

## **Occupational limbo, transitional liminality and permanent liminality: New conceptual distinctions**

*Matthew Bamber, Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson and John McCormack*

### **Abstract**

This article contributes new theoretical perspectives and empirical findings to the conceptualisation of occupational liminality. Here, we posit ‘occupational limbo’ as a state distinct from both transitional and permanent liminality; an important analytic distinction in better understanding occupational experiences. In its anthropological sense, liminality refers to a state of being betwixt and between; it is temporary and transitional. Permanent liminality refers to a state of being neither-this-nor-that, or both-this-and-that. We extend this framework in proposing a conceptualisation of occupational limbo as *always-this-and-never-that*, where *this* is less desirable than *that*. Based on interviews with 51 teaching-only staff at 20 research-intensive ‘Russell Group’ universities in the United Kingdom, the findings highlight some challenging occupational experiences. Interviewees reported feeling ‘locked-in’ to an uncomfortable state by a set of structural and social barriers often perceived as insurmountable. Teaching-only staff were found to engage in negative and often self-depreciatory identity talk that highlighted a felt inability to cross the limen to the elevated status of ‘proper academics’. The research findings and the new conceptual framework provide analytic insights with wider application to other occupational spheres, and can thus enhance the understanding not just of teaching-only staff and academics, but also of other workers and managers.

### **Keywords**

Academic careers, liminality, limbo organisational theory, work environment

## Introduction

The purpose of this article is to analyse and extend current understandings of the concept of liminality, originally utilised in anthropology in relation to *rites of passage* (Van Gennep, 1960). Organisation studies often employed a conceptualisation of liminality as a temporary condition, where organisational structures and systems are ‘suspended’ (e.g. Powley, 2009; Sturdy, Schwarz and Spicer, 2006). Recently, researchers have questioned whether liminality can be construed as a permanent condition (e.g. Ybema, Beech and Ellis, 2011; Ellis and Ybema, 2010), where life-spheres are ‘indeterminate and ambiguous’ (Johnsen and Sorensen, 2015: 323), and states of temporality and transition have become institutionalised (Szokolczai, 2000; Thomassen, 2012). In some of this literature, however, there is conceptual confusion, with some researchers conflating liminality with limbo. Here, we offer a conceptualisation of occupational ‘limbo’ as distinct from forms of transitional and permanent liminality, and show how this is important in investigating the experiences of workers who feel ‘locked-in’ to a marginalised occupational identity (e.g. Allen-Collinson, 2003; 2007). This is uncharted territory in the literature. We use teaching-only (TO) staff within academia as the empirical context to highlight why the conflation of these terms can oversimplify the considerable challenges faced by those in limbo situations, not just in academia, but also more widely. The concept of limbo, we argue – when used rigorously – can be analytically informative in organisation studies research. We commence with a brief overview of liminality, for those unfamiliar with this concept.

Van Gennep’s (1960) conceptualisation of *rites of passage* has been widely employed to understand occupational lifeworlds, in describing a person’s passage from one identity state to another as comprising three phases: separation; transition (liminality); incorporation (investiture). Van Gennep (1960: 21) refers to pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal phases, thus inferring a ‘before’ and ‘after’ state (Beech, 2011) as the individual shifts from one state

to another. Liminality thus connotes a transitional state, usually bounded in space and time, and is therefore often described as a period of ‘inbetweenness’, ambiguity and uncertainty (Beech, 2011; Turner, 1982; Van Gennep, 1960). As such, it can be painful, unsettling and disruptive (Swan, Scarbrough and Ziebro, 2016; Hoyer and Steyaert, 2015; Beech, 2011).

One of the complexities of liminality, however, is that it can also encourage productivity and creativity, bring about new structures and relationships, and provide a sense of freedom (e.g. Shortt, 2015; Cunha, Cabral-Cardoso and Clegg, 2008; Thomas and Hassenkamp, 2008; Tempest, Starkey and Ennew, 2007). Here, it is argued, the liminal person is ‘provisionally *liberated* from structural and social responsibility’ (Johnsen and Sorensen, 2015: 324 [emphasis added]; see also Turner, 1982), and when the threshold is crossed a new identity state awaits her/him which will typically benefit the individual and her/his community (Beech, 2011). This renders the rite of transition important and meaningful (Turner, 1982; Van Gennep, 1960).

With regard to the contemporary context, Tempest et al. (2007) note how the liminal condition is becoming more prevalent in organizations, whilst Czarniawska and Mazza (2003: 269) refer to the state of liminality as ‘the modern condition’. Furthermore, Ybema, Beech and Ellis (2011) develop an important distinction between time-limited liminality, and a sense of permanent ‘betweenness’, so that transitional liminality generates a sense of being *not-X-anymore-and-not-Y-yet*, whereas permanent liminality creates an enduring sense of being *neither-X-nor-Y* or indeed of being *both-X-and-Y*. For Ellis and Ybema (2010: 300) perpetual liminars are portrayed as ‘constantly crossing the threshold’. Garsten (1999: 326) describes employees contracted to rolling temporary assignments, but argues that they have grown accustomed to this as ‘a permanent condition’. In similar vein, Czarniawska and Mazza (2003: 286) describe management consultants’ role as a continuous ‘mov[ing] in and out’. They note, however, that these workers ‘consider [this] a stable state’. Thus, whilst

these studies note the potential negative emotional consequences of a perpetually liminal state, the implicit sense of powerlessness and frustration is mitigated by a worker's ability 'to end it' (Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003: 286).

Johnsen and Sorensen (2015) claim that 'permanent liminality is a situation in which the regular work situation is suspended – possibly indefinitely – in a social limbo' (p.326). This conflation of liminality and limbo is not new. Turner (1985), for instance, argued that the: 'rites of margin or *limen* are performed in limbo space and time for those undergoing transition... having lost their previous status and cultural location and not yet having passed through to their new place (or returned to their old place) in the sociocultural order' (p.209). We argue, however, that limbo and liminality – whether transitional or permanent – are better conceptualised as neither synonymous nor interchangeable, employing findings from a recent research project to provide an illustrative example.

Our data indicate that unlike liminality, the limbo state was characterised as neither desirable nor productive by participants. Differentiating between these concepts is important, not least because it can help identify those individuals or occupational groups in the precarious limbo position, and therefore potentially being able to address problems generated by this uncomfortable state.

To contextualise our participants' academic lifeworlds, we provide a brief review of the general university context and the literature examining the careers of those employed in academia on research and teaching, and TO contracts. Following this, we analytically portray transitional and permanent liminality and discuss how they are employed in the organisation studies literature, before contrasting them with the notion of limbo. The research approach is described before we present our findings and analysis.

