CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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ETHICS, NARRATIVES AND LEGITIMACY IN DEFENCE
ACQUISITION

CENTRE FOR DEFENCE ACQUISITION
Doctor of Philosophy

PhD
Academic Year: 2014 - 2017

Supervisor: Dr Kevin Burgess
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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research examines the proposition that ethics in business functions as part of legitimising narratives, rather than as a normative framework to guide or assess behaviour.

Methodology: The applied ethics context of the acquisition of UK military capabilities is employed as a case study to test the proposition. Adopting a critical realist paradigm, Bourdieu's theory of practice is applied in two stages. Quantitative (survey) and qualitative (narrative interview) data are collected, from which a Weberian ideal type is developed via narrative analysis.

Findings: The results reveal that the public/private sector interface should be understood as a Bourdieusian practice, in which people use narratives involving normative ethical claims as a means of delegitimising options that threaten their field positions and capital accumulations. It is argued that akrasia – acting against one's best interests – can be explained in these terms, and that even if a normative ethics of Defence acquisition is one day possible, any theory of ethics should – for completion – attempt to take account of how ethics serves to support or delegitimise specific narratives in the business of acquisition.

Research limitations/implications: The research builds on the literature on akrasia, suggesting that the options available to people in business are behaviourally as well as cognitively limited. Moreover, potential codes of ethics are overruled by symbolic power within a practice and hence have no effect.

The research is not longitudinal and is limited to a case study that necessarily involved unrepresentative populations, although the methodology facilitates generalisation. Further work on public/private sector interfaces is needed to explore how other populations narrate challenges to convention.

Originality/value: The research represents a novel application of Bourdieu's theory of practice to the context of public/private sector integration and uniquely to Defence acquisition, disputing the viability and utility of codes of ethics as part of professionalising the acquisition function. It also offers a sociological explanation of akrasia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ISCT	Integrated Social Contracts Theory
MCA	Multiple Correspondence Analysis
MOD	Ministry of Defence
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom

1 INTRODUCTION

The study of ethics has a long and storied history that, from the early twentieth century, has increasingly been applied to business (Abend, 2013). At its most general, ethics means a systematic conception of right and wrong behaviour (Fieser, 2003). However, the implications of ethics for the intersection of public and private sectors have been little considered and can be counterintuitive or even undermine codes of practice.

Consider the context of UK Defence acquisition, or '[t]he activities of setting and managing requirements, negotiating and letting contracts, project and technology management, support and termination or disposal based on a through life approach to acquiring military capability' (Ministry of Defence, 2009; the more commonly used term *procurement* refers only to the purchasing of equipment or a service). Suppose that two acquisition agents want a military capability programme they are involved with to succeed. One intends to deliberately ignore public sector processes and behave in whatever way necessary to achieve her aim, but she does not understand acquisition as well as she believes and the programme succeeds in spite of rather than because of her actions. Meanwhile, the other instead follows the mandated processes almost to the letter and delivers the programme, but accidentally commits a serious violation of procurement law. Judging the second agent harsher than the first is intuitive, perhaps because people are inclined to overlook unethical behaviour if it suits them to do so, but it is unclear how such a preference is justified. (This example is adapted from Bazerman and Tenbrunsel, 2011.)

Now imagine a change in the scenario: this time, both agents behave unethically yet succeed in delivering their programmes. However, a random audit selects the second instance and the agent's behaviour is discovered. By construction, there is no difference between the two agents; one was just unfortunate enough to be caught (adapted from Michaelson, 2008). Nevertheless, this grants luck an important role in ethics, which can be extremely problematic (Nagel, 1993); after all, if organisations are – or become – too complex to be controlled in detail, it is difficult for acquisition agents to be

held to account if the success or failure of their work is in significant measure due to chance.

Suppose instead that an acquisition agent deliberately distorts (reduces) the anticipated cost of a programme to help it secure funding, but the amount then doubles once reality takes over. However, the agent's hidden aim was to better satisfy the end user, who is eventually provided with a capability that saves lives on operations. Those responsible for the funding may be inclined to describe this conspiracy as unethical, but for the user the ends justified the means. It is then problematic to call such actions unethical if agents 'have a systematic incentive to underestimate the likely cost of equipment' (Gray, 2009: 6).

Finally, consider another story: this time, an acquisition agent is corrupted into giving – or deliberately chooses to give – preferential treatment to a 'British' company. Everyone then agrees that this action benefitted the UK economy overall, particularly the sustainment of engineering skills. Whether this should be called unethical depends on different ethical perspectives, but now the agent can argue that the question is also one of national strategy. The Government or the acquisition system could respond by insisting that the agent did not behave as the acquisition procedures require, but if the agent declares that she has chosen to prioritise securing British jobs over European procurement law because it is the right thing to do then pointing to the process will have little impact on her reasoning.

These examples, although hypothetical, suggest that any answer to the question of what counts as unethical in Defence acquisition will not be straightforward. This is because the procurement and support of military capabilities is undertaken in at least two contexts: the large but limited context of *business*, which spans the public and private sectors, and the wider context of *society*, of which business generally and Defence more specifically are parts. Both have ethics associated with them: the ethics that should inform how people conduct themselves in business – hence *business ethics* – and the ethics that advises how everyone should behave in society. Defence acquisition could be guided by the ethics of the society it operates within, but typically its

activities span national borders. It could also be bound by theories of business ethics, but the acquisition context may be unique, such that it requires a new theory of acquisition ethics.

1.1 Ethics in Defence acquisition

This research explored the Defence acquisition context from an empirical, sociological perspective to better understand what can or cannot be said about a theory of business ethics in acquisition. Rather than directly apply traditional, normative theories of ethics that prescribe what is ethical and what is not (Dancy, 2013), this research argues that existing approaches do not account for people's behaviour and that what is more important is how people use ethics when they talk about business decisions. For example, as the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) increasingly outsources more of its traditionally core functions, and as senior figures are caught in political scandals in which they appear to have sold their influence, a narrative of an unethical 'revolving door' between the MOD and the Defence Industry has gained prominence (David-Barrett, 2011). According to some versions of this narrative, which are replicated in the survey and interview data in this research, the Defence Industry is parasitic on the MOD, and the 'poaching' of public sector workers to positions in the private sector underpins an adversarial relationship. However, identifying a rule that defines this movement of people's employment as unethical and including it in a code of ethics is problematic, as the literature review in Chapter 2 clarifies. Moreover, there is very little research on the impact of such codes and people may ignore or resist them even if they have agreed to them (Helin and Sandström, 2010)

Although this issue of so-called 'revolving doors' has been studied in the contexts of political transparency and business ethics, there is little research on the impact of the ever-closer links between customer and supplier in Defence acquisition and how these may challenge the dominant, oppositional account. Those who argue that the relationship is more accurately characterised as interdependent have not directly considered the influence of narratives in precluding what might be better – in business terms – for the overall Defence

sector; for example, that the movement of people between sectors with blurred boundaries should be considered both natural and desirable (Zaring, 2013; Tan, 2013; Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2011). In particular, the ethical objections associated with the closeness or otherwise of public and private sectors in UK Defence have not been considered from a sociological viewpoint that examines how narratives shape what is or is not permitted. Therefore, this research seeks to address this gap in present understanding by examining how narratives shape legitimacy in business.

1.2 Research question

The overall research question addressed in this research was thus: *How does ethics function in narratives of Defence acquisition?* The investigation explored what people in Defence say when they talk about the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry, and what this suggests about the role of ethics in narratives of Defence acquisition. The proposition offered, with empirical support, is that these narratives use ethics to legitimise the courses of action that could be taken, rather than to do the right thing according to a theory of ethics. As a basic example, when the employment of women in front line roles was being considered by the MOD, critics pointed to the supposedly negative influence on military ethos and, therefore, the risk to life on operations ('every infantryman knows that the price for this social engineering experiment will be paid in blood'), attempting to delegitimise an option that was eventually taken (Kemp, 2016). How this form of narrative functions in Defence acquisition was the focus of the research.

1.3 Structure of the research

The research is set out across six subsequent chapters. Firstly, in Chapter 2 a detailed **literature review** explores business ethics, identifying several themes and the limitations of studies to date. It is argued that normative ethics is easily overwhelmed by the detail of specific contexts, a difficulty that is illustrated through thought experiments that initially appear easy to interpret but soon contradict people's intuitions and conflict with the ordinary behaviours expected

in Defence acquisition or anywhere else. Normative ethics is then contrasted with descriptive approaches, which examine how people actually act when confronted with ethical problems. The implications of neuroscientific and behavioural science research are explored and renewed emphasis is placed on the conflict between current perspectives on Defence acquisition and the reality of people's cognitive limitations, which are not addressed by existing codes of ethics. Finally, an alternative conception is set out, in which ethics is understood as forming part of how power is exercised within organisations. The literature review proposes that even if a normative ethics of Defence acquisition is one day possible, any theory of ethics should – for completion – attempt to take account of how ethics serves to support or delegitimise specific narratives in the business of acquisition.

To limit the scope of the research, Chapter 3 explains the **aims and objectives**, together with the detail of a case study that was selected as a vehicle to conduct the empirical work. The chapter characterises the literature gap from the prior review and how the research addresses this, stating its rationale and explicit intent through the research question above. The case study is situated relative to the literature and its appropriateness is justified.

Having examined the available literature and having considered the case study to be employed, Chapter 4 sets out the **methodology** used in researching the use of ethics in narratives. This is undertaken by describing the research paradigm, including a critical discussion of the ontological, epistemological and methodological commitments. In particular, it is argued that the use of a critical case study is necessary to construct, through narrative analysis, an ideal type to permit inferences about the whole – Defence acquisition, or business ethics across the public/private sector interface more generally – from the detail of a single, 'paradigmatic case' (Biernacki, 2012: 148). Bourdieu's (1990) theory of practice as a theoretical framework for social inquiry is explained and its use in this research is justified as providing the best fit for an exploration of business ethics in the acquisition context.

The **results and findings** in Chapter 5 display the quantitative and qualitative data obtained through the research. In addition to providing analysis of the results, it explores the use of narratives and how ethics forms a vital part of them. The penultimate **discussion** in Chapter 6 then brings together the literature and the findings to develop an ideal type to account for the results and suggest an answer to the overall research question. This is offered as a best explanation for why Defence acquisition has achieved limited success in integrating customer and supplier roles to deliver improvements (Gray, 2009). Finally, a **conclusion** in Chapter 7 summarises the research, including its implications and recommendations for further study.

1.4 Scope

An important qualification in this research is that it made a deliberate choice to focus on *how* people narrate their experiences using ethics, rather than ethics itself. Therefore, for the purposes of this work, it does not matter what should or should not happen in Defence acquisition: no ethical position is taken with regard to how people may behave or have behaved, and there is no advocacy of what ought or ought not to happen with regard to the case study or to acquisition in general, except insofar as critical realism as a research paradigm implies a search for better ways of undertaking acquisition.

Secondly, the research focused on the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry, but recognised that what counts as the latter is contested and is increasingly complicated by the global role of companies involved in Defence acquisition (Dorman, Uttley and Wilkinson, 2015). To address this difficulty, the UK Defence Industry has been characterised as 'all defence suppliers that create value, employment, technology or intellectual assets in the UK', whether UK or foreign-owned (MOD, 2002: 4). This then implies characterising the UK Defence Industry 'in terms of where the technology is created, where the skills and intellectual property reside, where jobs are created and sustained, and where the investment is made' (MOD, 2002: 9). This was the definition of 'the UK Defence Industry' employed throughout this research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Business ethics has a significant academic pedigree and, after an overview of why business ethics is important, this literature review is focused on four key themes that emerge from an examination of the existing research: the centrality of normative ethics, imported from philosophy; the major theories of business ethics and their influence on the principal-agent problem; the challenge of empirical research that describes how people actually behave with respect to ethics; and the application to business ethics of sociological perspectives on both the role of social identity and the influence of social power. These themes are related throughout to the research context of Defence acquisition. The review concludes with options for further research, as well as a link to the theoretical framework to be employed, which is covered in detail in the methodology chapter.

As set out in the introduction, this chapter situates the work within the larger business ethics research base. To explore what an ethics of Defence acquisition might consist in, the literature review was undertaken via keyword search against the search strings 'business ethics', 'acquisition', 'procurement', 'procurement ethics', and combinations thereof. Citation searching was then used to expand the scope to related papers and – given the results, explained below – to take a sociological perspective, which added 'identity', 'sociology', 'Bourdieu', 'theory of practice' to the keyword search. This captured the headings in this review and the associated literature. The primary database employed was EBSCO through Cranfield University's Barrington Digital Library, supported by Google Scholar, ABI Inform and Emerald Insight. An important limitation, particularly in the later use of Bourdieu's (1990) theory of practice, was that the literature was limited to publications in English and, therefore, excluded un-translated French discussion of Bourdieu's work.

2.1 Ethics and Business

Any discussion of ethics begins with the difficulty of defining it. The term *ethics* is often conflated with *morality* or the separation of good and bad behaviour, but

ethics is instead a conception of moral judgments: where morality is concerned with choices, ethics is about the reasoning that justifies them (Razzaque and Hwee, 2002). For example, a personal belief that infidelity is always and everywhere wrong is a *moral* claim; an explanation shared with others to convince them to believe similarly constitutes an *ethical* statement. Historically, morality developed from the obedience owed to God and to religious authority into a conception of self-governance (Schneewind, 1998). The study of morality and its extension to collective self-governance is thus ethics (Singer, 2002), in which morality becomes social and functions as a form of collective conscience (Swartz, 2010).

Ethics can be common to all situations or limited to a specific context, such as business, and is typically represented as a set of rules of behaviour that govern how individuals should behave, which sit over and above their own, personal sense of morality. If 'the good' designates what should be valued, then 'the right' codifies what should be done (Sullivan, 2006). These rules should be higher than the legal minimum (Backof and Martin, 1991). Indeed, without this distinction between law and ethics, it would not be possible to make sense of claims that what is (or was) legally permissible can nevertheless be judged unethical; for example, the owning of slaves or participation in genocide at times in history when these were allowed or even encouraged by the existing legal framework. In this respect, business ethics is considered vital in addressing corruption in procurement and other fields of business activity where actions that may be legal are nevertheless opposed as unethical (Sullivan, 2006).

The most common experience of ethics for individuals is via ethical dilemmas, or situations in which people are faced with conflicting values; for example, whether a person should adhere to an ethical principle against stealing or instead to a duty to provide food for her family (Landeros and Plank, 1996). Ethics should aid in resolving this kind of predicament and, in both business and personal contexts, provide accountability by demonstrating that activities have been conducted properly, or at least not in violation of societal expectations (Webley, 2001). Indeed, one challenge is that behaving unethically can often be

profitable in the short-term, but in the longer-term it damages reputation because trust is lost (Keller, Lindberg, Vickers and Williams, 2006).

Although business ethics is now described in the literature as an example of *applied* ethics, owing primarily to the complexity of the commercial environment (Withers and Maling, 2013), this is a recent conceptual separation and it had previously been assumed that everyday ethics would suffice, rendering any distinction artificial (Sinclair, 1993). Business ethicists now agree that commerce requires at least some form of consensus on obligations – such as trust and accuracy of information – to ensure that supply chains can function (Webley, 2001). Moreover, ethics forces its way into business because if there were no societal needs then there would be no place for business to serve them; so, in this sense, the opportunity for commerce to contribute to society depends on the existence of shortfalls or inefficiencies (Michaelson, 2008). By the same token, ethics must be part of national defence because people's security needs have to be met, not to mention the larger context of the ethics of maintaining and employing military capabilities in the first place (Byrne, 2010).

The study of business ethics as a specific discipline began in the early twentieth century as a consequence of public pressure on businesses to act in the wake of numerous scandals (Abend, 2013). However, in spite of the ancient philosophical history of ethics, discussed in more detail below, business ethics was not researched significantly prior to the 1990s (Bazerman and Gino, 2012). Instead, ethics was the domain of philosophers and, if it was taught at all on business courses, the education was prescriptive and normative, setting out what could be learned from philosophy and how people ought to behave, whether in business or in any other part of life. This approach also allowed decisions to be assessed in ethical terms, but only by appealing to philosophy.

Even if answers could be found in philosophy, the extent to which they could be accessed was at issue. Based on work in cognitive development, originating with Piaget (1950), it was argued that ethics depends largely on how developed a person's reasoning is. That is, given an assumption that philosophy already provides a guide to how to behave, the more ethically developed a person is,

the closer they should be able to get to the correct assessment. Kohlberg (1981) and Rest (1986) provided models that accommodated different levels of reasoning and suggested that people can be capable of ethical judgment yet still behave unethically if they fail to reason at the higher stages, in which intention is explicitly involved.

Research into business ethics began to challenge this approach, based on the commonplace that even good people sometimes do bad things (Bazerman and Gino, 2012). Several infamous experiments showed that people can be overwhelmed by the circumstances they find themselves in, such as in Milgram's (1963) investigations of obedience to authority or the Stanford Prison experiment (Zimbardo, 2007); both demonstrated that people could be made to behave in ways that they would otherwise recognise as unethical. Indeed, although public concern over ethics tends to focus on the actions of individuals, unethical behaviour has since been shown to be widespread in organisations and not attributable to specific individuals or groups (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms, 2008). Consequently, other explanations have been sought, which are identified in Section 2.5 below.

2.1.1 Ethics and acquisition

If business is an instance of applied ethics then the acquisition context is more specific still. At its most basic level, the Defence sector is indirectly responsible for the harm caused by weapons systems, whether to individuals or to the environment, through the provision of these systems (Byrne, 2007). Programmes may opt to invest more or less time in minimising undesired harm, such as collateral damage to non-military targets, and these are decisions for the Defence Industry as supplier and for the MOD as customer through requirements setting (Halpern and Snider, 2010). Whether the use of military weapons can be ethical at all is contested (Byrne, 2010), but – on the assumption that it can be, or given that such systems currently are acquired and used – this provision for the use of force creates a special regulatory context for the public and private sectors (Halpern and Snider, 2010), as well as tension where ethics is not also blended across the two (Roberts, 2010).

In general, unethical behaviour in acquisition takes two forms: deliberate action, which is typically also illegal; and indirect omission or negligence, usually driven by organisational pressures such as a desire for promotion (Latiff, 2015). Examples of deliberate action are when individuals involved in acquisition accept gifts or other inducements, provide unfair advantage to particular suppliers, or exploit information asymmetry (Saini, 2010). Historical examples of such behaviour in acquisition range from bribery and using political influence to deliberately selling faulty goods for profit at times of war (Latiff, 2015).

Ethical problems arise throughout the acquisition process. At the requirements setting stage, since supplier companies have an interest in winning new business and will not survive if they do not, they may attempt to convince the customer that a new system is necessary when it is not; meanwhile, acquisition agents or sponsors seeking greater influence may support them in doing so (Latiff, 2015). Moreover, once an acquisition programme exists, the prospects of the people involved – both public and private sector – are bound up in its success, which influences their behaviour and creates incentives to over-promise to seniors, to minimise cost predictions or plans, to refuse to accept and account for technological uncertainty, to reduce the time and effort allocated to testing, or to oversimplify requirements that will then have to be improved through greater investment; in short, 'many participants in the procurement system have a vested interest in optimistically mis-estimating the outcome' (Gray, 2009: 19). Even decisions about where to build or support capabilities can be subject to political intervention and governments, elected representatives, and large companies have been accused of exerting influence (Halpern and Snider, 2010).

The need for ethics in acquisition was recognised in the UK's Defence Values for Acquisition in the previous Defence Industrial Strategy (MOD, 2005), and more recently as acquisition has increasingly been professionalised and as behavioural incentives to underestimate costs have been identified (Gray, 2009). To assure ethical behaviour, the public sector has insisted that contractors have deliberate codes of ethics, supported by training programmes

(GAO, 2005), utilising better governance to ensure that procurement functions fulfil an ethical obligation to reduce social harm (Alder and Gooch, 2013). However, unethical behaviour is most likely to be caused by acquisition agents working to unachievable aims or timelines (Keller *et al.*, 2006) and, without incentives to behave differently, merely committing to ethical codes does not address the potential rewards of acting unethically in business (Kurland, 1993).

Therefore, this presents a problem to anyone seeking to understand what counts as ethical in Defence acquisition or to improve performance (Gray, 2009). To pursue the claim of a shortfall in codes of ethics and to add more detail to the overview of business ethics, the four key themes introduced above are now covered in turn, beginning with the historical focus on ethics as being exclusively the domain of philosophy.

2.2 Normative ethics

As has already been noted, normative approaches to ethics originate in philosophy, of which ethics is a significant element (Schneewind, 1998). They are prescriptive insofar as philosophical consideration of an ethical problem is intended to reveal the correct (ethical) course of action; that is, they seek to identify *norms* to govern conduct. Normative ethics can invoke principles that either absolutely determine an act to be unethical (for instance, 'it is always and everywhere wrong to kill someone') or else judge it in a contributory sense (that an act involves killing someone must count against it, but there may also be other principles involved) (Dancy, 2013). Nevertheless, given a normative theory of ethics, the right thing to do in the face of an ethical dilemma is whatever the theory prescribes. Although this need not imply that everyone is or should be a philosopher, people are at least supposed to consider ethical decisions rationally and judge as a philosopher presumably would (Palazzo, Krings and Hoffrage, 2011). Normative theories thus have two aims: the theoretical one of explaining why a particular course of action is or is not ethical, as well as the practical goal of applying this to guide behaviour (Väyrynen, 2011).

2.2.1 Ethics and trolley problems

To illustrate normative theories before defining them, it is useful to offer a famous philosophical thought experiment: the so-called 'trolley problem' (due originally to Foot, 1967). Suppose that a runaway trolley car (or tram) is hurtling out of control and that further along the track there are five innocent bystanders who happen to be walking on the line and who thus unknowingly face certain death. (In less benign versions of the problem, the five may be tied to the tracks to prevent escape.) An observer, conveniently standing near to a switch that controls a track interchange, could operate the lever and thereby divert the trolley onto another track, along which a single person is walking. Should she divert the train? Now consider an adjustment to the scenario: instead of the switch, the observer is located on a bridge overlooking the track and stands next to a large man. If she pushes the man off the bridge and into the path of the trolley, she can stop it killing the five bystanders, sacrificing him in doing so. Should she push him?

The trolley problem has resulted in a wealth of literature because it illustrates a basic difference in ethical theories. When questioned, in the first scenario most people agree that the switch should be thrown and they base this decision on simple consequences: it is better to save five even though one will die, or – normatively – the needs of the many outweigh those of the few. On the other hand, people report feeling uncomfortable about pushing the man from the bridge, even though the calculation is exactly the same: sacrifice one so that five may live. In the second case, there seems to be a separate duty at work, which prevents the deliberate intent to kill the man.

One way to understand the distinction is via Aquinas's doctrine of double effect, according to which doing harm to promote good overall is always inferior to promoting good while doing harm only as an indirect side-effect (Lanteri, Chelini and Rizzello, 2008). This perspective allows the trolley problem to be characterised as it standardly has been: it is permissible to flip the switch but not to push the bystander because the former results in indirect harm whereas the latter is direct and deliberate, even though both achieve the same

consequences. Indeed, this preference for indirect harm may even be a psychological mechanism in people (Royzman and Baron, 2002). In summary, it seems that people weigh up the consequences but still have in mind some form of duty to not cause deliberate harm, a balance that a good person would then try to achieve.

2.2.2 Normative theories of ethics

Trolley cases are found throughout the ethics literature, which has been dominated by normative theories that help explain how people should make ethical decisions (Michaelson, 2008). A detailed analysis of ethical theories is beyond the scope of this chapter, but they are traditionally divided into three classes of theory: consequentialist, deontological and virtue-theoretic.

2.2.2.1 Consequentialism

The claim that an action is right insofar as it has positive consequences is called consequentialism and is akin to an ethical cost-benefit analysis (Slote and Pettit, 1984). It is in consequentialism that 'the ends justify the means' or 'the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few', hence sacrificing one to save five. Indeed, for the consequentialist, both trolley scenarios are the same and if a person is willing to pull the switch then she should also be ready to push. Consequentialism is most famously associated with Bentham and Mill, and what counts are the effects of actions as part of an overall ethical calculus (Gigerenzer, 2010).

Standard objections to consequentialism focus on the practical difficulty of having enough information available to predict and then assess the consequences of potential actions, just as with the trolley scenarios. There is also a concern that consequentialism can be used to justify various horrors, such as imprisoning innocent people if the deterrent effect on overall criminal behaviour outweighs the not inconsiderable inconvenience to the new prisoners (Murphy, 1994). Consequentialists respond that theirs is a theory of *justification* rather than one of deciding which values should be chosen in the first place, or a focus on the right rather than the good (Pettit, 2002); therefore, it can be

noted what kind of world might follow from selecting between options while still choosing to do otherwise (Slote and Pettit, 1984). In the introductory scenario in Chapter 1, for example, the acquisition agent who engaged in inflating costs but ultimately delivered an important capability could account for her behaviour on consequentialist grounds: it was acceptable (to her) to lie because the value of the outcome outweighs the deception, but whether this kind of behaviour is permitted would be up to the employer. Needless to say, a political backdrop of austerity may disincline the acquisition agent to consider ethics and focus instead exclusively on programme results.

2.2.2.2 Deontology

The second approach, due to Kant, is deontology, which is concerned with duties rather than consequences (from the Greek *deon*, meaning duty). For the deontologist, people should focus on doing what is right because it is their duty to do so, instead of or even irrespective of the consequences. Kant set out both hypothetical imperatives – things people should do if they want to get something else, such as working hard to pass an exam – and categorical imperatives that are always and everywhere duties (Bowie, 2002). There are several formulations of these categorical imperatives: one is to act 'only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction', which implies that people cannot lie because if everyone did the same then social life would break down. Another derivation is to 'treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end' (Kant, 1993: 30). In business terms, this means that people must freely consent to a relationship such as employment and must be given the opportunity to develop their capacities as an unrestricted individual rather than being thought of and used as an economic tool (Bowie, 2002).

For a deontologist, then, an acquisition agent is not permitted to lie because there is a categorical imperative not to, even if the capability that may be brought about through the lying is desperately needed. This disregard for consequences is a criticism of deontology: what if lying once to acquire a

capability would save ten lives on operations? Kant insisted that the duty not to lie holds even where life is at stake, famously arguing that if a killer asks for the whereabouts of his quarry then a person may not lie to prevent the murder and must answer the question honestly. However, while a Kantian perspective prevents some of the imagined horrors of consequentialism, it is easy to stretch it to incredulity: if it is wrong to sacrifice one person for the sake of five, what about one for two hundred or two million? Another difficulty is that ethical dilemmas are, by definition, conflicts between duties.

2.2.2.3 Virtue ethics

Rather than concerning itself with what people should do, virtue ethics is about what kind of person they should aspire to be (Pence, 2002). Virtue ethicists argue that duty and the greatest good have become outdated concepts and that in daily life people merge conflicting principles, such as by employing triage in treating the sick but prioritising individual autonomy in affirming the right to abortion (MacIntyre, 1981). Virtue ethics aims to provide, through archetypal virtues like wisdom, courage and temperance, a narrative tradition that helps develop ethical character (Pence, 2002). When confronted with an ethical dilemma, the virtue theorist asks what the different possibilities would say about her character (and vice versa) instead of seeking a rule or calculating consequences, although both can form part of her deliberations.

In an acquisition context, virtue ethics is embodied in the notion of a military ethos and the development (through osmosis) of the appropriate values, usually via exemplar characters or stories (Robinson, 2008). The virtuous agent then relies on her ethos to judge how to behave, although critics argue that it is unclear whether this means that people positively accept the values they adopt or are inculcated with, or instead behave in response to social cues and scripts, particularly to help in reducing identity tensions when they join the military or any other new environment (Lind and van den Bos, 2013). Moreover, it is difficult for people to translate stories or examples of virtue (such as tales of saints) into tangible actions when faced with ethical dilemmas (Abend, 2012). Virtue approaches are also contradicted by the UK military's consequentialist

'Service Test' that asks personnel to consider how an act will impact the reputation of operational effectiveness of their Service, even if military training in the UK is essentially ethos-based (Robinson, 2007).

2.2.2.4 Theories of ethics and the trolley problem

Returning to the trolley problem and its recent empirical treatments helps demonstrate why applying these normative theories is not so straightforward, particularly with experiments suggesting that how people react to the ethical dilemma can be manipulated in interesting ways. For example, when the sequencing of the problem is changed, such that people are exposed first to the question of pushing the bystander off the bridge, their emotional response can alter their reasoning about flipping the switch in the other (now second) scenario. However, their reasoning (that killing one to save five may be permissible) does not appear to change their emotional response to the deliberate pushing, even though the consequences of both scenarios remain the same (Lanteri, Chelini and Rizello, 2008).

Providing an 'explanation' for responses to a hypothetical scenario is perhaps inappropriate, but one way to interpret the difference in this case is that if people are forced first to confront the possibility that someone will die as a direct result of their action, their emotional response overrules the later, reasoned decision. Normatively, at least, this conclusion is disturbing because in life people do not get to choose the order in which they experience ethical dilemmas: the utility of theories of ethics would be significantly limited if they only function when life plays out in a particular way. Another experiment adapted the trolley problem to test whether people would be more likely to push the bystander to save five lives than to pull the switch to save three, but this proved not to be the case. However, when the experiment was changed to involve two separate tracks on which three could be saved by switching or five by pushing (in addition to doing nothing), people preferred to push, presumably moving towards a consideration of consequences (Bazerman and Gino, 2012).

Further differences have been identified in cultural attitudes, particularly the role of a belief in fatalism, from which perspective an action may be ethically

permissible but is nevertheless resisted because of non-ethical factors, such as a conviction that events should not be steered from their given course (Gold, Colman and Pulford, 2014). Another, less culturally-bound way to interpret this is via limited knowledge: although the trolley experiment is set up as a simplification to begin with, people realise that they cannot be certain what will happen if they act in an attempt to save others and may therefore prefer to not become involved at all – a kind of 'keep out of it' heuristic, invoked even when there is an opportunity to do good by intervening. This is returned to later in the literature review.

2.2.2.5 Methodological issues with trolley problems

It is also unclear whether, in considering trolley problems, people are making comparative assessments between the cases or instead evaluating each individually; however, given the implications of the order in which the cases are presented, there are difficulties associated with making any normative conclusions at all (Liao, Wiegmann, Alexander and Vong, 2011). Indeed, trolley problem research has been based on small samples that are straightforwardly unrepresentative, consisting largely of higher education students who are paid to participate and who come from limited demographics (Hauser, Cushman, Young, Kang-Xing Jin and Mikhail, 2007). Moreover, using standard scenarios implicitly assumes that there are no organisational structures or dynamics that influence how people make decisions (Baïada-Hirèche, Pasquero and Chanlat, 2011). The analysis of trolley problems in terms of the major philosophical approaches is also begging the question, assuming that no other options exist or that the experiments can only be explained in terms of the standard normative theories available. The experiment thus tests how well philosophy can be applied (reproducing the cognitive development work discussed above), not how people actually behave when confronted with ethical choices. In short, trolley problems are reliant on a methodological assumption that the closest match between the intuitive response and normative ethical theories 'wins' (Turner, 2013).

The general issue is that both ethical decisions and their interpretations are underdetermined because of equivocality and uncertainty: there are many possible options available to people, who lack complete information to decide between them, and this is precisely the position of others who then seek to explain why people decided as they did or judge them for it (Sonenshein, 2007). Indeed, it can be argued that an ethical dilemma is just a problem like any other, in which a person has to decide which factors are important and which are less so. Although an ethical principle may be appealed to, there is no way to know whether a general principle will apply to a particular situation without first setting out the reasons that arise from the particular circumstances; but then the general principle is no longer necessary (Dancy, 2004).

The serious methodological issue with the trolley problem (and other philosophical thought experiments) is thus that, to reduce bias, the cases intentionally present subjects with less complexity and uncertainty than would otherwise be the case (Hauser *et al.*, 2007), which potentially primes them for acceptable or supportable responses and encourages *post hoc* explanations in terms of norms (Sonenshein, 2007). For example, note that the consequences in the basic trolley scenarios are *not* actually identical: the innocent victim who dies to save the five other innocents is different in each case (that is, the person on the tracks is not the person on the bridge, unless this is specifically emphasised).

Even if the story is adjusted to make the two situations the same, there may still be a difference between the five and the one. For example, what if the person switching or pushing is related in some way to the sacrificial bystander on the bridge or else to any of the five? This changes the story from one privileging rational explanation to a more emotional response: the lack of supporting information – simplistically, what if the one potential victim is a cancer researcher and the five are convicted murderers? – means that the most honest answer might be 'it depends' (Abend, 2012). In consequentialist terms, based on the overall outcome alone, pushing one's spouse off a bridge to save five people might well be the ethical thing to do, but of course this adjustment to the

scenario alters everything. Similarly, if the spouse now lies on the track with four other unfortunates, any resistance to pushing may be far easier to override.

Nevertheless, trolley problems are not entirely hypothetical and are increasingly relevant as work develops on autonomous vehicles, for which ethical decision making exactly like whether to switch or push has to be embedded in control systems. For example, an autonomous vehicle may need to choose between killing five people or deliberately crashing to instead result in only the death of its single passenger. Even though the owner may agree with this reasoning via trolley cases, some research suggests that people will be less likely to buy vehicles that are able to make a decision to sacrifice the owner for the consequentialist benefit of others (Bonnefon, Shariff and Rahwan, 2015). Here the tension between an imagined duty that a person may believe her car owes to her as its purchaser is in conflict with a similarly imaginary ethical obligation for the car to balance the life of the owner against those of others.

2.2.2.6 The insufficiency of normative ethics

In summary, although this introduction to normative theories is necessarily limited and a voluminous literature exists, normative ethics remains contested with little or no agreement on which ethical theories are correct or even which values should be held (Duska, 2013). This means that there are no philosophical conclusions to recommend to business or to society at large (Leiter, 2014). Even where consensus exists, the background philosophical assumptions can differ significantly (Abend, 2014). More importantly, if philosophers are unable to agree on normative ethics, the prospects for application by non-philosophers in business contexts are limited. Indeed, if there is no accord on how to decide what counts as ethical, what is the use of codes of ethics? It is possible to point instead to agreement on common values, but this is no more than is already provided by the European Convention on Human Rights and similar statements of basic rights.

Even if there was a hypothetical set of norms that could be applied by ordinary people, it is the constantly changing nature of the actual context that frustrates attempts to implement a normative approach, just as with the literature on the

trolley problem. This is not to argue that ethics is relative, but only that 'it depends' is indeed a legitimate response in practice to ethical dilemmas when the specific context is important. Philosophically, it is difficult to argue that because an ethical principle makes sense in some hypothetical context, or even in some real life historical scenario, it must follow that it has general applicability in all contexts (Dancy, 2013). It then becomes easy to tell hypothetical stories about acquisition that would be analogous: what should an Army agent do if cost-benefit analysis shows that it is better to sacrifice several land programmes for the sake of an aircraft carrier? Perhaps more challengingly, what if an agent's friend has recently been killed on operations for want of a capability that, to acquire it, will imply pushing someone off the metaphorical bridge? On this view, acquisition becomes a zero-sum game in which the funding of a programme means another losing support.

2.3 Theories of Business Ethics

In spite of the difficulties with normative theories, in practice business ethics is a form of applied ethics that mediates between philosophical theories and the everyday business environment. Even though the reliance on philosophy is typically based on a superficial reading of the associated literature (Abend, 2011), the field has been dominated by three approaches, which are influenced by and associated with the main normative theories.

2.3.1 Shareholder theory

Firstly, shareholder theory argues that it is the responsibility of business managers to maximise shareholder profit because companies are the private property of their owners; therefore, businesses can have no social responsibilities and it makes no sense to speak of ethics in business beyond this focus on what the shareholder wants. This does not mean that businesses can do as they please because they must still follow legal rules and shareholders may choose to impose specific requirements on managers; for example, to not operate in countries with poor human rights records (Friedman, 1970). However, on this view, the sole responsibility of an acquisition agent

would be to her 'shareholder'; that is, to a capability sponsor as the overall customer.

Criticism of shareholder theory focuses on its short-termism, as well as its association with consequentialist economic logic and the idea that the hidden hand of markets best advances the common good, which has been subjected to empirical critique (Stout, 2013). However, there is also a deontological version of shareholder theory that avoids this objection, which contends that it is impermissible to use the resources of shareholders in ways they do not desire, even if this would advance the common good. This is because it is always unethical to use people – in this case, the shareholders – as means rather than ends, with business managers having agreed, implicitly or explicitly, to use the shareholders' money as the shareholder intended (Hasnas, 1998). The deontological acquisition agent must then deliver exactly what her sponsor has asked for, even if she believes herself able to provide something superior.

