal to me in terms of flexible working hours. I can juggle it with my hobbies. But as it turns out, it is also intellectually very fulfilling. So actually as an academic I have three areas of life, work life - teaching, research, and administration. So teaching and research are the must do kind of stuff. And I like both. And also along the way I learned to conduct myself in front of a group of people who sometimes can be very challenging. And I managed to do that as a researcher when I present at conferences and as a teacher when I present in lectures to MBA students. So I learned a lot from that. And I do find a lot of fulfilment in that kind of work experience. And then as an administrator I also get to discover that I have some capability in terms of like, organising people, getting people to work with each other, working with people and making projects work within an organisation. So I also have learned a lot from that and enjoy my work. So therefore it has been surprisingly fulfilling. So it started out as like, okay, so I'll do this so that I can earn my dough on one hand and will not be bound by 9 to 5 working hours. But it turns out to be much better than that.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. You mentioned sort of like the flexibility aspect of it. With that kind of flexibility, do you feel like you have a lot of autonomy in what you do, sort of deciding what you're working on at a specific time, deciding what kind of research projects you're going to work on, deciding what you're going to teach? Or is it perhaps more structured than that? What's your kind of experience of that, the kind of autonomy side?

##### Participant 48

Well, I do not have complete freedom in choosing what I want to teach, although the kind of subjects that I teach now, let's say, especially nowadays, all the courses I teach, I kind of volunteered to teach them myself. And even kind of created them for the programmes that I'm teaching in. But if you ask whether I can decide what I want to teach, yes, the subjects I teach now, most of them are subjects that I voluntarily asked to teach and so that's good. In the past I just did some introduction to [management sub-discipline] courses which are like, somebody needs to do that. So why don't you do that sort of thing. Now, as for research, so research projects, really like, you either have the research question generated by yourself or like a potential co author or a PhD student comes to you and then asks you, hey, I want to do this, could we work on that together? I get a lot of my research projects in those ways. So that is somebody who has some ideas and somebody has been working on something and then they talk to me and then we work on that together and help each other and we collaborate. So as for whether I get to choose those projects, well, of course I wouldn't take up a project unless I find the research questions to be interesting or I try to move the research questions in a way to make it interesting to me. In that sense, I get to choose the way I approach it.

##### Researcher

And in terms of the admin role that you take on as well, the director of programmes, is that something that you volunteered for and you were actively wanting to do? Or was that something you took on because you sort of felt, I kind of need to do something in the kind of admin side of things.

##### Participant 48

I didn't suddenly just raise my hand and say I want to become the director of programmes or something like that. So it's more like, the dean asked me. So I got invited to do this job. In academia, quite a few of my colleagues would work on things like this, but I feel that, I think this organisation has treated me really well, so I think I should try to do something to kind of reciprocate. On the other hand, I think this is a nice challenge, so I'd like to see it as a really nice challenge and which kind of allows me to learn a lot. And I find this kind of thing is very fulfilling. At the end of day, even though the meetings really creep up on you, really, I can easily have like three or four admin meetings a day these days... they're tiring. They consume your time and effort. But I learned a lot from that. I could say no, definitely. I could say no, but then I decided not to and I have not regretted it yet. Does that answer your question?

##### Researcher

Yeah, absolutely. That's very interesting. So it sounds like you do quite a lot of teaching. You also have multiple projects going on at the same time. You have quite a high responsibility admin role where you're sort of overseeing a lot of other members of staff. Do you generally find that your workload is sort of manageable or do you sometimes feel like it's slightly overwhelming? What is your kind of experience of your workload with different areas of your job?