## **Higher education and the research/teaching divide**

Within the UK higher education sector, and over the last two decades in particular, a stand-alone TO academic career pathway has emerged. As early as 1991, Westergaard (1991) warned about the deleterious consequences of a rift between research and teaching, highlighting potential problems if non-research academic positions continued to proliferate without appropriate consideration to the policy and process choices governing them. In 2005, research by the Association of University Teachers (AUT, 2005) identified that one in five UK academics was employed on a TO contract and noted how this could serve to undermine the link between research and teaching. Subsequently, numbers of academic staff on the TO pathway have grown considerably. In the UK's 'Russell Group' of research-intensive institutions, approximately 25% of academic staff are now categorised as TO (Universities UK, 2013). Across the sector, the latest figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, 2015) reveal that 60.7% of part-time academic staff are categorised as teaching-only and 9.7% of full-time staff.

Research identifies that in most research-focused universities across the world, the quality and quantity of an academic's research output have become key factors in career success (Clarke and Knights, 2015; Knights and Clarke, 2013; Learmonth and Humphreys, 2012). The pursuit of research has emerged as a first-order priority. In the UK, the quality and quantity of an academic's research output are subject to regular in-depth audit (Clarke and Knights, 2015; Knights and Clarke, 2013; Clarke, Knights and Jarvis, 2012). The externally-designed and moderated set of expectations can lead academics to feelings of failure (Clarke et al., 2012) if they do not 'measure up'. High quality research output provides individual 'recognition' (Knights and Clarke, 2013: 343) and a 'highly successful academic *star*' is usually one who is 'much published' (Ford, Harding and Learmonth, 2010: S78). Publication (regular and often) in high-quality, usually international, journals has therefore

become the yard-stick for academic success. This is problematic for TO staff whose time is primarily (and for some, fully) devoted to teaching and teaching-related duties. Many research-intensive universities seek to ‘offload’ heavy teaching allocations to TO staff in order to leave so-called ‘REF-able’ researchers with more time to publish, especially as TO are currently (permitted to be) excluded from being ‘counted’ in the UK Research Evaluation Framework (REF) exercise.

Whilst the quality of an institution’s research can impact on factors such as reputation and prestige, and has major consequences for receipt of funding, and rankings in domestic and international ‘league tables’, it is unclear how tensions between research and teaching activities and staff have emerged so strongly. Both activities form the core ‘business’ of universities. Given the considerable numbers of academics on TO contracts and their contribution to the effective functioning of higher education (Oxford, 2008), it is perhaps surprising that the occupational experiences of this group remain under-researched. TO staff are of particular sociological interest as they may be perceived, and often view themselves, as being of lower status in the higher education hierarchy, which privileges research so intensely, if (to some degree) tacitly. It is perhaps not surprising that many TO staff seek to cross the difficult *limen* or threshold – often associated with research activity – and make the transition to the more exalted ‘proper academic’ status. Such threshold-crossing and transition constitute key topics in contemporary organizational studies, including those focusing upon occupational identities and identity-related issues, and it is to theorisations of liminality and boundary-crossing that we now turn.

### **Transitional liminality, permanent liminality and limbo**

To illustrate the importance of liminality as applicable in contemporary research, *Human Relations* has published 34 studies in the period 2000 to 2016 that separately identify

‘liminality’ as an explanatory concept.<sup>2</sup> In addition, 11 identify limbo as relevant in the same journal and timeframe although many of these intersect, conflating the concepts of limbo and liminality. Johnsen and Sorensen (2015: 335) point towards the blurring distinction between work and life, arguing that this evokes a sense of ‘permanent liminality’, or ‘never-ending social limbo’. It is, we argue, important to differentiate between these states, in order to allow a much more in-depth and nuanced theoretical and critical perspective on occupational experiences.

### *Transitional liminality*

The anthropological notion of liminality highlights a transitory, transformational state, during which an individual is ‘betwixt and between’ and moves from one identity state or role to another (Van Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1982). Interpreting the organizational implications of liminal persons and spaces is complex. On the one hand, liminality has been characterised as a state that is disruptive, unstructured, frustrating, ambiguous, fluid, and unsettling (e.g. Hoyer and Steyaert, 2015; Beech, 2011; Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003; Turner, 1982), an unstable and unstructured place with no (or few) routines or rules, and ill-defined rights or obligations (see Thomson and Hassenkamp, 2008). In the context of transitional work arrangements, liminality is often viewed as undesirable, detrimental to individuals’ well-being (Galais and Moser, 2009), leading to feelings of substitutability and disposability (Garsten, 1999).

Conversely, positive features of liminality have been identified. Management consulting (Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003) and accounting (Kornberger, Justesen and Mouritsen, 2011), for example, demand a formal transitional phase from junior to senior positions. Sankowska and Söderlund (2015) also highlight that liminality can be socially and psychologically transformative in a positive way. Hoyer and Steyaert’s (2015) study of career

change found liminality to be disorderly and disruptive, but also potentially part of a healing process (p.1840). Cunha et al. (2008: 956-957) argue that organizations and individuals deliberately ‘create spaces of liminality’. Similarly highlighting the benefits of liminality, Powley (2009) notes how entering a liminal state at times of organizational conflict and crisis can provide a temporary suspension of social arrangements that allows alternative social structures and changes in relationships to emerge. Therefore, whilst the state of liminality can be difficult, crossing the *līmen* represents the moment of aggregation where investiture is secured and this can have profoundly positive, meaningful consequences for the individual and community (Turner, 1982; Van Gennep, 1960).

In the literature, the line between transitional and permanent liminality can appear somewhat blurred and yet the implications for occupational location and experiences can be markedly different. For example, Raghuram (2013) describes Indian call centre staff who are required to adopt ‘Western identities’ in the workplace. This identity is referred to as liminal, but it is difficult to ascertain from the study to what the transition is towards, and whether there is a threshold or point of investiture. Raghuram (2013) further notes that some individuals adopt this ‘Western’ identity more permanently in their private lives, and this problematizes notions of ‘transitoriness’. In the next sub-section, therefore, we examine the literature on more sustained or ‘permanent’ liminality.