Nevertheless, shareholder views on business ethics may have the effect of encouraging 'unethical' behaviour: if business decisions are taken via cost/benefit analysis and the ultimate aim is to increase shareholder value, then ethical values may be subordinated to profit. However, businesses – both at the organisational and individual level – also undertake philanthropic activities, so it may be more accurate to say that a plurality of values exists and that people can be ambivalent about which predominates at any given time (Segal and Lehrer, 2013). The more general issue is that separating business from ethics is untenable because a sole focus on shareholder value is not ethically neutral and implies valuing possible courses of action above others (Harris and Freeman, 2008).

2.3.2 Stakeholder theory

The second key theory of business ethics is stakeholder theory, which asserts that anyone with a stake in a business's activities is due ethical consideration, regardless of their legal position relative to the company (Freeman, 1980). This was also intended as a critique of shareholder theory and succeeded in bringing stakeholder perspectives to prominence (Webley, 2001), particularly once it

became apparent that greater shareholder profit could be delivered by achieving stakeholder value (Freeman, 2008). Indeed, if customers want to see ethical practices then it should be profitable for businesses to behave ethically (Wagner-Tsukamoto, 2007).

Stakeholder theory is often linked to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), or any actions of businesses 'that address social and ethical values beyond legal requirements', such as philanthropy (Van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013: 351). CSR is then that aspect of business ethics that focuses on how companies should interact with wider society, rather than solely with individuals as customers; for example, taking into account any corporate (deontological) duties to the environment rather than to shareholders, such as where a profitable activity is in conflict with environmental protection. However, CSR is not just about ethics but can also help to increase future profits by enhancing the reputation of a business or aligning with stakeholder expectations; this is the link to stakeholder theory (Windsor, 2006).

Common to many such views is the claim that pro-social behaviour is of benefit both to society and to the profitability of a business (Porter and Kramer, 2006). This enhancing of business success was, explicitly, the original aim of business ethics education in universities and business schools (Abend, 2013). However, critics object that the accommodation of stakeholders and shareholders ignores situations in which there is a tension between their aims (Margolis and Walsh, 2003). Furthermore, this is an empirical (actually consequentialist) version of stakeholder theory: the claim is that considering the views of all stakeholders is best for the success of a business, rather than this approach being recommended even if it is not profitable at all (Hasnas, 1980).

In fact, there are well-documented instances of companies behaving in a pro-social manner without any economic motivation (Matten and Crane, 2005). The associated normative version of stakeholder theory holds that, notwithstanding the empirical assertion that business success follows from stakeholder consideration, businesses should give equal weight to the differing needs of stakeholders regardless, achieving a balance between these claims rather than

maximising profit to the shareholders. For stakeholder theorists, this normative principle is deontological insofar as businesses then have a duty to treat all stakeholders as ends rather than means (Wagner-Tsukamoto, 2007), even if this violates the same duty owed to shareholders (Hasnas, 1980). The practical difficulty for stakeholder theory is thus how to represent all stakeholders while also respecting the rights of shareholders, as well as attempting to account for the value of intangible assets such as trust or knowledge (Sveiby, 1997). In acquisition terms, this is the complexity of involving everyone with an interest in a capability while still delivering what the sponsor requires, which means balancing a commitment to front line operations with the assertion that all stakeholders have an equal claim, all complicated by the public sector having to consider factors beyond profit.

2.3.3 Integrative Social Contracts Theory

A third form of normative business ethics is the social contract tradition, best exemplified in recent times by Integrative Social Contracts Theory (ISCT; see Donaldson and Dunfee, 1999). Recognising that ethics needs to take account of organisational reality and cannot be imposed from above, ISCT attempts to achieve an accommodation between 'thin' norms that everyone in society could endorse and 'thick', context-dependent ones that are actually applied in daily life – a now-common distinction in ethics (Walzer, 1983). ISCT thus separates two forms of social contract: a hypothetical macro contract that sets the overarching, global ethical terms, and a second micro or local contract that applies within communities, businesses or other organisations (Donaldson and Dunfee, 2000). This twin conception of norms then means that communities may define their own local norms that are binding for their members, but *only* if the resulting micro contracts are compatible with the higher-level norms that everyone (by construction) accepts.

A simple example of ISCT is seen in many sports: rules set the boundaries of what can be done, but within their limits the teams are free to experiment with tactics. Another example is the restriction that 'churches cannot persecute heretics but they can choose bishops in the manner they see fit' (Lindblom,

2011: 578); that is, the persecution of heretics is (now) incompatible with societal hypernorms, but other religious matters are the business of the church alone, so long as its actions remain within the limits of these hypernorms. Norms are then described as authentic if they are both contracted and recognised by a community, and further as legitimate if they are within the boundaries of hypernorms. ISCT thus means giving communities as much freedom as possible to decide on their own ethics, but not so much that anything is permitted (Dempsey, 2011). The integration of the two types of norm stops communities from adopting rules that are considered illegitimate but also provides for 'moral free space' in which people are at liberty to contract with one another.

ISCT is useful in conceptualising acquisition because, on this view, if a decision has no effect outside of a community then it has no ethical implications unless it violates hypernorms (McGraw, 2004). For example, an acquisition agent might ignore process restrictions, thereby violating the equivalent of micronorms within acquisition, while not violating any societal macronorms: perhaps she ignores the views of a particular stakeholder while delivering a capability that still meets the requirements of the sponsor. The converse is also interesting: in a 'conspiracy of optimism', in which an acquisition agent accepts an unrealistically low tender from a contractor, the agent's behaviour may be unethical from a wider societal perspective while remaining ethical inside a subset community, such as a Single Service intent to safeguard capabilities even if the Government and/or electorate has other priorities. Another important instance is the conviction that so-called revolving door transitions between Defence and the defence industry are unethical: there are no macronorms preventing this movement of people and micronorm prohibitions are usually temporary if they exist at all.

Criticism of ISCT centres on the problem of actually identifying hypernorms. Donaldson and Dunfee (1999: 54) explicitly avoid providing a catalogue because 'the claim to have found a list, expressible in a particular natural language and definitive for all moral situations, constitutes a form of moral

absolutism'. Instead, on their view, ethics is no different from science in being a fallible and inevitably incomplete venture. Moreover, the 'thickness' of people's actual experience of ethics implies that hypernorms are already known *for them*; the difficulty is coming to an agreement with others, such as through a wide consensus, the acceptance of a bill of rights, or an overlap between laws and normative philosophical claims.

Just what constitutes sufficient consensus is the empirical question at issue, though (Wempe, 2008). If ISCT fails to provide hypernorms then it cannot be applied in practice in complex situations, especially in business (Calton, 2006). The general response to this objection has been to undertake surveys to determine hypernorms (Dunfee, 2006), which, for example, is how the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights was derived (Glendon, 2001). However, appealing to a vote hardly constitutes a normative approach and many historical norms that achieved consensus at one time – such as slavery or the inferiority of women – would now be rejected, at least in some regions (Van Buren, 2001). In short, a consensus has to be *just* before it can be accepted (Rawls, 1996), so ISCT must return to normative ethics.

This concern with articulating hypernorms is key when confronting moral free space: those circumstances in which the available hypernorms (such as a bill of rights) and micronorms fail to provide enough guidance to address some ethical dilemma; for example, the use of new technology such as Unmanned Autonomous Vehicles in combat (Singer, 2013). The implication is that moral free space will exist whenever new circumstances arise and while norms are adapting or evolving to meet them (Dunfee, 2006); but these are precisely the conditions in which ethics is needed most. Hypernorms are thus underdetermined and cannot function as intended (Phillips, Freeman and Wicks, 2003).

Nevertheless, a potential response – returned to below – is that the latitude provided by moral free space is exactly what ethics *should* involve (Kant, 1991): there is always a separation between ethical principles and actions because being ethical is about determining how best to apply the principles, rather than

following them as instructions (Derrida, 1988). On this view, then, people are actually empowered by deliberately not articulating ISCT in some hypothetically full format (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1999).

2.3.4 Principal-Agent problems

All these normative theories of business ethics, whether applied or otherwise, face the same difficulty, known as the principal-agent problem: while the shareholders and/or stakeholders may provide resources for and direction on what a business should do, agents must carry out this intent and may choose to deviate from it to suit their own needs. This divergence between the two always favours the agent because the latter has an advantage in information terms (Soudry, 2007). Transactional costs are then added to business because the principal must constrain the agent through policy and processes to minimise the risk of a separation of interests; meanwhile, the agent is less inclined to work to achieve the principal's ends because there is a lower chance of personal (additional) benefit (Yukins, 2010).

The principal-agent dichotomy is based on an agent being monitored by a principal, but in acquisition there are multiple principals and agents (Soudry, 2007) and merely being aware of the potential for conflicts of interest is insufficient to reduce their actual impact (Bazerman and Tenbrunsel, 2011). To return to an earlier example, an acquisition agent may actually believe that people on front-line operations are her real principals, or there may be other people she seeks to satisfy by leveraging information asymmetry. This then generates moral hazard in the public sector because there is little or no threat of sanction in the event that an agent misunderstands – deliberately or otherwise – the principal-agent relationship in this way.

Indeed, for an economically rational actor, any benefits from efficient acquisition will accrue largely to the principal, while the costs of inefficiency will be borne by the agents, which means that agents are not actually motivated to achieve financial savings unless otherwise incentivised (Yukins, 2010). The implication is that the agent can focus on the front-line colleague rather than the principal and will escape sanction even if caught; after all, although the principal may

understand 'value' to mean the best capability possible while minimising costs to the taxpayer, the agent may interpret it differently as the greatest capability regardless of cost, an assessment that will be hard to challenge on ethical grounds. (As discussed later, exactly this point was raised in the interviews.)

Without an economic measure of agent performance, it is difficult for principals to understand how well agents are discharging their responsibilities or the extent of any divergence in interests. In the unlikely event of being challenged, an acquisition agent can either point to delivering results to the end user (a consequentialist justification) or insist that she has a duty to not compromise on the threat to end users regardless of cost (a deontological rationalisation). Moreover, any control measures, whether in the form of rules or oversight, will restrict the innovation that an agent can say is necessary to identify and act upon opportunities (Soudry, 2007). The point is that, from an ethical perspective, the agent may prioritise innovation on behalf of colleagues rather than acquisition rules; that is, she prioritises stakeholders over principals (Yukins, 2010). From the agent's point of view, she is not doing anything wrong; and for the principal, there is no normative consensus to fall back on to say otherwise.

2.3.4.1 Principals, agents and ethos

One way for public sector organisations like Defence to attempt to address the principal-agent problem is via the development of a public service ethos, which is a virtue ethics approach that then motivates agents to serve the public interest rather than their own. However, achieving this in practice is not straightforward and people do not merely drop or minimise their own values and replace them with others (Gailmard, 2010). The difficulty is that these 'public values' are themselves contested and potentially in conflict with others; for example, the clash of existing Single Service values with the pan-Defence behaviours sought by Defence Reform (Levene, Allen, Conway, Day, Grimstone, Houghton, Iacobescu, McKeeve and Noakes, 2011). Indeed, a perverse behaviour can be induced if a principal declines to offer an agent any incentive to achieve a socially optimal result because an inefficient alternative

would actually leave the principal with a greater share (Miller and Whitford, 2006). For example, a military principal may decline to pay agents to deliver capability coherence across Defence because the existing incoherence provides for more resources to the principal's own Service, which is then an instance of 'good' behaviour violating an existing ethos (Cording, Harrison, Hoskisson and Karsten, 2014).

Therefore, even where the principal appeals to ethics via the notion of public service to reduce the likelihood that the agent will serve her own interests, those priorities may be replaced by group interests and still defeat the principal's intent (Atkinson and Fulton, 2013). Where what counts as the public interest is contested, as indeed it must be in a democracy, this problem will persist (Gailmard, 2010). Furthermore, if – as the sociological literature suggests – people in the public sector use 'public interest' as a rhetorical device to hide their own, more partisan interests, it is necessary to understand how this takes place and is sustained (Colley, 2012). Indeed, the notion of a 'public interest' is itself an explicitly ethical claim with normative implications – people should do such-and-such in the name of the public interest. Studying how narratives about it either support or delegitimise specific ways of organisational behaviour and how people make sense of them can thus illuminate the actual role of ethics in acquisition, a possibility considered again below (Sonenshein, 2007).

2.3.4.2 Codes of ethics

In spite of all these difficulties, the primary approach to avoiding the principal-agent problem and securing ethical behaviour in organisations is to provide people with a code of ethics, a method that has increased in popularity since the 1990s (Linden, 2013). In practice, businesses tend to treat ethics in an absolutist manner: using codes of ethics, organisations specify the values, policies and behaviours that are to be followed and typically do not admit of any doubt (Michaelson, 2008). Moreover, these codes also presuppose that people are rational and that the requirements of the code can be followed regardless of the role of organisational context (Colley, 2012).

Although ethics ostensibly benefits everyone, codes of ethics may actually function to restrict entry to professions and thus provide economic benefit to existing participants, serving to inflate the prestige associated with membership (McGraw, 2004). Indeed, the original motivation for business ethics education was explicitly linked with a drive to make business a profession like medicine by associating it with a code of ethics (Abend, 2013). Insisting on a code also places a limit on the right of exit because ordinarily a person can move between companies, but not if prohibited or restricted by a professional code.

More importantly, there is very little research on what happens to codes once they have been issued, and even when people actively sign up to a code of ethics they may still ignore or resist it (Helin and Sandström, 2010). Insisting upon a code is then likely to be of limited utility (McGraw, 2004). Studies also suggest that codes of ethics are insufficient in combatting unethical behaviour because people need to *feel* that something is wrong before they act on a code prohibiting it (Zhong, 2011). Codes can actually be counter-productive because they absolve people of ethical concern by transferring all ethical questions to the rules set out in the code (Helin and Sandström, 2010). In effect, they reduce ethical attention within a community because members defer to a code rather than, in the absence of any direction, being forced to make ethical decisions for themselves (Gordon, Clegg and Kornberger, 2009). This problem is returned to below.

2.4 Descriptive ethics

Given these difficulties with applying normative ethics to business, whether generally or to the acquisition context specifically, it should be little surprise that the literature on ethical decision-making questions whether people use norms at all, except in justifications after the fact (Lanteri, Chelini and Rizello, 2008). Descriptive ethics instead depicts how people actually act, and behavioural approaches study how ethical decisions are made and how people in turn judge the ethical choices of others.

Descriptive perspectives can also inform normative ethics, such as where following a norm results in unpalatable real world consequences and the norm

is therefore discarded (Gorski, 2013a). However, it is the difference between 'ethical decision making in a morally ideal world and ethical decision making in a world characterized by bounded rationality, weakness of will, character flaws, and the limitations of human cognition' that drives descriptive ethics (Bowie, 2009: 635). In short, it focuses on thick concepts that are contingent on the contexts in which they arise, rather than the thin, ostensibly universal standards of normative ethics (Abend, 2011). (Note that the potential objection here that descriptive ethics cannot be generalised – because it deals with specifics rather than universals – is addressed in Chapter 4.)

Another motivation for a shift to descriptive approaches is that questions of business ethics have tended to focus on individual action rather than the influence of collectives, minimising the role of organisations and thereby discounting the extent to which different business contexts might change ethical behaviours. This risks ignoring the impact of power, whether political or organisational, and invariably recommends minor changes to ethics training programmes rather than examining why ethical violations arise in organisations in the first place (Parker, 2003). In particular, the attitudes and expectations of individuals within organisations can be important in shaping how they behave and can induce unethical behaviour even when the values of the individuals and the organisation preclude it (Ntayi, Ahiauzu and Eyaa, 2011). Similarly, when ethical behaviour is not rewarded in organisations, ethical frameworks or the values espoused have little impact (Kurland, 1991). In general, the implied psychological contract between a company and its employees, or between a buyer and a supplier, can set reciprocal expectations of behaviour or obligations, violations of which can break down trust and lead to unethical actions (Hill, Eckerd, Wilson and Greer, 2008).

The underlying focus of descriptive ethics is thus on the complexity of actual ethical decision-making: the question of how things happen rather than how they ought to. Therefore, this section of the literature review is split into two: the implications of neuroscientific research for and on ethics, and empirical investigation of how people respond to ethical dilemmas.

2.4.1 Neuroscience and ethics

Normative accounts of ethics are significantly challenged by neuroethics, or the application of cognitive neuroscience to ethics (Salvador and Folger, 2009). Although no single area of the brain has been identified as responsible for ethical deliberation, research suggests that people categorise and make assumptions about their environment in ways that may be automatic or out of their control (Hauser *et al.*, 2007). In particular, there is a separation of this reflexive cognitive system from the reflective approach that is associated with normative ethics (Haidt, 2001). Neuroethics then provides an account of ethical decision making in terms of distinct neurological processes: first, a reflexive, pattern-matching process compares an experience to prototypical ethical cases to seek a match; then, if no match is found, this is followed by a reflective, conscious attempt to consider the experience, which is more akin to the normative approach (Salvador and Folger, 2009). People can learn heuristics, but typically by adaptation to their environment, including power relations (Gigerenzer, 2010).

On this view, people make ethical judgments almost instantaneously by comparing situations to already available heuristics and only draw upon ethical reasoning if these heuristics are unavailable, such as if the situation is novel (Hulsey and Hampson, 2014). This in turn accords with research into the trolley problem and other scenarios in which people declare actions to be unethical but are unable to explain why they decided as they did, a phenomenon that has been described as moral dumbfounding (Haidt, 2001). The likelihood that people do not necessarily follow ethical rules and instead rely on a kind of ethical intuition is important because it may mean that forcing people to use the former will lead not just to worse choices, but also to people not knowing why they are supposed to be following ethical rules at all (Woodward and Allman, 2007).

This neuroethics perspective, with the empirical work underpinning it, challenges the traditional assumption that ethical failures are intentional (Kish-Gephart, Harrison and Treviño, 2010). Instead, the research suggests that

providing codes of ethics or insisting that agents undergo ethical training is unlikely to succeed if most decisions are taken intuitively (Bowie, 2009). Indeed, a rules-based approach may be actively resisted if it fails to accord with agents' own subjective experiences of ethics being a matter of instinct and emotions (Salvador and Folger, 2009). Worse still, training courses that focus on normative approaches may encourage calculated, deliberative decision-making that reduces the role of intuition and ethical rules-of-thumb, thereby indirectly promoting consequentialist choices as a default (Zhong, 2011). Ultimately, 'active judgment may actually be quite uncommon' (Reynolds, 2006: 741).

According to the neuroethics literature, this is because people are simply not as rational when it comes to ethics as they believe themselves to be; instead, they can act in ways that they would consider unethical if they were made aware of the normative reasoning available or if they were in possession of all the information (Bazerman and Gino, 2012). An example of this phenomenon, known as bounded ethicality, is seen in the assessment of business options: suppose that in one case a decision is made solely with a focus on profits but that the choice leads to societal benefit, while in another the same decision results in societal harm. When questioned, a low proportion of people judges that the benefit in the first decision was intentional, but a high proportion asserts the harm to have been deliberate in the second (Knobe, 2003).

This example also highlights the problem of luck in ethics, or the clash between the desire to assign ethical blame or praise to business decisions and the reality that chance plays a significant role in whether decisions prove to be correct (Michaelson, 2008). While this asymmetry in the attribution of intent may be reclaimed as normative in the sense that the second decision ignored the normative consideration of societal benefit or harm (Hindricks, 2014), there remains a divergence between how people reason about ethics and how they judge behaviour (Bazerman and Gino, 2012). Indeed, people are risk averse in general and may prefer to avoid losing rather than actively seeking to gain something, which then influences how they respond to ethical dilemmas (Kern and Chugh, 2009).

In general, it is persistent over-estimation by individuals of how ethical they are that contributes to ethical failure (Chugh, Bazerman and Banaji, 2005). Bounded ethicality is an extension of the concept of bounded rationality, or 'how people actually make decisions in an uncertain world with limited time and information' (Gigerenzer, 2010: 529). It means accepting that people neither have access to all possible options and knowledge of their consequences, nor the time to assess them, to determine the maximal course of action. Even if it were possible to provide a normative ethical theory that always and everywhere provided norms to cope with any situation, in practice people would be unable to cope with all the information they would need to really apply it. Given these limitations, training people in ethical theories does not provide them with what they actually require: the time to reflect and/or experience of other situations to help shape their responses (Sonenshein, 2007).

People are thus less likely to regard their behaviour as unethical in circumstances where the appropriate ethics are vague or unclear and where, because of bounded ethicality, they are not able to address this normatively (Mazar, Amir and Ariely, 2008). Conflicts of interest may then go unrecognised because people's conception of their own ethical rationality exceeds their actual abilities, so they fail to notice problems (Chugh, Banaji and Bazerman, 2005). Another consequence is that systematic, process- and/or governance-driven responses to principal-agent problems are insufficiently complex to cope with the neurological reality of ethical decision-making; they merely add delays and costs rather than getting at ethics (Atkinson and Fulton, 2013).

More importantly, faced with these cognitive constraints, people may use ethics to justify their behaviours rather than to shape them (Reynolds, 2006). This is akin to operating as a lawyer rather than as a judge, allowing people to improve confidence in their own decisions by making them appear rational and unavoidable after the fact (Sonenshein, 2007). As with neuroethics, this reverses the traditional understanding of ethics: people make decisions first and use normative theories afterwards to explain themselves (Olson, 2002). Facing an ethical problem, people may then seek to construct a narrative that explains

their choices rather than reasoning them through before acting (Atkinson and Fulton, 2013).

Although an ethics that fails to take account of this body of literature has been described as 'like a ship without a sail' (Gigerenzer, 2010), the influence of empirical studies is a relatively recent phenomenon. Indeed, in spite of the availability of research, neuroethics is still significantly shaped by normative ethics: typically, neuroethicists experiment to determine to what extent normative ethical principles are employed when people reason about ethics, so it remains difficult to shake off the methodological assumption that people are ultimately still normative ethicists.

Indeed, and to reiterate, experiments based on the theory of cognitive moral development (Kohlberg, 1969) and ethical decision-making models (Rest, 1986) assume that ethical decisions result from conscious reasoning (Hauser *et al.*, 2007). This reasoning is supposed to happen at different levels, from avoiding punishment (the lowest), through self-interest and concern at the expectations of others, to rules and complex ethical principles (the highest level). On this view, improving organisational ethics is about raising the level of individuals' ethical reasoning, hence the focus on ethics training programmes. However, the actual influence of education on these levels is inconsistent (Kish-Gephart, Harrison and Treviño, 2010) and, while the level of education might, on Rest's (1986) model, suggest greater sophistication in ethical reasoning, in fact education may merely permit better justifications. That is, the more ethical training a person has, the better she will be at *explaining* her behaviour as ethical, as opposed to her actually *being* more ethical. Moreover, when it is unclear what counts as ethical and what does not, people are less likely to describe their own conduct as unethical anyway (Welsh and Ordóñez, 2014).

The weakness of neuroethics is thus that it has largely focused on how ethical behaviour in the thin sense can be related to brain activity, not the thick, and it is difficult to say how the latter can be achieved without pointing to the dependence of descriptive ethics on social factors; in short, neuroethics still focuses on the individual rather than the social (Abend, 2011). Nevertheless, it

places importance emphasis on the influence of complexity and the necessary reductions in information load and options that people must actually employ in ethical decision-making.

2.4.2 Ethics and heuristics

If neuroethics is correct that reflexive decisions come before reflective justifications, then the ways in which people actually make their decisions become very important. The use of heuristics or rules-of-thumb involves ignoring some information rather than seeking the 'correct' decision in an ethical dilemma (Gigerenzer, 2010). This means acknowledging bounded ethicality and opting instead for satisficing, or achieving an answer that is *good enough* rather than perfect (Slote and Pettit, 1984). It is not that this employment of heuristics involves a meta-ethical claim that people *ought* to use ethical shortcuts rather than normative theories, but instead that fully reasoning things through is rarely (if ever) possible (Bruni, Mameli and Rini, 2013).

Indeed, satisficing via heuristics need not imply that a 'good enough' decision is always inferior to an optimum one; this is because the parameters of optimum models typically have to be estimated from limited data samples and the 'best' decisions become impossible in practice (Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2007). For example, in economics the mean-variance portfolio model of asset allocation is optimal, for which its author Markowitz was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, but it underperforms the heuristic that Markowitz actually used in his own investing (specifically, allocating his money equally across however many investments he chose). This is because the data demands to identify the mean-variance portfolio for a large number of assets are just too great (DeMiguel, Garlappi and Uppal, 2009). Another example of satisficing in acquisition is calling for 80% (or 'good enough') solutions to capability requirements (Gray, 2009). On this view, that people lack all the available information is not a problem to be overcome but instead becomes definitive of ethics: to behave ethically in a situation is to identify the best heuristic (Gigerenzer, 2010). (Note that what 'best' means in this context *does* have a meta-ethical character, which is a problem associated with normatively

grounding the results of neuroethics that is not pursued in this chapter; see Bruni, Mameli and Rini, 2014.)

Examples of heuristics used in ethics are 'don't get involved', 'do as others do' (where the others are members of a person's own community), 'divide things equally', and 'tit-for-tat' (Gigerenzer, 2010). Given heuristics like these, people's behaviour can be understood not from a process perspective but in terms of the heuristics they follow. To illustrate, they may be acting in a manner determined by following an organisational culture ('do as others do'), although society is complex and hence it is unclear *which* culture is meant (Sinclair, 1993); they may minimise their involvement in contentious decisions ('don't get involved') rather than actively avoid ethical responsibility; in an acquisition context, they may assume competition for contracts as a default when it is not suitable ('divide things equally'); or they may sustain adversarial behaviours rather than more appropriate ones ('tit-for-tat'). A corollary is that the heuristics that people actually rely upon for ethical decision-making may differ from the processes and roles they have been assigned to work within, potentially leading to deliberate disobedience or else to principled objection (Colley, 2012).

Heuristics thus do not somehow represent a failure of ethical reasoning; instead, they seem to be inevitable, given the computational limitations of the brain. However, by the same token, they may also result in an ethical blindness, or 'the temporary inability of a decision maker to see the ethical dimensions of the decision at stake' (Palazzo, Krings and Hoffrage, 2011: 325). Bounded ethicality means that this ethical blindness is not deliberate and that people are not even aware of it, but it presents a significant challenge to normative approaches because these assume that people know the difference between an ethical and an unethical decision. Instead, cognitive limitations impose frameworks on how people interpret the world, which then allow them to reduce the overwhelming complexity they are faced with, often by following what is effectively a script that helps to disallow particular issues (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012).

The problem is that this necessary simplification can also restrict how widely people consider their context, resulting in ethical decisions that are correct from within the framework but unethical to those outside it (a cognitive violation of ISCT, so to speak). Social and organisational pressures can increase the risk of this happening and, insofar as people are organisationally dislocated from their larger social context (typically owing to specialisation, individualisation and globalisation in the workplace), they are then less able to take empowered decisions about limiting their behaviour (Gonin, Palazzo and Hoffrage, 2012).

In circumstances where a consensus on how to behave exists, generally through socialisation, individuals can then effectively lose their ability to act independently even if they recognise the group behaviour to be unethical. That is, notwithstanding that socialisation may originally aim at inculcating ethical behaviour throughout an organisation, successful establishment of an organisational perspective may also enable deviant actions to become the norm if they are part of this viewpoint (Ntayi, Byabashaija, Eyaa, Ngoma and Muliira, 2010). This can lead to a 'motivated blindness', or individuals being disposed to ignore their values and ethics in making decisions that benefit them. For example, a supplier may ignore unethical practices by a buyer (and vice versa) if the result appears beneficial to both parties; an ethical concern only occurs when one party feels that it has been taken advantage of (Hill, *et al.*, 2008). In effect, a person's ethical reasoning can behave like a lawyer trying to argue for an advantageous outcome rather than like an attempt to get at ethical truth (Bhattacharjee, Berman and Reed, 2012).

The role of heuristics points again to the weakness of codes of ethics: they provide a framework for people to make ethical decisions when the codes align with agents' heuristics, but this agreement also provides the potential for rigidity in decision-making. The conditions are then set for ethics to be perceived as an add-on rather than central to business, which exacerbates the problem of ethical blindness (Helin and Sandström, 2010). As people become socialised into the ethical frameworks of organisations, their unawareness of other possibilities may increase (Jost, Blount, Pfeffer and Hunyady, 2003). As a

potentially worst case, the existing practices become embedded in organisations as norms, rather than contingent and open to question (Peacock, 2010).

This may also help to explain why people are incrementally capable of moving from ethical to unethical behaviour (for example, the infamous Milgram (1963) experiment on obedience to authority): having been gradually socialised, they make their evaluative judgments not from a hypothetical philosopher's position of atemporal, normative objectivity, but instead relative to the organisational context and the decisions they have made previously (Palazzo, Krings and Hoffrage, 2011). These are effectively a form of ethical 'sunk cost': having chosen to invest time and effort in a course of action, people may prefer to stick with it, even if it becomes increasingly unethical, rather than give up. Even when attempting to make consequentialist, cost-benefit decisions, people do not have all the information they need and are constrained by bounded rationality. Moreover, given imperfect information, any process or governance employed will be insufficient to decide between competing options (Sonenshein, 2007).

2.4.3 Akrasia

A specific problem in ethics related to cognitive limitations is the ancient challenge of Socrates that akrasia – acting against one's better judgment – is impossible: people always do what they think is right, even if their reasoning is faulty (Rorty, 1980). (For Socrates, 'no one who either knows or believes that there is another possible course of action, better than the one he is following, will ever continue on his present course' (Plato, 1961: 358b-c).) An akratic action is voluntary and yet contravenes an actor's assessment of what she *ought* to do in a given set of circumstances – she acts against her better (actually, her best) judgment (Rorty, 1998). Akrasia is an ethical problem because those who act against their better judgment may then find that their conduct in doing so is judged to be unethical (Sommers, 2011).

Although akrasia is contested in the literature and many have, with Socrates, denied that is possible (Gilead, 1999), the problem has lacked a normative solution and hence empirical approaches have been pursued (Ainslie, 2005). In

general terms, an action is assumed to consist in a *reason* for the action (its cognitive grounding); an *emotion* that makes the action wanted and could act as its cause; and a *preference* for acting (choosing to want to act); whereas an akratic action may have a reason that is hidden because the person is unaware of it (Gilead, 1999). This might be because of 'unarticulated moral beliefs and habitual dispositions' (Sanghera, 2011: 2), and the occlusion is also sustained by the social context, including the way people talk about and categorise phenomena (Rorty, 1998). As a result, people may feel shame for behaving in an akratic way (Gilead, 1999); for example, when wealthy people agree that they should donate significantly to charity but 'have become accustom[ed] to their affluent lifestyle and privileges [and] find the prospects of losing their power and status too painful' (Sanghera, 2011: 6).

Recent empirical investigation in behavioural science has demonstrated conclusively 'that both people and nonhuman animals spontaneously value future events in inverse proportion to their expected delays', and this hyperbolic discounting (rather than the expected, more 'rational' exponential curves) has been used to explains akrasia: it means that people prefer smaller rewards that occur sooner, rather than larger ones that they have to wait for (Ainslie, 2005: 636). The discounting then creates an incentive to not notice contradictions or lapses in motivation. Since akratic actions that originate in dispositions are widespread in society, people can thus easily act against their better judgment when to do so is habitual (Rorty, 1998). This means that people may act in an apparently akratic way, yet nevertheless remain consistent with their beliefs and habits, even if they are unable or unwilling (ashamed) to articulate this (Rorty, 1997) – such as when a person prefers to do *x* but believes that those in positions of power favour *y* (Sommers, 2011).

In summary, descriptive approaches to ethics pose significant challenges to the default normative interpretations of how people make ethical decisions, drawing particular attention to cognitive limitations that drive the need for coping strategies like heuristics or to behavioural phenomenon like hyperbolic

discounting and akrasia. However, while descriptive ethics often points to the role of social factors, it remains focused on the individual (Abend, 2011).

2.5 Sociological perspectives

To summarise the argument so far, the majority of treatments of ethics are either explicitly normative or presuppose a normative approach, yet research on how people actually behave suggests that these are untenable. Furthermore, the separation of normative and descriptive ethics has been underpinned by an assumption that ethical reasoning is different from other decision-making, which then minimises the importance of the social (Elm and Radin, 2012). Therefore, seeking a foundation for a theory of business ethics offers (at least) two options: to develop a normative theory that is adjusted or somehow accounts for the results of descriptive ethics research, perhaps by demonstrating how heuristics are influenced by normative theories, or to investigate whether ethics has a different role.

There has been limited overlap in academia between ethics and sociology (Turner, 2013). However, sociological examinations of ethical problems argue that they occur not as isolated questions with defined answers, but as aspects of stories in which the meaning of the decisions cannot be divorced from the unity of the narrative (Abend, 2012). On one interpretation of this, there can never exist single ethical decisions akin to the experiments of normative or descriptive ethics because these circumstances do not occur in real life (MacIntyre, 1981); instead, people try to make sense of their lives and the ethical decisions they make as part of a continuous story that is told and retold (Abend, 2012). It is how they do and do not achieve this narration that this section deals with, focusing on two key concepts: identity and power. The literature review could also have considered the role of culture, but that concept has less explanatory power because organisational cultures are either too abstract or too diverse (Sinclair, 1993). This preference for a Bourdieusian view over a Foucauldian one is further justified in Chapter 4.

2.5.1 Ethics and identity

That people want to identify themselves as ethical and preserve this self-conception has been shown to motivate behaviour (Mazar, Amir and Ariely, 2008). Specifically, the extent to which people are prepared to be unethical is limited by their desire to maintain a positive self-image (Welsh and Ordóñez, 2014). Even though they might be able to benefit economically from some unethical behaviour and there may be little risk of being caught, they will only engage in it to the extent that they do not then have to reconsider their self-image as an ethical person (Bazerman and Gino, 2012). For example, it may be easier to steal something from a friend than to steal money from the same friend to pay for the item because the former presents less of a challenge to a person's sense of ethical self (Mazar, Amir and Ariely, 2008). Being ethical is then a matter of sitting on a spectrum rather than taking a single position, such that self-image is positively reinforced when a person feels closer to the fully ethical pole; while conversely, a disjunction between actions and identity can lead to a person experiencing shame (Stets and Carter, 2011).

It is this sense of self-image that is meant by the concept of identity, which refers to the meanings that people attribute to themselves, whether as individuals or as members of groups. Identities are always plural, varying over time as people shift between roles like employee, spouse, friend, student or customer that they can hold simultaneously (Bardon, Clegg and Josserand, 2012). This fluidity of identity has increased in importance as the roles of traditional sources of self-identification, such as religion and other social structures like family and community, have reduced as a result of globalisation (Giddens, 1991). Being perceived as ethical is an important part of people's narratives and they will emphasise stories that demonstrate this (Bazerman and Gino, 2012).

On this view, it is then not the rules and governance of acquisition that constrain the agent, but her own sense of identity as an ethical person, which may be affected by the ends to which she is working. Rather than taking any opportunity for unethical behaviour if the benefits outweigh the costs, as those in favour of

ex ante control measures may assume, an acquisition agent might instead take as much ethical risk as possible to achieve an aim but remain constrained by her own sense of self, giving process restrictions little or no attention. It is thus being true to (ethical) self that matters to people, not adherence to ethical principles (Blasi, 1984). If unethical actions go unchallenged by an agent, this may in turn be because recognising them is an identification that presents a threat to her ethical self-image rather than acquiescence in bad behaviour. People may thus not even realise or – if confronted – agree that they have done anything wrong (Atkinson and Fulton, 2013), relying on an ethical calculus that balances lapses against good behaviour (Bazerman and Gino, 2012).

2.5.1.1 Pro-social identity

An example of people acting unethically but preserving a sense of ethical self is lying, which most people consider to be wrong but engage in all the same. Explaining this may be relatively straightforward: lying can result in the dishonest person being perceived as more rather than less ethical, especially if the deception is undertaken to help others (Levine and Schweitzer, 2014). This pro-social lying begins with 'white lies' but extends to altruistic lies being considered more ethical than selfish truths. Consequently, even if – from a hypothetically objective ethical standpoint such as Kant's – it is possible to state that it is always better to tell the truth than to lie, in practice people appear (at least sometimes) to value compassion above honesty: they separate what a behaviour like lying *is* from how it *functions* (Folger, Ganegoda, Rice, Taylor and Wo, 2013).