##### Participant 48

My workload is heavy, but it's not overwhelming. It's just that I work all the time, or most of the time. I think I get pretty stressed. I can get pretty stressed. But I never feel like I can't stand it anymore. However much I get stressed, I actually like all this stuff that I'm doing. So actually, let's say, research for example. So, it's terrible, you know? You prepare a paper with people and then you send it to a journal and then they just come back to you with five pages of criticisms and then a rejection or sometimes a heavy revise and resubmit. And it's really very bad. But however, I kind of like it. Not that I kind of like, that I like this kind of stuff, but I like the whole process of creating knowledge, finding out about how humans behave, for example. And with teaching nowadays, it can get me very stressed. But then all of the stuff I have already prepared. So every time it's like small tweaks here and there and try to do things a little bit better every time. It's okay. It's actually a lot of work, but I never think that it's too much. But I will say my family has suffered. So I have my wife and two sons. They probably would like me to spend more time with them. But on the other hand, apart from that, I do not find that this is not manageable. So it's a very busy life, but it's not an unmanageable life and it's not something that I feel very adverse to.

##### Researcher

And in terms of managing that workload, do you find generally that it sort of can change throughout the year? So, for example, you might have a certain semester or a term that is really sort of teaching heavy and then after that you might have a few months where you can focus on research more and then perhaps you have times where the admin stuff kind of increases... is it kind of like a rhythm like that or is it generally all at the same time?

##### Participant 48

Yeah, so, for example, I have no teaching in the first term of the academic year. So the first term, the term from October to December, I have no teaching. So therefore I could do a bit more research and a bit more, well, admin, I can't choose the workload for that. If these meetings have to happen, they have to happen. But then I can spend more time on research. In the past term, that is from January to March, I had quite a bit of teaching, most of my teaching load is happening in that term and I really was quite snowed under. But that's it. So I kind of try to bite the bullet and survive. And then the term that is coming up - that is from late April to early June - I only need to teach one course. That's manageable. More than manageable, actually. I haven't started preparing for that yet. You've remind me to do that, haha. So it is okay. So there's a rhythm and I certainly would try to advise all research faculty at least to try to arrange their teaching in such a way so that they have at least one term that is completely free of teaching. And then they have one term in which all their teaching is concentrated, if not all then most.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. Thank you. You mentioned something earlier on about kind of the promotion criteria and you talked about sort of like the identification of really successful publications. How does the business school kind of define the quality of a publication?

##### Participant 48

That's a very good question. I don't know. The reason is I am not in the decision making body that decides on the list of publications. So we do have this kind of thing where we have a list of publications that are considered within the promotion criteria. And it's just a number of counts. How many have you published in that list? And some of the input to that would have come from Financial Times, the FT50, or the UTD list. And these lists inform, but we never blindly follow any single external list, I think. So it's like, is that journal considered really top in terms of the amount of people who publish in them who really know things about the field... I think that's how it works. So at the end, the list is pretty exclusive. Most of the journals in this list you would not deny that they are really good. And they are considered to be really good. But on the other hand, the best judge of this kind of journal for certain subject groups are the subject group people. So if they and their colleagues decided that this should be good enough, who are we to sort of dispute that? So we do have a few of those, but not many. I mean, most of the journals on that list are qualified top journals.

##### Researcher

Okay. That's really interesting. Thank you. So I guess kind of on the topic of the sort of criteria for promotion and kind of progression, obviously being twelve years in, and like you said, you've gone through promotion rounds, kind of going up those stages. In your experience, what was I guess the kind of most important thing for you to have done to have kind of gone through those ranks? And if I may ask, did you have a specific kind of strategy for how you kind of were planning to achieve those things to get into the next stage of your career?

##### Participant 48

Yeah, so it's not just research. So in terms of our school, there is some difference in terms of the nature between getting tenured and then the promotion runs. So the university-level promotion runs are done in a more elaborate way than the one where you are moved up from untenured to tenured. Just for your reference. In any case, I think in all these rounds, the most important area of criteria was research, which is like how many papers you have been publishing, that sort of thing. And are they good? Do people think that they're good? And they will get referees to kind of write something about how good those papers are. But however, especially for promotion to reader or professor, teaching and admin are very important. Teaching or service, what they call service, I guess. So, therefore you have to teach well enough and sort of like, establish that your teaching evaluations are good. You teach a good number of subjects, that sort of thing. And then you also have to have contributed to the organisation. I do all those things probably because I want to get promoted. I mean. Before you sort of get to a certain point, you do all of this partly to learn, in my case partly also because that really helps in the promotion criteria. So you need all of that. And you would know that the committees which decide, which make a decision on your promotion, they look at all fields, that is research, teaching and admin. But research is usually the most important. It takes up like 60% of the mark. They have a mark for everything and it's something like that. Okay. So something like that. The proportion changes from year to year sometimes but usually research takes up the biggest chunk for the research track faculty - so that is the regular faculty. Yeah. So does this answer your question?