### *Permanent liminality*

Many of the positive aspects of liminality stem from its being transitional, spatio-temporally limited, and transformatory. There is, however, a growing body of work which notes the possibility of more enduring liminal identity states and spaces (e.g. Swan et al., 2016; Shortt, 2015; Beech, 2011; Cullen, 2009; Sturdy et al., 2006; Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003). Others are more cautious with regard to this particular conceptual architecture. Thomson and



Hassenkamp, for example, (2008:1788) argue: ‘Liminality cannot be permanent unless the therapist [in this case] shuns social structure altogether and accepts its lack of stability.’ Reflecting on Garsten’s (1999) description of temporary workers as substitutable, dispensable, and inhabiting prolonged liminality, Beech (2011:288) notes: ‘However, they do not reach the aggregation phase... [and therefore] they would not conform to the anthropological use of the term.’ Here, Beech (2011) makes a useful conceptual distinction between forms of liminality, further developed by Swan et al. (2016:783), contrasting one form of ‘transitory state’ with ‘another where it encompasses an enduring experience of ambiguity and in-betweenness within a changeful context’.

In similar vein, Ybema et al. (2011:22) extend the conceptual boundaries of the original social anthropological usage that refutes any notion of permanence. Instead, they argue that this state can be ‘persistently ambiguous’, and describe two distinct identity positions: ‘(i) actors who experience going through a transformational change from one *identity position* to another, and (ii) actors’ sense of being in-between two identity positions for a prolonged period of time’. This is one basis for the distinction between transitional and more permanent betweenness, where permanent *liminars* are always on the borders. Ybema et al. (2011:28; emphasis in original) conclude that ‘transitional liminality generates a sense of being *not-X-anymore-and-not-Y-yet*, permanent liminality creates a more permanent sense of being *neither-X-nor-Y* or *both-X-and-Y*’.

To ground this distinction, Iedema et al. (2004) portray how a doctor-manager holds a boundary-position imposed by a disjunction between practice management and care for individual patients, and is forced to shift between orientations. Similarly, research by Zabusky and Barley (1997) found European Space Agency scientists to be boundary-spanners, identifying neither with the organisation nor the scientific community, and they argue, inhabiting a liminal state. The authors consider that a failure to recognise the

permanently-liminal state may 'explain why organizational strategies for enhancing the commitment of technical professionals backfire'. As with the doctor-managers, these scientists feel 'neither this nor that'; they feel unattached and unallied, and shift constantly between positions to maintain their own sense of self. This is a difficult, yet also satisfying situation, according to Zabusky and Barley (1997).

Ellis and Ybema (2010:282) discuss inter-organisational relationships managers' shifting circles of identification as they manage their firms' supply chains, moving in and between groups as they are caught up in institutionalised 'permanent and inescapable liminality'. In response, managers adopt a series of oscillating identities and identifications: 'an inclusive and exclusive self vis-à-vis others' (p.280), identifying with *many* and yet *no-one* at the same time. Ellis and Ybema (2010: 299) argue that these managers move between an inclusive and exclusive 'us'; they are 'inside' and 'outside', 'same' and 'other', as reflected in the identity talk of a group that transcends organisational boundaries, switching between in and out. They (p.300) conceptualise permanent liminars as those who are 'constantly crossing the threshold' and who 'cross and stretch boundaries on their own terms'. Their rhetoric of inclusion *and* exclusion allows them 'simultaneously to belong and to be different' (p.300-1).

In a further example, Rottenburg (2000:91) describes a case of literal border-land inhabitation, where the landlord of a bar on the Polish/German border works in an 'auspicious liminal space'. Rottenburg contends that patrons separate themselves from their 'normal' identities when they enter and re-join on leaving. This conceptualisation of liminality as a revolving doorway, rather than a threshold, is intriguing and coheres with the notion of permanent liminality. The customers seemed to enjoy prolonged visits 'just because it was a limbo', they were in no hurry to be 'incorporated into something new' (Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003:272) This interpretation of Rottenburg and usage of the term 'limbo' is

interesting, particularly given patrons' freedom of choice to enter and leave. This diverges from the traditional notion of limbo, which can be exited only through profound (or divine) intervention (e.g. Capps and Carlin, 2010; D'Costa, 2009). There is thus a need for conceptual disentanglement of limbo from notions of permanent liminality, given that knowing one is 'stuck' (Fraher and Gabriel, 2014) is likely to generate greater negativity than knowing one is in a state of transition, which may be actively chosen. We now therefore analytically explore limbo, including occupational limbo.

### *Limbo*

Unfortunately, a degree of conceptual confusion prevails in much of the organizational literature. Hoyer and Steyaert (2015), for example, use the concept of limbo in relation to career change. Browning and McNamee (2012) draw on limbo to describe how interim leaders find it difficult to exert their leadership and take meaningful decisions, precisely because of their transitional state. Shortt (2015) explores whether the concept of limbo is applicable to work-related spaces such as cupboards, stairs, and toilets, but concludes that the value of these kinds of spaces stems from their 'transitory dwelling space' status. At this juncture, it is useful to consider the origins of the concept of limbo.

D'Costa (2009: 148-149) portrays the four 'regions of Hell' in the Roman Catholic tradition, which include *damnatorum* (*Sheol* in Hebrew; or the place of damnation), *limbus puerorum* (the limbo<sup>3</sup> of unbaptized infants), *iustorum* (the limbo of the just; where those living pre-Christ await redemption), and the *purgatorium* (purgatory; the place of purification). Capps and Carlin (2010) adopt the 'limbo of the just' as useful in explaining both 'severe' and more mundane experiences of waiting, highlighting the negative consequences for those feeling 'stuck in limbo', for instance, the impairment of creativity. Reflecting from a theological perspective on experiences of limbo, they maintain that there is

always hope. The hopefulness of transition relates to Balthasar's theology of Christ's descent into hell, where in the limbo of the just, Christ offers salvation to trapped souls (D'Costa, 2009). Importantly for theoretical precision regarding conceptualisation of limbo, without Christ's intervention, souls would remain trapped, 'forgotten' (Capps and Carlin, 2010; D'Costa, 2009).

Limbo is thus distinct from transitional and permanent liminality. The former relates to an individual shifting from one state to another and the latter to an oscillation between states, whether of necessity or choice. Limbo, however, infers a fixed, 'trapped' state, to be changed only via profound intervention. Those who inhabit this state are *not* moving towards a threshold.

In Catholicism, those with faith in God stay hopeful of being saved, because hope is all they have, lest they simply be forgotten. For those in occupational limbo, if there is such hopefulness it may stem from faith in the systems, structures and communities.

Conceptualisations of liminality are, we argue, highly relevant to the occupational experiences of TO academics in the UK's Russell Group of universities in the UK. Interviews with 51 TO staff revealed their feelings of being 'locked-in' to an inferior occupational state by a set of socially and structurally constructed barriers. No transition out of this limbo state was perceived by interviewees, and it is this sense of 'locked-in-ness' that we analyse and situate theoretically.