People are thus more interested in pro-social actions than in maximising self-interest (Lind and van den Bos, 2013); in short, 'from the group's point of view, there cannot be a more dutiful act than so-called "white lies"' because they recognise the existence of the rules that are bent or broken (Bourdieu, 1998: 139). Paradoxically, then, it is being deliberately unethical for pro-social motives that demonstrates to the group that there are ethical rules that define the group in the first place – this is why people conceptualise actions along an ethical continuum instead of viewing them as right or wrong (Perryer and Scott-Ladd,

2014). In ethical terms, the implication is that when lies have consequences, people prioritise these above deontological limits on dishonesty; in short, it is wrong to lie as a general principle but not necessarily if it is for the sake of someone else. The problem in the Defence context is that acquisition agents may always or predominantly have in mind the consequences to operational capability rather than honesty and transparency in processes. There is then little to be gained from advocating these values if people rate them less than pro-social lying that supports operational effect. More importantly, once people are incentivised to look favourably upon someone, they will try very hard to maintain a pro-social narrative and will excuse unethical behaviour rather than give up on that person (Linstead, Maréchal and Griffin, 2014).

2.5.1.2 Changing identities

Given the plurality of identities available, people will attempt to move between identities as a way of controlling and reducing uncertainty, and – to the extent that identities can be asserted – people may experience authenticity, ambiguity or anxiety (O'Mahoney, 2011). When a person can maintain the integrity and consistency of their sense of self, their identity is described as authentic; the aim is for people to be able to control their stories of self to achieve this (Miyahara, 2010). Therefore, the way in which the past is interpreted has a key role in making sense of current identities through achieving a form of biographical continuity (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). A common way of achieving this is to insist on a separation between the groups to which an individual belongs and 'them', typically demarcating or 'othering' a superior group that the individual is a member of from an inferior group (Ybema, Vroemisse and van Marrewijk, 2012). By construction, this includes a sense of wanting to be considered more ethical than the comparison group, which then functions to underline the dominance of the identity and the position of power that it reinforces (Bazerman and Gino, 2012).

On the face of it, this suggests that identity is something that people *have*. From a narrative perspective, though, identity is not something that is possessed but rather is employed when people attempt to explain their current positions and

perspectives in life, as well as where they want to get to in future (Miyahara, 2010). By narrating identity as a story or series of stories, told in a way that selects from past history to create a potential future, the narrator hopes that others will endorse her identity and thereby help it achieve authenticity, especially when the narrator is using identity to negotiate her position relative to others (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). The narrative thus ties events together to become episodes in a continuous tale (Somers, 1994), which may be an ethical one that implies normative demands: 'because you are an *x*, you ought to do *y*' (Donahoe, Eidson, Feyissa, Fuest, Nieswand, Schlee and Zenker, 2009). These appeals may be explicit or (more likely) implicit and embedded in habits or narratives (Bourdieu, 1990). This is then the link between identity and ethics: being able to act at all seems to depend on some form of normative framework against which to assess possibilities (Taylor, 1989). (This claim is returned to below.)

Identities are non-trivial and in particular the negotiation of identity can be especially important in an organisational context as identity moves from being an individual narrative to a collective one. For example, businesses will typically seek to develop their own identity, which employees may be compelled – explicitly or otherwise – to adopt or resist (Gagnon, 2008). Notwithstanding the importance of self-image to individuals, they may opt to accept the organisational identity imposed on them because they value job security and assess that refusal represents risk. However, once this organisational identity is acceded to, the individual's self-worth can increasingly become associated with the organisation and its values, both inside and outside the workplace, including as part of a professional identity (Ramarajan and Reid, 2013). It is this bonding with the organisation, together with the narrative continuity of identity as an ideal to help make sense of life, that make it difficult for people to leave an organisation or to challenge the dominant narratives (Conroy and O'Leary-Kelly, 2014).

2.5.1.3 Social identity

Although identity can be empowering when narratives are developed to create biographical continuity and a sense of a positive future, in fact people do not have full control over their narratives because identity is a social phenomenon (Horton, 2006). Given the focus on demarcating one group from others, identity can only be constructed cooperatively and it is the inevitably performative aspect of identity that reinforces the desire for narrative continuity (LaPointe, 2010). In particular, since a loss of status is socially undesirable, it is easier to remain within the dominant narrative or to only adjust it slightly than to challenge it (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). This is achieved in two ways: either through assimilation, incorporating a new identity within a person's existing self-conception, thereby making the practice of the new identity fit with the existing narrative; or through accommodation, which involves adjusting the narrative to make space for the new identity, minimising the change required so that narrative continuity is preserved. It is the social context that determines the salience of a particular identity (Tacon, 2016).

In general, change is easier to cope with if the overall narrative remains unadjusted because then the future identity is contained within the existing concept of self (Just, 2011), reducing stress and normalising the modifications to identity practice (Manzi, Vignoles and Regalia, 2010). It is when people are unable or unwilling to adjust their narratives to accommodate change that they feel a lack of integration (Niessen, Binnewies and Rank, 2010). Powerful organisational narratives can thus delimit identity creation and the opportunity to develop alternatives because people will tend to position themselves relative to what they perceive to be the standard narrative (Ybema, Vroemisse and van Marrewijk, 2012), especially because attempting to hold conflicting identities simultaneously can lead to cognitive dissonance (Vest, 2013). Consequently, in practice people tend to maintain narrative continuity by limiting identity changes, particularly when moving employment; for example, military personnel disproportionately seek to remain in uniformed service (Higate, 2001). They also avoid anxiety by aligning themselves with organisational narratives (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012).

2.5.1.4 Criticisms

It has been objected that the majority of identity research has been conducted in Western contexts (Ellemers, Spears and Doosje, 2002). However, the primary objection to identity as a concept in social science is that it is used in a folk sense to purportedly explain how people behave rather than analytically in a way that demonstrates the actual existence of identities (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). On this view, identities are reified and, as an essentialist concept, actually contribute to reducing individual agency (Somers, 1994). On the other hand, the more people can choose to change their identity, the less causal power the concept has (Todd, 2004). This criticism holds that identity is shorthand for a plurality of different things that should be distinct; for example, identity binds people together but, at the same time, is supposed to separate them. Rather than being a conceptual error, then, identity is wrongly taken to actually exist and to have ontological meaning in the social world (Brubaker, 2002).

Against this criticism, conceptions of narrative identity have changed in recent years, from an assumption that narratives are an attempt to overlay a form of order on social experience to arguing 'that social life is itself *storied* and that narrative is an *ontological condition of social life*' (Somers, 1994: 613-614). In this way, the experience of social life just *is* the arraying and combining of narratives: people are continuously in a process of *becoming* social beings, so their identities are indeed fixed by the narratives they use but constantly changing also. (This is explored in more detail in Chapter 4.) Therefore, the essentialist objection to identity is misplaced because it does not account for the use of identity as a relational concept, the implications of which are to be understood empirically (Wellman, 1988). Moreover, the narrative approach means that people act as they do because of the stories they tell about themselves (Calhoun, 1991); to not do so would go against their self-conception and result in ontological conflict (Somers, 1994). In short: identity is not an *a priori* concept at all and is contingent-yet-constitutive of social being. Nevertheless, its operation presupposes non-identity, or the demarcation of self

from other: by affirming their identities, people disaffirm those of others (Olson, 2002).

2.5.2 Ethics and power

If identity is key in understanding ethics but is necessarily social, the way in which ethical narratives are mediated by social structures and practices needs to be understood (Calhoun, 1991). Consider an example: if a person is perceived by others to be an ethical exemplar, a 'good person', then this can imply that a form of ethical 'credit' has been accrued, which in turn allows for later unethical behaviour (Bazerman and Gino, 2012). In short, a person can get away with being unethical sometimes because she is ethical most of the time and is known as ethical by others.

2.5.2.1 Ethics and capital

This presents a difficulty from a normative perspective because if a person has a large amount of 'ethical capital' then she is less likely to be judged unethical by those who recognise and value this credit, or else will be judged differently insofar as she is on good terms with those assessing her behaviour. Indeed, research suggests that people are more inclined to accept ethically questionable decisions by those who are similar to them or with whom they have positive relationships (De Bock, Vermeir and Kenhove, 2012). Therefore, those who might otherwise be expected to regulate or identify unethical conduct might perceive the behaviour as comparable to their own and choose to accept it rather than challenge it, or else be lenient towards people with significant ethical capital.

The accumulation of capital is a social phenomenon that influences how people act. Specifically, ethical capital is accrued by behaving in an ethical way and – crucially – being recognised as so doing by a community (Zug, 2014). Just as with economic capital, acting in a manner that accords with social expectations thus becomes an investment in ethical capital because a person then builds up a stock of it, which can in turn be converted into opportunities; in short, it becomes profitable to behave as others expect (Swartz, 2010). For example, a

person perceived as ethical – holding a significant amount of ethical capital – might be preferred for an opportunity within a community or be afforded more respect by it, leading to a position of power:

> [Ethical] capital consists of accruing a record of [ethical] stance, enactment, and reputation. It can be possessed, enlarged, increased, invested in, lost, gained, and transferred. It is recognised by others, creating advantages, and comprises a combination of personal, social, relational, institutional, and structural features that ultimately convey (economic) benefit to those who possess it. (Swartz, 2009: 148)

This ethical capital is then a form of symbolic capital that has value insofar as it functions as a form of prestige that demands recognition and hence affords the bearer power (Bourdieu, 1998). Groups can use ethical capital to create and sustain cohesion, which can be regarded as positive (Kluver, Frazier and Haidt, 2014). However, by the same token, this ethical capital will help subdue any actions within the group that are contrary to its sustainment and limit interaction with other groups (Gu, Konana, Raghunathan and Chen, 2010); hence, it may function to delegitimise alternatives as people find themselves unable to conceive of options that lie outside the limits imposed on them by their lack of capital, or possibilities to which no ethical capital is attached (Strand and Lizardo, 2015). Alternatively, ethical capital may encourage people to regard themselves as justified in behaving unethically insofar as their actions promote the collective identity (Kluver, Frazier and Haidt, 2014). The accumulation of ethical capital is then a function not of behaving in accordance with normative ethics, but instead with the dominant narratives in a community or field, since this activity is what generates opportunity and advantage relative to the power structures that exist (Swartz, 2010).

2.5.2.2 Ethics and structures

More can be said about the operation of social power and a literary example of its potential influence is Hamlet's claim in discussion with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: 'for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.' Regardless of the philosophical merits of Hamlet's perspective (Wittgenstein,

1993), it poses a challenge: if there is no agreed normative theory of ethics that can be called upon, or if people do not actually behave in accordance with normative theories, does this imply that what counts as ethical in an organisation is a result of how dominant discourses shape what counts as legitimate (Kornberger and Brown, 2007)? Furthermore, all structures are non-neutral insofar as they imply an ordering of possible options through the recognition and reward of some actions over others (Olson, 2002). On this view, to describe how ethics functions in organisations it is necessary to understand not which norms are appropriate but how other systems such as social structures operate, such that ethics can then either reinforce or question existing structures and behaviours (Besio and Pronzini, 2014). This is to say that if 'thinking makes it so' then research can explore how it achieves this and what different thinking could otherwise make so.

One perspective is via institutional theory, in which the aim of organisations is to enhance their own legitimacy rather than their efficiency. They achieve this by adjusting internally as necessary to anticipate and reflect their stakeholders' needs, which then delimits options for change as these expectations become embedded (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). This results in organisations being characterised as fields, or areas of institutional life in which a specific logic dominates and provides rules and patterns of behaviour that are taken for granted (Scott, 2001). This is a macro-level alternative approach to business ethics, in which companies have to behave ethically to the extent that stakeholders support their activities and the business can survive (Van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013). From the institutional perspective, dominant social actors will call on organisational resources to force others to observe the behavioural norms that those with authority wish to maintain, based on a particular view of the institution and the kind of identity it should have (Donahoe *et al.*, 2009).

Considered from a perspective centered on social power, the earlier objection that identity creates fixed categories then fails for another reason: what is shared when a social identity is pointed to is not a reified concept that,

somehow, exists across a shared, collective mind, but is instead the use of 'structurally similar sets of practical schemes of classification and perception' (Lizardo, 2004: 392). Moreover, and to also return to the claim that being able to act at all depends on a normative framework against which to assess possibilities (Taylor, 1989), the alternative is thus that these norms are provided not by ethics but by accepted organisational practice (Bourdieu, 1990). However, the influence of power goes beyond the institutional level because individuals acting within a collective context are exposed to different levels of impact on their ethics: the macro system of ideologies and social attitudes; the institutions and other practices that govern how people can behave even if they play no explicit part in them; the micro system of lived experience and interpersonal relationships; and the inter-relationships in turn between different micro systems that people inhabit at different times or simultaneously, according to the identities they move across (Swartz, 2010). By setting out these levels, researchers are better able to explain why people may be aware of and able to reason ethically in terms of social norms, yet still behave unethically (Evans and English, 2002).

2.5.2.3 Power and narratives

At the limit of this sociological view, ethics is thus the power of convention and people are subjugated by dominant classes (Marx, 1988) or constrained by narratives that set social norms (Foucault, 2000). For Durkheim, the way that people speak about their organisation and about others is part of the ritual that sustains their view of the social world, and it is this narrative that demands obedience (Lincoln and Guillot, 2004). This is then the normative requirement: ethical facts become rules of social behaviour with defined sanctions in the event of a violation; the only difference between ethics and law is that sanctions are, respectively, organised diffusely by society or formally by the state (Karsenti, 2012). A sanction is imposed for ethical violations not because it follows from an act, but because of the relationship between social expectation and that act. This relationship is important because society then functions as an ideal to which the intentions of individuals are drawn (Durkheim, 1953).

The challenge for business ethics is that the organisational narratives that provide a normative influence are not necessarily disinterested and may instead mask the operation of power (Gordon, Kornberger and Clegg, 2009): what is purportedly for the benefit of all, or at least for the benefit of the organisation, may instead reinforce a contingent order that could otherwise be challenged and only claims neutrality through its success (Olson, 2002). At minimum, the complexity of ethical choices is such that single factors cannot be isolated from the larger context or overlapping influences (Kish-Gephart, Harrison and Treviño, 2010). Moreover, if – as the descriptive ethics research suggests – the normative understanding of ethics is precisely the wrong way around, such that people make decisions first and, if asked, use normative explanations to justify them (Sonenshein, 2007), then power may have a role both in the decision-making and the subsequent justification. It can also provide a disincentive for people to question how things are done and take organisational routines as natural and not in need of explanation (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012).

Ethics thus cannot be separated from business because values are 'embedded in social contexts from which they cannot be removed' (Sandberg, 2008: 230) and it becomes difficult to point to unethical activity as anything other than 'a collection of transgressions united only in the context in which they occur' (Ficcarrotta, 1998: 11). In particular, if ethics is formalised into following a code of conduct then the role of actual ethical decision-making is reduced or even entirely absent (Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2007). To develop an argument originally from Wittgenstein (1993), suppose that acquisition had an operating process defined in all-encompassing detail, along with a code of ethics and a training programme that ensured that all agents were able to make fully rational decisions to deliver their programmes. On the one hand, there is no place in such a schema for ethics *at all* because there is no sense in which the agents do not know how to act; but this implies that ethical blame cannot be assigned to mistakes because the agents are not responsible for any of their decisions: by construction, there were no grey areas in which they had to go beyond what the process, code and training told them to do. On the other hand, notwithstanding the unpalatable absence of ethical responsibility, such a

schema has another consequence: it allows people in positions of power to frame the decisions made in acquisition as resulting from the structure of the system, rather than representing a choice by one or more individuals that could have been made otherwise, an alternative in which the challenges provided by ethical dilemmas would help to shape the development of ethics (Baïada-Hirèche, Pasquero and Chanlat, 2011).

On this view, the structures in Defence acquisition, or in any organisation, can reduce ethics to process, thereby implicitly supporting or delegitimising particular courses of action (Helin and Sandström, 2010). Moreover, ethical procedures presuppose that ethical issues are in principle decidable, which ensures that people are given technical rather than ethical accountability, so the routine of working against a decidable process numbs ethical sense (Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2007).

The alternative is to argue that the very undecidability of social reality, born of a backdrop of bounded ethicality and the satisficing role of heuristics, provides a place for ethics at the heart of decision-making (Derrida, 1988). This undecidability offers people the chance to become involved in debating what counts as satisficing and to explore pro-social behaviour as a priority (Lind and van den Bos, 2013). Without this prospect, '[a]n ethics of undecidability suggests that those accounts of business that seek to ease moral anxiety or resolve moral indeterminacy through the institution of the rule or the norm should be exposed for what they are: an unjustifiable and amoral fig leaf to cover a lack of human decency' (Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2007: 407). This, then, is the philosophical problem of applying general ethical principles to specific contexts as though a code could take the place of ethics (Dancy, 2013).

This line of argument can be objected to on the grounds that ethics is always about finding an accommodation between principles and a complex reality (O'Neill, 2002). That is, ethical principles are 'indeterminate, yet generalizable commitments' that provide reasons for acting (or for not acting) (Smith and Dubbink, 2011: 223). In effect, principles contain an implicit *ceteris paribus* clause; for example, 'other things being equal, you should not steal'. On one

interpretation, this was Kant's (1991) original intent for deontology: ethical principles count as reasons that should not be ignored when determining a course of action, but can be overcome by circumstances and other reasons if necessary, such as when a duty not to steal is outweighed by a duty to support a family (Smith and Dubbink, 2011).

However, these other reasons include the 'thick' combination of description and evaluation that people use when describing the context of their ethical decisions (Linden, 2013). Therefore, as descriptive ethicists contend, ethical principles actually function not as guides but as heuristics (Stangl, 2006). The ethical danger is again that these 'rules of thumb' can become ossified as 'thin' concepts that, by virtue of their abstraction, are used to either overrule organisational reality or shape it in ways that legitimise some decisions over others, discouraging people from challenging what becomes perceived as normal (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012). This move from thick to thin makes ethics falsely simplified (Linden, 2013).

2.5.2.4 Ethics as disposition

This concern is compounded because the ability to behave ethically results from integrating perceptions of ethical situations with actions, turning these into habits that then make up ethical identity (Hulsey and Hampson, 2014). Borrowing Bourdieu's (1990) term, responses to ethical problems are thus a form of habitus: people become inclined to react in particular ways and these become the heuristic through which people interpret their experiences (Hulsey and Hampson, 2104). Once these responses have formed and are rewarded, ethics is whatever members of a community define it as (Lukes, 2005). Although these dispositions have developed over time and are contingent, they become automatic and are then assumed as the default (Todd, 2004), providing social power to those who are favoured by the organisational narratives that shape the habitus (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In this way, specific forms of behaviour become normalised and misrecognised as a natural part of membership in an organization (Lincoln and Guillot, 2004):

Once belief is conceptualized as a species of habit, […] it is easy to see that by the time a person is assenting to abstract propositions, they *already* believe in a way that is more fundamental than assent to the abstract statement. Because belief is always rooted in concrete situations, assent to propositional statements is always derivative and only connected to action after the fact.' (Strand and Lizardo, 2015: 63-64)

Unethical behaviour can then become part of organisational narratives and habitual, routine and unquestioned (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms, 2008), especially when people's identities are threatened (Swann, Seyle, Gómez, Morales and Huici, 2009). When this occurs, codes of ethics and compliance checks fail because the ordinary undertaking of business is itself unethical (Weaver, 2006). From a Bourdieusian perspective, pro-social behaviour is that which individual agents use to increase their power, depending on their relative positions, the capital they have available and their dispositions (Van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013).

Indeed, pro-social actions in favour of a group then imply an antisocial activity towards competitors (Ellemers, Spears and Doosje, 2002). It is thus the embodiment of the organisational narratives in habit that perpetuates the behaviour (Bourdieu, 1990), so only the development of new habits can address this (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms, 2008). Changes in organisational ethics require 'the creation of alternative identities that cognitively and morally frame action differently' (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms, 2008: 751). Without these, people who belong to dominant groups will reaffirm their existing identity, while the dominated either convert to the dominant identity or do so publicly while retreating to private, core identities such as religion or family (Todd, 2004).

Where such alternatives are absent, those who are dominant within an organisation have the power to define what counts as legitimate, achieving this indirectly by rewarding behaviour that sustains an organisational narrative and thereby creating dispositions and habits in others (van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013). Moreover, when a dominant identity is challenged, both the dominated and the dominating may experience this as a threat to the ethical order on

which their habitus is founded (Todd, 2004). Ethics then becomes 'a discursive resource bound up in relations power' and 'dominant discursive practices can work to legitimate certain decisions and actions rather than others' (Kornberger and Brown, 2007: 514). In this context, people behave in ways that serve to increase or retain the power associated with their positions and reduce organisational and individual uncertainty (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012), which then provides a sociological understanding of the operation of ethics that allows people to have individual agency while still accounting for the macro-influence of structures like institutions (van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013). The research implication is that ethical behaviour in business is not the free exercise of individual agency of normative ethics, but it is also not fully determined by structures (Tsoukas and Chia, 2002).

2.6 Summary

Having sought to identify a potential ethics of acquisition, the examination of this context from an ethical perspective – both normative and descriptive – suggested a gap in the literature. It was argued, firstly, that normative approaches fail, particularly when confronted with the specific contexts faced by acquisition agents. Although a formal philosophical account might be able to address this in time, it was also shown, through a descriptive ethics examination of how people really behave and reason when confronted with ethical issues, that the normative view is at fault as a presupposition for ethics in organisations, specifically when people's cognitive limitations are challenged by the complexity of actual ethical problems. Finally, it was proposed that any theory of business ethics in acquisition should look instead to the function of ethics within organisations such as Defence, notably in the power of ethical narratives to act as a means of controlling behaviours and limiting possibilities.

The literature review thus framed the research that was undertaken because it justified a focus on the influence of power structures, especially given the hierarchical nature of the MOD and Defence acquisition. The scope is set out in Chapter 3, while the methodological implications are explored in Chapter 4.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Having set out the wider context through the literature review, this chapter explains the aim of the research and provides background on the case study selected.

3.1 Literature gaps and research intent

The literature review indicated that there is a gap in how business ethics is conceptualised, which prevents the acquisition community understanding the extent to which Defence acquisition seeks to reduce ethics to procedures, how this reduction operates, and the potential or actual consequences. There has been little study of how such process rules affect the ethics of people in organisations (Nielsen and Massa, 2013), let alone how ethical discourses are framed by – or themselves frame – what is possible or thinkable, such as what counts as open to ethical consideration and what does not (Rhodes, Pullen and Clegg, 2010). For example, a disallowed discourse might be one that compares military redundancies – characterised as an inevitable consequence of fiscal austerity and, therefore, not a matter for ethics – with mistakes in acquisition programmes that result in costs equal to or higher than the anticipated manpower savings. Excluding some forms of thought then becomes an important use (or abuse) of power.

On this view, ethical problems in organisations could be the result of macro-level, structural factors that impose 'rules of the game' instead of exclusively the province of individual acts or actors; but if this is the case then, by implication, the solutions are to be found and/or implemented in changing organisational narratives, not in providing staff with more training (Nielsen and Massa, 2013). Rather than behaviour being caused by failures in ethical reasoning about what decisions to take, it may be that ethics functions as a narrative to explain and legitimise decisions instead of normatively underpinning them (Gordon, Kornberger and Clegg, 2009). The standard approach in business ethics is then, mistakenly, focusing on the consequences rather than how the possibilities came about in the first place; or – crudely, and with reference to the

trolley problem referred to in the literature review – ethics means asking 'how many should suffer death-by-trolley?' instead of questioning how and why people came to be on the tracks at all. Indeed, the *post hoc* use of ethics to justify actions then becomes yet another means of preserving organisational power, reducing the agency of the people involved and delimiting scrutiny through narratives of inevitability (Rhodes, Pullen and Clegg, 2010).

To repeat the scope limitation set out in the introduction, though, it should be noted that this perspective says nothing about whether a specific organisational activity is ethical in the traditional, normative sense; instead, it is concerned with how ethics is implemented within organisational practice and how ethics serves to persuade others (Duska, 2013). Given that organisations function in conditions of bounded rationality just as individuals do, narratives that, in principle, restrict ethical scrutiny of decisions or else use ethics to circumscribe discussion are to be expected. Therefore, they are to be critically examined; otherwise, '[a]n ethics innocent of power is an ethics of ignorance: power is always implicated with ethical discourse and practices' (Gordon, Clegg and Kornberger, 2009: 94). Failing to undertake this scrutiny leaves those in positions of power able to rationalise their own versions of what counts as legitimate (Gordon, Kornberger and Clegg, 2009), even though they may not even realise that they are doing so and may instead view their behaviour as entirely natural (Bourdieu, 1990).

3.2 Research aim

The aim of this research was, therefore, to examine the extent to which ethics in Defence acquisition functions as part of narratives to legitimise or delegitimise options, rather than as a normative framework to guide or assess behaviour. The research focused on the applied ethics context of the acquisition of military capabilities and a presumed adversarial relationship between the Ministry of Defence as customer and the Defence Industry as supplier. Through a sociological, mixed methods investigation of military acquisition, which is detailed in Chapter 4 below, the research attempted to explore how the

relationship operates with a view to understanding whether an ethics of acquisition is possible.

3.2.1 Rationale

The justification for choosing to research ethics as narratives is both applied and academic. In addition to revealing the role of ethical narratives in shaping practice, the literature review also showed that there is widespread public concern about the ethical implications of the so-called 'revolving door', or the movement of public sector workers to positions in the private sector that results – or gives the impression of resulting – in conflicts of interest (Demmke and Bossaert, 2004; David-Barrett, 2011). (Note that, in the UK Defence context at least, the 'revolving door' is actually more accurately characterised as a one-way valve, since there is very little movement back into the MOD from Industry.) Although this revolving door problem has been studied in the context of political transparency, there is little research on the impact of the ever-closer links between customer and supplier in military acquisition, and the impact of narratives on the effectiveness of the new working relationships that result.

Additionally, the relationship between defence sector customers and suppliers has been the subject of proposals for more accurately characterising it as an interdependent ecosystem, implying that the straightforward division of public and private sectors should be reconsidered as people move along a continuum between these poles rather than through a door (Tan, 2013; Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2011). Moreover, a limited amount of other research argues that the revolving door problem is overstated and that in fact both sectors benefit from such transitions (Zaring, 2013). However, this claim has not been investigated in the context of military acquisition, and the normative objections associated with the closeness or otherwise of public and private sectors in UK Defence have not been considered sociologically.

The potential practical implications are that moving between sectors should be supported, and that the business ethics associated with Defence acquisition will have to be reconsidered as applying *across* the intersection of public and private sectors rather than to the public and private sectors separately. This

may have significant implications for the ongoing reform of Defence acquisition (beginning with Gray, 2009), particularly given more recent demand for such ecosystem approaches in the Defence sector (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2013). It could also influence the development and adoption of a code of ethics, which is standardly a requirement for defining a profession (McGraw, 2004) and is important as acquisition becomes a specific career field in UK Defence (HM Government, 2016).

3.2.2 Research question

The overall research question addressed in this study was: *How does ethics function in narratives of Defence acquisition?*

This was examined via two sub-questions:

- How do people involved in Defence acquisition talk about the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry?
- What does this reveal about the role of ethics in narratives of Defence acquisition?

The proposition was that people in Defence employ ethics not in the traditional, normative sense, but instead as part of their narratives to legitimise or delegitimise potential courses of action or those already undertaken. The investigation of this was achieved via the case study detailed below and using the methodology set out in the next chapter.

3.3 Case Study

Since late 2014, the MOD has taken steps to address critical skills shortages by considering a whole-of-sector approach, according to which 'Defence will in future be drawing more heavily on people and skills from the private sector' (Ministry of Defence, 2015: 18). In particular, the UK Government committed in the Strategic Defence and Security Review of 2015 to 'mak[ing] it easier for people to move between the different elements of the "Whole Force" over their career, [working] collaboratively with industry to make skills available across

organisational boundaries when and where needed' (HM Government, 2015: 32).

Responding to this strategic intent as part of the Armed Forces People Programme, the Enterprise Approach was a project that aimed to improve the maintenance of critical skills by challenging the definition of retention, arguing that keeping skills within a wider Defence Enterprise is actually the issue; in effect, that skills are not 'lost' if a person exits the Armed Forces or Civil Service for a job in the Defence Industry if she is still supporting Defence outputs, especially if it were possible for her to move back again having developed her skills in Industry. The Enterprise Approach thus intended to support sector-wide retention by offering so-called portfolio career pathways within the Defence sector. To achieve this, the formal definition and integration of a Defence Enterprise was assumed to be necessary, which could then enable a collaborative alignment of the demand for skills between the MOD and the Defence Industry, securing the supply of skills to deliver Defence outputs while also contributing to securing the industrial base.

In keeping with the strategic direction, the Enterprise Approach efforts focused initially on options for accessing the private sector to address the specific shortage categories of maritime engineers, particularly those with nuclear skills. The work employed a joint team involving the MOD and maritime prime contractors, with the participants agreeing that behavioural change would be vital to success, but was likely to be long-term. Although the Defence lexicon had shifted, with UK Defence literature increasingly speaking of 'the Defence Enterprise', many people in both the MOD and Industry remained sceptical that closer collaboration between the two is possible. For example, prior to this research, but subsequently confirmed by it, a common sentiment expressed in the MOD in response to skills shortages was that "Industry poaches our people". The Enterprise Approach project thus presented an opportunity to research how people responded to the initiative, especially given that – in keeping with the conclusions of the literature review – 'poaching' (a legal term)

is suggestive of delegitimising the Enterprise Approach through the use of normative ethical language. This example is returned to in Chapter 5 below.

3.3.1 The case study relative to the literature

Some research suggests that the UK Government's strategic intent, notably the aspiration to support UK prosperity, is indeed conditional on an industrial base and the security of the supply chain (Louth and Taylor, 2015). However, while there is limited evidence that quantifies the benefits of Defence spending to the wider UK, including output multipliers of 2.3 for investment and 2.8 for skilled job creation (Oxford Economics, 2011), together with an estimated 36% return to the Treasury for onshore tax obligations (Taylor and Louth, 2012), there is a lack of data to quantify the Defence sector's impact on UK prosperity. This is largely due to a focus on 'value for money' in terms of individual programmes rather than for the UK as a whole (Dorman, Uttley and Wilkinson, 2015). Nevertheless, a significant and increasing body of literature, including case studies from other sectors, demonstrates that greater value is generated when customer, key suppliers and their supply chains are integrated and work collaboratively (Kastalli and Neely, 2015). One implication of this research is that any strategy for prosperity must include the co-creation of value and joint innovation because success is ultimately based on how effectively the overall system directs its combined capabilities and talents to transform and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes (HM Treasury, 2015).

As already noted, distinctions between the public and private sectors are contested (Clarke, 2004), particularly in the Defence context of a monopsony buyer typically purchasing from monopoly providers (COM, 2007). Consequently, research data suggests that partnering relationships are increasing (Farrant and Mommeja, 2009) and are challenging the assumption of an adversarial relationship between customer and supplier that is driven by competition (Louth, 2012b). Moreover, in Defence the customer is typically also the sponsor through funding research and development activity, but – in the UK context – also through a commitment to supporting Defence exports; and it is also the regulator through Governmental and Departmental policy

(Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2013a). Consequently, the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are essentially bound to one another by default, even if this then results in unresolved tensions (Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2013c).

This blurring or convergence of roles, both of the public sector as buyer and of an overall Defence system, is particularly well established in Singapore, where the defence sector is described as a single ecosystem (Karniol, 2006). Through personnel exchanges across the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces and the Science and Technology Laboratories, the intent was to develop the onshore defence industry while also building up critical skills and national research capabilities (Tan, 2013). The viability of the Singaporean ecosystem was a result of this strategic choice to integrate through a deliberate overspill of both technology and skills into non-Defence applications (for example, aviation) (Eliasson, 2011). This helps sustain a Singaporean defence sector that would otherwise be unviable due to its relative size and competition from other nations (Karniol, 2006). The experience of Singapore illustrates research conclusions that the success or otherwise of an ecosystem perspective depends on the extent to which the customer and supplier(s) are willing to collaborate rather than attempt to control the new entity (Farrant and Mommeja, 2009), or else to exploit a pre-existing position of dominance (DeVere, 2011).

The Singaporean ecosystem can be characterised as an enterprise, or 'a complex system of interconnected and interdependent activities undertaken by a diverse network of stakeholders for the achievement of a common significant purpose'; engineering services contracted through availability are the best current UK examples (Purchase, Parry, Valerdi, Nightingale and Mills, 2004: 7). In addition to leveraging the lessons of the Singaporean experience, the Enterprise Approach project had adapted this definition to describe a Defence Enterprise that encompasses anyone involved in developing, generating, sustaining and delivering military outcomes, which implied accepting that the notional enterprise is less concerned with *where* skills are based and instead with *how* they can be accessed to deliver operational capability. More generally,

it meant recognising that the MOD and Defence Industry are interconnected and interdependent, working to a shared purpose with a shared risk of failure.

This Enterprise Approach was justified on the basis of the UK Government's determination that, in addition to protecting its people and projecting global influence, the UK would seek to achieve prosperity by supporting UK Industry (HM Government, 2015). However, the aspiration to define and manage Defence as an enterprise conflicted with existing Industrial Policy in the White Paper *National Security through Technology* (MOD, 2012), which prioritises open competition except for relatively few capabilities, such as submarines, in which the preservation of onshore industrial capacity can be justified. The White Paper's perspective has been subject to significant criticism, especially with regard to critical skills, because buying off-the-shelf implies that the skills, manufacturing, and research and development bases move to wherever the shelves are (Louth, 2012a), thereby undermining the ability to generate exports (Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2013c). This challenge is being addressed in Australia through detailed attention to the use of both domestic and international industry in supporting exports and the potential for disparity between them, but not in a similar way in the UK (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015).

Consequently, there was the possibility for discord within UK Defence, born of an apparent mismatch between existing Industrial Policy and the new Governmental strategic direction. The fact that public sector support to Industry had become explicit also meant that the revolving door problem could return to prominence. Furthermore, at the societal level, this aid or assistance, along with an enterprise approach or ecosystem perspective that sought to develop it, was likely to lead to wider public criticism of the role of the Defence Industry and the extent to which the Government incentivises arms sales as a vehicle for prosperity (Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2011). Indeed, the integration of a Defence system could itself become strategic intent – an end in itself – and then imply that the resulting Defence Enterprise is to be taken as given, discouraging criticism (Tan, 2013) while also inviting moral hazard if individual programmes, companies or even the Enterprise itself becomes 'too big to fail' (Vucetic, 2013).

3.3.2 Justification of the case study

This case study thus presented an opportunity to explore the tension in Industrial Policy intent through the challenge associated with critical skills in Defence. The Strategic Defence and Security Review direction to explore sharing skills between the public and private sectors was likely to maintain or increase the number of people moving across organisational boundaries, which has already been shown to create adversarial narratives (Newall, 2014). Given that behaviours have been identified as crucial to any collaboration between – and integration of – organisations (HM Treasury, 2015), coupled with the results of the literature review, it could be anticipated that the Enterprise Approach project would be challenged in behavioural terms. Moreover, if the research proposition proved to be correct, this contesting would involve ethics being used to delegitimise the project.

Therefore, as a joint MOD/Industry initiative, the Enterprise Approach project provided for a specific case in which narratives about Defence acquisition might explicitly be used, primarily with respect to the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry. Given the Government's commitment to this work, the research could leverage this strategic direction to achieve both quantitative and qualitative data within a bounded time period (the Concept Phase of the Enterprise Approach project lasting from May 2016 to April 2018 in total). Finally, the restriction of the project to a maritime test case meant that it was realistic to expect sufficient but not overwhelming data for analysis. Consequently, the Enterprise Approach met the conditions necessary to be employed as a case study (that is, that it should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound), subject to the methodological arguments in the next chapter. The limitations of using a single case study are covered in Chapter 4 below.

3.4 Summary

Given the gap in the research on business ethics identified in the literature review, coupled with the research aim set out in this chapter, an appropriate theoretical framework was required that could be applied in attempting to

understand how ethics actually operates within narratives. The context of the public/private sector relationship in acquisition, particularly the so-called revolving door transitions involved, suggested a focus on how business ethics functions in Defence acquisition. A case study was justified as providing an opportunity to explore how people talk about public/private sector interactions because if – as hypothesised – ethics is used to delegitimise options, then the case study would be likely to exhibit instances of this behaviour as people resisted the proposed greater integration between the MOD and the Defence Industry.