##### Researcher

Absolutely, yeah. That's really interesting. Thank you. And I guess in terms of obviously being at [current institution] for about twelve years you've had the experience at multiple kind of levels of progression. Where you are now are the expectations on you kind of as, kind of strict or have they kind of I guess become less specific and more general? How do you generally feel about how your kind of performance is measured?

##### Participant 48

It's less specific and more general. So I think the motivation becomes more intrinsic than extrinsic. So in the past you have this carrot before you and a stick. Because if you don't do this or that then you may be kicked out. But then after a certain point you kind of have internalised everything. And now I sort of even feel that, I feel a sense of belonging to the organisation, where I think that this is just the kind of stuff that I should do. But on the other hand different colleagues will have very different opinions on that. By the way, you asked about, do I have a choice in what I want to teach? No I don't. I do mostly. I do mostly. But I do not have a choice in how much I teach. That is, I have to teach up to so many hours. Okay. This is my contractual obligation. So I have to teach 70 hours. That's not negotiable. If I am in deficit, then people will come after me. I do find that different colleagues may have different opinions on that. Personally, I feel that I need to contribute in my capacity.

##### Researcher

Okay, thank you. That's really interesting. I want to talk about something slightly different now which is kind of the idea of impact. So when I say impact, that can take loads of different definitions but when I say impact in this context, I mean sort of like engaging with external stakeholders and making a difference to society or particular organisations or whatever. So in terms of that kind of side of impact, what kind of attitude does the business school take towards those kind of activities? And is that something that you feel is kind of filtered down to your role? Do you feel like you are expected to kind of be mindful about impact when you're carrying out your work, whether that be through research or teaching? I'd be interested to know if that's something that kind of is in the culture of the business school.

##### Participant 48

Yeah, I think that is in the culture of the business school. So we are supposed to do things that will have an impact and I see that coming in different ways. So in terms of teaching, when I teach, for example, MBA or EMBA or executive education, or even like introductory management programmes, I do feel that I am making an impact in terms of sharing my views, sharing some of my understandings with all of these people who will become managers, or who will go further up in their career ladders as managers. And this is one way impact is being implemented. On the other hand, in terms of my research, I think what happens is that we do have this kind of publicising sort of process. So that is, if I have done some research our media team will talk to me and try to see what sort of insights the research will have in terms of practical implications. And then we try to do something which can range from like, issuing a press release or arranging press interviews. So to talk about what my research implies. And often these are fun. And we also do videos, even, some short videos. So that is one way of conveying the impact. And also I write a column for this magazine, run by [university]. And then I write a column and I often have to try very hard to find a topic. I manage to get my thoughts together to sort of see what I can share with managers more directly. And so it is in all these different ways that I feel that I am sort of doing work that will have an impact. And we do see that as something very important.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's really interesting. And on your profile I read about you've done a few consultancy projects for [governing body], is that correct?

##### Participant 48

Yeah. A few years ago, I think, I did work for them on [topics].

##### Researcher

And from your kind of own perspective, is that something that you would class as like an impact activity, or is that something would you class that more as kind of research or service or, how would you kind of classify that?