## **The research**

To explore the occupational experiences of TO staff in UK universities, a semi-structured interview-based approach was used, as this form of interview is well-suited to providing rich data, especially in under-explored areas. We sampled the research-intensive, Russell Group universities because staff there are contracted to one of three pathways: research-only,

research and teaching, and teaching-only. Outside of this group of institutions, the line between teaching and research staff is often more blurred.

TO staff were initially identified via the job titles provided on university websites. To provide a cross-disciplinary sample with some variation, we drew our initial sample from both business schools or similar (n=399), and engineering faculties (n=192) at 20 of the UK's 24 research-intensive, Russell Group universities. These are the two subject areas most heavily populated by TO pathway staff. Degrees in these subject areas are often 'pegged to' professional syllabuses (e.g. Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, Institution of Mechanical Engineers, etc.). Staff in these subject-areas often have professional experience and qualifications but many are unlikely to have backgrounds in academic research.

In total, we received 58 positive responses to the invitation letter, four withdrew (due to time constraints) and three were excluded from the data because they were graduate research students on temporary teaching contracts (two) or not formally designated as TO staff (one). We thus draw on data from 51 interviews (see Table 1 for demographic information).

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All three authors have considerable experience of working within UK universities (combined: 60 years; 21 years as TO staff), including research-intensive institutions. Drawing on this experience, we developed an interview schedule, and undertook a pilot study involving interviews with six TO staff. This allowed us to refine our questions before conducting the interviews, which were semi-structured to allow participants to narrate their own lived experiences in their own words, and to express thoughts and opinions on issues not

necessarily pre-defined by the researchers. To help shape the interviews, the schedule was designed to address core themes: (i) motivations for entering academia and, if relevant, pursuing the TO pathway; (ii) everyday work-lives and tasks; (iii) individuals' perceptions of the evolution of their career; and (iv) the status of TO academics more generally. On average, interviews lasted 50 minutes (minimum 34; maximum 122), were recorded and transcribed.

We initially listened to recordings and then read and re-read the transcripts in detail several times before coding, which was originally undertaken by one member of the research team and subsequently reviewed by a second. High levels of inter-coder agreement reliability testing were obtained ( $\kappa > 90\%$ ), and provide reassurance regarding the robustness of the classification and coding exercise. Nvivo 10 – a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis package – was used to code the data. In line with Attride-Stirling's (2001) proposed 'thematic networks' framework, we jointly developed a set of preliminary codes to separate data into meaningful segments. From this initial review, key themes emerged as salient: anxiety and insecurity about career, specifically a lack of career structure and opportunities (46 respondents; 315 comments); a strong sense of hierarchical inferiority in relation to teaching and related activities (47 respondents; 60 comments); and the identification of structural and social barriers as preventing change in status and contractual position (39 respondents; 130 comments).

In terms of contextualization, we found the majority of respondents had entered academia after pursuing a career elsewhere (94%), with participants having more experience in professional practice (average: 13 years; maximum 39; minimum 0) than in academia (average: 6 years; maximum 32 years; minimum 1 year). We simplified the data into a number of 'basic themes' to avoid misinterpretations arising from code repetition, omission, and so forth. Following this, we aggregated these basic themes into 'organising themes' according to their meaning, before eventually arriving at a set of 'global themes' (Attride-

Stirling, 2001), cohering around the key issues highlighted by respondents. These were: first, highly negative feelings about being ‘locked into’ a state of occupational limbo, and second, the work done in seeking to ameliorate this unwelcome state. Under the first global theme, organising themes were: a lack of career structure, being (re)assigned second-order administrative work, and issues surrounding negative labelling. Under the second global theme, the organising themes were: addressing (in)visibility, undertaking research, and investing in the student experience. These are summarised in Table 2, and analysed within our conceptual framework below.

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## **The challenges of occupational limbo**

### *Locked in–locked out*

The literature on academic cultures often identifies an ‘us and them’ division between various academic sub-groups (e.g. Dobson and Conway, 2003; McNay, 1995); for example, between university administrators and academic faculty (e.g. Allen-Collinson, 2006, 2009), contract researchers and more ‘permanent’ faculty (Allen-Collinson, 2000, 2003, 2004; Hockey, 2002;) and doctoral students and academics (Allen-Collinson, 2005), which may be due to perceived differentiation in levels of academic capital and credentials. TO academics, however, have broadly strong academic credentials. Over half of our sample (53%) reported their highest qualification to be a PhD (or equivalent), and 41% held a postgraduate professional qualification (e.g. Chartered Accountant). Many respondents expressed

frustration at the putative boundary between teaching and research (TR) staff and TO staff, particularly given the importance of teaching in the teaching-research nexus:

In public, we're a research *and* teaching institution... Teaching has always been a core business... And if we don't get it right, we don't get the students... And without the students, we can't do the research.' (TO37; *italics* indicate vocal stress)

Relatedly, respondents frequently articulated the fundamental importance of teaching as the predominant income stream for universities, for example:

Teaching is not given the credit it deserves... all staff in all UK universities are paid for by student fee income. (TO37).

[We] get forgotten by research colleagues... only 10-15% of our school's income comes from research work. So that gives you an indication of just how important the teaching side *should* be. (TO41).

Most respondents reported that management and research-active colleagues considered TO staff and activities as less worthy of recognition than were research activities and research-active staff. Participants highlighted that a set of social and structural norms and expectations had been instituted, which favoured research activities and staff over teaching, and which worked to 'lock' TO staff into a second-class identity:

We're second-class citizens. To the management, it's research that's important! (TO40).



Whilst at one level it's appropriate that research and research active staff are seen as critically important to the university, teaching is too... those who are teachers and focus on teaching should not be seen as second-class citizens. (TO16)

Furthermore, participants noted how research-active colleagues appeared to view teaching as an inferior form of academic work, or even as academic failure:

Research staff believe that anybody that would want to pursue a teaching career can't possibly be worth their weight as an academic. There's no perceived value in teaching. There's just a value on research. (TO19)

In contrast to theorisations of the permanent liminar (e.g. Ybema et al., 2011; Zabusky and Barley, 1997), TO staff did not perceive themselves as boundary-spanners, able to shift between occupational states. Instead, like those in limbo they felt more akin to 'separated souls' (Riches, 2012), 'stuck' and 'locked in' to a fixed and permanent second-class state. The path to investiture as a 'proper academic' appeared blocked, and like those in limbo, the only means of escape to a more elevated state appeared to be through profound intervention (Capps and Carlin, 2010), from 'on high':

Basically, we feel like second-class citizens in the university... To force an attitude change for the status of teaching fellows, that's really hard to do... it would require a cultural change... I believe it needs change from the top. (TO30)

According to interviewees certain policies, processes, and practices reinforced this perception of second-class status, cohering around three key themes: a) negative labelling; b) promotion and progression criteria; c) (re)assignment of citizenship duties.