Methodologically, only a form of research that observes and analyses how people use ethics as part of constructing and employing narratives could study the possibility that ethics – regardless of its normative, positive intent – is just another organisational power dynamic (Baïada-Hirèche, Pasquero and Chanlat, 2011). That Bourdieu's theory of practice could achieve this is justified in Chapter 4, together with an explanation of how the theory was employed.

4 METHODOLOGY

Having explored the relevant literature and set the objectives of this research, this chapter explains the methodological decisions taken, including its ontological and epistemological assumptions; provides a discussion and justification of Bourdieu's theory of practice as the appropriate theoretical framework, including why it could be used to investigate organisational ethics; and presents the methods used to gather data for subsequent analysis.

4.1 Research goal

To restate and build upon the aim of the research that was given in the last chapter, previous work had investigated the relationship between the MOD as customer and the UK Defence Industry as supplier on the basis of a persistence of individual identities across organisational boundaries (Higate, 2001; Newall, 2014). This study's exploration of identities in transition suggested that the MOD benefits from the persistence of military identities: people who have moved from the MOD to the Defence Industry retain a desire to support their former colleagues – going beyond their contractual obligations – because they perceive themselves to have a wider defence ecosystem identity. According to this, some individuals must move across the public/private sector border but remain part of the same overall system. However, this analysis was limited to a small sample size and revealed only that this motivation operated at an individual level; whether or not a collective ecosystem identity exists or how it might function were beyond the scope. Nevertheless, the implication was that the existence of such collective identities would be a better explanation of individual behaviour within the Defence system and that the default assumption of an adversarial relationship between customer and supplier should be critiqued (Heidenkamp, Louth and Taylor, 2013b).

The current research sought to develop this previous work, moving beyond the focus on individual identities to examine if and how a collective identity (or identities) exists in UK Defence and the role of ethics in shaping it. If, for example, an adversarial tension contributes to a separation of MOD and UK

Defence Industry identities, then it would be of interest to determine whether this is based on any normative ethical claims about the behaviours of one or both sides, or if it is generated and/or sustained in another way. Since a prior study observed that 'a sense of shame' was associated with cross-boundary employment transition (Newall, 2014: 51), the research explored the extent to which this embarrassment is grounded in the symbolic power of ethics, including the possibility that individuals can be driven to adopt or internalise a dominant adversarial discourse without realising (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002) and then – through their actions – reinforce it (Samuels, 2013).

4.2 Rationale

On the assumption that an antagonistic relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry is the dominant discourse, there were (at least) two possible propositions as to why this state of affairs exists. From a normative perspective, there may be unethical behaviour on the part of one or both sides, which results in distrust and the reinforcing of identity boundaries. However, from another perspective, 'claims about identity are rarely evaluated and accepted on their own merit, but are instead mediated by the operation of symbolic power' (Samuel, 2013: 401). This authority then disposes people to act in particular ways that reproduce existing ways of life, such that those who move against expectations can feel ashamed without really understanding why:

> The practical recognition through which the dominated, often unwittingly, contribute to their own domination by tacitly accepting, in advance, the limits imposed on them, often takes the form of bodily emotion (shame, timidity, anxiety, guilt) … (Bourdieu, 1995: 169)

Since this sense of shame was noted in the previous research (Newall, 2014), the question was then – in business ethics terms – whether Defence acquisition is constrained by genuine ethical violations or by ethically arbitrary limits that are placed on people via collective identities, which then come to be regarded over time as natural and hence form the basis of interactions within the ecosystem (Bourdieu, 1990).

The issue for Defence acquisition is that an ostensibly rational justification for separation on the basis of ethical norms could actually be obscuring (and doing the rhetorical work of) a discourse that imposes and preserves the power of dominant actors, which is a problem that confronts any development of collective identities (McConkey, 2004). This is especially the case if circumstances become taken for granted by individuals because this implies a denial of other options, social possibilities or distributions of power (Swartz, 2013; McConkey, 2004). Rather than an adversarial relationship being natural, then, it may be the result of narratives about Defence acquisition being shaped by symbolic power, thereby creating collective identities that could be otherwise (Bourdieu, 1991).

As theoretical framework to explore this, Bourdieu's theory of practice is set out in greater detail below. Prior to this explication, the research paradigm is discussed; that is, the ontological, epistemological, methodological and other assumptions made by the researcher in approaching the social world in this investigation (Kuhn, 1962). Once this research paradigm has been paired with the Bourdieusian theoretical framework, which sets *practice* (as revealed in narratives) as the unit of analysis (Bourdieu, 1990), the methods used to collect and analyse data are then described (Blakie, 2010).

4.3 Research methodology

4.3.1 Research paradigm

Historically, there are two main paradigms of social science research: positivism and interpretivism (Bryman and Bell, 2003). At a philosophical level, they are demarcated by the question of whether social reality exists independently of the knowing subject (Nightingale and Cromby, 2002). Positivists pursue causes for social action that do not depend on the existence of people or their opinions (Roth and Mehta, 2002), while interpretivists seek an understanding of how social reality is experienced (Heracleous, 2004); that is, interpretivism trades positivism's generalisation-via-causes for understanding-in-depth, based on an assumption that the two are incompatible (Crane, 1999).

Positivism advanced in the early 20th Century, particularly with the philosophical development of logical positivism in the 1930s. For positivists, what exists is what can be measured (Cruickshank, 2010); therefore, there is no need for any metaphysical assumptions in science. The social sciences should thus follow their natural science predecessors and proceed empirically, advancing what positivists would say are theory-neutral hypotheses that, from their consequences, could be subjected to experiment. Where regularities between variables could be determined, explanation in social science could take the form of covering laws and social facts: given a particular fact about society, a general law should be able to subsume or 'cover' it, such that the combination of the law and the circumstances result in the fact to be explained (Bunge, 2004). As a result, positivism is overwhelmingly but not exclusively associated with quantitative methods such as surveying (Glennan, 2006).

However, both observations and hypotheses cannot be neutral; they are unavoidably theory-laden (Hanson, 1958). Moreover, covering law explanations were rejected as logically flawed (specifically, they assumed that only one cause exists for a given social behaviour; see Law, 2007) and because they do not involve mechanisms (Bunge, 2004), or 'the process (or processes) through which the cause influences its effect' (Steel, 2005: 950). In general, being able to deduce the behaviour of the system from some first or fundamental principles still does not explain the behaviour (Manicas, 1987).

Noting this limitation of positivist inquiry, interpretivism involves moving away from the assumption that reality exists separately from social actors and towards a social science that is about social meaning (Roth and Mehta, 2002). In particular, it implies that people's understanding of the social world is created as they assign meaning to their actions; and furthermore, that when people form groups, this understanding must be constantly negotiated and renegotiated, such that social reality is constructed rather than fixed (Sandberg, 2005). Interpretivist research is then about the depth of understanding of the social context through the meaning that people give to it (Roth and Mehta, 2002).

From this perspective, there is no independent social reality; instead, it is intersubjective and always changing (Crane, 1999). However, this makes it difficult for social science research to examine relations of power in society, especially less overt ones that influence how people interpret their experience but over which they have little or no control, even if aware of them (Hartley, 2010). Thus, the interpretation of social reality by individuals may not be connected to the hierarchies and other social structures they actually live within; that is, they fail to recognise that, since social actors have unequal access to resources, their creation of meaning is constrained and not solely a function of their understanding (Swartz, 1997).

Critical realism was developed in the 1970s as an alternative, according to which 'the primary aim of science and explanation is to identify and understand the underlying structures, capacities, mechanisms, etc. which causally bear upon (facilitate, influence, produce) surface phenomena, including events, of interest' (Lawson, 1999: 233). On this view, rather than exclusively seeking laws or regularities ('if x, then y'), and rather than only looking at meanings, critical realism also pursues the mechanisms that support the observed laws and interpreted meanings, such that the social world can be explained – indeed, these causal mechanisms *are* the explanation (Bunge, 2004), while the mechanisms are specific to whatever system is being investigated (Steel, 2005). In social science, these mechanisms are necessary but not sufficient to explain social behaviour, because the critical realist can agree with the interpretivist that much of the social world is constructed, particularly norms (Bunge, 2004). An increasing body of literature argues that critical realism represents a development of and improvement upon positivism and interpretivism; therefore, critical realism was preferable as an overall approach to social science research for this study (Gorski, 2013b).

4.3.2 Ontology

4.3.2.1 Ontological commitments

As a macro research paradigm, critical realism attaches particular weight to questions of ontology (Bhaskar, 1979) and how questions about how anything

can be known (*epistemology*) about the social world force researchers to ask about what exists (*ontology*) (Law and Urry, 2005). For Bourdieu (1996: 1),

> The goal of sociology is to uncover the most deeply buried structures of the different social worlds that make up the social universe, as well as the 'mechanisms' that tend to ensure their reproduction or transformation.

Critical realism in social science commonly means presupposing that knowledge claims must ultimately respond to a world that endures independently of social scientists and their subjects, and also that the entities proposed in theories to explain the operation of the social world actually exist (Bhaskar, 1994). Since the social world typically cannot be directly accessed, social scientists must content themselves with appearances and hence realism is fallibilist about what really exists (Wainwright, 2000). Realists emphasise causal explanations that are derived by uncovering the mechanisms that underlie social phenomena, with structures and individual agency both considered important (Delanty, 1997). Against positivism, critical realism refuses to correlate predictive success with explanation because social phenomena may be more or less prevalent in different circumstances and may interfere with each other, such that achieving a direct link between structures and their effects via correlation is impossible; instead, critical realists seek the structures and other mechanisms that generate the social phenomena (Wainwright, 2000).

A distinction is made in critical realism between transitive and intransitive domains of knowledge, or what can be known about things that exist in the domain of social being and what can be known of things that exist whether there are people to ask about them or not (such as the universe itself) (Bhaskar, 1979). These distinctions are also applied to the ontology of the social world, such that social structures can be intransitive. This is then important methodologically because one of the objections to realism in social science is that researchers create or construct reality when they investigate it.

For example, by undertaking an experiment, the researcher causes a sequence of events to occur and then interprets the events to mean that some phenomenon exists in the social world; but without the experiment, there would have been no need to posit the phenomenon. The critical realist would argue that the researcher does indeed bring about the events, but does not similarly create any mechanisms underlying them that, by virtue of undertaking the experiment, the researcher is now able to identify as mechanisms (Bhaskar, 1979). In short: there may exist social laws or mechanisms that can only be identified by experiment and exploration of how they function. This means that the social world can be both real and constructed – linking but expanding upon the positivist and interpretivist perspectives – because whatever structures exist, social reality is constantly remade by the relationships between these structures and social actors, as well as between the social actors themselves (Tsekeris, 2010).

Indeed, by their investigations of social reality, social scientists themselves enact it as much as they explain it (Law and Urry, 2005): their results are an expression of the social world at a specific moment in the ongoing explanation of it (Giddens, 1990). This is because social science participates in the social world as it tries to account for it (Law and Urry, 2005). For example, by obtaining data and defining suicide rates from them, Durkheim created a new element of social reality that then (and now) had effects in the world as people sought to address and account for differing regional rates (Durkheim, 1951). Here, the suicides existed independently of Durkheim and his research, but the latter constructed a new aspect of the social world that then became as real as the suicides.

The critical realist thus resists the 'epistemic fallacy', or the claim that ontology collapses into epistemology; that is, to argue that social science can only speak of what exists in the social world in terms of what can be known (Bhaskar, 1979). For a critical realist, social science does not reveal what precisely exists, but only that things like mechanisms exist, which it is then the role of the researcher to explore (Bryant, 2011); in this respect, it must be accompanied by

73

a fallibilist epistemology (Bhaskar, 1979). The manner of getting at these mechanisms is then analogous to police investigation: 'the detective knows that a crime has been committed and some facts about it but he does not know, or at least cannot yet prove, the identity of the criminal' (Bhaskar, 1998: 35). Indeed, if social reality both exists and is made by the actions of the social scientist, then epistemology is forced back into ontology as the researcher considers not just what and how she knows anything, but also what she creates in seeking that knowledge (Law and Urry, 2005).

4.3.2.2 Criticism and responses

A philosophical objection to critical realism is that it methodologically begs the question: it presupposes, ontologically and *a priori*, that there are causal mechanisms in the social world and then develops a methodology to identify them (Guala, 2005). To avoid methodological constraints, this critique advocates instead a pluralism of methodologies that are constrained by ontology only in the sense that the activity of the researcher does not lead to ontological incoherence; otherwise, the researcher can do as she chooses, without adhering to a rigid methodology. Ontological assumptions then arise *a posteriori* as part of an explanation that combines ontology with what is relevant in practice, as well as what the researcher aims to achieve (Van Bouwel, 2003). In short, if – like Bourdieu (1990) and Bhaskar (1979) – researchers want to engage in emancipatory or evaluative critique, then they should advocate methodological pluralism; but then this implies that ontology is a matter of pragmatism, at least prior to research commencing and before the results suggest what ontological commitments might be advised (Van Bouwel, 2003).

This complaint can be accommodated by critical realism, though. The historical turn in the philosophy of science demonstrated that scientists violated methodological 'rules' (or *post hoc* assertions of what the scientific method should involve) as and when it suited them (Lakatos, 1978), so much so that – hypothetically speaking – insisting on these rules would have stopped dead what are now regarded as paradigmatic instances of great science (for this *reductio ad absurdum* argument, see Feyerabend, 1993). In social science, 'the

problem is not so much lack of variety in the *practice* of method, as the hegemonic and dominatory pretensions of certain versions of *accounts* of method' (Law, 2007: 4). Although methodology is typically fixed at the outset when conducting social science, there is no reason why it cannot be reviewed or adjusted as social reality is explored and constructed (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008). On this view, the critical realist adopts an underlying concept of causation, but not a fully developed ontology, which then leaves her with space to innovate methodologically (Rudder Baker, 1993). Ultimately, though, there is no single social science methodology for divining the mechanisms that the realist assumes must lie behind social action (Bunge, 2004).

A separate social constructionist criticism is that if the social world is always a reality *experienced* then it makes little sense to speak of reality beyond this: it is through experience that the world *becomes* real for people (Sandberg, 2005). From this perspective, even if reality existed as distinct from all subjects, it could have no meaning for them until interpreted through the lens of experience. Although realists assert that the reality of the social world has to be assumed before anyone can make knowledge claims (Cromby and Nightingale, 1999), social constructionists argue that there can be no neutral, 'God's-eye' position from which to view the world and assess our knowledge claims (Nightingale and Cromby, 2002).

However, constructionism need not mean that just *anything* can be socially constructed because the realist's external world can still be accepted as playing a constraining role, even though, having created their social reality, people then come to experience it as existing independently of them (Dobbin, 2008). For critical realists, the constructionist perspective advances 'thick' descriptions of social phenomena in the place of 'thin' explanations, whereas what the critical realist actually seeks is thick explanation (Wainwright, 2000). For ethics, in particular, if it 'is inevitably expressed in ways that are "thick" with culture, tradition, and institutional significance' (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1999: 57), then the critical realist aims to avoid removing *both* the thick micro context as well as any macro setting that could help identity social structures and other

mechanisms (Porter and Ryan, 1996). Focusing on the phenomenology of primary experience risks the researcher being unable to account for that experience at all (Bourdieu, 1995).

From this perspective, explanation is more important than understanding in social science: the critical realist attempts to develop mechanisms that explain social phenomena, while providing empirical justifications for believing in the existence of these mechanisms and arguing that there are no *better* explanations (Wainwright, 2000). Moreover, relying too much on what social actors report runs the risk of the researcher ending up with folk beliefs that are counter to the available evidence (for example, that poverty does not cause poor health; see Blaxter, 1997).

4.3.2.3 Social reality

For a critical realist, then, social reality is neither singular (positivist) nor constructed and intersubjective; instead, it consists in three domains: the empirical, the actual, and the real (Bhaskar, 1979). The *empirical* domain is what social actors experience; it is empirical because data can be gathered from it, and is the focus of positivism. The *actual* is what social actors experience over and above the empirical, such as the meanings that are the goal of the interpretivists. Finally, the *real* is the domain of the mechanisms that generate the social world (Danermark, Ekstrom, Jakobsen and Karlsson, 2002). This conception of realism is called *critical* because, by uncovering mechanisms, it attempts to identify and challenge power relations in the social world (Bhaskar, 1998).

Therefore, when the social constructionist researcher argues that meaning for people is not *in* the world but is constructed by their attempts to understand it (Clark, Zukas and Lent, 2011), the critical realist responds that there is more to social reality than what social actors express (Bhaskar, 1979). The social world can indeed be created as people interact with their surroundings and with each other (Miyahara, 2010), both in people's *minds* as they experience it and in their *behaviours* as they embody their experiences to date (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), but this remains the domain of the actual. Critical realists can accept the

social realities of the positivist and the interpretivist, but insist on moving a stage deeper by aiming at the mechanisms beneath both (Bhaskar, 1979). The reality that is then uncovered is too complex to be captured completely such that explanation comes to an end, but this is why social science must be fallibilist (Wainwright, 2000).

Given these constraints on social science inquiry, the selection of an appropriate epistemology that can effectively work within these limitations is now considered.

4.3.3 Epistemology

4.3.3.1 Objections to standard social science approaches

The critical realist's search for mechanisms amounts to asking, 'how does it work?' (Bunge, 2004). To achieve this quantitatively, business research has focused on surveying attitudes, particularly those of managers, with the resulting data used to make an assessment; for example, of how ethical an organisation is (Crane, 1999). However, this approach presupposes that social reality is about the actions and decisions of individuals, so they are used as the unit of analysis rather than – for example – the organisation or some other proxy for the collective actions of individuals; but this means that social context and its influence is missed or explicitly ignored (Saini, 2010). Moreover, surveys have poor response rates for people occupying marginalised positions (Wainwright, 2000), yet these are precisely the people whom the researcher needs to access to avoid learning only about majority opinions or else assuming that those in leadership positions are representative, which is unlikely (Brigley, 1995). Given that how people understand their business ethics obligations is precisely what this investigation seeks to uncover, it would be begging the question to presume that they act as isolated, rational individuals and then test whether ethics policies are being followed, ignoring the social context.

From a qualitative perspective, research tends to involve interviews that are then abstracted and organised into themes; that is, generalising from the data to identify key terms (codes) that are repeated, and then drawing these together to

a higher level of generalisation as primary concepts or themes (Bryman and Bell, 2003). However, there are no standards of validity for this coding process, which can lead to the researcher incorporating pre-conceived theoretical frameworks in her analysis (Bulmer, 1979). Moreover, the problem with coding is that 'the literature of the ages has always suggested that the most essential meaning of a text may run contrary to the linguistic devices used to convey it' (Biernacki, 2012: 130).

Therefore, if results are coded on the basis that a specific code is valid because it fits or is correlated with other codes, this is begging the question by presupposing what counts as valid; but if valid codes are already known or can be determined, then there is no need to actually pay attention to data at all: the theory that allowed for this assessment of representativeness would already be the theory sought by the researcher. The point of Biernacki's literature metaphor is that data take their meaning from their relationship to the wider cultural environment, but coding must strip much of this away to identify which aspects are most salient; and yet there is no way to know whether the parts remaining are the most important; so, even where another researcher identifies other codes, this can be attributed to transcription errors and the overall theory preserved. In short, the selection can never be falsified (Lakatos, 1978).

There is still another problem, though: by coding data and observing similar meanings, the researcher presupposes that the data are referring to the same things; the codes are then generalised to provide a theory encompassing all of the data. However, the data may straightforwardly use identical terms and yet mean something different: they may be part of incommensurable paradigms (Kuhn, 1962); for example, the concepts of mass in Newtonian physics and quantum mechanics (Feyerabend, 1981). Precisely this form of incommensurability was found in the qualitative (interview) data; for example, 'project management' meant different things in the MOD and in Industry. (This is discussed in Chapter 5.) Even where codes are commensurable, the researcher has no way to determine that this is intentional, so to speak – that like uses are

actually synonyms and that meaning is persistent across data sets (and across time) (Biernacki, 2012).

4.3.3.2 Social knowledge via case studies as ideal types

Just as there are no rules in the natural sciences for when a result disconfirms a theory (Galison, 1987) or what is allowed or disallowed in developing it (Feyerabend, 1993), the lesson of these quantitative and qualitative epistemological shortfalls is that both the natural and social sciences need to provide transparency in how interpretations were derived (cf. Weber, 1949a). This is achieved not by coding away detail, such that correspondence with an assumed reality becomes impossible, but by offering the original texts for others to contrast them with any conclusions drawn from them. One way to achieve this is via case studies, or 'an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units' (Gerring 2004: 342).

Critics of case study research argue that generalisation is not possible because it implies losing the context that case studies capture in detail (Peattie, 2001); that is, exchanging 'thick' descriptions of social reality for 'thin' abstractions that then mean little to the people from whom they originate (Walzer, 1983). This objection can be rejected: case studies can simply be regarded as the end point of sociological research (Flyvbjerg, 2006) because with the empirical detail of conversations and actions captured by researchers embedded in the specific context (Linstead, Maréchal and Griffin, 2014), the hidden aspects of organisational life such as careerism and the pursuit of power are made available when they would otherwise be missed (Shapira, 2015). Indeed, from a critical realist perspective, generalisation is a positivistic requirement that addresses only the domain of the empirical, whereas the realist seeks to identify mechanisms in the domain of the real that case studies could illuminate (Ruddin, 2006). On this view, interpreting a case study is about developing an explanation that is overlain *on* the case, rather than trying to inductively generalise *from* it (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Although criticised for merely establishing the researcher's prior ideas (Diamond, 1996), in fact the depth of understanding

arrived at through a case study makes it more likely to falsify those ideas than confirm them (Ragin, 1992).

In any event, a case study *can* be used to generalise – even in positivistic terms – if it is constructed so as to be a *critical case* (rather than a representative one); that is, one that is associated with the falsification or confirmation of a theory (Flyvbjerg, 2001) and either a most likely or least likely case, respectively (Flyvbjerg, 2006). (For some problems with falsification, see Lakatos, 1978.) For example, Aristotle's theory of gravity, particularly its concepts of impetus and place, meant that a heavier object should fall quicker than a lighter one. However, Galileo was famously said to have used a single case to demonstrate that objects fall at the same speed by dropping items from the Tower of Pisa (Mitchell, 2000). Historians of science dispute whether this experiment actually took place, but it was repeated to demonstrate that Galileo could have undertaken it as he described (Settle, 1961). More importantly, in this instance, '[a] particular case that is well constructed ceases to be particular' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 77) and the detail of this one case can be applied to others. Just as in the development of case law in legal judgments, a qualitative generalisation occurs, rather than a quantitative statistical inference (Ruddin, 2006). Indeed, in common with the legal profession, only by developing experience of detailed single cases can expertise develop (Flyvbjerg, 2006), which is why most scientific knowledge is actually the result of case studies (Gerring, 2004).

In this way, it becomes not only possible to generalise from a single case study because social problems share characteristics and 'a finding that applies to one of them often sheds light on many of them' (Steinberg, 2015: 168). Any inference about the whole can come only from building upon the detail of a single, thoroughly explored example (Flyvbjerg, 2001), which is then made into a critical case that explicitly emphasises how and where the researcher has constructed the paradigm (Biernacki, 2012). This is a Weberian *ideal type*, or an analytical construction that serves to stress the logic of social relations and interactions, allowing this construct to then be applied to other contexts:

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct. In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found anywhere in reality. It is a utopia. (Weber, 1949b: 90)

If an ideal type proves useful in explaining a particular case, there is reason to suppose it will be similarly fruitful elsewhere unless and until the details of another case show otherwise (Bengtsson and Hertting, 2014). For example, Weber's three kinds of ideal type involved historical particularities (for example, 'the Protestant ethic'), abstracting social reality (for example, 'bureaucracy'), and reconstructing behaviours (for example, propositions about social actors in economic theory); these have been so successful that they have been largely adopted in social discourse (Coser, 1977). Like a point mass in physics, this ideal type does not exist (in the positivist's sense) in the domain of the empirical and thus as an ideal it cannot be confirmed or falsified, but it illustrates the operation of mechanisms in the domain of the real, which can then be generalised to any similar context (Bengtsson and Hertting, 2014).

Therefore, the case study is not just compatible with generalisation but constitutes the larger part of it, notwithstanding that the process of creating an ideal type is not described by a methodological formula (Weber, 1949a). In short, '[o]ne cannot think well except in and through theoretically constructed empirical cases' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 160), the impact of which is very much underestimated (Flyvbjerg, 2001). For these reasons, the development of a Weberian ideal type through a case study was selected as the appropriate epistemological approach.

4.3.3.3 Case studies of ethics

To arrive at an ideal type when researching ethics poses several issues. Firstly, any investigation of ethics research risks social desirability bias, where people offer what they believe the researcher wants to hear – whatever is socially

appropriate – instead of their true beliefs (Landeros and Plank, 1996). Secondly, and as a consequence, this reluctance to speak openly for fear of saying the 'wrong' thing then imposes the perspective of the researcher, since she is a proxy for social acceptance (Crane, 1999). This means that the researcher can only get at what people believe relative to the context they are being asked about, whether their family, their organisation, or society as a whole (Brigley, 1995).

Investigating ethics in the way advocated in this methodology chapter implies identifying a case study (Yin, 2003) that starts with how people actually conceptualise ethics rather than imposing frameworks on them (Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2007). However, the case study would need to go beyond the domain of the empirical (in critical realist terms), which meant seeking to identify how people use ethics in practice through the domains of the actual and the real (Wainwright, 2000). The closer that research can get to its subjects and the more trust can be established with them, the more likely it is that (relatively) honest results will be obtained and bias minimised (Miyazaki and Taylor, 2008). This implied a need for the researcher to be embedded within the research context to some extent to gain an appreciation of the domain of the actual as well as an awareness of ethics as 'something one does rather than something one has' (Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2007).

4.3.3.4 Narrative analysis

To examine how people use ethics, insofar as it is possible to do so, narrative analysis is a way of learning about social reality that lets people tell their own stories and minimises the role of the researcher (Bauer, 1996), such that beliefs – including those about ethics – are inferred from the narratives and the social world they created, rather than asked about explicitly and so encouraging bias (Foster, 2012). It attempts to analyse the way in which people interact with the social world, particularly how they interpret their relationships with society and with others as stories within an overall life narrative (Miyahara, 2010).

A narrative is 'a method of recapitulating past experience' (Labov, 1972: 359) as the conjunction of stories and a controlling plot (Franzosi, 1998). The narrative

analyst can ask people to recount events and how they were navigated (Bryman and Bell, 2003). The goal is to then identify the plot – a kind of screenplay – that lies behind the narrative (Franzosi, 1998), which then sets out the roles of the different people involved and the social backdrop against which the stories play out, as well as providing a means of assessing the function of the narrative (Bryman and Bell, 2003). In general, a narrative will include a number of stories that illustrate particular instances in support of its overall themes (Feldman, Sköldberg, Brown and Horner, 2004).

Critics of narrative analysis argue that narratives create order out of the chaos of everyday life and, therefore, are distinct from the critical realist's domain of the real. On this view, narratives cannot be used to reveal social reality because they project an order onto it that does not actually exist (Mink, 1981). In particular, the more people have thought about their life stories, the richer these tales are likely to be; but the passing of time also permits the reconstruction of narratives to support what people think and aim at now, rather than as their lives actually played out (Bauer, 1996).

However, the conclusion that narratives are epistemologically limited or even worthless is based on the positivistic ontological presupposition that social reality is that which is independent of any meaning given to it by social actors (Meretoja, 2014); that is, an ontology that privileges the empirical domain at the expense of the actual and the real (Bhaskar, 1979). For a critical realist, though, the actual is precisely a process of interpretation in which social reality exists and is constructed by social actors (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). Thus, on the basis of a differing ontological commitment, if there can be no positivist's experience of social reality as pure sense data, then the critical realist has no grounds for dismissing narratives as less real or as epistemologically frail (Meretoja, 2014). Moreover, since narratives are always interpretations, this concern with accuracy is misplaced because there is no means of determining the validity or otherwise of narratives anyway (Biernacki, 2012); after all, the point is to get at the narrative and its mechanisms (Hunter, 2010) and then develop an ideal type from it (Caine, Estefan and Clandinin, 2013).

Given a critical realist commitment to narratives, the primary reason why narrative analysis can help in researching ethics is that the *way* social actors narrate provides a window into their ethical beliefs and behaviours (Savin-Baden and Van Niekerk, 2007):

> [T]hrough the events the narrative includes, excludes, and emphasizes, the storyteller not only illustrates his or her version of the action but also provides an interpretation or evaluative commentary on the subject (Feldman *et al.*, 2004: 148).

The researcher then indirectly approaches ethics via a tendency for people to recount their lives as a continuous narrative with ethical lessons and implications embedded within it, just as in folk tales and other stories (Hunter, 2010). The narratives thus help reveal the social enactment of ethics, so any social desirability bias or other distortion – such as 'tactical answering' in line with dominant organisational themes – is a central part of these practices and, therefore, to be welcomed as part of the analysis (Diefenbach, 2009: 882).

4.3.4 Methodology

Having chosen narrative analysis as an epistemology to develop a detailed case study into an ideal type, this form of analysis became both the epistemology and the methodology of this research (Caine, Estefan and Clandinin, 2013). Moreover, insofar as people use narratives to define themselves as social beings, these narratives are also ontological: they provide people with social identities that influence how people act, but these actions then adjust and create new narratives (Somers, 1994). Narrative interviews were conducted according to a standard format (Bauer, 1996) and then analysed by setting the case study in its social context, an additional step that is often missing from other case study research, (Diefenbach, 2009).

4.3.4.1 Methodological relationalism

To do this, rather than suppose – with positivists – that correlations between variables imply causal relationships, critical realists focus on (necessarily unobservable) structures that condition but do not fully determine how social

actors behave, such that social behaviour is an emergent property of these structures (Bhaskar, 1998). For example, economic systems like socialism or capitalism emerged from the actions of individuals, including those writing foundational texts, but these systems then became structures that cause behaviours and cannot be attributed again to their individual creators or the social actors within the systems (Cruickshank, 2010). This means that it does not necessarily follow that all social mechanisms can be reduced to the agency of individuals (called methodological individualism, or 'the doctrine that all social phenomena (their structure and their change) are in principle explicable only in terms of individuals – their properties, goals, and beliefs' (Elster, 1982a: 453)). Social science explanations may limit the agency of individuals when other factors are strong, such as organisational inertia reducing the impact of individual management action (Hannan and Freeman, 1989). Therefore, analysis has to move from a focus on individuals to one of relations (Tsekeris, 2010).

This view is contested, though. For methodological individualists, 'large-scale social phenomena must be accounted for by the situations, dispositions and beliefs of individuals' (Watkins, 1955: 58). These explanations are contrasted with functionalism in social science, or where the function of a phenomenon explains why it exists (Elster, 1982a). Functionalist explanations are common in evolutionary theory and organisational ecology: in the same way that camouflage functions to help prey avoid predators and thus explains the former's survival, the existence of particular organisations or structures is explained by their differential mortality rates (Steel, 2005). Methodological individualists object to functionalism in social science because it fails to specify the *mechanisms* that cause behaviour: whereas the explanation can point to natural selection, the social scientist cannot do so analogously, except insofar as she points to the role of individual agency (Elster, 1982b).

However, in general, and against methodological individualism, the acceptability of functional explanations – or indeed of any explanation – is dependent on what is being explained (Steel, 2005). While it may be that a particular instance

of a social phenomenon can be described in terms of individual agency, the same phenomenon could arise for different reasons and in a different way at another time or place, so its explanation is underdetermined by methodological individualism (Wright, Sober and Levine, 1987). Indeed, following Davidson's (1989) conception of meaning holism, beliefs cannot be ascribed to individual agents at all without an assumption that they can employ part or all of a language, which – since it is a social phenomenon that cannot be reduced to individual acts – implies that the meanings of agents' beliefs are 'as social as can be' (Kumar, 2008: 199).

A distinction can also be made between methodological and ontological versions of methodological individualism: a preference for explanations in terms of individual agency alone need not imply that *only* the actions of individuals exist (Van Bouwel and Weber, 2008). On this view, any explanation of social phenomena requires *interactions* between agents, so explanations of social phenomena must be in terms of both individual agents *and* the relations between them, as well as how they relate to social structures (Hodgson, 2007). That one of these might predominate, depending on the question being asked, need not exclude explanation in terms of the others (Van Bouwel and Weber, 2008).

This is a methodological relationalism that looks to the composition, structure and contents of social networks (Tsekeris, 2010), yet retains an assumption that individuals act rationally – or for a reason – insofar as they can (Bengtsson and Hertting, 2014; Bourdieu, 1998). Indeed, the difficulty for methodological individualism is that unless there is some way to aggregate separate explanations in terms of social phenomena that supervene on individual agency, no general explanation is possible. The function of a system remains an essential mechanism in explaining how it works, alongside other mechanisms like structures and agency (Bunge, 2004), and people are positioned within it relationally, such that they do not and cannot have a view of the whole (Maton, 2003). To put it another way, 'to exist within a social space, to occupy a point or to be an individual within a social space, is to differ, to be

different' (Bourdieu, 1998: 9); so how people differentiate themselves in relation to others becomes the focus. As a result, it is *practice* – as revealed in narratives – that must be the unit of analysis, not individuals (Bourdieu, 1990).

4.3.4.2 Abduction and Retroduction

Given narrative analysis as the appropriate epistemological approach, and given a methodological focus on relations rather than individuals, the research needed to then make inferences on the basis of any data collected. In social science, there are two traditional forms of inference that a researcher can use to account for or extend the data she gathers. A deduction moves from general principles to a particular case, as with the positivist's covering law explanations; conversely, an induction moves from particular cases to general principles. However, there are significant philosophical difficulties with both.

Firstly, making deductive inferences in social science is an instance of *affirming the consequent*, a formal logical fallacy because there are many possible causes of social behaviours (Law, 2007). For example, it might be argued that if social security benefit levels are increased in a country, then it should be anticipated that more people would choose to stop working within or to migrate to that country. If unemployment and migration subsequently go up, the proponent of this argument then declares that the rise in benefits caused joblessness and migration. However, since there are many possible reasons for both, this argument confuses *subsequent* behaviour with *consequent* (hence *affirming the consequent*, or *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* – 'after this; therefore, because of it'). The critical realist would say that what is needed is the underlying mechanism, not the deduction, which – once the mechanism is known – becomes redundant.

Inductive inferences also face issues. Regardless of how much data the researcher has, her interpretations are only *supported* by it; they can never be determined by it (Brigley, 1995). This is the problem of induction in philosophy (Hume, 2000), according to which generalisations are always underdetermined because the data can imply many explanations (Bonk, 2008). To expand on the previous example, a researcher might have discovered several instances of

migrants who say that they were motivated by an increase in benefits, but it does not follow that all migrants were so inclined; moreover, no number of additional interviews would make the inductive inference any more secure, unless it was somehow possible to access all migrants. Although it is possible to argue that a sample is representative (Williams, 1947), this is begging the question because then – in this example – the researcher would already know the distribution of migrants motivated by benefits and would no longer need an inductive inference. Social science cannot define some specified number of data points that a researcher needs because the inference can never follow from the data (Brigley, 1995) and, therefore, induction cannot generate theories (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012).

A third form of inference is abduction or an inference to a best explanation (Mantere and Ketokivi, 2013), which is increasingly supplanting deduction and induction (Reichertz, 2010). What counts as the 'best' explanation is contested (Niiniluoto, 1999; Lipton, 2004), but abduction is essentially a conjecture at what hidden mechanisms lie behind social reality (Bunge, 2004) and – in addition to its use in science – is the reasoning people employ in everyday life and notably in history (Niiniluoto, 1999). Abduction bridges the philosophical gaps between deduction and induction because it sets the data alongside current theories and invites the researcher to conjecture an explanation (Bendassolli, 2013). Indeed, since mechanisms in both the natural and social worlds are unseen, researchers must guess or offer a hunch (Bunge, 2004); that is, in the manner of Bhaskar's (1998) detective and based on the evidence available (Linstead, Maréchal and Griffin, 2014; Reichertz, 2010). Although abduction is necessarily creative, it assumes a detailed familiarity with the research literature and existing theories so that problems or gaps are emphasised and set up to be addressed (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012).