##### Participant 48

I think that's more like an impact activity because we didn't kind of try write a paper out of it. By the way, last year also, I got these occasional calls from different bodies, so these guys at the [independent body], they just asked me to have a chat on [topic]. And then they published a report afterwards and then they listed me as one of the expert advisors or something like that. So this also happened and this also, of course, I would classify as an impact activity. And I get these occasionally.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's really interesting. And we talked about impact and you said the way that you see impact is... a big part of that is the kind of impact through education, the kind of more, I guess you could call it the kind of hidden impact or more indirect impact, you know, impacting future managers who are going to change their management practise based on their teaching experiences. Obviously, impact has been amplified in recent years because of the REF impact case studies, for example, which focus on particular projects that have engaged with practitioners. How do you feel impact through education compares to this?

##### Participant 48

That's a very good point. So for example, we have an executive education branch and some of my colleagues really work a lot on those executive education programmes. I do work on some of them, but not as much as some other colleagues of mine. And we often run this executive education programme for companies. So we'll have the managers come over - pre Covid-19 - to here, where we give them three days of management programmes. So something like that for a few days, that is certainly impact. Right? I mean, we are helping a company to kind of rethink their way of running their business. I don't know whether that would count as one of those impact cases. Probably not. So some of the teaching that we have done could have very significant impact. But I'm not sure how the REF case thing really works. But it probably wouldn't count, an executive education programme. Or it may, I don't know. But if it doesn't, then it is slightly unfortunate. And then in general, most of our programmes are really for managers. They take a year off to do our programmes. So of course, we are kind of like sharing some insights with these managers who may continue on to have very successful careers. So then, yeah, actually delivering impacts, so, I mean, if there is some way for REF to sort of see that there can be an impact there, then that would be great. On the other hand, REF is for research, right? So if you deliver impactful teaching, but not research, then why should the REF count it? So maybe they should have separate metrics for business school impact or academic impact, that is not related to research, that is more related to teaching or teaching related activities. But that is a different kind of conversation, I guess.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's really interesting. Thank you. So, just to tie up that kind of impact conversation, those things you've done, the [governing body] projects, the writing in the column for that magazine, is that stuff sort of regarded by the business school as being important things that would perhaps count towards... would that sort of stuff contribute to your progression, or is that stuff not sort of as highly regarded as kind of the teaching and the research stuff that we talked about? What's your kind of perspective on that?

##### Participant 48

Yeah. So I think they would be appreciated, but whether they would really like clinch the deal, I doubt it. So at the end of the day, it's really about whether you have done... you know, after all, we are scholars and we take our scholarship seriously. So therefore, at the end of the day, writing articles, being in the press and doing Twitter, whatever, doesn't count as much as publishing a really good and rigorous scientific article in a good journal, I think. And teaching is very important because teaching is really like, really what we do. So this is what we do. As you say, teaching at the end of the day is a way of conveying impact. It's a very effective way of conveying impact. So therefore we also look at teaching very highly. But most importantly for the promotion process, I think research is of paramount importance for the regular faculty. We have a teaching track which is different. So for the regular faculty, research is most important, next is teaching, and then a bit of organisational service. And on top of that, whatever you do for the press, whatever you do on the side to disseminate knowledge, certainly people will give you credit for that. That may not be a key driver for promotion, though. A nice-to-have, basically.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's really interesting. So I have one more thing I want to talk about, which we very briefly touched on earlier on. When you talked about sort of your admin role in terms of having to sort of have contingency plans for programmes because of the effects of Covid-19... I'm wondering, on the topic of the pandemic and stuff, obviously it's changed the way we've all worked majorly. But in terms of your kind of specific role, have you had to kind of change anything about your work in terms of, like, have you had to take on more teaching? Have you had to kind of prioritise certain things over others? Have you had to let some research projects sort of go to the side a little bit? How has the pandemic affected your own priorities and your kind of working patterns and stuff?