### *Negative labelling*

The use of ‘teaching’ and ‘research’ in job titles (for example ‘teaching fellow’ compared with ‘lecturer/assistant professor/research fellow’; ‘lecturer: teaching and scholarship’ compared with ‘lecturer: research and scholarship’) was widely reported as indicative of hierarchical sub-grouping both intra-University (e.g. in departmental documentation and name-plates) and externally (e.g. online faculty directories and business cards). Whilst it could be argued that such identifications are functionally necessary to distinguish different roles, such labelling was not felt to be ‘neutral’. Rather, the labelling of someone as ‘teaching only’ was considered by participants to ‘mark’ them as ‘other’ in a social-exclusionary manner (see also Allen-Collinson, 2009), excluding them from the ‘in-group’ and in some quarters identifying them as not ‘full’ academics. As with the permanent liminars identified by others (Ybema et al., 2011; Ellis and Ybema, 2010; Iedema et al., 2004) TO felt both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of academia, but unlike the permanent liminars, they felt themselves destined always to be ‘outside’ of their aspired identity state as ‘full’, ‘proper’ academics.

In terms of labelling, interviewees noted the stark contrast between research-active colleagues being granted the title of ‘professor’ and the apparent unattainability of this academic status indicator for TO staff, even within the same institutions:

You’re definitely made to feel like you’re a second-class citizen... We are *never* allowed to use the word *professor*, whereas the research-active guys come in as

an assistant professor... Even when they come in fresh from their PhD, they have professor in their title. (TO10)

Some institutions had recently adopted terms such as 'professors of practice' but this was considered by interviewees merely to reinforce TO status as '*not-this-but-that*' and to 'mark' teachers as other than 'real' professors.

In general, interviewees argued such labelling was socially divisive, and some wondered openly if it was employed as a deliberate means of segregating academic sub-groups, which worked to exclude TO staff, for example, from circulation lists and committees:

The split between teachers and researchers is almost encouraged... We're not invited to attend committees which they tell us are about *academic* matters... You're only regarded as an 'academic', if you do research. So there's almost a deliberate divide.' (TO10)

*'You shall not pass'*

Many TO staff reported contractual progression caps that embedded in formal organizational processes their sense of being 'stuck' without possibility of onwards transition. In reference to her/his promotion prospects, one respondent proclaimed: 'You shall not pass!' thus echoing feelings of being trapped in an inescapable occupational limbo-like state. Prior research (e.g. Clarke and Knights, 2015; Knights and Clarke, 2013; Sparkes, 2007; Lorenz, 2012) highlights the *de facto*, if not *de jure*, situation that it is research performance and not teaching that 'counts' as 'promotion-worthy', often at the expense of teaching and other student-related activities (Clarke and Knights, 2015; Lorenz, 2012; Macdonald and Kam, 2007). Participants were acutely aware of this:

We all know that research is rewarded more than teaching. The fact that research staff have a clear career path and progression through that career path. Any progress is principally determined by research, not by teaching. (TO1)

Interviewees identified as a key problem the lack, in many research-intensive universities, of an appropriate set of teaching-specific promotion criteria, resulting in TO performance being evaluated in relation to promotion criteria developed for research-active staff. This contributed to a strong sense of being 'stuck' (Fraher and Gabriel, 2014) and 'forgotten' (Capps and Carlin, 2010; Pitstick, 2007), particularly as a clear and stable career pathway has been found to be important for academics (e.g. Clarke and Knights, 2015; Macdonald and Kam, 2007; Sparkes, 2007). Interviewees expressed frustration at the lack of a structured TO career path:

I think we just *really need* better career paths. [We] *need* a clearer career path.'  
(TO38)

They noted that despite purported equivalence between research and teaching pathways, there was little evidence of this actually operating:

So although technically research and teaching are in theory equivalent scales, the fact that there's *nobody* on the top three rungs of the teaching scale after it's been in for years is an indication that something's not right.' (TO42)

*Second-class activities and assigned citizenship*

Widespread amongst TO staff was the concern that their inferior position was being entrenched by managerial decisions to (re)assign them administrative ‘citizenship’ work that was time-consuming and unproductive in terms of academic worth and promotion prospects. Research-active staff, in contrast, appeared to be spared such administrative burdening, leaving them with more time to pursue more ‘profitable’ research-related tasks:

If you’re a researcher you don’t have to do any of that! Especially if you’re a really good researcher. People will let you off... Citizenship – that doesn’t get recognised. That doesn’t count for anything. All that counts is whether you’ve got [research] papers. (TO28)

Interviewees reported a sense of being ‘locked-in’ to such administrative citizenship tasks as a result of managerial decision-making, caught in a loop, which also resulted in being ‘locked-out’ of zones of more valorised activities such as research-related work. Participants described teaching itself as being deemed a ‘second-class’ academic activity within research-intensive universities, an ‘irritant’ detracting from the ‘real’ and valued work of research:

Did you know that teaching has always been a second-class pursuit in Russell Group universities? ... It’s always been like this... teaching is seen by many as an irritant.’ (TO47)

The connotations of researchers using grant monies to ‘buy themselves out’ of teaching were not lost. Whilst interviewees recognised this could be a sensible mechanism to allow researchers to meet research grant conditions, they also highlighted how it impacted negatively on conceptualisations of teaching:

They might say teaching-only, but what they mean is you're '*only a teacher*' ... and this means they can give you any admin job they want. (TO48)

I have heard other colleagues say: 'Oh well, you know, you are a teacher, not a proper academic... So, tell me then: *What am I?* (TO6)

This sense of permanent 'inbetweenness' and lack of 'proper' academic status were portrayed as unsettling and frustrating. In the temporary circumstances of transitional liminality, feelings of being betwixt-and-between might be relatively easily resolved over time, and even retrospectively enjoyed (see Beech, 2011; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003; Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003), but for those TO staff experiencing a deep sense of occupational limbo, the route to escape and 'salvation' remained unclear. We now address some of the ways in which TO staff sought to deal with this occupational limbo.

### **Challenging the unchallengeable? The apparent futility of identity work in limbo**

In this section, we examine some of the tactics employed by TO staff as they struggled to create a more positive identity for themselves, via visibility-enhancement work, engagement with research, and enhancing the student experience.