Abduction is often combined with retroduction and the two are strongly associated with critical realism (McEvoy and Richards, 2006). For critical realists, a distinction can be made between seeking a best explanation of unexpected findings (abduction) and using assumptions about social reality to

move beyond the empirical and develop theories to flesh out this explanation (retroduction) (Meyer and Lunnay, 2013). Abduction is then about the interpretation of a social phenomenon through inference to a best explanation, whereas retroduction is an attempt to recreate the social conditions – in the domain of the actual – that bring about the phenomenon (Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen and Karlsson, 1997). The combination of the two thus permits inferences in social science: abduction uses creativity to re-describe social phenomena and, in so doing, posit a better explanation; this having been undertaken, retroduction means searching for the social properties without which the phenomena could not exist and, thereby, inferring the mechanisms responsible (Meyer and Lunnay, 2013).

A combination of abduction and retroduction was thus the best form of inference for this study and, in combination with narrative analysis, could be used to generate explanations as to why people experience social meaning as they do (Mantere and Ketokivi, 2013). An account is offered as a best explanation of what the researcher has found, inferring mechanisms that allow the particular case to become an ideal type if the abduction/retroduction supports it (Ybema, Yanow, Wels and Kamsteeg, 2009). Like realist social science, an abductive/retroductive inference is always fallible (Reichertz, 2010), but it provides a way to get at ethical issues in research without prompting social desirability bias (Landeros and Plank, 1996); that is, by approaching ethics indirectly and trying to infer attitudes without explicitly asking about them. It also drives theoretical innovation (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012).

To summarise, in the same way that the natural sciences have been criticised as being able to use neither induction nor deduction (see Kuhn, 1962, Feyerabend, 1993), the social sciences can be understood as constructing ideal types from narrative case studies through analogy and abduction/retroduction (Biernacki, 2012). The validity of the ideal type and the narrative interpretations underpinning it are assured by providing the reader with the original data (transcripts) and setting out in detail the process of analysis (Feldman *et al.*, 2004; Biernacki, 2012).

4.4 Theoretical framework

Given the critical realist approach taken to this research and the subsequent development of ontological, epistemological and methodology assumptions, the next step was to adopt a theoretical framework. Noting the merits of Bourdieu's theory of practice that were identified in the literature review, Bourdieu is also a critical realist who holds that the aim of social science is to:

> … uncover the most profoundly buried structures of the various social worlds which constitute the social universe, as well as the 'mechanisms' which tend to ensure their reproduction or their transformation (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 7).

For Bourdieu, these mechanisms are both *agents* – through the deliberate behavioural choices that individuals make – and *structures* – the causes that underlie social or organisational behaviour (Manicas, 2006). As a critical realist, Bourdieu can allow that social reality is constructed, but nevertheless note that the positions from which people begin their constructions, the categories they can employ, and the limits on their ambition, are not (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu is emphatic in insisting that social action 'lies neither in structures nor in consciousness, but rather in the relation of immediate proximity between objective structures and embodied structures' (Bourdieu, 1996b: 38); that is, in the interaction of objective social structures like institutions and in the 'objectivity of the subject' when these are embodied as people become socialised into them (Bourdieu, 1990: 135).

Bourdieu's theory of practice as applied to organisations was thus an optimum choice of theoretical framework insofar as it balances individual agency and the influence of social structures, thereby allowing for the conceptualisation of businesses as structures within which agents act and can come to see the ways things are as inevitable rather than an issue for ethics (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008). Moreover, Bourdieu's work explores the notion that communication – whether of ethics or anything else – reflects imbalances in power between individuals who attempt to maintain or enhance their social positions (Shenkin and Coulson, 2007). Without this combined focus on power, structure and

agency, a theory of business ethics that takes account of contemporary research would not be possible, and acquisition could continue to employ – and recommend the further employment of ideas – that not only fail on their own terms, but actively preclude true ethical behaviour. To support this claim, Bourdieu's account of social action is now discussed in detail.

4.4.1 The theory of practice

Bourdieu's theory of practice begins with his conviction that power is central to the study of the social world (Wacquant, 2004). The focus of Bourdieu's interest is what Lukes (2005: 143) defines as 'the capacity to secure compliance through the shaping of beliefs and desires', such that social order arises from habituation. Against social contract theorists, Bourdieu (1995: 168) holds that all social or political orders are essentially arbitrary and founded on violence, with any constitution 'merely a founding fiction designed to disguise the act of lawless violence which is the basis of the establishment of law'. (See Oppenheimer, 1999, for a detailed discussion of this perspective.) Over time, the arbitrary becomes taken for granted (Bourdieu, 1990). Against this backdrop, several key concepts explain how Bourdieu theorises the operation of power in the social world.

4.4.1.1 Capital

For Bourdieu (1996b), power takes the form of – and is exercised through – capital, which is accumulated labour that social actors struggle to define, gain and control. Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes four forms of capital: *economic*, or the traditional equating of power with money and property; *social*, or the networks and relationships that people maintain in society; *cultural*, or knowledge of cultural objects and practices, as well as educational and other qualifications or marks of distinction; and *symbolic*, or authority and legitimacy. Bourdieu's conception of capital is derived from Marx's, although Bourdieu rejects the possibility that his forms of capital can ultimately be reduced to the economic (Swartz, 2013). (Note that subsequent work has identified other forms of capital; for example, see Hakim, 2010, for a discussion of *erotic capital* and Everett, 2002, for *linguistic capital*, although these may in fact be subsets of

91

cultural capital.) Like money (or economic capital), these capitals can be made, saved, exchanged or consumed, and to a certain extent translated (such as economic capital affording the means to accumulate cultural capital); they may also be more or less liquid or subject to degradation than each other (Bourdieu, 1985). The possession of capital allows the holder 'to wield a power, or influence' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 98). Importantly, the other forms of capital – economic, social and cultural – become symbolic capital when they are legitimised; that is, when social actors recognise the possession of these capitals as conferring authority (Everett, 2002). For Bourdieu, capital is always dependent on the social context (Tacon, 2016).

4.4.1.2 Field

The existence and operation of capital only occurs relative to fields, or 'structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their positions within these spaces and which can be analysed independently of the characteristics of their occupants' (Bourdieu, 1993: 72). Fields are then structures that are situated relative to other fields, and in which social actors struggle over capital relative to their positions (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Organisations can be considered fields (Everett, 2002), within which the skirmish involves both *how much* capital people can gain and control, and what *counts* as capital in the first place; that is, the validity of a particular form of capital dominating the others. For example, an artist might argue that cultural capital is more important in her society (the field) than economic capital; a scientist might agree and yet argue that scientific knowledge is its highest form (Bourdieu, 1996b).

In all forms, capital is a relation between people (Bourdieu, 1990). The boundaries of a field depend on how far the influence of power (via capital) extends, so they can be determined empirically, but – crucially – they are thus always contested as people fight for capital and positions within the field (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008). In particular, the relational interdependence of field and capital means that analysis must be continual and iterative: the operation of capital depends on the structure of the field, but this structure

depends on the forms of capital and where they sit within it (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). If the field is instead regarded – for Bourdieu, *wrongly* – as fixed instead of in flux, it is easier to assume that organisations can be conceptualised as natural rather than as the result of a contested historical process (Everett, 2002).

4.4.1.3 Symbolic power

In addition to this battle for the dominance of capital to secure positions *within* a field, Bourdieu (1990) also distinguishes a separate and higher field of power, in which actors fight for a particular form of power to be recognised as primary across society *as a whole*. Normally, the right to adjudicate within this field of power now lies with the state and the field of power becomes a bureaucratic field, which essentially seeks to monopolise symbolic power and perform a regulatory function that establishes 'exchange rates' between forms of capital (Swartz, 2013). This symbolic power is, for Bourdieu, the most important type because it legitimates the way societies are structured and stratified into hierarchies. It allows him to explain why, in general, people do not resist or fight against unequal social orders: they *misrecognise* the way society is as *natural* and, therefore, inevitable, so they accept it without resistance except insofar as they compete within fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

4.4.1.4 Habitus and practice

Social actors then embody this misrecognition through what Bourdieu (1977: 72) calls habitus, or 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions' that provide social actors with 'an unconscious calculation of what is possible, probable, improbable, or impossible for people in their specific locations in the stratified social order' (Swartz, 2013: 39-40). The field structures habitus, but habitus then structures how social actors perceive the field (Bourdieu, 1990); it becomes 'what is called in sport a "feel" for the game' (Bourdieu, 1998: 25). Habitus covers cognition, preferences and perceptions, but it is not deterministic because it only operates relative to field and capital, including the positions of social actors within fields (Golsorkhi, Leca, Lounsbury and Ramirez, 2009). Bourdieu (1962: 111) calls habitus 'the social inscribed in the body', and notes

that people will literally carry and conduct themselves in particular ways depending on their habitus.

The resulting interaction of field, capital and habitus creates practice, or what social actors *do* in a specific field in specific circumstances (Bourdieu, 1990). Practice determines social structures as well as being determined by them: as people act to achieve their own purposes, they are constrained by social structures but also – in acting – create and recreate these structures (Swartz, 1997). The importance of practice means that Bourdieu (1977) rejects methodological individualism because people are not themselves aware of the operation of habitus: focusing only on individual intent provides an insufficiently social perspective by ignoring the constraints of social structures (Swartz, 1997).

On Bourdieu's conception, then, a field is stratified by the amounts of capital that people possess and how this permits them to occupy more or less dominant positions within the field, which may in turn overlap with other fields in which the same or other capitals operate. Those who are dominant will fight to maintain both their capital and the position it enables, as well as to acquire more capital and thence more power; meanwhile, those who are dominated will also seek to expand their holdings of capital or to enhance the legitimacy of other forms that they possess. However, having misrecognised how and why things are as they are, the dominated will share with the dominant the field's doxa, or the 'cognitive and evaluative presuppositions' that people accede to, particularly an acceptance that capitals are valuable rather than essentially arbitrary (Bourdieu, 1995: 100). The doxa means that people take the established social order, or the order of a particular field, as natural rather than – to reiterate – as the result of a contested process (Everett, 2002).

Importantly for ethics, a field's doxa will define 'what is politically sayable or unsayable, thinkable or unthinkable' (Bourdieu, 1991: 172), which might also include what is ethical or unethical. Bourdieu calls this illusio, or when people accept – as part of their habitus – what is or is not conceivable and acceptable within a field (Bourdieu, 1986). The illusio acts as a kind of veil: underneath it,

social actors have agreed to the 'rules of the game' and that the game is to be taken seriously, such that acting in accordance with the rules is the natural thing to do and, therefore, not really a game at all (Golsorkhi *et al.*, 2009); whether the game is worth playing is a question that would then never arise (Bourdieu, 1998). Where people benefit from the game, it is in their interests to invest in it and thus retain the veil (Bourdieu, 1990).

4.4.1.5 Symbolic violence

When people naturalise the symbolic power involved by adjusting their social actions to it, their behaviour becomes a 'practical adaptation' rather than an act of consent (Bourdieu, 2001). Bourdieu calls this phenomenon symbolic violence because it leaves power structures intact even as the dominated misperceive their positions as inevitable and, thereby, preserve those of the dominant (Swartz, 2013). Indeed, even where the dominated fight for a better position in the field, they still maintain the illusio because they are merely trying to be better players of the agreed game, not to adjust the rules or question the doxa and change the game altogether (Golsorkhi *et al.*, 2009).

For Bourdieu (1989), the possession of symbolic power within a field is what permits the social world to be constructed by the dominant; or, in critical realist terms, to make and remake the *actual*. This occurs not overtly or as the intentional exercise of power, but through dispositions that become *practice* as people – both the dominant and the dominated – misrecognise and naturalise the contingent structure of the field and their places in it, even when this is against their own interests (Bourdieu, 1990); that is, akrasia. This misrecognition then means that the dominated are the authors of their own domination because they 'apply categories from the point of view of the dominant', which they then embody in their demeanour towards authority (Bourdieu, 2001: 139). It is this symbolic violence that helps Bourdieu address his concern that 'what is problematic is the fact that the established order is *not* problematic' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1994: 15). On the conception of the theory of practice, it is how it is because people reproduce the mechanisms of social control by their own practices without realising it (Golsorkhi *et al.*, 2009).

4.4.2 Criticisms

There are several criticisms of Bourdieu's theory. One objection is that he makes no distinction between symbolic power enabling power *over* people instead of as a means of *empowering* them (Lukes, 2005). This difference is akin to that between negative and positive freedom, or the freedom *from* constraints contrasted with the freedom *of* self-actualisation; that is, distinguishing between not being prevented from achieving something and actually being able to achieve it (Berlin, 2002). On this view, symbolic power could be a creative force, especially if harnessed by those in dominated positions. However, Bourdieu's (1986) perspective is that the two collapse into one another, since power is all-encompassing and *power to* would become *power over* once new arrangements of domination exist.

Another complaint is that Bourdieu's symbolic power is not actually as powerful as he supposes. If it were then, on the face of it, there would be little need for physical coercion in the form of prisons, and yet some states have significant prison populations (Swartz, 2013). This is to say that Bourdieu focuses on symbolic power at the expense of the very real physical power that states have – a monopoly over violence that may outplay or dominate his symbolic form (Loveman, 2005). This critique depends to an extent on the degree to which compulsion by a state is independent of symbolic power (Mann, 1993), but Bourdieu's emphasis on the symbolic remains a weakness of his theory. Bourdieu (1996a: 242) simply states that, 'I do not contend that everything is symbolic; I would only suggest that there is nothing which is not symbolic at least in part'.

A third and primary difficulty is the charge that Bourdieu's concept of habitus is simply too powerful: it reduces the agency of social actors because they have little choice but to act in accordance with their dispositions (Archer, 2007; Burawoy, 2005). This implies that people cannot challenge the doxa or illusio at all because they have misrecognised their situation and their habitus is not accessible at a conscious level. Bourdieu (1995) accepts this complaint, but argues that there is always some degree of tension between fields and habitus,

markedly recording in his fieldwork notes that people bent or broke social rules (Crossley, 2000). He holds that, where this strain becomes a jarring incongruity, change occurs (Bourdieu, 1990), which is why people in remote social positions are more likely to try to change society (Lockett, Currie, Finn, Martin and Waring, 2014).

Indeed, this is Bourdieu's response to the objection that, if habitus is as powerful as he supposes, then sociological investigation is unlikely to change anything (Swartz, 2013). His argument is that if people are made aware that their dispositions are ethically arbitrary and that power structures might be organised otherwise, they at least have the opportunity to be disposed to change them, especially when '[e]verything suggests that an abrupt slump in objective relative to subjective aspirations is likely to produce a break in the tacit acceptance [of the dominated classes]' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1997: 97). For Bhaskar, a commitment to valuing truth over falsity is 'not only a condition of moral discourse, it is a condition of any discourse at all' (1998: 63). Given this epistemic assumption, it is better to seek the truth and expose it, whether as an explanatory (Bhaskar) or emancipatory (Bourdieu) critique, even if the operation of habitus means that success may be limited.

Moreover, Bourdieu emphasises the positive role of habitus by explicitly rejecting any similarity between symbolic violence and Foucault's conception of domination through discipline (Bourdieu, 2008). This is because the dispersal of power along Foucault's (1997) all-pervasive 'capillaries' does not equate to a person misrecognising their position relative to a field. In effect, Bourdieu argues that Foucault's work was historical, seeking to understand why structures are as they are, whereas Bourdieu's theory of practice is concerned with how an individual agent confronts these structures. For Bourdieu (and against the charge that habitus is deterministic), people do not necessarily pay attention to their discourses. They *do* confront fields that have been shaped by the history of ideas and contain dominant discourses, but they also are *involved* subjectively via their habitus, which is what links the inherited structures to inherited dispositions (Callewaert, 2006).

On this view, Foucault is conflating structure and agency, insisting that subjectivity is reproduced rather than produced (Schlosser, 2013); whereas Bourdieu explicitly separates them, claiming that the difference is between how a discourse or disposition has been produced *historically* and how it is actively created and sustained in a specific social context (Swartz, 2013). For this reason, Foucault's (1997) focus on discourse is inappropriate because discourse does not *cause* actions and, therefore, does not help explain why people choose to act as they do. Indeed, the assumption is that the pre-existing structures limit them (Callewaert, 2006), whereas Bourdieu insists that the strategies people pursue depend also on their positions relative to these structures (the appropriate field), the amount of capital they have available, and their habitus or disposition to do something about their positions (Bourdieu, 1992). He argues that people *do* proactively weigh their options; it is just that this weighing is constrained by their habitus (Everett, 2002).

4.4.3 The theory of practice and research methodology

4.4.3.1 Ontology

To now consider Bourdieu's theory of practice in terms of research methodology, there are two levels of ontology involved. Firstly, there is the field, or the institutions and other structures that have developed over time and form an objective backdrop to social action. Secondly, there is habitus, or 'the life-course history of dispositions stored in the psycho-motor and cognitive-motivational system' (Lizardo, 2004: 394). This means that fields are *historical* structures while habitus is *biographical* (the embodiment of these structures in people); that is, they are objective structures and internalised structures, but both can be considered structures (Bourdieu, 1990: 25) and, therefore, within the domain of the real. Note that neuroscience supports Bourdieu's ontological conception of *habitus* here: observation is not just perceiving something but rather is a positive *cognitive achievement*, or perceiving *that* something does or does not obtain. Indeed, if, cognitively, social actors had no – or instead had fixed – hypotheses about the world then they could not learn anything from or adjust to it. This is to say that observations or experiences must be *interpreted*

before they have any meaning, so they are *theory-laden* all the way down to brain function (Churchland, 1991).

For Bourdieu (1998), there is no contradiction between social reality being constructed and being real, since it can be a fiction and yet – because it is recognised collectively – really exist. Moreover, by adopting methodological relationalism, social reality for Bourdieu exists in the relationships between individual actors and social structures, not separately in their opposition (Swartz, 1997). This means that practice exists when habitus, capital and field combine to create social action, but cannot be reduced to anything less than their interrelationship (Bourdieu, 1984).

4.4.3.2 Epistemology

In epistemological terms, there are three forms of social knowledge for Bourdieu. At the lowest level, phenomenological knowledge makes social practice available to research by getting at the construction of social reality by social actors (Harrits, 2011). In this respect, it corresponds to the domain of the actual in critical realism. At the next level is objective knowledge, or the researcher's knowledge from outside of a specific social context. This is an epistemological achievement insofar as it provides knowledge of structures, such as the operation of capital, field and habitus, which is not available to people within their social context and 'reengender[s] theoretically the empirically observed social space' (Bourdieu, 1998: 32). This objective knowledge would be of critical realism's mechanisms in the domain of the real.

The final level is praxeological knowledge, which Bourdieu (1995) characterises by the researcher making an intentional and decisively reflexive break with her research to avoid what he calls the scholastic fallacy. This is the tendency for social scientists to assume, unwittingly or otherwise, that people see the world in the same way as the researcher does (Harrits, 2011); for example, that people think in terms of capital and habitus in their daily lives. For Bourdieu, it is this break that helps ensure that the social scientist moves from studying structures to appreciating the limitations of her research and hence encourages a more accurate, yet fallible knowledge. This would be analogous again to the

domain of the real, but now with a focus on social practices as people *themselves* would know them; that is, by combining explanation and understanding (Bourdieu, 1990).

4.4.3.3 Methodology

Bourdieu (1999) considers his methodological approach to be a merging of constructionism, structuralism and the power tradition, or of social symbols performing first *cognitively* by constructing meanings, then *communicatively* to share these as structures, and finally in *legitimating* power relations. For Bourdieu, social structures like class begin as constructions ('observation presupposes construction' (1991: 37)) but become real in the sense that they begin to enter into relations with other constructions and people take positions relative to them:

> One has to situate oneself within 'real activity' as such, that is, in the practical relation to the world...To do this, one has to return to practice (1990: 52).

It is Bourdieu's concept of habitus that allows him to 'analyze the social agent as a physical, *embodied* actor, subject to developmental, cognitive and emotive constraints and affected by the very real physical and institutional configurations of the field' (Lizardo, 2004: 376). By combining this qualitative investigation with a quantitative stage to support the derivation of objective knowledge, Bourdieu's (mixed methods) methodology allows him to make practice the unit of analysis (Harrits, 2011; Bourdieu, 1990), using methodological relationalism to structure them in terms of binary oppositions associated with the relative possession of capital (Swartz, 1997; Bourdieu, 1998).

Furthermore, Bourdieu's methodology involves explicitly undertaking case studies to develop ideal types: he argues that 'the deepest logic of the social world can be grasped only if one plunges into the particularity of an empirical reality, historically located and dated, but with the objective of constructing it as a "special case of what is possible" … that is, as an exemplary case in a finite world of possible configurations' (1998: 2). Explanations arrived at in this way

can then address the mechanisms behind social phenomena and unify them into a single worldview (Salmon, 1998). With these ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects taken together, Bourdieu's theory can be described as a critical realist one (Vandenberghe, 1999) that can take into account methodological criticisms (Van Bouwel and Weber, 2008).

4.4.3.4 Reflexivity

A specifically methodological criticism of Bourdieu is that he sometimes employed coding in his research that operated on the basis of his own prior prejudices, with the amount of capital ostensibly involved in an interview response being determined by Bourdieu himself rather than leaving the data to support the claim or otherwise (Biernacki, 2012). Bourdieu is aware of this and argues that it is not enough to merely conduct research; the researcher must also look to herself and the bias she may unwittingly include in her work (Bourdieu, 1990). Accordingly, Bourdieu (1995) advocates epistemic reflexivity to take into account three sources of potential bias: the researcher's own social background; her position within the intellectual field of social science; and the bias (the scholastic fallacy) that results from taking a spectator's view of the social world.

Actually achieving reflexivity is problematic, though. If a researcher tries to make her work reflexive by focusing attention on the relation between her and her inquiry, she creates another object that she has a relation to. This process of reflexivity and new attention can then be an infinite recursion, but if she stops then at what point has *enough* reflexivity been undertaken? Bourdieu's reflexivity becomes not part of an epistemology but a sociological account of it (Maton, 2003).

Ultimately, social science research must point to the fallibilism inherent in critical realism and set out results for scrutiny (Biernacki, 2012). This means constructing an ideal type from them in a way that leaves meanings intact and with any abductive/retroductive inferences available for falsification, either by developing a better explanation of the data to support an amended ideal type or else by obtaining new data that is worked into an alternative. Importantly, given

the criticism of Bourdieu's theory as too deterministic (Archer, 2007; Burawoy, 2005), even if the research could make a case for understanding ethics through capital and/or habitus, it would not follow that normative ethics can be discounted as playing no role in people's behaviour.

4.4.3.5 Sociology as politics

For Bourdieu, sociology can and should have what he calls 'theory effects', or the positive consequence that, in developing and expounding a description of the social world, a researcher can influence it by exposing and highlighting power structures or other aspects that were hidden from people or only implicit until revealed by the sociologist (Bourdieu, 1991: 132). This is the 'critical' aspect of realism (Bhaskar, 1979). The key methodological point is that a researcher cannot use Bourdieu without recognising that, as conceived in the theory of practice, the aim of sociological investigation is to *change* things; it is 'another means of doing politics' (Swartz, 2013: 159). In turn, this poses the risk that, in researching the operation of social power and making the results available, the researcher aids those wielding it because they are then better able to adjust and improve their positions. Nevertheless, Bourdieu's hope instead is that the research empowers those who are disadvantaged, so he explicitly sides with them (Bourdieu, 2004).

Therefore, there is a tension for the researcher employing Bourdieu. The traditional assumption is that (social) science is disinterested and impartial, and – on this view – the results need to be derived from a neutral methodology that can be reproduced, thereby giving them no more than the power to change affairs that is associated with scientific inquiry. However, for Bourdieu, the scientific field is *itself* subject to power struggles (although he does not argue that knowledge is thus relative to power; see Bourdieu, 2004); so, it is naïve to suppose that the results of scientific investigation do not help or hinder political conflicts to which knowledge can contribute, not least if the way the social world is conceptualised is shaped by habitus (Bourdieu, 1995) or, at minimum, there are no neutral observations (Feyerabend, 1981).

Indeed, it may even be that some facts are value-laden, so an historian may deliberately describe genocide not as a 'population loss' but as 'mass murder' (Bhaskar, 1998). Attempting to remove the value judgment to leave only the facts would obscure the reality that the historian's values shape the description (Cruickshank, 2010), and without this it would be less accurate to the historian, the people affected, and to those reading and interpreting the results (Collier, 1998). In the social world, at least, people do ascribe value to things (they are 'value impregnated'), so the researcher must account for this (Bhaskar, 1998).

To be clear: this does *not* mean that the results of scientific investigation are influenced or constructed by the researcher, but only that research choices have political consequences if people are empowered or disempowered on the basis of what is described or discovered. Moreover, researchers are not immune from temptation and may call upon reputational power as a means of increasing support for their conclusions (Swartz, 2013). Ultimately, Bourdieu is a realist, arguing that truth in science is 'irreducible to its historical and social conditions of production' (Bourdieu, 2004: 84), such that researchers must submit to 'the *arbitration of the real*' (2004: 71).

Moreover, for Bourdieu (2004), this is the methodological challenge: to minimise the influence of politics on scientific research while aiming to ensure that the research has the optimum impact on the world, especially if – to obtain credibility with peers – a researcher has to rely on specialist language that is all but incomprehensible to lay persons. (Ironically, Bourdieu's own writing suffered from this problem; see Swartz, 2013.) Foucault (1997: 131) argues similarly that the academic's role is not to seek to change the politics of others, but 'to question over and over again what is postulated as self-evident, to disturb people's mental habits, the way they do and think things'. Likewise, Bhaskar (1998) asserts that social science should move from facts to values, utilising explanatory critiques to illuminate structures that cause false beliefs and then to both negatively judge such beliefs and positively assess any rational responses that might address them – hence *critical* realism.

4.4.4 Researching ethics via the theory of practice

The assumption in Bourdieu that everything is power implies that even shared goals in an organisation or field are subject to struggle (Swartz, 2013). This was important in exploring the role of ethics in Defence acquisition because the field is still relatively new and is being defined by actors within it. This meant that being able to describe some actions, options or behaviours as unethical could delegitimise them and so contribute to shaping the field; the question was, who should be entitled to do this?

Defining a code of ethics or other framework is a means of delimiting the field and constraining behaviour (McGraw, 2004) or, in effect, encouraging the consent of people within the field by marking off other possibilities as unethical and, therefore, not to be pursued (cf. the manufacture of consent in Carey, 1997). Although an ethicist could argue that such limits are normative and determined by philosophical analysis, for Bourdieu any boundaries are fictions designed to hide the fact that the original construction was ultimately an arbitrary use of power; over time, this is forgotten and laws, customs and even ethics become 'natural' (Bourdieu, 1995). Even if this analysis of the basis of power only holds in an historical sense (cf. Oppenheimer, 1999) and there exist rationally-derived values – such as those of the Enlightenment – that can serve as a basis for society, for Bourdieu what people accept comes from habituation to existing laws and customs, not from an original, rational analysis (Bourdieu, 1995). (See Giddens (1993: 121) for a criticism of Weber and Nietzsche's 'normative irrationalism' or the view that there is never any basis for judging between value claims.)

4.4.4.1 Ethics through capital

That ethics could be examined via Bourdieu's theory of practice is implicit in his definition of a resource constituting capital when it serves as a social power relation, particularly as symbolic capital concerned with authority and legitimation (Bourdieu, 1986). Recall that, on this view, ethics either serves as a form of capital itself, or – as actors contest what counts as the most legitimate form of capital in a field – it aids the struggle by performing as symbolic capital

to legitimise or delegitimise the extent of the field and other forms of capital (Swartz, 2013). For example, in a hypothetical Defence acquisition field, competition might exist between rank and experience, or else rank and academic qualifications, and thus a subordinate might be constrained from making better acquisition decisions by ethical limits on disobeying or disagreeing with superior officers.

Here the danger – from a Bourdieusian perspective – is that the subordinate then misrecognises the inequality in rank as natural, which allows an essentially arbitrary code of ethics and social structure to delimit options (Swartz, 2013). Rank may also be misrecognised as legitimating competence if it is a form of symbolic or 'bureaucratized' capital, one that is 'codified, delegated and guaranteed by the state' (Bourdieu, 1994: 11). Furthermore, there may be a role for a reputational capital associated with 'being good' (Bazerman and Gino, 2012), while a sense of the ethical may be constrained by the delegation of power through a (military) hierarchy (Bourdieu, 1991). In general, ethics may be reduced to individuals attempting to achieve social power: people behave in ways that are characterised as ethical when they have opportunities to increase their capital and, thereby, their position, relative to the field(s) they are in (van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013).

4.4.4.2 Ethics through habitus

However, the Bourdieusian perspective outlined so far implied investigating ethics through capital when the operation and primary form of capital in Defence acquisition is yet to be explored and legitimised. Another approach was to consider ethics instead as habitus, noting that Bourdieu (1977: 77) insisted that it:

> … emerges through primary socialization from a practical evaluation of the likelihood of success of a given action in a given situation [and] brings into play a whole body of wisdom, sayings, commonplaces, *ethical precepts* ("that's not for the likes of us") [emphasis added].

For Bourdieu, habitus means that people are disposed to behave in ways that are most likely to succeed, given the resources (capital) available to them, their position in a field and their prior experiences of what works (Swartz, 2013). The limits that people operate within then take on a sense of inevitability and objectivity, leading to '"a sense of one's place" which leads one to exclude oneself from the goods, persons, place and so forth from which one is excluded' (Bourdieu, 1984: 471). Symbolic violence ensures that people will behave in accordance with – submit to – the doxa because it is etched in their habitus (Bourdieu, 1998).

Given that empirical research into ethics suggests that people use heuristics rather than normative reasoning in making ethical decisions, it may be that behaviours are adjusted not by a sense of their ethical merits but by the operation of habitus. For example, adversarial narratives in Defence acquisition may go unchallenged because people have internalised heuristics ('do as others do' or 'don't get involved'; see Gigerenzer, 2010) and have adapted their conduct to avoid confronting matters that they have little chance of affecting, whether this is owing to their lack of capital alone or also if they are not in a position of power within the Defence acquisition field. Similarly, people may act in ways that are characterised as ethical (or otherwise) according to the field's illusio because they are disposed to reproduce the field and its capital; that is, their habitus inclines them to act to maintain or enhance their positions without challenging the field as a whole (van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013).

At issue methodologically is whether habitus includes these heuristics, such that people are ethical insofar as their habitus 'fits' with the external world and permits them to retain or improve the positions they hold within a field. This would at least permit the empirical investigation of how complying with ethics becomes a disposition (Luke, 2005) or how people self-select courses of action based on cultural assumptions about their 'station' in life, rather than via ethical norms (Swartz, 2013). On this view, it would be difficult to judge unethical behaviour normatively *at all* if it arises from habitus (Bourdieu, 1996b),

particularly if both the dominant and the dominated embody symbolic power, with any collective identity developing from that habitus.

This is a use of Bourdieu's theory of practice that, from the literature review, has had little attention (Sayer, 2010; see van Aaken, Splitter and Seidl, 2013, for a rare example, although Bourdieu (1998) did discuss ethics briefly in *A Paradoxical Foundation of Ethics*). It had a philosophical precursor in virtue ethics theories, which argue that ethics is incorrectly associated with normative choices, which is methodologically emphasised by a focus on thought experiments involving simplified decisions (Hauser *et al.*, 2007). For some ethicists, this abstract approach actually removes ethics from being embedded in practice and from the experience of constant adjustment and reflection that characterises people's lives (Murdoch, 1970), such that self-interpretation through narrative is necessary to achieve genuine responsibility (MacIntyre, 1981). Indeed, this implies that ethical decisions have been taken before people consciously realise that there were choices, such that ethics is a continuous, lived process (Sayer, 2010).

On the face of it, this perspective is consistent with Bourdieu's (1995: 141) focus on 'the ordinary order of things' and how subjectivity arises through everyday events; that is, not how disciplined subjects are created through institutions (Foucault, 1997), or how they actively confront and make decisions without considering the influence of social power (Gordon, Kornberger and Clegg, 2009), but instead how people continually mould and create their dispositions such that social structures become natural. However, while Bourdieu (1993: 86) holds 'the notion of habitus to encompass the notion of ethos', he has very little to say about ethics *as* habitus (Emmerich, 2014).

4.4.4.3 Additional criticism

Recent work raises a difficulty with Bourdieu's theory of practice that posed problems for applying the theory to ethics in this way (see Pellandini-Simányi, 2014, for a summary). Bourdieu can be interpreted as arguing that ethics becomes part of habitus, particularly insofar as ethics forms an aspect of a person's worldview (Sayer, 2011). According to Bourdieu (1984), even though

individual social actors may experience their ethical views as motivated by a commitment to 'the good' or doing the right thing according to some code or rules that are independent of them, from the outside – objectively speaking – they are still competing within a field for control of capital. The claim here is that the right to describe social behaviour as ethical or otherwise is part of the struggle over legitimisation; that is, that ostensibly disinterested ethical claims are actually exercises of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991). The difference between Bourdieu and other theorists is that this occurs not consciously as a rationally derived strategy, but as embedded in the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). Nevertheless, it implies that ethics is habitus.

However, Bourdieu's commitment to sociology as political (Swartz, 2013) means that there is an apparent contradiction: on the one hand, ethics can be reduced to habitus; but, on the other, Bourdieu wants to challenge injustice and assert that some forms of life are better than others, which presupposes an ethical assessment that is normative rather than merely an academic power play (Sayer, 2005). To resolve this inconsistency, Bourdieu (2004) argues that social science can aim at truth rather than at ethics, leaving descriptions of inequality to work on people as they will. The problem is methodological, though: whatever empirical data shows, such as examples of people actively engaging in ethical reasoning (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006), Bourdieu (1991) can always respond that the centrality of competition in social life survives. In short, the theory of practice cannot be falsified.

Whether this is an issue for Bourdieu depends on whether his commitment to competition as the basis for understanding social action is acceptable. Changing the associated auxiliary hypotheses permits the accommodation of apparent falsifications of theories, rather than giving up on the overall framework; this is one of the main criticisms of falsification as a concept in the philosophy of science (Lakatos, 1978). Even if there exist normative forms of ethics that apply universally and hence can be regarded as not fitting with Bourdieu's conception of habitus, these are then so 'thin' as explanations that they lose their value as mechanisms (Pellandini-Simányi, 2014). Given that

Bourdieu's (1998) aim is to develop ideal types, it is no surprise that these then cannot be falsified by any empirical results: the ideal types do not exist, so they are valid insofar as they explain how the social world operates and until replaced by a better – more fruitful – exemplar (Bengtsson and Hertting, 2014).

4.4.5 Summary of theoretical framework

Researching ethics through capital and habitus thus provided an opportunity to address a shortfall in the literature (Sayer, 2010). That habitus relates the cognitive and bodily habits of social actors to those of others, as well as to social structures and practices, means that cognitive and somatic dispositions can be combined in a way that Bourdieu does not himself allow (Ignatow, 2009). Bourdieu's (1995) conception recognises that shame and other emotions are embodied in habitus, but he does not follow this through to notice that such emotions motivate people 'to want to fit in, to behave in a culturally acceptable fashion, and to avoid harming people' (Rozin, Lowery, Imada and Haidt, 1999: 574); that is, that – as part of the social – ethics may *also* be a disposition that is 'inscribed in the body' (Bourdieu, 1962: 111).

Indeed, if emotional judgments occur before ethical ones, as the literature suggests (Haidt, 2001), then their embodiment in habitus should be amenable to investigation in the domain of the empirical as well as the actual. This is to say that if habitus provides social actors with dispositions as to what is or is not possible then ethical judgments should be included in it also (Ignatow, 2009). If, methodologically, habitus is taken to be composed of narratives (Drummond, 1998), then research should expect to find that descriptions of emotions (such as shame) would be related to both ethical judgments and the content of ethical narratives (Ignatow, 2009).

Although Bourdieu's theory of practice is yet to be employed systematically to study organisations (Dobbin, 2008; Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008), it can be employed to investigate ethics within Defence acquisition as a field by identifying the operation of both capital (including which forms exist and dominate) and habitus. In addition to determining the doxa and illusio, contested boundaries could be anticipated because one implication from Bourdieu's work

was that the Defence acquisition field does not need to be defined as it is now, so the research may support or challenge the dominant views (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008).

Moreover, on Bourdieu's (1990) view, organisations – like individuals – behave not rationally (or even irrationally), but as a practice: any position taken (such as an opposition to the private sector) is then not the result of a single leadership decision but is, instead, a contested compromise across the field (Golsorkhi *et al.,* 2009). These options needed to be explored in the Defence acquisition context. Finally, the research could have expected to see people who are in dominated positions in Defence acquisition trying to discredit the capital of those who are dominant (Everett, 2002) and using narratives that link ethical judgments to emotions (Ignatow, 2009). The detail of how these research aims were achieved is considered next.