##### Participant 48

I don't think really I have... if anything I only have more of each of these things. So teaching is about the same as before, because teaching is highly quantifiable. So if I'm going to teach a twelve hour course then I'm going to teach a twelve hour course. Whether that is in person, whether it's during Covid-19 or not, I still have to teach that twelve hour course. So no difference. In terms of research, I think I'm even getting a few more projects than I used to. But maybe it's because I got to know more people nowadays. So the point is, I'm getting more busy with research, and then also more busy with admin. So in terms of admin, the workload has certainly increased. So we now have these meetings. I mean, we used to have meetings about day to day things. So is this programme okay? Is that programme okay? But now on top of that, we have to think, so to what extent are we going to move online and do blended teaching, even if Covid-19 is over? So there's a lot more of that. And Zoom meetings or Teams meetings, you can do them back-to-back. You don't have breathing space if you do not schedule that in. If you have forgotten about that. You can have 6 hours straight of nonstop meetings. I never got myself in such a situation, fortunately. But like in the past you always would be able to slot in like five minutes of like coffee time, but now it's like, you know, three to four, stop, and then the next one. And that is making me more busy. But that doesn't make me prioritise one thing over another in a way that I wouldn't have done pre Covid-19.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. And you mentioned the kind of blended learning, the move to online learning. Just as a sort of final question, did you find that you had to kind of learn lots of different kind of new skills to be able to engage in the online learning? And if so, did that take up a significant amount of time that you perhaps wouldn't have sort of given had it not been that way? In terms of teaching prep.

##### Participant 48

I have learned quite a bit of new skills. I mean, you know, faculty, they really are kind of slightly, they are from the last century... like me. So I have to spend time to pick up stuff. But it wasn't like an enormous amount of time. It's just some time, and I sort of got to learn about it as I moved along. It was not like a serious drain of time and effort. I wouldn't say it that way. But over the course of the past year, I think we have all picked up a lot. But that's fine. So it's not like it has been really completely overwhelming. It's certainly not like that. I feel that life has become much more, not overwhelmed, but much more crammed, much more like busy and much more of a headache. But in no sense do I feel that I can't stand it anymore, that sort of thing. So I just feel much more like, you know, my schedule is completely filled and yes, I'm at home all the day, that sort of feeling... which is not very healthy in terms of physical health. But otherwise, I think, yeah, that's how I would describe it. More busy but not unmanageable. Much more busy but not unmanageable.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. Thank you for sharing that. I think in terms of my sort of direct questioning, that is everything I wanted to ask. So I'm happy to kind of finish things there. Unless there's anything you can think of that you think might be relevant to this kind of area that you haven't had a chance to talk about, that I might not have asked? If not, that's absolutely fine. But if you have a final thought?

##### Participant 48

Not really. So I think, however, you have touched on some very nice questions about the life of an academic in a business school, so yeah, I hope what I said makes some sense.

##### Researcher

Absolutely, it's been a very useful interview. I've got a huge page of notes which is always a really good sign for a good interview, so. Yeah, thank you for that. In that case, I'm happy to wrap up there then and finish and let you get on to the next thing that you have planned for the day.

##### Participant 48

Yeah, I have to meet a group of students on a consulting project, so yeah. So like, you have groups of students working for real companies solving their problems. So when I help students do that or when I work with programmes on making those projects work, then it is also a way of delivering impact. It's a very organised and efficient way of delivering impact. So I think you have raised some good points in terms of, you know, our regular teaching already delivers a lot of impact. And the REF impact thing is almost like, you know, the kind of really good stories on top of all of this bread and butter sort of impact. It's very nice of you to raise this angle.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting and it's given me a lot to think about as well for my own research. It's sort of, I guess an emerging perspective, it's a really interesting perspective, so yeah, thank you. I appreciate your feedback on my questions as well. It's great to hear that you found the interview good and everything, so. Yeah, thank you, I appreciate that.

##### Participant 48

Thank you very much for this opportunity, it's been nice talking to you and sharing some of these views.

##### Researcher

Thank you. Thank you for sharing your experiences with me, I really appreciate it. I think that's everything, so I'll let you go, but thank you very much for your time and obviously best of luck with everything for the future for you as well.

##### Participant 48

And all the best for your research and your studies as well. I hope that your dissertation will go well and your future afterwards as well. Very nice to talk to you.

##### Researcher

Thank you. Lovely to meet you. Take care. Thank you. Bye

##### Participant 48

Have a good day. Bye.