#### *Visibility-enhancement work*

In earlier work, administrators' perceptions of themselves as 'invisible' workers within academia were examined (Allen-Collinson, 2006, 2009). It was found that their work went largely unnoticed, unacknowledged and unrewarded. Analogously, our TO respondents highlighted the relative invisibility of their teaching work in terms of its recognition and

valorisation by others in academia, relative to the ‘real’ work of research that generated kudos for universities and placed research-active staff in a visible and privileged position:

... what you don’t get is much recognition from other people. We’re improving the way students learn and the student experience in the school. There’s not as much kudos that goes with that. It’s not seen to be the same as publishing a paper or getting a research grant. (TO45)

To overcome this invisibility and lack of acknowledgement, respondents related how they sought to achieve greater visibility and to be ‘kept in mind’ positively. Some even deliberately took on major administrative roles, far beyond those assigned or normally considered appropriate for their contractual level, such as faculty and university roles rather than departmental ones. This may seem perverse given the perception that administrative work is a less valorised pursuit than research (and in some cases teaching). However, the work sought out by TO staff was described as institutionally important, visible, and prominent, not the mundane, burdensome variety described above. Interviewees considered that these more major and visible administrative roles offered the potential to acquire academic capital and credibility. One respondent, for example, had taken on a major university role, which s/he saw as institutionally important, to enhance both his/her own and other teachers’ visibility:

I co-run the university’s teaching and learning programme. We train new lecturers coming in, new academics ... We run up-skilling workshops for new and existing lecturers. Yes, we’re teaching them how to teach. (TO5)

Analogously, another explained how TO staff would sometimes take on major administrative roles in an attempt to enhance others' perceptions of the academic legitimacy and credibility of the teaching role:

When we take on these *larger* admin roles... it's partly about perception. It gives the teaching-only role more credibility. I think it enhances others' perception of 'What the role is' and 'What we can offer'. So, if perhaps you're not doing research and publishing papers, then I think it is important to be doing something else that's legitimate, credible, and worthwhile and contributes to the university.

(TO41)

These narratives were, however, often accompanied by a vividly expressed sense of futility. We were told that regardless of the level of responsibility, this additional citizenship work all too often remained unacknowledged and unrecognised. Taking on major administrative roles thus did not, for participants, allow them to cross the *limen* to a new, more valorised identity state, regardless of how widely they 'share[d] experiences of this work with colleagues' (TO13). Another attempted pathway out of the liminal state emerged from the findings: engaging with research.

### *Engaging with research*

Given the importance placed on research in individual (and institutional) academic success (Knights and Clarke, 2013; Learmonth and Humphreys, 2012; Alvesson, 2010; Ybema et al., 2009; Humphreys, 2005), it is unsurprising that TO staff felt an obligation to engage with research in order to escape the liminality of a perceived 'non-academic' status. This was undertaken via a range of research-related activities, for example, completing doctorates,



undertaking research projects, writing for publication, attending conferences and research seminars. This, for many in research-intensive institutions, was framed as an expectation for all academic staff, including TO staff:

I think there's an expectation that everyone at an academic institution such as this needs to do research even if they're teaching only. (TO5)

In doing this, TO staff reported that they often confronted a lack of support, even a degree of hostility from research-active colleagues:

And then you've got people who say 'Oh, this guy's got a few hours a year for research on their workload model. But they're a teaching fellow... Well, that's not fair. We should give them more teaching to free up time for us.' (TO40).

Another interviewee noted, in contrast, that TO staff at her/his institution were not allocated time for doing research, rendering it difficult:

There's no time factored in for me to do my research... so I don't see that teaching staff can. (TO29)

In some instances, this was described as a deliberate policy, often rationalised by budgetary constraints:

There's no budget for us to do research... we've got this academic balance model and there's absolutely zero budget for research for a teaching fellow... The

institution, or specifically the Dean, decided that he's not going to give us time to do research. (TO31)

Many interviewees reported that their efforts to undertake research were either actively blocked or made difficult by a lack of institutional and/or collegial support. They consequently felt 'locked-out' of an aspired-to status and 'locked-in' to a perceived second-class status. There appeared to be little or no hope of passing over the *līmen* to the research world, without some form of direct intervention to free them from occupational limbo. A further form of 'enhancement' work was reported by interviewees, relating directly to the world of teaching.

#### *Enhancing the 'student experience'*

A final theme that emerged from our data was how TO staff deliberately chose to undertake the very work perceived to be second-class and thereby in some ways sustaining and reinforcing their occupational limbo state. This is not as perverse as it may at first appear, as feelings of being 'stuck' may be most uncomfortable when an individual actively wants to escape her/his current identity state, rather than when s/he is resolved (or resigned) to remaining in that state (Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003). Participants did describe positive elements of the teaching role, including student interaction:

I don't know of any real incentives for us... But I *really* enjoy the interaction with the students and spending time teaching them and all of that kind of stuff. So that's what I love about it and why I do it. (TO11)

In contrast to TO staff's self-deprecating narratives of being 'second-class' citizens within academia, the pro-vocational elements of a 'chosen' teaching pathway were emphasized by some who had actively chosen the teaching pathway:

I think the people on the teaching pathway do it because we like teaching. We do it because we love it, and enjoy it, and it's what we've chosen to do. (TO15)

However, this positive narrative is ultimately overshadowed by one of second-class status. Czarniawska and Mazza (2003: 286) argue that 'acceptance' of permanent liminality, 'thereby end[s] it'. In contrast, no amount of positive talk puts an end to their limbo status. These 'trapped' workers may share stories to overcome the confinement, neglect and oblivion which, it is argued, characterises this state (Capps and Carlin, 2010).

## **Discussion and conclusion**

This article contributes fresh perspectives to the literature on the lived experience of workers in academia, and most saliently to theoretical and conceptual debates around the concept of liminality as applied to occupational status. Drawing on data from 51 semi-structured interviews with TO staff across 20 of the UK's 24 research-intensive, Russell Group universities, we found that TO staff reported feeling trapped in a state of occupational limbo; a state re/enforced in three key ways. First, institutional labelling identifies TO staff as the 'marked' (Allen-Collinson, 2009) 'out-group', in contrast to the unmarked and more valorised group of research-active staff. Second, the contractual progression caps in place at many institutions, alongside research-led promotion policies, processes, and practices, effectively bar TO staff from progression to senior posts, including professorial positions, and lock them into a second-class status as 'just teachers'. Third, the (re)assignment of low-status

citizenship work to TO staff, and away from research-active staff, often prevents them from pursuing the very activities that *could* provide them with a route to transition to ‘proper-academic’ status.

To combat the negative connotations of their status, TO staff engaged in three forms of ‘enhancement work’, namely: visibility enhancing work, engaging with research activities, and enhancing the student-experience. Whilst these practices may carry a degree of intrinsic reward, and were sometimes narrated in positive terms, interviewees identified its apparent futility.