4.5 Research Design

In pragmatically applying Bourdieu's theory of practice as the theoretical framework for this research, there were three stages to consider (Wainwright, 2000; Harrits, 2011). Firstly, the field needed to be mapped out to establish any relationships between positions within the field and the dispositions (habitus) of the people occupying them. For Bourdieu (1996b), this is achieved best using statistical analysis (specifically multiple correspondence analysis) because social mechanisms consist in interrelationships rather than an aggregation of the operation of independent variables (Lebaron, 2009). This analysis sets out the structure of the field, or 'differentiated positions, defined in each case by the place they occupy in the distribution of a particular kind of capital' (Bourdieu, 1998: 15). The second step was to then explore how capital and habitus operate in the field, as well as how the particular field is related to the overall field of power (Swartz, 1997). Lastly, the doxa was investigated by explaining the field in terms of practice. Both the second and third steps are achieved using ethnographic research (Bourdieu, 1998); therefore, Bourdieu's approach is an instance of mixed methods or analysis from within and without the social world (Harrits, 2011).

To implement the theory of practice in this research, the association of Bourdieu's theoretical framework with critical realism, which was established in Section 4.4.3, was extended to his research methods. This provided an opportunity to test the application of Bourdieu's method to business ethics, thereby potentially extending the theory of practice.

According to this conception, researching the use of ethics in narratives could commence within the domain of the empirical by seeking a quantitative baseline within a specific case study; that is, the field structure within Bourdieu's theory of practice, but approached indirectly to establish whether there is a separation between how the field is organised and how it could (or ought to) be. The distinction between is and ought originated with Hume and is now standard in ethics, referring to the apparent impossibility of moving from factual statements to an evaluative judgment, notwithstanding that ethical claims appear to take this form (Norton and Norton, 2007). Such a demarcation could be anticipated to be relevant in the acquisition context because Bourdieu's theory presupposes competition for field position, or an assessment by individuals that their circumstances ought to be other than they are (unless, perhaps, they occupied dominant positions). This difference in field positioning would then be amenable to quantification through surveying, yet would need to be bounded to enable the subsequent analysis.

The next stage would be to explore how people experience the discord between the positions they occupy within the field and where they might otherwise prefer to be, thereby uncovering the domain of the actual. This could be addressed by understanding the role of capital and how habitus is developed, utilising an opportunity to contribute comments to the survey to construct an overarching narrative of how social reality is experienced.

To then access the domain of the real, the research would need to uncover mechanisms that explain the quantitative baseline in the empirical, as well as how people experience, in the actual, the failure of social reality to correspond with how it ought to be. For Bourdieu, such an explanation would be in terms of the theory of practice and would be achieved through an ethnographic

approach. However, in applying this to the research of ethics, it would be necessary to focus on how people either dominate the field or participate in their own domination; in short, how the field is prevented from being as it might otherwise be. Therefore, the research would need to be targeted at those in positions of power. Moreover, to access mechanisms indirectly because the subject remains the role of ethics, narrative analysis would be an appropriate way to limit social desirability bias.

Here the comparison with Bourdieu's method ends, but it would need to be extended to the creation of an ideal type. This is because the narrative approach, while able to uncover an explanation via the theory of practice, is likely to be too complex to serve as an exemplar precisely because narrative analysis retains the detail of the narrative rather than abstracting from it. Consequently, the abduction and retroduction with which critical realism is associated could be employed to generate an ideal type, which is then based on – yet extends – the theory of practice, producing an exemplar that captures the use of ethics and permits application in other research contexts through analogy.

Finally, given that ethics in acquisition is under-theorised, it was appropriate to use a single case study to explore the context in depth, instead of several cases in overview, because this was a strategic case in which the relationship between the participants in acquisition was being observed intensely (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Indeed, in this respect it was a critical case insofar as it would set the conditions for the further collaboration across organisational boundaries in support of Governmental intent (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2013). Therefore, if the exemplar ideal case could be demonstrated to undermine rather than support collaboration, then it could be assumed that this would hold for other cases without formal support to buttress them (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Opportunities for such research on additional cases are identified in Section 7.6 below.

Table 4-1 summarises this comparison of the research method in this work with Bourdieu and critical realism:

Research aim	Bourdieu's method	Domain of critical realism	Research method
Field structure and associated dispositions	Correspondence analysis	Empirical	Crosstabulation of data and Correspondence analysis via is/ought survey construction
Operation of capital and habitus	Ethnographic research	Actual	Narrative analysis of survey comments
Explanation of field as a practice	Ethnographic research	Real	Narrative analysis of interviews with people in field positions of influence
Ideal type	n/a	n/a	Abduction and Retroduction from narrative explanation

Table 4-1: Comparison of research method with Bourdieu and critical realism

The remainder of this section sets out how this research method was implemented.

4.5.1 Case study selection

Given the research methodology and the intent to develop an ideal type explanation, along with the focus on practice as the unit of analysis, a case study was selected that placed the researcher at the centre of the practice. This met the requirement to examine the interaction between the public and private sectors in Defence acquisition, but was also a pragmatic choice because the researcher had – through employment circumstances – access to a Defence ecosystem context.

As detailed in Chapter 3, the MOD was – as part of both the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 and of efforts to address severe shortages in critical skills – exploring the possibility of formalising a 'Defence Enterprise' of the MOD and the Defence Industry, potentially along with other organisations as well. As the Programme Manager for this work, the researcher was at the centre of a change initiative that confronted people with the problem of what kind of relationship the MOD should have with the Defence Industry. Moreover, given that the starting assumption of the programme was that collaboration should

replace competition, people were already discussing the relationship in adversarial and other terms, providing opportunities for the researcher to keep a field diary to note any additional data that arose during the case study. This diary could also be used to record any lessons from scrutinising internal and external literature associated with this proposed transformation, and to note the researcher's own perspective and its influence on the research; in short, to observe whether the research would help or hinder an assessment of the viability of the programme.

In Flyvbjerg's (2001) terms, then, this case study represented a critical case because the MOD was deliberately seeking to change behaviours, so the change initiative could be expected to prompt either acquiescence or a reaction in terms of the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry.

4.5.2 Conduct of survey stage

Based on the discussion of method in Section 4.5, the survey shown at Appendix A was developed to explore the dispositions of social actors to ethics relative to their positions within the Defence acquisition field. The survey was piloted with a limited audience prior to its use in this research and, in keeping with the design of methods, this confirmed the potential utility of adding comment fields to each question to allow respondents to expand on their answers.

To minimise social desirability bias, the survey questions were based around the is/ought demarcation: each question was framed in terms of how, in the opinion of the respondents, an aspect of the relationship between the MOD and the UK Defence Industry currently *is* and then how it *should* be. In keeping with the research method, this provided a means to reveal how social actors in the field are disposed towards the relationship: it permitted people to express an ethical opinion (the difference between is and ought) without directly asking them to do so. This could then identify – and ideally quantify – a social phenomenon in the domain of the empirical, which would allow the research to establish the structure of the field. The question pairs were derived from the case study context, focusing on issues that the researcher identified as under

discussion by virtue of being embedded in it: the extent to which greater integration between MOD and the Defence Industry is undermined by a lack of trust; whether the two were co-dependent, as argued in some of the literature discussed in Chapter 2; how people were disposed to the cross-boundary movement of skills that was sought by the initiative; to what extent values differed; and how people were disposed to the 'Defence Enterprise' perspective advocated.

Given the existence of the change programme, the research also took advantage of pre-existing contacts in both the MOD and the UK Defence Industry to achieve a wide survey distribution, including a snowballing effect by asking for senior stakeholder commitment. This meant that the online survey could be issued via email from these stakeholders instead of being sent directly by the researcher. Moreover, rather than selecting the subsequent interview population at random, the researcher was able to take account of the organisational structures that exist to identify participants from their positions within the Defence acquisition field (Brigley, 1995), as well as to leverage the survey results, continuing senior stakeholder endorsement, and researcher immersion in the context (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008). (Note, however, that the convenience achieved by being embedded in the research context is also a potential criticism, insofar as the researcher could select interviewees in line with organisational politics or else to drive towards a particular (assumed) result (Diefenbach, 2009).)

This approach was preferable to seeking to identify and survey a 'representative' sample within the Defence acquisition context for several reasons. Firstly, the extent of the Defence acquisition system remains contested, so it was not possible to sample it in a way that accurately reflected a defined whole. Secondly, given the contingent nature of the case study, the sampling was time-bound: although it provided an opportunity to obtain data and to use senior sponsorship, it also meant having to be content with the responses provided rather than attempting to secure a greater number of survey responses at another time. Finally, the research could not access ethics

directly because of social desirability bias, so the indirect approach adopted aimed at representation in the sense of what the people surveyed believe ethically, not representation as a proportion of the total population.

Therefore, the survey was sent to potential respondents in the MOD and the UK Defence Industry via a hyperlink generated by Qualtrics Survey Software, which included a consent statement explicitly stating that the research was exploring how the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry currently is and how it should be. To achieve Industry representation, the survey was initially targeted at the maritime Defence Industry in keeping with the scope of the case study, but respondents were asked to forward the hyperlink to others to facilitate snowballing. This approach led to a high response rate for the surveys and better interview possibilities, relative to the organisational context of survey fatigue in which both the MOD and the Defence Industry have struggled to achieve sufficient (let alone representative) survey data to measure employee engagement. Indeed, there was no ideal time to conduct a survey within this context, other than at this point when it was possible to leverage the change programme.

This tactic also allowed the researcher to gain access to internal (MOD) and some external (Defence Industry) documents to help record the details of specific events as they happened (Watkins and Swidler, 2009). Moreover, and most importantly, it meant that the research could indirectly address business ethics without any research ethics impropriety: the success or otherwise of the change programme was believed by stakeholders to depend on behavioural attitudes towards public/private sector collaboration, so narratives about this initiative were focused on business ethics by default because they were a primary concern for the people impacted. A total of 124 survey replies were ultimately received, with an average of 108 responses per question (an 87% completion rate). The results were then analysed using SPSS and are detailed in Section 5.1 below.

4.5.3 Survey comment analysis method

The inclusion within the survey of an opportunity to add comments yielded a large amount of supplementary data (almost 3,000 words of commentary), which then constituted what was essentially an additional set of (minor) narratives that could be analysed as such. To achieve this, rather than undertake the detailed narrative analysis planned for the interviews in the next stage and in keeping with the research method, the comments were used to identify any themes (Boyatzis, 1998), or the content of any narrative rather than how it was constructed (Riessman, 2005). This analysis employed a standard categorisation of narratives into an *abstract*, an *orientation* (the setting), a *complication* (the problem), a *resolution* and a *coda*; in short, the plot of the story or stories that the narrative is trying to tell (Bamberg, 2012).

To achieve this without reducing the richness of the data, the comments were set against a default narrative of MOD distrust of the Defence Industry. This was selected because it was the hypothesis of the case study; that is, that the relationship between the MOD and Defence Industry should be more collaborative than it currently is. Approaching the data in this way meant that the comments could be contrasted with a pre-existing narrative, preserving their being embedded in the case study context rather than reducing their richness through coding or seeking an abstracted account.

4.5.4 Conduct of interviews

On the basis of the survey results and given the access for the researcher that was provided by the case study, interviewees were identified for the ethnographic (narrative) stages of this data collection process, which allowed the researcher to work *within* the context under investigation. These needed to be selected to be 'most likely' cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006), or people who could be anticipated to oppose public/private sector collaboration and thereby provide ethical reasons for their dispositions (and conversely for 'least likely' cases); this would then help the research assess how ethics contributed to preventing a collective Defence identity (or otherwise). Alternatively, they needed to be people in positions of power within the acquisition field who could be expected

to shape its future structure, whether for or against the intent of the case study. Indeed, given the restricted window of opportunity to access a change programme in progress, together with the organisational desire to make this change work, the researcher needed to obtain a general sense of the sentiment within the case study as a proxy for how such a change would be perceived more generally, but then to gain access to the powerful few.

The interviewees were thus selected for their positions of influence – via possession of capital, primarily Rank – within the Defence acquisition field, as well as their roles in the case study (especially, therefore, the Royal Navy and the maritime Defence Industry). Ease of access was also a minor factor (to ensure that interviews could be conducted within the period of the case study) and hence interviewee availability was achieved through the researcher's position within the project. There was (deliberately) no attempt to identify a representative set of interviewees because, following Bourdieu's theory of practice, the research sought to understand the capital actually employed in narratives about ethics in Defence acquisition and how this structured the acquisition field, using those who possess power to explore this; in short, using capital to structure the field, rather than gender or other identifying characteristics.

A total of 10 interviews were undertaken; the selection of interviewees is discussed in Section 5.3 below. These interviews were conducted using the detailed narrative method described in the next section and then transcribed for analysis. In keeping with the requirements of research ethics – covered in Section 4.5.8 below – and with the assurance of anonymity given to participants, full transcripts are not provided here, but are held securely by the author. However, they are available for further research and to confirm or challenge the analysis conducted.

4.5.5 Narrative analysis method

Using a narrative approach meant reducing the role of the interviewer as much as possible (Bauer, 1996). Therefore, the interviews began with the prompt: 'Please can you tell me your impression of the relationship between the MOD

and the UK Defence Industry?', with follow-up questions, as appropriate, on the role of leaders in the relationship. These stimuli were designed to reveal the operation of capital and habitus, as well as specifically what counts as doxa in Defence acquisition.

In addition to minimising the number of prompts, the interviewees were encouraged to use their own language, which was recorded and transcribed exactly. The structure of the interviews involved an explanation of the topic to the interviewee, explicitly describing this as 'the relationship between the MOD and the UK Defence Industry' and not mentioning ethics to help reduce social desirability bias. Each interviewee was then given the details of the research and asked to sign a consent form to agree to the interview and its recording. The interviewees were also told that at any time they could request that recording be stopped or could stop it themselves. The prompts described above were then used to ask the interviewees to narrate their experiences of the relationship, without interruption or other questions from the interviewer. After this, a questioning period (when needed) employed further prompts (such as, 'can you tell me more about that?' or 'what happened next?') to invite the interviewees to add more detail of plot or stories. During this period, no questions about opinions (especially ethical views) or mechanisms were used, again to guard against leading the interviewees to ethics. Finally, the interviewer stopped the recording and an opportunity for any final informal discussion was offered. (See Bauer, 1996, for a detailed account of the narrative interview technique employed.)

Once the interviews were transcribed (by the researcher, using Dragon Dictate software), the analysis of the narratives was divided into several phases. The first focused on structure, including key characters and events (Riessman, 2008), as well as how separate stories were joined together as part of an overall narrative (Feldman *et al.*, 2004). The next phase sought to identify the content of the narrative rather than how it is constructed, using the separation of the plot into abstract, orientation, complication, resolution and coda that was already described (Bamberg, 2012). The third step attempted to combine the previous

phases to assess the overall purpose of the narratives – such as apology, appeal, justification or explanation (Bamberg, 2003) – with their intended audience (Feldman *et al.*, 2004) and (if possible) their function, especially where ethical decision making was implied (Bruner, 1990).

Overlain on this analysis, the type of narrative(s) was considered: whether they were ontological (setting out a process through which people make and remake their identities); public or performative (aimed at telling a story to others); metanarratives (referring to larger, societal narratives); or else conceptual narratives that the interviewees had created for themselves as an exploration of their circumstances (Somers, 1994). Finally, the narratives were examined to identify the role of any of Bourdieu's key concepts, but particularly the operation of capital and habitus.

4.5.6 Generation of an ideal type

Given the general methodological commitment to ideal types in this research and Bourdieu's particular focus on them, it was necessary to construct a Weberian ideal type from the narratives and their mechanisms. To achieve this, the ideal type was placed as the end point of the methodological framework set out in Table 4-1 in Section 4.5 above: identifying a phenomenon in the domain of the empirical through the survey; exploring matters further through people's reported experiences in the domain of the actual to then finally achieve an explanation in the domain of the real; and – the last step – creating an exemplar type.

An ideal type is an abstraction that is intended to capture the substance of an activity, such as ethics in acquisition. Through providing this exemplar, it should help to illustrate how people interact in the social world by calling attention to the primary elements of a phenomenon. By construction, the ideal type does not exist and hence no individual person, group or organisation will display all its aspects; however, it is a heuristic that supports the production of further hypotheses, generalisation by analogy to other contexts, and/or options for other research to confirm the type or challenge and reinterpret it. The ideal type also allows the research to explain what the data mean, how the results are

consistent (or otherwise) with the existing literature, what new knowledge is proposed, and what limitations should be borne in mind.

An ideal type is constructed by exploring the difference between how things are in the social world and how they ought to be, analysing what causes the separation (Mitropolitski, 2013). The method adopted in this research facilitated this construction because, by design, the quantitative survey stage sought an is/ought demarcation in the social world, coupled with data (the survey comments and the narrative interviews) on people's experience of it. This meant that the explanation achieved through narrative analysis could become an ideal type through abduction and retroduction. In particular, having creatively re-described the social phenomena and, in so doing, posited a better explanation (abduction), the analysis could then search for the social properties without which the phenomena could not exist and, thereby, infer the mechanisms responsible (retroduction).

To achieve an ideal type from the explanation arrived at in the narrative analysis, it was necessary only to create 'an exemplary case in a finite world of possible configurations' (Bourdieu, 1998: 2). In this research, this meant setting out the ways in which acquisition could be understood as a Bourdieusian practice, offering this description as an idealised version of the explanation that could then serve as an exemplar to generate knowledge, rather than constitute it. For Weber (2012: 126), this fecundity is the standard by which the resulting ideal type is to be judged:

> [I]t is never possible to determine in advance *whether* [ideal types] are mere fantasies or whether they constitute scientifically fruitful concept formation. [...] the only standard is whether [the ideal type] is useful for acquiring knowledge of concrete cultural phenomena – their context, their causal determination and their *significance*. Consequently, the construction of abstract ideal types can only be considered a *tool*, never an end [in itself].

There were three important caveats to this process, especially given that ethics is the subject of the analysis. Firstly, the research as a whole, and the ideal type

121

in particular, was not concerned with whether the way acquisition is undertaken is itself ethical, but only with how people narrate their experiences of it. Secondly, the research did not argue that any behaviour observed or captured in the empirical work is normatively unethical, even if a separate case to this effect could be made, because this was beyond the scope of an ideal type. Finally, and most importantly, since the research was located within the critical realist paradigm, the ideal type should not be understood as definitive or unchanging. While such a conception would violate Weber's methodological guidance and intent, it would also ignore the critical focus: if an ideal type characterises social reality in a particular way, it does so to help people to change that reality (for the better).

4.5.7 Repeatability of the method

The development of the methodology in this research, together with its application to researching ethics as a specific method, is repeatable by following the stages set out in Table 4-1, which align critical realism with Bourdieu's approach and the intent to achieve an ideal type. In particular, this methodology insists that the explanation is overlain on the case, rather than being generalised from it. This means that the ideal type as exemplar explanation can and should be used unless or until contrary data or a better explanation is provided; in short, it serves as 'an operational exemplar whose suggestiveness sparks a search for analogues' (Biernacki, 2012: 144).

Furthermore, Kuhn (1962) and Feyerabend (1993) set out how paradigmatic examples in the history of science, such as Galileo's explication of heliocentrism, used a single, detailed case study to create a new ideal type that explains reality in a new way; or, in the terms of this research, redescribes the domains of the empirical and actual in terms of the real. The meaning of the resulting ideal type cannot be separated from the demonstration of it, but it permits researchers to move from case-to-case via analogy with the type as an exemplar, not by abstracting from it. People then make reference to these exemplars – for example, to Weber's (1958) Protestant ethic – rather than to

specific predicates within them, even though there is no one to whom the Protestant ethic applies exactly.

Finally, the exemplar is exposed to scrutiny via additional research, but it is not separated from the cases that it becomes a paradigmatic example of. Moreover, the intervention of the researcher is evident in the construction of the ideal type precisely because there is no claim that the type really exists and it retains the original detail to support it (in this case, the detail of the narratives). This makes the ideal type an open and honest form of research because the investigation can be repeated step-by-step: by surveying other populations; by analysing or re-analysising survey comments; by conducting and analysing other narrative interviews; and by offering other abductive/retroductive explanations that account for the data in different way, thereby improving upon the ideal type.

4.5.8 Research ethics

In addition to the overall approach taken in this research and to account for research ethics requirements in general, the Cranfield University Research Ethics System was used to obtain permission to conduct the research, alongside the MOD's process as set out in Joint Services Publication 536. Confirmation of these approvals is at Appendix B.

A key concern was the confidentiality of the research participants, notably the risk that comments can be attributed to individuals and result in damage to their organisational standing (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, 2000). As a result, all data were anonymised for both the survey and the interviews, and storage of identifying detail was limited to the researcher in password-protected files. All printed copies of transcripts were kept in secure cabinets and destroyed on completion of the research.

Another issue was to take care with the subject matter (ethics), which was addressed in the interviews in part by using narrative analysis to indirectly approach ethics and avoid placing respondents in difficult positions (such as admissions of ethical violations by themselves or by others), although some evidence suggests that people are willing to do so to support beneficial

research (Graham, Grewal and Lewis, 2007); this also helped to reduce social desirability bias. To minimise the danger that the research misrepresents the subjects of the interviews (Chataika, 2005), the transcripts of their interviews were made available to the participants, along with the subsequent researcher's analysis (but only of each person's section of the research), which is to acknowledge that, in narrative analysis, the participants are co-creators of knowledge (Grafanaki, 1996) and grant them a form of quality control and assurance. All survey respondents and interview participants were required to give their informed consent prior to being interviewed on the basis of information about the research, and the researcher's contact details were also provided; the consent form used is at Appendix C.

4.6 Summary

This chapter positioned the research within a critical realist paradigm, setting out the ontological, epistemological and methodological commitments to social reality that critical realism entails and responding to potential objections. This approach then enabled a focus on narrative analysis and the goal of developing a Weberian ideal type via abduction and retroduction as the best way to explore the function of ethics in the Defence acquisition context. The use of Bourdieu's theory of practice as a theoretical framework was then justified, particularly through the potential for employing the concepts of capital and habitus to ethics. Finally, the employment of the theory in the research design was explained, including the use of mixed methods to provide a quantitative baseline of field position (with capital) and habitus, followed by a targeted qualitative analysis to explore dispositions via narratives. This methodology and the results it generated are now illustrated in Chapter 5.

5 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This chapter sets out the results of the quantitative survey and the subsequent qualitative (narrative) interviews, culminating in the development of an ideal type.

5.1 Survey results

As described in the methodology, the survey was the first of two stages of data collection. Its aim was to map the Defence acquisition field through correspondence analysis, which would ideally structure the differentiated positions that people occupy and suggest the relational capital that they might employ. In practice, this meant exploring the relationships (if any) between variables using SPSS software, treating each of the questions in the survey as a variable and using each of the identifying characteristics (Sector/Service, Rank/Position/Role, Education Level, Age and Gender) as supplementary variables. The first survey question is covered in this chapter as an example, with the remainder of the detailed analysis at Appendix D.

Given the number of survey responses obtained (n=124), some supplementary variables – specifically, Age and Gender – did not achieve sufficient diversity to make analysis meaningful; that is, the majority of respondents were male and aged 40-59, reflecting demographic trends in Defence as a whole and limiting the ethical experience available. Therefore, Age and Gender were not subjected to the additional correspondence analysis.

5.1.1 Example of survey results: MOD trust of the Defence Industry

For each variable and supplementary variable pair, the results at Appendix D display the crosstabulation followed by the correspondence analysis. This approach tracks the design of the survey, in which questions were based around the standard is/ought demarcation in ethics: each request of the respondents asked their opinion on how an aspect of the relationship between the Ministry of Defence and the UK Defence Industry currently *is*, and then how it *should* (or *ought* to) be.

Tables 5-1 and 5-2 display the first set of results as an example. The original question assessed trust between the MOD and the UK Defence Industry ('To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?), and in this instance the responses are crosstabulated against the Sector or Service of the survey participants:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	2	6	17	3	0	28 (26%)
	Army	0	8	14	0	0	22 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	0	9	13	0	0	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	0	9	11	1	1	22 (20%)
	Defence Industry	0	2	13	0	0	15 (14%)
Total		*2*	*34*	68	4	1	109

Table 5-1: Data example – crosstabulation of Sector/Service against MOD trust of Industry (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD should trust the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	6	14	7	1	0	28 (26%)
	Army	1	12	7	1	0	21 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	1	15	6	0	0	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	2	14	5	0	1	22 (20%)
	Defence Industry	4	8	3	0	0	15 (14%)
Total		*14*	*63*	28	2	1	108

Table 5-2: Data example – crosstabulation of Sector/Service against MOD trust of Industry (ought)

Of note, the questions – in common with the others – asked about belief, so it was appropriate to ask Industry personnel about what the MOD should do (and vice versa in the converse questions that followed). To help analyse these and the other survey results, an assumption was made that the responses 'fully' and 'mainly' could be considered a proxy for the matter at issue in the responses – in this example, the question of trust between acquisition system participants.

On this view, the data show a shift between the two variants of the question – the 'is' and 'ought' versions – of 33% to 71% (see the bold-italicized entries in Tables 5-1 and 5-2). Notwithstanding the limited data set (n=124) and the low proportion of Industry respondents (n=15), the movement from 'is' to 'ought' was consistent across MOD and Industry, and was found across the other supplementary variables in the subsequent tables (see Appendix D).

Having discovered this is/ought shift, the next step in applying the research method was to establish if there was any relationship between positions within the field and the dispositions (habitus) of the people occupying them, and then to describe this relationship. This step was achieved through correspondence analysis (Bourdieu, 1996b), undertaken using the appropriate functionality within SPSS. Figure 5-1 graphically displays the first pairing of 'is' and ought' results via SPSS outputs; specifically, how MOD trust of Industry is interrelated with Sector/Service through proximity in two dimensions, or the 'distances' between row and column cells in the crosstabulations (Lebaron, 2009).

The correspondence analysis should be read as a geometric representation of the interrelationships between variables: the changes between the two plots reproduced the is/ought shift from Tables 5-1 and 5-2. However, the additional information provided by the correspondence analysis was that these movements also suggest a correspondence between field position and disposition/habitus. For example, Figure 5-1 suggested that, on the face of it, the closest 'ought' association is between the Royal Navy and the Defence Industry (because both are closer to 'fully' in the second ('ought') version of the correspondence analysis):
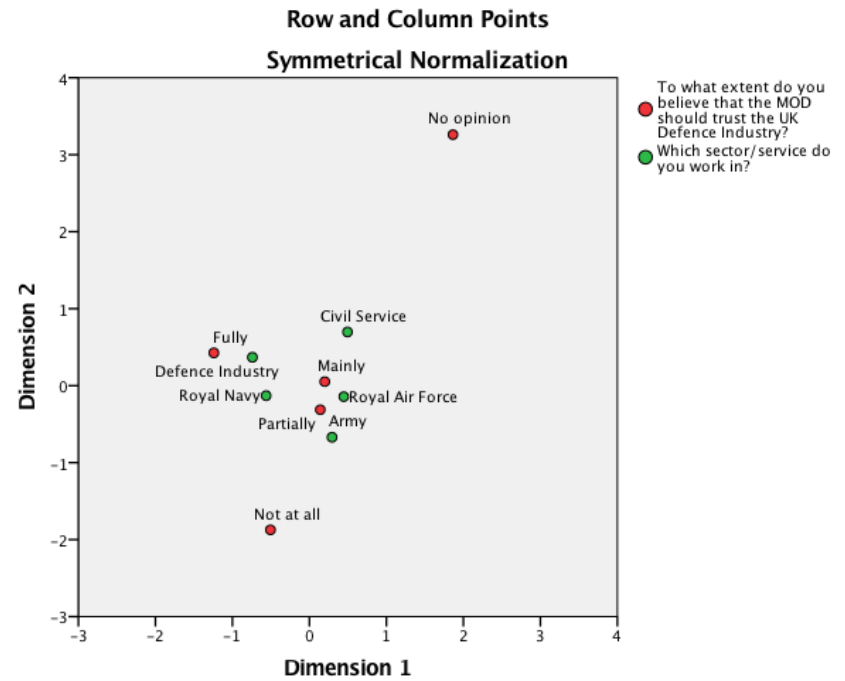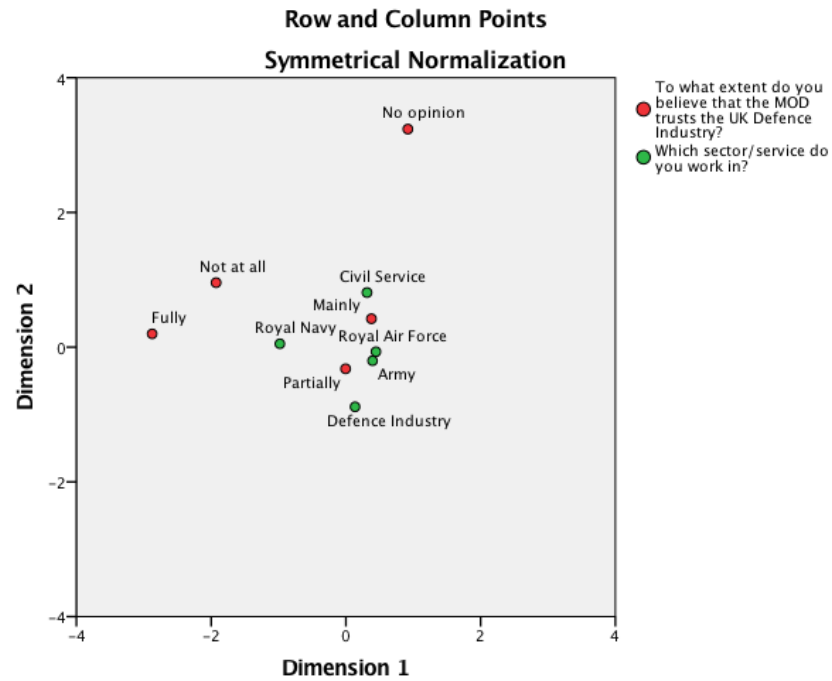
Figure 5-1: Data example – correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and MOD trust of Industry (is/ought)

In general, the correspondence analyses displayed within the results at Appendix D were sometimes skewed by 'no opinion' responses, but otherwise suggested the same shift or 'movement' that was noted in the crosstabulations. This shift was displayed also in the association of trust with Rank/Position/Role, Education Level, Gender, and Age (see Appendix D for the detailed analysis). Moreover, the closer 'ought' association of the Royal Navy and the Defence Industry with 'fully' in this example provided for additional information because it supported the assumption of the (maritime) case study that the relationship between the two would serve as an exemplar for how the MOD might collaborate more with the Defence Industry.

5.1.2 Summary of survey results

Taken together (with the sole exception of the movement of personnel from the MOD to the Defence Industry), the survey responses at Appendix D showed a definite shift from 'is' to 'ought'. This was a result within the domain of the empirical that required an explanation because it demonstrated that the people surveyed regarded the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry as other than it might be.

Furthermore, the correspondence analysis suggested that Sector/Service and Rank/Position/Role are more important in influencing the perceptions of the Defence acquisition field. Since these were thus likely to be the primary forms of capital that structure the field, they were given greater prominence during the subsequent interviews by prompting the researcher to seek out interviewees from within the case study context who held significant capital (whether rank or influence) or occupied positions of power. Finally, the closer 'ought' association between the Royal Navy and the Defence Industry supported the assumption that the specific relationship between the two, as embodied in the maritime case study, would be a 'most likely' case in the terms set out in Chapter 4.

5.2 Analysis of survey comments

As detailed in the methodology, with the exception of identifying data (the supplementary variables of Sector/Service, Rank/Position/Role, Education

Level, Gender, and Age), each survey question provided respondents with the option to record comments against their chosen answer. Although each 'comment' was almost exclusively a single line, analysis using the framework set out in the methodology revealed that several common themes were involved.

5.2.1 Summary of overall survey narrative

In the survey comments, those who were positively disposed towards Industry told the same story: no one intends to do anything unethical, but the acquisition process is unwieldy and the MOD is unable to articulate its requirements in detail, usually because it does not know fully what it wants; but this means that Industry has to guess and, when the MOD then inevitably changes its mind, it typically results in increased costs and the commencement (or reinforcement) of an adversarial narrative. This is essentially an example of organisational akrasia.

Using the narrative analysis method set out in Chapter 4, here the *orientation/setting* is the acquisition context; the *complication* is the reality that requirements have to change over time, contrary to the need for fixing them as part of the acquisition process ("we are viewed as an unreliable customer"); the *resolution* is missing (because there is none or, if it is identified – as commercial upskilling or greater collaboration with Industry – then it is currently out of reach: it is "impossible to fully trust them until we pay contractual staff in Defence as much as they do in Industry"); and, finally, the *coda* is the inevitability of discord ("there is an inherent distrust"). The purpose of narratives that follow this outline plot is explanation or (sometimes) apology: they seek to set out why there is a lack of trust and to place the blame on the acquisition process rather than with individuals and their behaviour, or else with the power structures that enable or encourage it. These narratives are performative insofar as they set up the discord between the MOD and Industry as unavoidable, rather than a choice or something to be challenged.

5.2.2 Survey narrative metaphors

Three metaphors were used in the survey comments to strengthen this narrative. The first is from farming: the MOD is a "cash cow" that Industry milks for easy profit. There are several implications to the use of this metaphor. Industry's behaviour is, by implication, consequentialist: if it collaborates with the MOD or seems to behave well towards its customer, this is due to a desire not to kill the cow, rather than because Industry values the cow in itself. (In Kantian terms, the MOD is a means rather than an end.) This implies that any collaboration between customer and supplier is, for the supplier, only undertaken for consequentialist reasons: to not harm the easy source of revenue and continue to "take advantage of MOD's dependence on them".

However, the metaphor functions at another level: although many people depend on dairy products and accept the use of farming, the lived experience of a cow is associated with exploitation. This is then the purpose of employing the metaphor, which reinforces an opposition between the motives of MOD and Industry. The former must deliver military capability that the latter assists with, but only insofar as it can constrain the MOD cow in a way that continues to produce milk (profit). This also places Industry is a position of control and dominance, from which it is "always looking for ways to make a quick buck", rather than a "symbiotic relationship" that develops the assessment that UK Defence is "not large enough" for the MOD and Industry to not be mutually dependent.

The second metaphor is sexual: the MOD is described as being "in bed" (or "getting in bed") with Industry. This has the effect of simplifying (personifying) the MOD and Industry into single actors who then share a bed in a way that suggests infidelity (or worse, "incestuous" conduct), which is aimed at an MOD audience and implies that the MOD actor who has too much interaction with Industry has been unfaithful. By appealing to a behaviour commonly understood to be unethical, the metaphor then delegitimises the relationship.

Using 'in bed with' as a root metaphor in narratives about the MOD and Industry thus shapes worldviews (habitus), as well as structuring the acquisition field by

133

setting the two apart and not recognising cross-boundary experience as capital. Indeed, it may be more accurate to say that such experience is *negative* capital, such that the more a person has worked with Industry, the more she is unfaithful and hence unethical. The use of narratives of infidelity then encourages people to avoid cheating, which means acting in ways that disempower or reduce the likelihood of collaboration succeeding.

The third metaphor is a legal one, or – perhaps more accurately – criminal: Industry is accused of "poaching" the best people from the MOD, which weakens the latter while strengthening the former. This delegitimises not only collaboration but also the movement of personnel across organisational boundaries, particularly from the MOD to Industry. This is in line with the results of the survey analysis, which showed that the transfer of people from Industry to the MOD was considered more acceptable than the reverse. Although this is challenged ("there are a large number of [ex-MOD] personnel working in Industry who still have the best interests of the Service in mind"), it is undermined when the narrative involves a requirement that those who transition "use their moral compass to give a good service", insinuating that this compass is necessary to prevent the otherwise adverse impact.

The poaching metaphor suggests that Industry is behaving in a way that is unethical (actually, illegal): rather than say – perhaps more accurately – that Industry offers greater remuneration or stability to employees, the implication is that Industry is taking (or stealing – "good MOD people will be stolen by Industry") something that does not belong to them and, moreover, is protected for the use of the MOD; here 'poaching' suggests the land use rights associated with kings or nobles. The effect of the poaching is to then destabilise or threaten the viability of the population from which people are being taken. In the absence of a counter-narrative, this casts Industry as predator, hinting at criminal violence and engaged in literally killing off the MOD as it hunts public sector people or, using the second metaphor, encourages them to get into bed with it.