Our findings demonstrate that occupational limbo is conceptually distinct from liminality and conflation of the two concepts results in a loss of analytic acuity. Being a trapped soul/worker in limbo with no route to aggregation is frustrating, unsettling and disruptive; it is not an enjoyable state, and does not facilitate creativity, whereas states of liminality, in contrast, can offer these positive aspects. TO staff perceived their status as fixed with little chance of movement over the threshold and ‘out’. In pursuing the limbo analogy, engaging in more positive and affirming narratives can be argued to be akin to the story-telling of those souls who inhabit the limbo of the just where shared stories alleviate feelings of confinement, neglect and oblivion (see Capps and Carlin, 2010). Such TO-insider positive narratives seemed to compensate in some way for the lack of recognition from research-active peers and institutional management, as well as the lack of ‘formal’ rewards for this occupational group. Furthermore, linking this to our conceptualisation of limbo, story-telling provides positive emotional feelings and gives hope where hope is all there is (D’Costa, 2009; Capps and Carlin, 2010).

Although the concept of liminality has been widely employed in the organisation studies literature, there are instances where, we would argue, the concept of limbo would provide a more finely focused lens. For instance, for the ‘liminal’ international workers

obliged to adopt 'western identities' in call centres (Raghuram, 2013), it is difficult to identify the threshold to aggregation. Where research conflates the concepts of limbo and liminality to describe places, situations, groups, and places as 'limbo-like', a closer analysis might reveal these to be better identified as transitionally or permanently liminal; for example, in relation to public houses (Rottenburg, 2000), temporary workers (Gibbs, 2009), internal interim management (Browning and McNamee, 2012), and organisational spaces (Shortt, 2015). Not only are these distinct concepts, but the implications of being trapped in an occupational state are fundamentally different from being an individual in transition. Whilst we have used TO staff within academia as our empirical context to demonstrate the conceptual distinction between limbo and liminality, this distinction has wider relevance, and can be extended to other occupational groups.

Within the context of academia, for example, a number of studies employ the concept of liminality to explore the experiences of 'marginalised' sub-groups in academia, including contract research staff and research administrators (Dobson and Conway, 2003; McNay, 1995; Allen-Collinson, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2006; Hockey, 2002). In some of the analysis the concept of limbo appears to be a more precise analytic lens. More generally with regard to occupational groups, researchers frequently employ liminality to examine the behaviours of marginalised groups (e.g. Hall, Stevens and Meleis, 1994; Allen-Collinson, 2003, 2007; Driver, 2008; Dar, 2014), and a tighter analytic distinction between liminality and limbo could offer fresh and important insights. Applying the conceptual framework of limbo offers particular promise in the study of hierarchical occupations and professions. For example, in an accounting firm there may a range of fully qualified, partially qualified and unqualified accountants. In this particular professional context, what would constitute 'aggregation'? Similarly, the medical world – in relation to both medical practitioners and patients – offers great scope for applying conceptual distinctions between liminality and limbo; medical

practices, practitioners, and patients are often described in liminal terms, drawing primarily on the anthropological convention of liminality as a temporary condition. Yet within this context it would be possible to identify instances of transitional liminality, permanent liminality, and limbo. For example, being hospitalised often places patients in a temporary and transitional liminal existence (Moreau, 2014). Patients with terminal conditions have been identified as living in liminality (see, Bruce et al., 2014), and sufferers of chronic pain have been termed ‘liminal creatures’ with ‘uncertain ontological status’ (Jackson, 2005: 332). Furthermore, nurses seem to face similar identity challenges as TO staff. Not only is the patient-nurse relationship permanently liminal (Moreau, 2014), but as shown in the *Doctor-Nurse Game* (Stein, 1967) – and again *Revisited* (Stein, Watts and Howell, 1990) – there is also an intractable and unbreachable doctor-nurse hierarchy which can be deeply unsettling and disruptive.

In other occupational domains, such as the music world, the concept of limbo could prove highly applicable. For example, a recent special issue in the journal *Twentieth-Century Music* (2007) is devoted to exploring how and why musicians occupy liminal spaces and identities. In this profession, Maciszewski (2007) argues that having a patron escalates a sense of fundamental dependency and creates an inescapable hierarchy. Interestingly, and by contrast, the prospect of *not* having a patron can also engender significant, deleterious consequences. Some contend that musicians hold low social status but high social importance, and this traps them in a permanently disruptive and unsettled state (Merriam, 1964; Brown, 2007); the conceptual framework of limbo seems highly apposite in this domain. The above constitute just some of the organisational milieux where drawing a conceptual distinction between liminality and limbo could provide researchers with a deeper and richer analysis, and generate greater understanding of particular lifeworlds.

To return to the occupational domain of academia, we have presented some of the challenges and disruptions encountered by TO staff as an academic sub-group in UK research-intensive universities. Findings identified that many in this group reported being ‘trapped’ in an uncomfortable occupational limbo, ‘forgotten’ with little hope of ‘salvation’ (Capps and Carlin, 2010; D’Costa, 2009; Pitstick, 2007). The study findings contribute directly to theory by extending Ybema et al.’s (2011: 28) distinction between transitional liminality – *not-X-anymore-and-not-Y-yet* – and permanent liminality – *neither-X-nor-Y* or *both-X-and-Y* – to include a conceptualisation of occupational limbo. So, whilst transitional liminality describes a person in transition – for a limited duration - to a new identity state, in contrast, permanent liminality constitutes a state of ongoing ambiguity and inbetweenness that is of indeterminate duration in a changeful context (Swan et al., 2016; Beech, 2011; Ellis and Ybema, 2010; Iedema et al., 2004; Zabusky and Barley, 1997). This latter form of liminality can be experienced positively as providing occupational ‘space’, for example to create and innovate. Permanent liminars are thus ‘boundary-spanners’, constantly crossing borders, and this can provide an occupational space for individuals both to belong and be different (Ellis and Ybema, 2010), or, as Zabusky and Barley (1997).

Occupational limbo, however, is distinct from the foregoing liminal states. TO staff described their sense of being locked-in to a status deemed second-class by other academics, and by TO staff themselves in many cases; and also of being locked-out from membership of the valorised occupational status of research-active academic staff. We argue, therefore, for a characterisation of occupational limbo as: *never-X-always-Y*, where X is a hierarchically superior and desirable occupational state than Y. If liminality can be painful, disruptive and unsettling, as has been found (Swan et al., 2016; Hoyer and Steyaert, 2015; Beech, 2011) then the sense of being ‘stuck’ (Fraher and Gabriel, 2014) in occupational limbo is certainly

worthy of investigation in relation to a range of occupational spheres, including those where employees may find themselves in a much ‘worse off’ position than that of TO staff.