5.2.3 Survey narrative function

The function of these narratives and the metaphors they employ is to construct or strengthen – in Bourdieusian terms – a doxa, according to which the friction between the MOD and Industry is entirely natural. This then allows the speaker to create and maintain a false dilemma that forces people to choose between the MOD and Industry ("profit ethic versus military ethos"), contrasting public service with private enrichment. Such narratives are immune to falsification because positive examples of collaboration can be undermined by talk of Industry "outwardly appearing to have the same aims" (thus implying deceit) or suggesting that it "does the minimum required to fulfil its contract" (thus actually delivering what was asked, which is then not enough). To speak positively of the relationship between the MOD and Industry risks not being taken seriously (because the speaker is another cow being milked) or accused of being too close to Industry (in bed with it and ready to be poached to a new, profit-focused job). Moreover, it is very difficult to trust and engage with people who are criminals and/or who engage in infidelity.

This doxa can be challenged in two ways: by objecting to one or more premise of the arguments (for example, "we must accept that profit is their motivation and that this is good for [Value for Money] and innovation"), or – following the theoretical framework – by identifying how habitus sustains the doxa by creating homogeneity through narratives or deliberate simplification (such as when a speaker "assume[s] that Defence is sufficiently homogenous" to be able to share values). Whether and how this occurs is now explored through the case study and detailed analysis of the narrative interviews conducted.

5.3 Interview analysis

The people interviewed comprised Royal Navy personnel (three), either employed in acquisition and directly engaged in attempts at collaborative working with Industry, or playing leading roles in professionalising acquisition; senior military Officers (one Army, one Royal Air Force) involved in shaping policy and strategic intent; a Civil Servant with experience across several Governments – including in Ministerial offices – and active in the case study

context; and Defence Industry workers (four) who had transitioned from prior military careers (spanning very short periods to almost four decades, all with the Royal Navy). In the analysis, a number in square brackets denotes each interviewee.

5.3.1 Narrative summaries and structures

Interview 1 was with an acquisition professional in the Royal Navy and was a discussion of the context of Defence acquisition with a focus on training systems. The interviewee emphasised the importance of contracting for driving behaviours, arguing that the separation of customer and supplier disincentivises collaboration before then insisting, to the contrary, that this demarcation is necessary because there is a requirement for holding suppliers to account for delivery. The narrative is public/performative in type, functioning as a justification (of how things work), but is also ontological insofar as the topic serves to sustain an identity of separation.

The narrative is comprised of stories that take acquisition as the setting and the profit motive of Industry as the complication. A further complication is the formal commercial process, which drives an adversarial relationship in which the need for procedure implies (or presupposes) the risk of unethical activity; after all, without this threat, at least on the face of it, there would be no need for scrutiny. (That is, the principal-agent problem discussed in the literature review means "there is a barrier between MOD and the sectors that we deal with".) The stories then offer several forms of resolution. Firstly, that the use, by Industry, of ex-military personnel provides an opportunity to build trust because "there is that personal connection"; secondly, that a person "will never take as much ownership as if they've got the whole" of the acquisition process; but, thirdly, "there does need to be that customer/supplier relationship" because the MOD needs to be assured of what it is receiving when it spends public money.

Interview 2 was with another Royal Navy acquisition professional and was an explanation of why adversarial tension exists between the MOD and the Defence Industry, using stories that illustrate the breakdown of relationships in acquisition and the rigid contractual remedies that are employed. The plot of

each story was repeated: the setting is an ostensibly collaborative or partnering arrangement in which requirements changed and, with them, costs rose (the complication), undermining confidence ("I wouldn't trust [company] to lick the toilets") and resulting in a stricter commercial resolution that assumes an adversarial approach.

The narrative type is again public/performative, functioning as a justification of why things inevitably go wrong. It offered two variants of the same story, which emphasises both the desirability of collaboration and the inevitability of failure. Given that "there's only one defence sector, so there's one customer and a handful of significant defence contractors", it makes sense to aim for mutual prosperity; but resources (especially people) are finite and this creates competition (the complication). With the MOD "being driven by a Government policy" to assess value for money through competition, the only way to find a resolution is for companies to "bid low" because "we all know that MOD change their mind, so [Industry will] be able to recoup some of that money". This is a case of explicitly unethical behaviour ("lowest compliant bid wins") because – according to the interviewee – everything encourages it, especially the MOD's "archaic commercial arrangements".

Interview 3 was the final example of a Royal Navy acquisition professional explaining how the acquisition field operates and includes the same insistence of failure being baked into the system through "insufficient information" being provided on the MOD's plans. It repeated the story from interview 2 of requirements changing "overnight", which occasions rework, but "the worst thing is that the MOD will then charge Industry with driving the cost up, when it was actually MOD in the first place". Perhaps owing to the maritime context of few prime contractors, the interviewee also pointed to competition-as-default adding cost because "if [a contract renewal] doesn't go to the current people you're building in risk and discontinuity". Indeed, accepting the limited structure of maritime acquisition but insisting on competition to satisfy commercial process means "you've just taken their eye off the ball when they could've been building in innovation or spending their time doing more".

In this instance, the narrative type is conceptual, aimed at and appealing to people who would challenge the field as it is currently structured. The important claim raised in this narrative is that it is always easier for the people involved in acquisition to defer to procedures and the wishes of their superiors ("you have assurance and protection and, you know, you're all pointing in the same direction"), so the limitations of their behaviours are self-selecting through the illusio. This is returned to in subsequent analysis, but it reproduces the ancient challenge of Socrates – covered in the literature review – that akrasia (acting against one's better judgment) is impossible. The implication in the acquisition context is that there is no unethical behaviour: people do not "act with any malicious intent; they do it because they think that they know what's required".

Interview 4 was an exploratory narrative from a senior Royal Air Force Officer in a policy role. Few stories were used, but the interviewee pointed repeatedly to people retreating to a defined identity (narrative the complication), from which unconscious bias limits options. Appealing then to the increased use of talent management in the MOD as a resolution, "we shouldn't say you've got to be thirty, you've got to be this age, you've got to have four reports, that does not make sense." This reference to identity work structured the narrative and is covered in greater detail in the narrative analysis below.

Interview 5 was with a very senior Army Officer in a strategic position of influence. It was partially conceptual, functioning as an explanation and apology by setting out stories that explain the distrust of Industry that, according to the interview, the MOD still harbours:

> I would characterise MOD's approach as saying, 'I don't trust Industry to do what it says it's going to do and deliver; therefore, I've got to have a contractual stick to beat them up with each time.

A story detailed how the MOD attempted to acquire a software system, "with no concept, as Defence, as to how to build software programmes in those days [the 1970s]". This was a problem that was solved by specifying in detail in the microchip to be employed. The complication was that this microchip "was obsolete before it was even off the drawing board"; but, since the MOD had

specified its use, this is what Industry provided to satisfy the contract (the resolution). The perverse consequence of this story is that its coda is the opposite of what may otherwise be anticipated: rather than point to MOD failings in the original contracting, the interviewee instead used Industry's honesty (about the microchip's obsolescence) as a justification for increasing MOD distrust ("we were suspicious of them, that all they wanted to do was increase their profit margins"). Consequently, it is no surprise that this "checking and confirming […] puts an attitude of distrust into the relationship".

The narrative also repeats a (deontological) concern for public resources, which arises because "those who are responsible for setting the contracts that the MOD goes into have a duty, above all, to get value for money for taxpayers' money". Repeating some of the challenges raised in the introduction to this research, another story asked if value for money means rigid contracts that demonstrate savings in the short-term, yet come at the cost of better capability ("whether it actually delivers what you want it to deliver"). The complication is thus "an immediate tension between the person designing the contract, who wants best value for money because it's not our money, it's taxpayers' money, and somebody who wants the best output, which may or may not be the cheapest contract". In this story, the problem cannot be solved "until we change contractual staffs to trust that actually a little bit more expense might be the better way of going".

Interview 6 was a performative justification through a mid-seniority Civil Servant perspective of extreme scepticism. The interviewee argued for Defence acquisition as a means of transferring public money to businesses – essentially a conspiracy that is out in the open for all to see ("how can we convert public money into private sector profit?") – in which the only difference between forms of government is their size (smaller or larger) to bring about this redistribution. The root story of acquisition is then that the public sector uses competition to get the best from business (the setting), but does so without understanding the flow of money or what is actually being acquired (the complication). The cynical resolution is simply that this transfer is the whole point:

[T]here's a colleague of mine who's running a [multi-million pound] contract, and I said to him, 'so how do you scrutinise the money?' And he said he doesn't need to; he just hands it over.

In this vision of acquisition, the coda is that there is no accountability; Industry merely takes advantage of its monopsony position in the Defence context because the businesses involved are 'too big to fail' ("[y]ou might as well just have an accountant saying, 'here's your cheque; come back to me in three months when you want more'").

The other significant aspect to this narrative is a story of unethical behaviour that attributed blame to symbolic power. This tale related the experience of working with Ministers and their seeking "to be seen to be doing the best by Defence" against a backdrop of pressure on resources. In the story, a Defence Minister was presented with evidence for the best course of action, but was challenged in Parliament and decided that the choice, although optimum in the circumstances, would be viewed negatively. The narrative resolution was then to change the evidence until it suited what the Minister wanted to say, an explicit example of akrasia:

And it got to the point where [military advisor] actually had to say to the Minister, 'so what is it you actually want to say and I will produce the line that proves that's what you want to say?' And the Private Secretary at the time actually reinforced it and said that, 'whilst the advice may conflict with what you want to say, we understand that you have to stand on the floor of Parliament and justify this decision, and at the moment you can't justify [the advice]; therefore; you should consider overruling it.'

The coda to this story is the cynicism engendered:

If we wanted to spend £20M, we just had to produce the Business Case that is more presentationally appealing for the Minister to stand on the floor of the House and say, 'we're spending £20M on this', and we would probably get it.

On this view, there are no challenges to what happens because the truth of a particular matter is in no one's interest unless it aligns with what those in power want to do; the role of military staff and especially of the Civil Service is to justify after the fact whatever decisions Ministers have already made, even if these pronouncements are akratic. The narrative concludes with a final story of the Government having changed and the interviewee adjusting a speech to support the new Minister at the expense of the old: "I did it, even though the [Civil Service] code says that you're to remain apolitical".

Interview 7 was the first of four Industry perspectives and was with a former junior Royal Navy Officer who moved into the Defence Industry after a short career. The conceptual narrative included stories that confirm those from other interviews, but from an Industry perspective: everyone wants to work together towards common goals (abstract), but there is "a desire or encouragement that Industry will go and do things in advance of all the [commercial] arrangements and things being put in place" (setting); this then implies risk for Industry, which often becomes an issue when the MOD changes its mind and is then not able "to live up to the encouragement they provided" (complication), which results in a loss of trust and increased weariness from Industry or pricing in risk (resolution) that the MOD can then point to as cost escalation (coda).

At the heart of the narrative is the principal-agent problem and whether requirements should be loose and seek collaboration yet leave the potential for abuse, such as "a huge number of contract changes needed just to update it", or else be strict and create adversarial tension through an assumption of misbehaviour ("I always joked that [the contract] actually defined how you were to boil the kettle if you wanted a cup of tea"). In this story, the MOD's response is to create an interface between customer and supplier – the 'customer friend' – to ostensibly translate between the two, which instead "set up an arrangement where [the customer friend] was in his world, he got paid for creating as much hassle as possible, so he created problems for both sides and it just fostered an adversarial relationship". Other stories build on this to explain how people are

incentivised to behave as they do, even though overall the acquisition system and military capability are negatively affected.

Interviews 8 to 10 were narratives of transition, from medium/long (25 years) to very long (35 years) careers in the Royal Navy into areas of the Defence Industry that support it. The interviewees told stories of how they sought to position themselves to best make the change and how people coming to the end of military service will manage this process. These were narratives of justification, seeking to legitimise MOD to Industry movement, and are partly ontological because of the identity work they involve (notably, to counter the assumption observed from the survey data that such transitions should be opposed). The stories involved a realisation that another job is necessary (the setting – "I realised that the only certainties in life were death, taxes and a second career") combined with the reality of regular reappointments making it difficult to acquire marketable skills, especially for people with operational backgrounds at sea (complication); this was then resolved by negotiating for particular roles, usually to the detriment of further career progression, to deliberately acquire capital that can be used in Industry ("I walked out of the door on a Friday and on Monday I walked back in in a suit"). These narratives are explicitly identity work, aiming to explain how the transition was managed to minimise the uncertainty and appeal to continuity-yet-improvement (see Newall, 2014, for a more detailed treatment of identities in transition).

Each of the ten narratives relies on a standard cast of characters that greatly oversimplify the social reality, a fact that some interviewees note:

> [T]here are a number of people, including myself, that all we've ever done in our lives in been in the Royal Navy. [1]

> I can only really talk for the MOD side because I haven't worked in Industry. [3]

> [M]y view is broadly perception rather than reality… because I've not worked in acquisition. [4]

> [T]he MOD is huge; Industry is large and diverse. So it is probably difficult to characterise it as being a single relationship. [7]

Having offered these caveats, though, the narratives went on to treat both MOD and Industry as singular entities, ripe for generalisation and occupying two 'sides' of a binary relationship rather than a continuum ("you have one organisation over on the left, one organisation over on the right, and the processes and the relationships are the strands between them" [1]). The interviewees, as the primary social actors, then interpret this relationship.

The other significant player sitting behind the stories in these narratives was 'the taxpayer' – apparently deeply concerned at the destination and usage of her money – who is the ultimate authority and to whom the public sector employee has a sacred duty. It is this taxpayer who desires value for money, albeit reinforced by the Government acting on her behalf ("it's not our money, it's taxpayers' money" [5]), notwithstanding that this requires an act of cognitive dissonance because both public and private sector people working in acquisition are themselves taxpayers. Even the ostensibly profit-focused private sector recognises a responsibility to spend carefully in this deontological sense, despite the protections afforded to the taxpayer through commercial process seldom being invoked ("I'm not sure I can put my hand on a single time when we've had a DEFCON [Defence Condition] called up and used as such" [7]). The problem is that using contractual conditions to support an unspoken deontological acquisition ethics – guarding against the principal-agent problem or inevitable bad behaviour ("it's there as a background protection" [7]) – is tantamount to creating a doxa of separation and adversarial tension; in philosophical terms, it is begging the question. In short, the adoption of an ethics creates the behaviour that it was meant to address.

5.3.2 Narrative themes

Having summarised the narratives, the analysis next sought to determine the main themes by exploring the content of each story's plot elements. As detailed in the methodology chapter, this was achieved using Bourdieu's theory of practice to examine the function of each element and the overall story.

Beginning with a brief further consideration of the metaphors identified in the survey comments, this section thus employs each of Bourdieu's concepts – with examples from the transcripts – to analyse the narratives in detail.

5.3.2.1 Narrative metaphors

The three metaphors identified in the analysis of survey comments were seen again in the narratives. The MOD "cash cow" that is milked by Industry is "seen to be a bit of a meal ticket" by those who have left the former and "know exactly the level [of work] that's expected" [1]. This allows Industry "to cut corners, exploit us" [1] and to "keep an order book going, even when the business model might need to be changed." [6] In addition to being a cow that is milked for money, the MOD is also a sheep that is repeatedly "being fleeced" [2], continuing the farmyard leitmotif.

Those who challenge this metaphor are confronted with the accusation, "you're in bed with Industry" [3], and support for Industry "almost feels slightly incestuous" [6]. Although there is little discussion of poaching, the narratives focus on Industry attempting to "spin us for every penny" and "rip us off" [5], both of which are wrapped in the same sexual implication that "we're now going to screw you for more money" [4]. The MOD's people then have no choice but to act in an adversarial way, "because if I don't you're going to screw me." [5]

This sexualised sense of exploitation gives rise to another metaphor: the relationship between the MOD and Industry as a form of combat. Acquisition is then "fighting an uphill battle" [3], in which "everyone gets into entrenched positions" [7] with "people throwing stones" [3] and "mudslinging" [4] or sitting on "the other side of the barricade with rocks being thrown over" [2]. In this battle, MOD personnel need "to have a contract stick to beat them up with", either "slapping across the interface" or "beat[ing] each other around the head" [7].

5.3.2.2 Acquisition as practice: the doxa

Given these metaphors, particularly their prevalence across both quantitative and qualitative data, the analysis begins with doxa. As detailed in the explanation of Bourdieu's theory of practice and its application as a theoretical

framework in this research, doxa is part of habitus and comprises the cognitive and evaluative presuppositions that people accede to, especially acceptance of capital as valuable rather than ultimately arbitrary. Throughout the narratives, the key component of the acquisition doxa is that the MOD and Industry have "different drivers"; specifically:

> [The MOD is] answering to, ultimately, the Government, who wants to see us doing more with less; and the shareholder pretty much wants to achieve as much as possible with as little investment, maximising their returns. [2]

The challenge in analysing the narratives is that these motives are *explicitly the same*, to the extent of being almost identical in description. Ostensibly the distinction is that, in Industry, there is always the possibility that "I could move into another sector and use my manpower or my resource to generate a better return" [2] (implying a threat that is used to justify the MOD's doxa); however, this is the equivalent pressure that the MOD faces when the Government conducts spending reviews and may choose to reduce Defence resources in favour of other Departments.

One of the aims of the narratives, then, is to set up a false dilemma using the assumption that the MOD provides a non-negotiable service to the nation via altruism, contrary to a Defence Industry focused exclusively on profit making. ("Half the [Defence] Enterprise are focused on shareholder value; half are taxpayers working for Queen and country" – senior officer response to the case study; field diary, 9 October 2015.) This doxa is repeatedly called upon ("[y]ou're dealing with the private sector, who have shareholders and will need to make a profit for their shareholders" [1]) and used to justify a demarcation of public and private sector motives ("there is a barrier between MOD and the sectors that we deal with" [1]). On this view, while the MOD invests in acquisition to deliver security for the UK, for Industry it is "just another serial that needs to be achieved" [1]; once the profit has been made, Industry must "move on to the next task" [1]. Consequently, "mistrust happens" [3] and is an inevitable part of the relationship between the MOD and Industry.

In one of the stories, the strength of this doxa is illustrated when an Industry interviewee (perhaps unintentionally) supports this assessment by challenging the mistrust in (economic) capital terms:

> If there is a view, which sometimes gets expressed, that sometimes the MOD doesn't trust Industry, that's a very narrow view of the world because, you know – take my business: yes, we have export stuff, don't forget that, but there's a substantial UK business and we exist because the MOD will pay, and if the MOD absolutely got to the point of saying, 'well, this company doesn't deliver', they wouldn't pay and we wouldn't have a business. [7]

However, because this argument repeats the appeal to a form of natural selection in business, it merely confirms the MOD doxa that "you have Industry trying to make as much money out of us as possible because they need to survive". [5]

5.3.2.3 Acquisition as practice: ethics through capital

The establishment of this doxa is important because it creates the conditions for how capital is valued. Recall that capital is made, saved, exchanged or consumed, with its possession allowing the holder to wield power or influence in a social context; in this case, the acquisition field, in which social actors struggle over *how much* capital they can gain and control, and *what counts* as capital in the first place. Capital becomes symbolic when it is legitimised; that is, when it is recognised by others as conferring authority. Holding this capital then justifies the way the field is structured and stratified into hierarchies: once social actors possess symbolic capital and a position of influence in a field, they have the symbolic power to construct the social world.

Since the MOD already controls contracts in the acquisition field as a default, the separation doxa provides the MOD with the ability to legitimise capital and use it to reinforce its symbolic power. For example, in one story, the MOD attempted to work collaboratively with Industry on the training for a capability:

> We started out in that instance of having, 'we'll have a fairly loose contract that we all sort of work around for the greater good', without being explicit about 'thou shalt do'; and that didn't work, that – the outputs we were seeing from the trainers, *we weren't getting what we wanted…* [emphasis added]. [2]

Although this was supposed to be a collaborative endeavour, the narrative recollection assigns greater symbolic power to the MOD ("we're having to put in a revised contract… it's become very prescriptive… that's how we've had to deal with it" [2]). The interviewees can employ the doxa to assert that failures like this are inevitable, ensuring that the MOD's symbolic power is thus misrecognised as natural; after all, when "you start coming up against the buffers or difficulties, which will be *the inevitable ones*, which are time, cost, quality, then you start going back into a more contractual, adversarial relationship" [emphasis added] [2].

Here not only are tensions inescapable, but this becomes the default position to which the acquisition system returns, as if finding its equilibrium. It means that collaboration, which works "[w]hile things are going well", is delegitimised because "all too often those initial aspirations tend to fall down" [2]. The implication of the story is thus supposed to be that the initial effort was naïve because it failed to appreciate the natural order of things – it was chasing "an ideal world" [2] that is unachievable.

This inevitability of failure is, in the narratives, just a fact of life, rather than something created from the MOD's position of dominance within the acquisition field through its symbolic power of contracting ("whatever we do is the customer's idea in the end" [10]) and reinforced, continually, by the doxa. For instance, "it's no surprise when quotes or the tendering process is [sic] undermined, because [Industry] are quoting on insufficient information" [3]. By withholding knowledge of equipment plans, ostensibly to achieve value for money through competition, the MOD creates (or rather sustains) an information asymmetry that preserves its position, using "contract conditions

and the attitudes that go around [them]" to contribute to "outcomes that may not be as good as they could otherwise have been". [7]

Here the MOD can insist that it is "bound by [its] own rules on competition" [3], but the symbolic power of contracting structures the entire acquisition field because it assigns the ability to legitimate capital exclusively to the MOD, which Industry must – and, in the narratives, does – accept as a condition of market entry. In contrast to Australia, say, which publishes a ten-year Capability Plan to help Industry predict future requirements, UK acquisition is "driven by this 'us and them' situation" [3] that is not inevitable at all. (On the other hand, attempts to make this adversarial approach a default can be seen in the US, although policy makers have vigorously contested it. ('We must treat our contractors like they are criminals. Before we find out anything wrong, we assume they are doing something bad.' (Shuster, 2012: 8)) Even when senior MOD personnel concede that some form of collaboration may be worth considering, they undermine it by presupposing an adversarial relationship anyway as part of the doxa ("both want partnership for their own ends, but both are suspicious of how much they can actually get away with… and that's not terribly healthy" [5]). When Industry also accepts the doxa that contracts set up an inevitable demarcation ("[o]bviously there is a contractual relationship across a boundary" [7]), even if this is considered "unhelpful", people within the field as a whole are not incentivised to challenge it ("we kid ourselves that having this 'us and them' combative approach drives in efficiency" [3] – akrasia again).

Here one story demonstrates the symbolic power involved:

> I think Industry are still calling for partnership and the question that we were asking in the [case study] and other issues is, 'partnership on whose terms?' *Is it partnership on our terms, which means a genuine partnership*, which says, 'we'll give you a slightly more generous contract, but we want your innovation and imagination built into it', or is it partnership in terms of, 'we'll give you a long-term contract, we'll give you a contract, but screw you for every penny'. Sorry – 'we'll screw you for

every modification from the contract', which they then make us pay for [emphasis added]. [5]

This exemplifies symbolic violence, in which people adjust their behaviour (their habitus) to symbolic power rather than challenging it, leaving the structure of the field intact and encouraging the dominant to regard their power as natural, just as the dominated must accept their lack of it. In this case, a member of the dominant group shows the dominated that the symbolic power of the MOD is naturalised and that any other options are to be considered deviations. This alternative is then delegitimised from the outset because it is not "genuine", such that MOD personnel are again faced with the false dilemma of the doxa: support the natural position of an adversarial relationship unless the MOD defines the terms of partnership, or advocate the MOD being 'screwed' by Industry. ("The Defence Industry, which is driven by the need to maximise profit and shareholder value, is very pro this [the collaboration case study], so what does that tell us?" – Civil Servant response to the case study; field diary, 11 March 2015.)

When the narratives default to the claim (the doxa) that differing capitals are involved in MOD and Industry, they set up the combat metaphor and ask whether "we, as the public sector, [are] ultimately always going to lose out, because a lot of human nature is driven by money?" [1] To support the delegitimisation of collaboration, this retreat to doxa is implied to be more realistic ("here comes the cynical head" [1]). It is also supported by an assumption that causation works in a particular direction only: "we won't modify the process for [project] because we don't trust them" [1], rather than the lack of trust driving the refusal to adapt the practice, which is embodied in habitus and as a presupposition in doxa because it separates (and thus shapes) MOD identity, securing a position of power within the acquisition field. Even when reporting a feeling of powerlessness ("he just hands [the money] over" [6]), continuing allegiance to the system as it stands is what secures field position.

One of the interviewees recognised this akratic possibility ("potentially we're ultimately driving an inefficient process to support our mistrust of defence

industries" [1]), but immediately undermined this insight by appealing again to the doxa that "mistrust happens", instead of being created:

> … the literature says it should work, everything says it should work, but fundamentally when things start becoming tight, *human nature*, individuals start looking at us going, 'am I doing as well out of this deal as they are?' At which point, it then breaks down [emphasis added]. [2]

This is important because the companies for which the process *can* be modified are those that accept that military capital is symbolic. One narrative told a story about a company employing lots of ex-military training specialists, which helps the MOD since "you are aware of the professional capabilities of that person for that team and, therefore, have developed a degree of confidence." [1] This is using capital to structure the field: to repeat, as the contracting body, the MOD is in a position of power within the acquisition field, which it uses here to define military training experience as symbolic capital; this then forces (or – more accurately – encourages) Industry to accept this capital as symbolic and seek it out because the contract will be easier to run and more likely to succeed – it is a means of "driving credibility, which then breaks down that [barrier to achieving trust]". [1]

The result is that the symbolic capital of military experience structures the field and creates a further doxa that doing things in the (ex-)MOD way is correct: people who have or acquire this capital will succeed in delivering what the MOD (thinks it) wants, which then makes the relationship between the MOD and the contractor successful ("because [company] developed a centre of excellence, a centre of gravity of [ex-MOD] training knowledge, they realise the importance of getting it right" [1], where 'right' is whatever the symbolic capital specifies). To the contrary, when a company is mistrusted, "that's going to drive us to do more work and we, therefore, allocate more resources", sustaining "a need for a degree of cynicism" [1] about Industry unless things are done as MOD capital specifies.

This symbolic power of being able to make decisions on trustworthiness, facilitating Industry performance with greater or lesser amounts of collaboration

depending on the extent of (ex-)MOD capital invested, makes the original doxa unfalsifiable: even when collaboration appears to succeed, "ultimately you could argue that the additional work they do is almost a bit of a loss leader to generate further work downstream" [1]; and if anyone claims that the collaboration is genuine and delivering results, they can be dismissed as chasing "a nice warm feeling because we've got collaboration and we're delivering the output of the here and now." [1] This also delegitimises attempts to challenge the doxa because the "nice warm feeling" comes from believing the contrary; therefore, it is associated with embarrassment at being taken in by simplistic but unrealistic ideas ("we mustn't be naïve" [1]). This is symbolic violence, adjusting habitus to what is permissible or thinkable as options (the illusio), and the advocate is to be ashamed of her naivety.

Worse than being credulous, though, is being Industry's advocate. (Note that the author was repeatedly delegitimised in this way over the course of the research – for example, "I heard you're working for BAE Systems now"; field diary, 1 December 2015.) Even the one interviewee who was willing to challenge the field structure was concerned at the risk of this perception ("I'm not painting Industry to be whiter-than-white") and drew attention to explicit delegitimising activity:

> [T]here is this suspicion that those military people, or even Civil Servants, who advocate a closer relationship with Industry are 'on the make', that they're about to jump ship and join Industry or they're getting back-handers. That's where I'm quite incensed because I'm a big fan of working really closely with Industry, but you would never get… I will never work for Industry. [3]

This kind of commentary from others ("the accusation, 'you're in bed with Industry'. I've heard that before" [3]) undermines by suggesting that proponents of a contrary doxa are behaving unethically. The allegation then serves to devalue cross-boundary capital such as business qualifications or experience with Industry, forcing the speaker to declaim any such influence as a condition

of contributing to the discussion ("to which I note that Industry have got nothing on me" [3]).

The result is a climate of guilty-until-proven-innocent, which exists and is vigorously sustained precisely because it challenges the illusio – that part of habitus that defines what is thinkable. Taking up a position in the field under the illusio means both agreeing to the 'rules of the game' and believing that it is worth playing; consequently, people take their identity from the illusio and thus it cannot be questioned without a powerful sense of threat to self. Given the influence of the illusio at this level ("deep down there's a suspiciousness" [3]), those dominant in the acquisition field can afford to allow experiments with collaboration ("they've paid lip service to it" [3]): they can assume that even the dominated will help to defeat change because everyone's positions in the field depend on doing so and this is embodied in their habitus ("they are still ingrained in a culture which is, 'don't trust Industry; anything collaborative must be wrong because competition is the answer'" [3]).

Notwithstanding these challenges, the narratives also recognise the inevitability that some people move from the MOD to Industry; after all, these are the ex-MOD personnel who have the symbolic capital necessary to help Industry succeed in ways that do not challenge the MOD's dominance of the field. However, the survey data showed that the movement of people from the MOD to Industry was considered to be higher than it should be, and the narratives are consistent with this insofar as they undermine transitions in two ways.

Firstly, and most straightforwardly, when people attempt to obtain Industry or cross-boundary capital, via a temporary exchange or otherwise, the capital acquired is not valued and thus is not symbolic ("you do that secondment and then you get sent somewhere completely different" [2]). This is a matter for career management – and for return on investment – rather than narratives, though. Secondly, and more importantly, the stories that are told about transition point to "evidence of bad behaviour in the past: people who leave then sell stuff to us that, actually, only later do you realise that this is a bad deal" [4]. Here the issue is not transition itself; instead, "[t]he difficulty with a lot of those

who used to be in the military is actually they were in the military five, ten, fifteen years ago, and MOD has changed." [4] The implication is that whatever capital is translated or taken across the boundary will decay over time ("we have a shelf-life" [4] and people have to be careful because "the moment their skillset begins to fade – they don't build on it – they're going to go" [10]).

Consequently, the transitioned person "can occasionally be playing into a generational gap that hasn't caught up to where this generation is trying to get to" [4]; in short, the symbolic power to determine what counts as capital remains with the MOD. The result is outwardly supporting the movement of people ("flow our new guard backwards and forwards so the new guard are talking to each other and are on the same page" [4]), yet delegitimising it through retaining the separation doxa ("yes, you can go and work *for them*" [4]; emphasis added) and continuing to suggest naivety (it is "the old-fashioned thing" [4]). Worse still, the movement of skilled people is described via the poaching metaphor and those who join Industry, having taken their knowledge with them, "are probably using it against us now" (because "the generic capability [remaining in the MOD] is perceived [by Industry] to be low" [7]).

Therefore, the demarcation remains part of the doxa and the motives for transitioning are questioned: "are people doing this in the interests of their business, or are they doing it in the interests of their mates?" [4] At its most cynical, transition is something that occurs for personal gain rather than organisational benefit:

> I think that the senior leadership involved in the military side are predominantly approaching the latter end of their career; they're thinking about what they're going to do when they leave and they're just looking to open doors for their post-retirement activities. … So I don't think that the Armed Forces leadership are doing the best for Defence. I think that they're doing the best for their Service and where they're going to take their careers next. I do believe that the majority of them are actually doing it for themselves. [6]

This is the so-called revolving door problem, discussed widely in the literature and referred to in the aims and objectives chapter, where it was noted that the limited research conducted to date suggests that such movement is actually positive for both public and private sectors. This is evident in the narratives of transition, but the sociological insight is that, from a theory of practice perspective, it is through capital that these benefits are sought.

Specifically, the stories that the interviewees told were all concerned with the proactive acquisition of new capital to make it easier to secure a position within a new field ("I engineered as best I could my last couple of jobs in the Navy to give me a broader industrial base" [9]). Although this is common across the stories told, the complication is that it is not actually a new field at all because acquisition spans the public/private sector interface. Therefore, the transitions relied on leveraging existing capital ("what they were looking to do was expand their operators' experience" [9]) while trying to acquire the new. Here the illusio remains because – notwithstanding the doxa that the private sector is only interested in profit – ostensibly everyone in acquisition is working towards Defence outputs and believes in the value of this endeavour. However, for the individuals involved, the doxa has to be adjusted slightly to accommodate the possibility – or ideally the inevitability – of transition; otherwise, the field position occupied and the capital held by individuals is at risk, especially the loss of the symbolic power of rank:

> You've also got to learn your place and it's particularly difficult, I think, when you are almost back in the world you were in but wearing a suit. The fact that you were a Lieutenant Commander, a Commander, Captain, it doesn't matter what you were, it doesn't matter two hoots: your reputation is based on what you know and how you perform. [10]

The survey data suggested Rank/Position/Role as the primary form of capital in the acquisition field, but the narratives add a complication: whether that capital is lost ("you've got to learn how to interact with people on a level where you have no power" [10]), retained ("[senior officers are] thinking about what they're going to do when they leave and they're just looking to open doors for their

post-retirement activities" [6]) or was never translatable in the first place ("the same language is being used but they're actually very different skill sets, and that in itself is a mismatch and can cause tensions" [7]). The individuals transitioning deal with this friction and threat to identity by attempting to retain their habitus and the capital that is associated with influence:

> [Y]ou find yourself missing – there's not the wardroom, there's not the get-togethers, there's not the companionship to talk through. Easier if you got a job like mine when you're in an office with three contractors and [Royal Navy] people; you sort of, you don't miss it because you're in that, the same environment. […] *you haven't fully left behind the mentality, that ethos*, because you're likely to be customer facing. Probably different if you're in the back with no input, you're just making widgets or whatever, if you've got a customer-facing role *you don't lose your contacts, your ethos, so it's easier to still feel included* [emphasis added]. [10]

These individuals are thus moving to Industry yet trying to retain what they have ("if you're working in the defence industry, certainly customer facing, and delivering something, even if it's like training, you feel like you're contributing to the [Royal Navy] still"; otherwise, "it's going to be painful" [10]).

This is then why transitions are portrayed as straightforward ("I actually left the Navy on a Friday and changed into a suit and tie and went to work for the company on the Monday" [9]) and as having been achieved through experience ("I am working in the defence sector, which is obviously an area I know having spent [number] years in the Navy" [9]). The challenge for individuals is to adjust their habitus as necessary ("leaving the military after so many years is largely a state of mind" [9]), emphasising continuity to reduce the threat to their identity and to the capital held ("having spent [number] years in the military, branching out into something completely new has huge risks associated with it" [9]).

The distinction here is that, while research into transitions has focused on identity work (Newall, 2014), the role of capital needs to be included also. In particular, those transitioning are motivated to retain the illusio because it

contributes significantly to their identity, but also because the value of the capital they hold is guaranteed by that illusio. Individuals are then in a (field) position to appeal to the need for Industry to leverage this capital to tackle the adversarial relationship with the MOD ("Industry's always coming up against individuals in uniform who are new in the job" [9]). The transitioning individual is thus benefitting from the illusio as it stands ("everything from the language that people talked, to understanding people's problems within the military sphere, is made a whole lot easier" [9]) and hence retains the doxa ("[a]ny company is there to make money. End of story. It doesn't matter what they tell you. The profit was it") [10].

Nevertheless, and consistent with the survey data, movement from the MOD to Industry is still delegitimised ("we are suffering from a lack of a system to be able to bring on the experience of our people" [1]). The narratives drive habitus by suggesting that actions that contribute or add to this "suffering" – such as "los[ing] those people into Industry" [1] – should be avoided, creating a tension for the individuals transitioning. Sometimes in the narratives this is noted in explicitly ethical terms ("I was told I was being disloyal to the Service because I was leaving a gap"; "most of them think, 'oh, he's jumped ship, he's a different person now'" [8]). Those who move for reasons of necessity or self-actualisation are then forced to describe the transition as occurring almost by accident, reducing their individual agency to preserve their habitus and sense of self: they create narratives that make the cross-border movement an inevitability, rather than a response to limits on their field position ("I realised that the people who I did it for, you know, the great and the good in the Navy, were only a bit older than me, but they weren't any wiser, and I didn't have a great deal of faith in the leadership" [8]). In short, they pass the responsibility to fate ("the sort of synergy of the planets aligning" [8]) rather than understand the symbolic violence being done to them.