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<sup>1</sup> See [russellgroup.ac.uk](http://russellgroup.ac.uk) (accessed June 16, 2015): ‘The Russell Group represents 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector.’

This group of universities includes many of the elite research-intensive institutions in the UK. Note, however, that there are a number of highly-regarded research-intensive universities who are not members of the Russell Group.

<sup>2</sup> This detailed review is available on request.



<sup>3</sup> 'Limbo' is often capitalised in religious text, but for convenience we adopt lower case throughout.

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**Table 1. Basic respondent information (TO = teaching-only)****Panel A: Summarised demographic information**

Number of interviews	51	
Male / female (number)	24 / 27	
Average age (standard deviation)	46	(5.80)
Average years spent in a 'teaching-only' role (standard deviation)	6	(0.84)
Average years spent in 'professional practice' (standard deviation)	13	(2.90)
Business / Engineering (number)	33 / 18	
Geographical origin (number)		
UK	42	
Europe	7	
Rest of the World	2	

**Panel B: Basic interviewee details**

<i>Resp't</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>TO experience</i>	<i>Professional experience</i>	<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>TO experience</i>	<i>Professional experience</i>
TO1	60 +	11+ years	0-3 years	TO27	40-49	4-7 years	11+ years
TO2	30-39	4-7 years	4-7 years	TO28	50-59	7-10 years	11+ years
TO3	40-49	4-7 years	7-10 years	TO29	21-29	0-3 years	0-3 years
TO4	50-59	7-10 years	11+ years	TO30	30-39	4-7 years	4-7 years
TO5	50-59	11+ years	11+ years	TO31	50-59	11+ years	11+ years
TO6	50-59	11+ years	11+ years	TO32	21-29	0-3 years	4-7 years
TO7	50-59	4-7 years	4-7 years	TO33	40-49	0-3 years	0-3 years
TO8	50-59	11+ years	4-7 years	TO34	50-59	7-10 years	11+ years
TO9	30-39	0-3 years	11+ years	TO35	30-39	0-3 years	4-7 years
TO10	50-59	4-7 years	4-7 years	TO36	50-59	4-7 years	11+ years
TO11	40-49	4-7 years	11+ years	TO37	40-49	7-10 years	11+ years
TO12	40-49	0-3 years	11+ years	TO38	50-59	4-7 years	11+ years
TO13	60 +	11+ years	4-7 years	TO39	40-49	4-7 years	11+ years
TO14	60 +	4-7 years	11+ years	TO40	50-59	7-10 years	11+ years
TO15	30-39	11+ years	0-3 years	TO41	50-59	11+ years	0-3 years
TO16	40-49	7-10 years	11+ years	TO42	30-39	11+ years	4-7 years
TO17	60 +	11+ years	0-3 years	TO43	30-39	0-3 years	0-3 years
TO18	40-49	4-7 years	11+ years	TO44	60 +	4-7 years	11+ years
TO19	30-39	0-3 years	4-7 years	TO45	30-39	0-3 years	4-7 years
TO20	40-49	7-10 years	11+ years	TO46	40-49	7-10 years	11+ years
TO21	40-49	4-7 years	4-7 years	TO47	50-59	7-10 years	7-10 years
TO22	60 +	7-10 years	11+ years	TO48	40-49	4-7 years	11+ years
TO23	50-59	4-7 years	11+ years	TO49	30-39	0-3 years	0-3 years
TO24	60 +	7-10 years	4-7 years	TO50	40-49	0-3 years	11+ years
TO25	40-49	0-3 years	4-7 years	TO51	30-39	4-7 years	0-3 years
TO26	50-59	11+ years	0-3 years				

**Table 2: Coding summary**

	# of Respondents	# of Comments
<i>Limbo (held-back/held-down/locked-in/locked-out)</i>		
Marginalised to second-class citizen status	47	60
Teaching pathway perceived to be 'non-academic'	16	26
Career		
Lack of career structure for TO academics	46	57
Research = career	39	55
Lack of incentives (vis-à-vis research colleagues)	31	39
Lack of reward, including promotion/progression opportunities	41	65
Lack of recognition	41	56
Lack of a TO-specific performance measurement system	33	43
TO assigned (excessive, unfair, relatively large) administrative duties	48	79
Job title: 'Teaching'		
Is an issue	37	46
Is not an issue	10	11
<i>Identity work</i>		
Administrative and pastoral work / visibility	25	32
Undertaking research	31	29
If you want teachers to research, support it	20	25
Investing more into core pursuits i.e. teaching/student experience	44	51
Internally motivated / self-recognition	30	33

*Note:* TO = teaching-only.

Matt Bamber is Assistant Professor in Accounting at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, Canada. His research examines topics related to occupational identity, identity challenges, and the influence of surveillance on social actors' behaviour and strategies in the workplace. His research has been published in a number of journals, including *Accounting, Organizations and Society, Higher Education, British Accounting Review, Applied Accounting Review, Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, Advances in Accounting Behavioral Research*. [Email: matt.bamber@rotman.utoronto.ca]

Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson is Professor in Sociology and Physical Culture, and Director of the Health Advancement Research Team (HART) at the University of Lincoln, UK. Her research interests include identity and 'identity work' in relation to occupational, leisure and health/illness identities. She also undertakes research on the sociology of the senses. Her published research appears in a variety of journal outlets, including *Sociology, The Sociological Review, Work, Employment & Society, Body & Society, Sociology of Health & Illness, Symbolic Interaction, Chest, Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health, Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Medical Anthropology, Studies in Higher Education International Review for the Sociology of Sport, Sociology of Sport Journal*. [Email: jallencollinson@lincoln.ac.uk]

John McCormack is Lecturer in Management at Cranfield University, UK. His research interests include the study of operational performance in public organizations, specifically the potential impact of social and political motives on project management decision-making. He has published in professional and academic journal outlets, including *The Economics Journal*. [Email: J.McCormack@cranfield.ac.uk]

**Corresponding Author:**

Matthew Bamber

Joseph L Rotman School of Management

University of Toronto

Toronto

Ontario M5S 3E6

Canada

[Matt.Bamber@rotman.utoronto.ca](mailto:Matt.Bamber@rotman.utoronto.ca)

**Other Author(s):**

Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson

Health Advancement Research Team, College of Social Science

University of Lincoln

Lincoln

UK

[jallencollinson@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:jallencollinson@lincoln.ac.uk)

John McCormack

Cranfield University

Cranfield

UK

[j.mccormack@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:j.mccormack@bristol.ac.uk)