The power of the illusio thus creates a strong identity, which people want to hold on to ("my motivations all come from, you know, these are my people, these

other people that I belong with" [8]), but it also associates a sense of embarrassment or even dishonour with leaving the MOD:

> … when you go from Services here [in the UK] and go and work in the defence industry, you know, it almost carries a shame with it that, you know, in the sense that there's a revolving door and you've just gone through the revolving door and, you know, you're just lobbying now and 'you would say that, wouldn't you?' [8]

This narrative implication of abandonment is something that the individuals cannot avoid because the value of the capital they wish to take with them is contingent on preserving the illusio. Therefore, it is addressed by seeking affirmation from former colleagues ("I do what I do so that guys look up to me in some way, shape, or form – that enjoying my peer review of their activity, or that, you know, looking down on me from the point of view of a resource to help them" [8]). Even so, it is still undermined by the turnover of personnel ("six people have been in the job I did in [location] in the last five years, if not more" [8]), which means that the capital earned from undertaking a role is precarious and potentially devalued because so many people have it by virtue of their MOD experiences. Moreover, the adversarial doxa persists when people "take an antagonistic view that we are only here to steal taxpayers' money and line our pockets then that sets an agenda of, you know, people are only in it for themselves". [8]

The result is that capital is still made symbolic by the original organisation ("I haven't yet snipped the cord" [8]) and the transitioning individual needs to emphasise continuity of identity (via the illusio) to retain capital:

> … my safety and my kids' safety is underwritten by the fact that we do have, you know, they get their identity from the institutions we have defining the country and part of that is the Royal Navy so, you know, in that sense I want the best for the Royal Navy… [8]

Ultimately, this is why transitioning from the MOD to Industry is referred to as 'going outside': it achieves the 'othering' of Industry to support MOD identity

work, sustaining both the doxa and the illusio, but also places control of the separation with the MOD because it has the symbolic power to set exchange rates of capital. The original position (working within the MOD) then becomes the default (doxa) and then privileges MOD capital, even when 'outside', such that people in both MOD and Industry adjust their behaviour accordingly. This is the very definition of symbolic violence: "you might be able to talk the customer into doing things a particular way and lead them, and there's a sort of art in that: you almost have to end up it being their idea." [10]

One story offered a challenge to this dominant narrative by insisting that competing capital is necessary and, in fact, should be legitimised as symbolic: the adversarial doxa exists "because [people] are not trained in acquisition." [3] By implication, this training would create cross-boundary understanding and help to develop contrary capital and habitus; but this will come at the expense of the value of (some) existing capital, as indeed it must if the latter was falsely legitimised. However, the primary difficulty with this approach is that those in current positions of symbolic power have little incentive to validate this hypothetical new capital because they themselves lack it ("it's those in the decision-making positions who haven't been trained in acquisition or don't understand the issue" [3]), so "their natural disposition will be to say no". [3] Moreover, their habitus has been shaped by long careers acquiring a particular form of capital and being rewarded for doing so ("we promote in our own image – they're like us, that's the kind of thing we like, that ethos, that corps, that mentality… it does generate a degree of homogeneity" [4]). There is thus no incentive for those with symbolic power to change.

This leads to a key claim in the narrative that contested the dominant practice (and it is supported in others):

I'm not saying they [reject alternatives] with any malicious intent; they do it because they think that they know what's required, and because they themselves aren't up to the task. They themselves want the best for Defence, but they're just not in a position to deliver that. [3]

On this view, no one is behaving unethically in the normative sense because people always act as they believe they should. The assertion is that this is what happens in the acquisition field, both for the MOD ("[w]e all like to think of what it is that we do is kinda right" [4]) and for Industry ("you've got very clever people for whom return to shareholder will always win. And they don't do that at MOD's expense to get one over us; they will just get their return to shareholder because that's their requirement" [3]).

This is thus a restatement of akrasia in the acquisition context: people are acting against the better judgment of the literature review and the arguments in favour of collaboration, yet believe – with Socrates – that this is impossible because they are doing what they think is right. The original Aristotelian response to akrasia was that acting against one's better judgment is caused either by weakness of will (making a choice through reason, but following a passion instead) or by being impetuous (not reasoning things through at all and acting immediately on the basis of the passion). The narrative analysis offers a sociological alternative: akrasia is due to a desire to retain capital and field position (to do what senior people want and will reward), as well as driven by a habitus that embodies a disposition to sustain the illusio, regardless of what reason dictates. This implies that the options available to people (such as collaboration) are actually cognitively and behaviourally limited by their positions in the field, the capital they possess and their need to preserve both. (This claim is returned to in Chapter 6.) This reinforces their habitus and the illusio, which everyone is dependent upon for their activities to be meaningful (some people "can't [do things differently] because they got scarred or damaged by something" [4]). Indeed, it establishes a virtue ethics narrative tradition as part of the MOD ethos.

Consequently, asking about ethics in acquisition would be a fruitless task that no one could make any sense of:

> [P]eople who will end up [in influential positions] will want to be like the bosses – so the bosses will select people who think in their own mental

image. And it happens in other areas of Defence that we *create* people in our own image; that's who we are [emphasis added]. [3]

To get to the field positions they are in, then, people will thus have been acting as they were required to ("because we bottom-feed – we grow people bottom-up in Defence – there's a certain bit of you've got to go through certain hoops" [4]) and always in the best interests of Defence *as they understood them* ("[e]veryone is guilty of perpetuating what they believe to be right" [3]). Therefore, from the perspective of the social actors, the possibility of being unethical in the normative sense could never arise; or, more accurately, *there is no set of norms or an ethical code that would result in people behaving other than as they already do*. Furthermore, it would follow that the illusio must be ethical also. It thus should be little surprise that people use ethical narratives to undermine alternatives because, by contradicting the illusio, these are straightforwardly unethical and to be opposed.

5.3.2.4 Acquisition as practice: ethics through habitus

If this argument holds then the akrasia should be embodied in habitus, which is what provides people with 'a feel for the game' and represents the dispositions that unconsciously tell them what is or is not possible, including emotions like shame. Such a form of habitus motivates people to want to fit in, rather than challenge symbolic power, and it should be expected to also involve the defence of the illusio in normative terms.

In support of this claim, the narrative metaphors identified are again used to imply that the doxa, itself part of habitus, captures the appropriate dispositions:

> [A]s a general perception of how we as the MOD view the private sector is that we don't trust them, we think that they will look to, let's use 'rip us off', at every opportunity… [1]

This is a direct appeal to normative ethics because 'ripping off' implies deceit, but in the narratives this is a preconception ("[t]hose prejudices rise and make it difficult" [1]). For example, in one story, a collaborative venture between the MOD and Industry began well, but "little changes [to the contract] became quite

160

big changes over time", resulting in a "mindset change" (specifically, a declaration that "we're being fleeced here" [2]). The interesting claim in this story, which is supported by the survey data, is that the real influence was at upper/middle management level:

> [T]he [locations] were getting what they wanted, the people in the [company] were providing what was asked for, everyone was happy. If you look at the two tops, so the head of [company] and the head of [organisation] as it was at the time, they were happy and talking nicely. It's [at] the immediate level between those two that it all started to go wrong. [2]

It was then at this level that "ingrained concerns" were raised and became:

> … a self-fulfilling prophecy of, 'I've got a concern, you're not telling me the right answer, or *the answer I'm expecting*; therefore, you do have something to hide, so I was right' [emphasis added]. [2]

Here the doxa is inscribed in the habitus of MOD people as an expectation. When combined with the symbolic power that the MOD has as the contract holder, things "quickly fall off the cliff" into a "purely adversarial" relationship; after all, "[y]ou can't have a win-win situation where you've got your middle management all sitting there going, 'you bastards, you're fleecing us'" [2]. In this instance, the field structures the dispositions of the MOD staff, but their unconscious assessment of what is possible and permissible (habitus) also constrains their ability to identify alternatives. Indeed, following the earlier narrative criticism of MOD people lacking experience of Industry, the implication in Bourdieusian terms is thus that its people (literally) "don't see" the other side of the fence that "rocks and abuse" are thrown over. From the literature review, they can be said to be suffering from bounded ethicality, except that here they are actually limited by the illusio:

> What is it that's actually stopping us doing this? Is it legislative, which is a big deal? It takes a lot of time to get anything through the legislative

process. Is it financial, where there's something we just can't do? Is it Treasury rules? *People hide behind these* [emphasis added]. [4]

This is the veil of illusio in operation: confronted by difficulties, the interview subjects demonstrated that they are afraid of losing their field positions and, rather than challenge the blockers they identified, they believe that it is better to assume that they are insurmountable because of the investment in the game that has already been made. Here the people involved have individual agency – albeit constrained by field and capital – but their choices support the illusio because they are afraid that the entire field will be undermined by change, threatening their capital accumulation and relative positions. They then defend themselves by creating and embodying a doxa that only gradual change can be accommodated ("we'll aim for something perfect and that, probably, is a wasted effort" [4]).

On this view, those whose habitus ultimately caused the "self-fulfilling prophecy" – a degeneration between the two sides – can appeal to the inevitability of conflict to excuse what was actually a reaction to their dominant MOD capital being threatened by an early success of collaboration ("the first time we come up against difficulty or we perceive that somebody's doing better than us, we'll go back to an adversarial, win-lose mentality" [2]). After all, in a collaborative venture, there is less need for two (or more) sets of finance and commercial officers, which is precisely where the challenges in this story originated.

The interviewees also appealed in their narratives to the importance of contracting in driving habitus ("[i]t's almost like unconscious bias over the way you treat people" [4]). On the face of it, they are inclined to accept collaborative approaches as delivering greater benefits because "the person doing [some element of the acquisition cycle] will never take as much ownership as if they've got the whole cylinder of that process" [1], or else because "if you're delatching a support contract, particularly in the training area, you may be disincentivising the collaboration and again driving this attitude that it's a business step that I need to get completed so I can move onto the next" [1]. However, this actually

privileges the MOD's position: it is only when things are done in accordance with MOD process that life is easy and true collaboration is seen.

Indeed, the MOD is advantaged by its symbolic power. In one example, it was because "the approach [a company had] taken has very much been at odds with what we think they should have taken […] that relationship and collaboration never got the opportunity to grow" [1]; that is, the collaboration was to be on MOD terms ("partnership on our terms, which means a genuine partnership" [5]). The problem for Industry is that, since MOD people are not incentivised to achieve acquisition capital, the process invariably involves failure:

> [T]here's an expectation that Industry will deliver something because we've asked them to, when actually we haven't asked them for alpha, we've asked them for beta, and when they deliver beta against our requirement that we specified as alpha, then Industry is 'seeing us off' again. [1]

However, even where the narrators recognise – as in this excerpt and in the common story identified from the survey comments – that the blame is actually with poor (MOD) requirements setting, the doxa of an inevitable customer/supplier relationship, in which there "has to be a degree of formalisation" [1], means that individuals are not accountable. This need for holding to account, born of the duty to spend public money well, shifts ethics to process and becomes a form of symbolic violence as people adjust their expectations. Indeed, this creates suspicion in Industry through "the incredibly tight way these contracts are formed; you know, it gives Industry no leeway [to innovate]" [5]. As a result, Industry does not innovate, which then allows MOD staff who have transitioned to Industry to reconfirm the doxa ("[y]ou don't deliver more than the customer has ordered, because if they want more then there is more money to be made" [10]).

In short, it is a form of principal-agent problem in which the desire to employ process to safeguard public money creates an assumption of dishonesty in the agent/supplier, which is then embodied in habitus:

[I]f they can prove to us that their costs would be much, much more, but they've kept it down so that they can win the contract and they believe they can do it, then it's us who looks distrusting. But there's this distrust that's *built in* from simple things like that [emphasis added]. [5]

The adversarial relationship then becomes mutually reinforcing because the doxa is that distrust is inevitable ("built in" [5]), which justifies the existing commercial process ("the answer's competition" [3]) that protects against that distrust ("there is no way around it" [3]). Given the MOD's symbolic power, though, the narratives are still able to cast Industry as culpable: "I've not seen the honesty come back the other way of going, 'oh yeah, you know you've not got this right, but we'll do that; oh, you didn't contract for that, you didn't set that?'" [4] The implication is that Industry is lying in wait for MOD errors ("thanks for that; we're now going to screw you for more money" [5]) because Industry has different (profit) motives – the separation doxa again, but now as a disposition (habitus).

Another example of inscribed habitus in the narratives is when they refer to the MOD as risk-averse, which is then described as driving an "underlying cynicism within our leadership that we must remember that at the end of the day we're dealing with a commercial organisation". [1] On this view, MOD leaders are "caught in a risk analysis" [5] and do not want to have to ask for more (economic) capital ("[Defence] wants the capability, but doesn't want to pay for it" [5]) because an admission of failure to deliver with what they have could harm their own capital with respect to the larger bureaucratic field, in which the Government holds symbolic power. Instead, they exert symbolic violence by preferring to define the alternatives as unachievable and guided by ulterior motives (both then part of the doxa). The capital at the highest (political) level is thus shaping habitus ("the politics is one of 'we must provide the very best, and if you can't afford it then how do you reduce costs?'" [5]), driving inflated requirements and blaming Industry if these prove unaffordable or obsolete ("giving us what we want when they know they've got something better on the shelf at the same price" [5]).

This provides a summary of the delegitimising process: Industry is motivated by profit, differently to the MOD; and the MOD has a duty to spend public money well; therefore, it is safer (as well as more realistic) to assume that Industry will behave badly and hence to default to leadership behaviours as they are ("we tend to lead with a position of mistrust" [3]). Positions within the acquisition field can be secured against the influence of the political field by blaming Industry for failures, a heuristic that no one will challenge because of the doxa and a need to save face ("the ultimate message that gets in front of the Minister is, how can they be held up in a slightly higher regard with their constituents" [6]). Furthermore, this writes behavioural dispositions into the organisation when individuals act as their leaders – those with symbolic power over them – prefer ("that came about from the management pressure, which was, 'don't tell me there are problems; just tell me that it's all fine'" [7]).

In the example of an attempt at collaboration that went wrong, then, the story reported that the situation required the leadership to say, "'yeah, they're a commercial company, of course they've got to make money; you know that what they've done is exactly what we've asked them to do. What's your beef with them doing exactly what we've asked them to do?'" [2] However, it was easier to blame Industry and, without a positive intervention ("the seniors didn't want to hear it or weren't willing to stamp on it" [2]), relationships were poisoned:

> [I]n terms of some of that baggage and some of that experience and history, you can't help but be – 'scarred' is possibly the wrong word – you can't help but be informed by it. [4]

This scarring is habitus being (literally) inscribed in/on the body, especially when people have been let down by their leaders ("I didn't have a great deal of faith in the leadership" [8]). Over time, with their deferral to symbolic power, the adjustment of their habitus becomes misrecognised as natural ("it's just human nature and it sticks" [1]), which then excuses individuals and absolves them of agency – again, challenging the need for an ethics of acquisition. This motivation could then be behind the ostensible admissions of lacking capital

("all we've ever done in our lives is been in the Royal Navy" [1]) because it legitimates the habitus as it is and avoids blame.

5.3.3 Acquisition ethics as practice

To now further link the influences of habitus and capital, the analysis so far suggests that habitus is driven by a fear of acting in a way that risks capital accumulation and, with it, position in the field. Consider this example:

> Comfort. And there's a lot of fear about that. It's interesting – it's a Governmental one, it's an inside-Defence one: once it becomes comfy, we're suddenly not challenging. [4]

Here the dominant narrative is able to change the very definition of a word ('comfort'), such that to behave in existing ways – to advocate or incentivise an adversarial relationship – is perceived as challenging, whereas to offer an alternative is comfortable and easy. Consequently, people who want to improve or maintain their field positions need to be confrontational, not collaborative, and adjust their dispositions accordingly. All of this is enabled by the inherent short-termism of the defence sector, which structures habitus through reward systems:

> So, I go in. 'Right, here's your project: you're to deliver this bit of kit, this grey box, to this price, within this time frame.' Okay, I can do that. I'll make a few – I'll take a short-termism view. If I painted it slightly differently, if I put this cheaper paint on, I can get it in. It'll increase the costs overall, but you know what? I hit my target of getting it in on time and on budget. The fact that I've increased cost throughout the life of this box, I'm not going to be judged on that. I move on, nobody comes back – my report's written – nobody comes back to me and goes, '[name], why did you make that decision?' My report's been written that says 'delivered the project to time and cost, he can drive this, he knows how to achieve success'. I get promoted and I'm on an upward trajectory. [2]

In a field structured in this way, people acquire capital by being "perceived to do the right thing" [2], even if the right thing is wrong in the longer-term; this is the

akratic behaviour that is written into their dispositions, in which moral hazard is encouraged.

Another example: one story refers in detail to the MOD (especially the military) using the concept of the organisation and its people having a 'can-do' attitude. This is used to structure habitus by prioritising MOD capital: "we expect the same of others we deal with, when in reality it's 9 'til 5, it's what's written in the contract, and we shouldn't expect to get anything for free" [1] – as though somehow MOD personnel work for nothing. It also reinforces the separation doxa by presupposing that only the MOD is 'can-do', so only its people will go beyond expectations.

This is another unfalsifiable perspective, since if Industry did so consistently then going beyond would become the expectation. Indeed, when a company *does* behave in a can-do way, this is reinterpreted to be because the individual(s) ultimately responsible "thinks he's still within the navy, and therefore he will do things that he is not contracted to do because he sees the overarching benefit" [1], whereas with others, "what you ask for is what you'll get" [1]. The former individual is "the one we prefer to work with because he very much reflects our own mentality of can-do" [1]. However, if the MOD can – contractually – only ever receive exactly what it asks for, then the "mentality of can-do" is mythical, except that the theory of practice explains it as overlain on events in a way that reinforces habitus and capital.

The result is that it is in no one's interest to challenge the system and, therefore, MOD personnel embody habitus accordingly. They are incentivised to act in ways that retain an adversarial relationship by cutting corners ("if I put this cheaper paint on" [2]) and blaming Industry for the results ("there are an awful lot of people in the Civil Service that, because of the way the structures work, they feel perhaps less direct association between what they do and the impact it has on them individually" [7]). This is why individuals reaffirm the illusio, even though – under its veil – they may be in positions of lesser symbolic power. For example, when asked about senior leadership behaviours, one interviewee said, "I'm going to try to duck this question" [1]. That is the illusio in action: a

middle-ranking officer lacking symbolic power tries instead to "twist [the question] around to governance" [1] rather than challenge the symbolic capital of rank and lose the benefit it affords.

After all, when "all you're judged on is what's in your report" [2], people will adjust their behaviour to whatever those in power require ("they will automatically go down the combative route because they've been told that's what they need to do" [3]). This further legitimates ranks as symbolic capital and encourages people to misrecognise the structure of the acquisition field as natural, rather than as an exercise of symbolic power ("you've got people there and it doesn't make any difference to them whether something takes a week or a year because it has no personal impact" [7]). People are then rewarded for following process ("the answer's competition; what's the question?" [3]) and responding to their leadership's aims ("congratulations, you've done really well, you're promoted" [2]), creating a habitus that is underpinned by the symbolic capital of rank and of experience in a competitive context ("you get Civil Servants who think they understand how to manage projects because they're [called] Project Managers" [7]).

To challenge this would require both new capital *and* a new illusio, but no one is incentivised to do so even if they can acquire the former. It is simply easier to defer to symbolic power ("they'll then blame the Government" [3]). Moreover, since individuals in Industry are aware of these reward mechanisms, either from experience (and being "scarred") or through having transitioned from the MOD themselves, they "don't believe the MOD can be serious" [3] when new talk of collaboration begins and also contribute to the doxa of inevitable failure ("already you've got people throwing stones at [the case study], both senior industry and at middle manager level in MOD" [3]).

Finally, disputing this overarching narrative is also dangerous because of the "fear of failure, or a rapidity of British society to blame for a mistake" [4], which again makes it safer to remain within the field as it stands and try to improve position instead (i.e. to retain the veil of illusio). This is especially so when resources are limited ("we don't have time or money, political will, risk appetite,

to get stuff wrong" [4]), but the point of the narratives is that here it is capital in general that is at risk, not just money. Therefore, "we'll tell Ministers what is presentationally more appealing, rather than what's the correct business model to follow" [6], because positioning within the field is contingent on agreeing with and supporting symbolic power, not opposing it. In these circumstances, unethical decisions are taken ("what is it you actually want to say and I will produce the line that proves that's what you want to say?" [6]) because the field structure determines priorities ("Defence came at the bottom of the pile" [6]). These actions are enabled by habitus and people's need to retain or acquire capital, all in accordance with the illusio.

Consequently, "there is too much conformity" [6] and codes of ethics have no impact:

> So it's how passionate you are about upholding the values … but it's at what point [people] are almost prepared to accept the inevitability that, 'if a Minister says that we're going to do it then we're going to do it and I'll make it work somehow'. I think that's how the – it might not be the right word, but – the dichotomy is being held by a series of values that you're expected to uphold, but you're also expected to serve, so *you're almost encouraged to park your values* [emphasis added]. [6]

Habitus is amended accordingly, with people who "serve" rewarded via capital accumulation and field position:

> [I]t tends to be the ones that break into senior leadership roles who are much more comfortable being able to park that passion for public service, to serve the Government of the day, and latch onto that. [6]

As a result, any available ethical code is simply overwhelmed by symbolic power ("it just says, 'we'll all be nice to each other' […], which doesn't do anything" [7]).

5.3.4 Summary

In conclusion, the implication of the results is that everyone involved in Defence acquisition has individual agency and can act ethically or otherwise, but if people want to succeed then they have to "park [their] values" and adjust to symbolic power. By the time they reach positions of influence themselves, the structure of the field and its habitus will have been naturalised, so they are unlikely to recognise any ethical challenge to how things are. Consideration of ethics via habitus thus suggests the same conclusion as with the focus on capital: there is no set of norms or an ethical code that would result in people behaving other than as they already do. Therefore, it seems that there can be no ethics of acquisition; instead, acquisition is a practice in the Bourdieusian sense that what people do is a result of the interaction of field, capital and habitus, to which can be added the claim that their behaviour is typically akratic.

The implications of this interpretation are explored in more detail through the discussion in Chapter 6, but it means that the narrative analysis is an explanation, in the domain of the real, of the is/ought gap that was identified in the domain of the empirical, and of people's lived experiences as narrated in the domain of the actual. However, to develop this case further through analogy in other areas, it was necessary to create an exemplar via an ideal type.

5.4 Development of an ideal type

As detailed in the methodology, a Weberian ideal type was constructed from the narratives and their mechanisms. This was achieved via abductive/retroductive inferences from the survey data, together with the associated survey comments and the narrative analysis. The result was then used to set out the original contributions to knowledge that are proposed from this research.

5.4.1 The ideal type: acquisition as practice

The ideal type developed here lists essential or typical characteristics of public/private section interaction, generalised from the specific Defence acquisition context, together with brief comments to expand on these.

5.4.1.1 Ideal type

As an ideal type, public/private sector interaction as a practice will be characterised by those in the public sector:

- **Using contractual conditions to support an unspoken deontological ethics**, yet doing so to ostensibly guard against the principal-agent problem or inevitable bad behaviour is tantamount to constructing a doxa of separation and adversarial tension. Since the public/private sector interface is a practice, the adoption of this doxa actually contributes to creating the behaviour that it was meant to address.

- **Employing narratives of duty to exacerbate this tension, which then ends up justifying public sector control as the dominant social actor**. Once they possess symbolic capital and a position of influence in a field, social actors have the symbolic power to construct the social world. By employing the doxa to assert that failures are inevitable and that public/private motives are in conflict, the public sector's symbolic power is misrecognised as natural and becomes the equilibrium to which the system should return if confronted with any challenge.

- **Using ethical supremacy to scapegoat the private sector for public sector shortcomings**, especially in the skills of its people and the ability to deliver outcomes. This places blame on the acquisition process rather than on individuals and their behaviour, or the power structures that incentivise them. It also feeds into a wider societal narrative of the public sector as providing non-negotiable services to the nation via altruism, while being taken advantage of by a private sector focused only on profit making.

- **Encouraging public sector 'othering' of Industry as part of an illusio that guarantees field position and capital accumulation**, thereby maintaining symbolic power over the private sector. This also achieves control over public sector personnel, who are willing to misinterpret the separation as vital identity work because they benefit from maintaining the value of their capital.

- **Paying lip service to a code of ethics and ostensibly permit**

171

challenges while assuming they will fail. This is because the dominant social actors can assume that even the dominated will help to defeat change since a person's position in the field and her capital accumulation, as well as her identity as embodied in habitus, all depend on preserving the illusio. Given the incentives to discount potential future benefits, people within the practice will behave in an akratic way, creating and employing adversarial narratives – with ethical content – to delegitimise alternatives.

5.4.1.2 Behaviours

Given this ideal type, it will encourage particular types of behaviour. As characteristics of a general person (or persons) working in the public/private intersection, especially in the public sector but also in the private, people will:

- **Appeal to the inevitability of conflict between public and private sectors**. This doxa excuses what is actually a reaction to their dominant capital being threatened by any possibility of collaboration, even if it is against their best interests.

- **Privilege public sector way of doing things**. Since the public sector has the symbolic power to legitimate capital and set exchange rates, this structures the field and incentivises people in both public and private sectors to do things in ways consist with public sector capital. People will define their identity via a public sector illusio because this guarantees the value of their capital.

- **Emphasise blockers to avoid threats to capital and illusio**. Rather than challenge these blockers, it is better to assume that they are insurmountable because of the investment in the game that has already been made. Therefore, public sector leadership will prefer inaction above innovating-but-failing. They can safeguard their capital with respect to the larger bureaucratic field by blaming the private sector for failures.

- **Discount the future benefits of collaboration between public and private sectors to favour capital accumulation or preservation now**. Over time, with their continuing deferral to symbolic power, the

adjustment of people's habitus will become misrecognised as natural, which then excuses individuals and absolves them of agency, disputing the need for a code of ethics.

- **Use ethical narratives to undermine alternatives**. Since change threatens an individual's field position and capital value, she will interpret this as contradicting the illusio and oppose it, claiming that her identity is at risk and that she has a (deontological) duty to achieve value for money for the taxpayer. She will use sexualised and/or exploitation metaphors to delegitimise the proposed change to achieve this.

5.4.2 Challenging the ideal type

The narrative analysis suggested that options for falsifying the doxa, as captured in the ideal type presented here, are limited because suggesting that the private sector is engaged in loss-leading activity can undermine any successful public/private sector collaboration. Even if a code of ethics for acquisition in particular can be provided or referred to, such as the previous Defence Values for Acquisition in the Defence Industrial Strategy (MOD, 2005), an implication of the narrative analysis is that codes do not achieve anything when confronted by symbolic power.

The most fruitful response to the ideal type is to repeat and adopt that offered by Bourdieu (in reply to the objection that habitus denies individual agency): if people can become aware of acquisition as a practice, understanding how the interaction of capital, field and habitus incentivises them in akratic ways, then they may come to appreciate that their dispositions are ethically arbitrary and that social structures could be organised otherwise. This would provide for the possibility of a significant dislocation between people's aspirations and their likely prospects, given the influence of symbolic power as it stands. However, this must be realistically set against the disincentives of hyperbolic discounting and bounded ethicality at the cognitive level. Given the importance of capital, it may be possible for new incentives to develop if some senior leaders begin to advocate and model change; this could then make a difference to the prospects of the case study or of greater integration of customer and supplier in Defence

173

acquisition. Nevertheless, this would still not impact the inappropriateness of codes of ethics.

It can be argued that, as a deliberate fiction that does not exist in the critical realist's domain of the real, the ideal type can only be assessed in terms of empirical adequacy. Therefore, the ideal type and the narrative analysis on which it is based represent the biases of the researcher, including personal value judgments (for example, that the acquisition doxa ought to be opposed). Weber (1949b) addressed this criticism when the concept was originally developed, insisting that an ideal type should openly declare for a value position, without which the type's meaning would be ambiguous and the position of the researcher would be obscured. This candour mirrors Bourdieu's (1995) insistence on epistemic reflexivity and his demand that the aim of sociological investigation is to change things, not merely report them (Swartz, 2013). It also accords with the critical realist's desire to reveal false beliefs with the intention of replacing them (Bhaskar, 1998). In short, the research can only present the ideal type in these terms and invite others to improve upon it.

6 DISCUSSION

This penultimate chapter combines the literature review with the results of the data analysis to develop an ideal type and discuss the implications of the research.

6.1 Findings of the research

To reiterate, the aim of this research was to examine the extent to which ethics in Defence acquisition functions as part of narratives to legitimise or delegitimise options, rather than as a normative framework to guide or assess behaviour. Utilising the applied ethics context of the acquisition of UK military capabilities, in which an adversarial relationship between customer and supplier has been the default, an empirical investigation sought to explore how this relationship operates from a sociological perspective and the role of ethics.

The overall research question addressed in this research was: How does ethics function in narratives of Defence acquisition?

This was examined via two sub-questions:

- How do people involved in Defence acquisition talk about the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry?
- What does this reveal about the role of ethics in narratives of Defence acquisition?

The proposition was that people in Defence acquisition employ ethics not in the traditional, normative sense, but as part of their narratives to legitimise or delegitimise potential or actual courses of action. This was studied using a methodology comprising Bourdieu's theory of practice as the theoretical framework and the development of an ideal case, focused on a specific acquisition case study (a change programme to consider whether critical skills in UK Defence should be managed as a wider, collaborative enterprise).

To restate the research findings to this point:

- The literature review showed that normative ethics – the standard

approach to business ethics – is challenged by empirical work and likely to be inappropriate for an ethics of acquisition, notably because it does not account sufficiently for the influence of social structures and the limits of people's cognitive abilities.

- A quantitative exploration of the acquisition context via a case study established that there is a perceived gap between how things are and how they should be (reproducing the standard is/ought demarcation of ethics), a result that was in need of an explanation because it implies that something is preventing the acquisition system from operating as its people would otherwise wish.

- Qualitative analysis of acquisition narratives demonstrated that this is/ought shift is due to the influence of field, capital and habitus on how people behave; in short, that acquisition is a practice in Bourdieusian terms. It further suggested that the behaviour captured in the data is akratic, implying that codes of ethics can have little or no influence.

- An ideal type characterised the intersection of public and private sectors as an exemplar to be developed in other cases.

Before applying these results to answer the questions posed in the introduction and discussing the implications and limitations, the final stage of the research was to construct an ideal type to help set out the meaning of the findings.

6.2 Reviewing the research

Having constructed an ideal type, the final section of this chapter reviews the research against the original aims and intent.

6.2.1 Meaning of the data

Both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (narrative interview) data were collected as part of the research. The former was used to examine the gap, if any, between acquisition as it is and as it ought to be, following the standard demarcation in the ethics literature. Using a survey in this way was a deliberate methodological decision and design, which was intended to minimise social desirability bias. The findings imply that this was successful and suggest that

the acquisition system could – or should, for the respondents – be more collaborative than it is.

Given the separation of is and ought in this data (a consistent 33% to 71% 'shift' between the two in favour of greater collaboration, as discussed in Chapter 5), the ideal type was developed via narrative analysis to explain this phenomenon. This comprised the second stage in adapting Bourdieu's theory of practice to researching applied ethics, and provides a means of answering the questions posed in the introduction and the formal research questions set in Chapter 3.

The opening question – 'What counts as unethical in Defence acquisition?' – can be answered definitively, but with a significant caveat: unethical behaviour is whatever the dominant narratives say it is; but this does not mean unethical in the standard, normative sense. This proviso is made for two reasons: because the literature review demonstrates that normative approaches to ethics fail, and because the research reveals that acquisition is a practice in the Bourdieusian sense.

Consequently, the further question of whether acquisition should follow existing theories of business ethics or, given its unique context, requires a new theory of acquisition ethics, is no longer valid. That is, the existing theories are inadequate because they fail to account for empirical research, particularly in neuroscience and behavioural science, which shows that people are cognitively limited when it comes to ethics and in fact do not (and cannot) apply normative theories. Furthermore, the literature shows that these theories need to account for the influence of social context, especially social power. Finally, the narrative analysis established that ethics has no function in acquisition as a practice, except in narratives of delegitimisation.

This, of course, was the aim of this research, and permits the conclusion – and a response to the overall research question – that ethics in Defence acquisition functions solely as part of narratives to legitimise or (primarily) delegitimise options, rather than as a normative framework to guide or assess behaviour. The narrative analysis sets out in detail how people in acquisition talk about the relationship between the MOD and the UK Defence Industry, as well as what

this reveals about the role of ethics in narratives of Defence acquisition. This is summarised in the ideal type and its associated behaviours, generalised – as explained in the methodology – to the intersection of the public and private sectors.

6.2.2 Consistency with existing knowledge

The results are consistent with the existing literature insofar as they confirm:

- That normative ethical theories are not actually used by people (at least in the Defence acquisition context), except insofar as they are employed as part of narratives of delegitimisation;
- That people are constrained in how they approach ethical problems, except that this research focused on behavioural (sociological) rather than cognitive limitations;
- That social power is considerably more important in how people behave than normative theories of ethics;
- That the interaction of capital, field and habitus via Bourdieu's theory of practice provides a means of explaining why people behave as they do in the acquisition context; and
- That people engage in akratic behaviour due to social influences.

An alternative explanation of these findings is that the sociological perspective taken, and the theory of practice in particular, can (or will ultimately) be explained via descriptive ethics approaches such as neuroethics. While the literature review noted that neuroethics largely excludes social factors, it may be that eventually become encompassed within the scope of neuroscience. Another possibility is that the concept of identity can be extended to account for these results, including akrasia, such that the theory of practice is no longer required.

6.2.3 New findings

Having constructed an ideal type from the research, there are three main findings of note that add to the existing literature.

6.2.3.1 Customer/Supplier collaboration in Defence acquisition

The research data obtained from the quantitative survey demonstrate that people regard the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry as less collaborative than it should be. The subsequent narrative analysis details why this is the case, even though – other things being equal – the disparity would imply that the acquisition system should be moving to a collaborative approach. That the acquisition system should be understood as a Bourdieusian practice is offered as a best explanation for why Defence acquisition has achieved limited success in integrating customer and supplier roles to deliver improvements.

Of note, the research shows that Sector/Service and Rank/Position/Role are most important in impacting perceptions of Defence acquisition, with the Royal Navy more likely to favour a collaborative approach and middle ranks having more influence than other levels, albeit in response to the requirements of a practice. Therefore, the focus in the MOD's Enterprise Approach (the case study) on a maritime pathfinder is confirmed as appropriate.

6.2.3.2 Akrasia and practice

Acting against one's best interests – akrasia – has a sociological explanation: it is due to a desire to retain capital and field position within a practice, and is driven by a habitus that embodies a disposition to sustain the illusio, regardless of what reason dictates. This implies that the options available to people, whether facing ethical or other challenges, are behaviourally limited by their position in the field, the capital they possess and their wish to preserve both. In a practice structured in this way, people will acquire capital by being perceived to do the right thing, even if this is actually disadvantageous for them or their organisation from a longer-term perspective, and this will be the akratic behaviour that is written into their dispositions.

This result builds on the behavioural science literature by adding a sociological dimension: the influence of hyperbolic discounting in incentivising akrasia (that is, when people fail to notice contradictions in their short- and long-term valuations) is supported by the desire to retain capital and field position. In

Bourdieusian terms, people literally do not see 'the other side' of an adversarial relationship, not just because they may be cognitively limited by bounded ethicality and hyperbolic discounting, but because they are not incentivised behaviourally by their illusio to do so. On this view, to seek a business ethics of acquisition is to miss the point of why people behave as they do.

6.2.3.3 Ethics in Defence acquisition

Given their likely akrasia, individuals involved in Defence acquisition can act ethically or otherwise, but if they want to succeed then they have to adjust to symbolic power and not concern themselves with normative ethics (which, in any case, is not capable of providing them with a code of ethics as a guide for behaviour). By the time they themselves reach positions of symbolic power, the structure of the field and its habitus has been naturalised, so they are not incentivised to recognise any ethical challenge to how things are done. This explanation represents a novel application of Bourdieu's theory of practice to the context of public/private sector integration.

Although people will use narratives that include normative ethics as a means of delegitimising options in acquisition that threaten their field position and capital accumulation, there is thus no place in Defence acquisition for a set of agreed norms or a code of ethics. This is because, as a consequence of acquisition being a practice in Bourdieu's terms, any such code cannot result in people behaving other than as they already do. In short, symbolic power simply overrules an ethical code and habitus is amended accordingly. Therefore, there is no need to seek an ethics of Defence acquisition.

As noted with reference to the ideal type, this conclusion can be objected to on the same grounds as Bourdieu's concept of habitus was critiqued: it is all too deterministic and does not allow for individual agency; for example, that people act as they do because acquisition is a practice but also because they are guided by their own ethics. The problem with this complaint is that insofar as people do this – they have and apply their own ethics – they do not need an ethics of acquisition; and where they do not and their behaviours are guided by something else, the research has proposed that this is best explained through

understanding acquisition as a practice, characterised by the ideal type.

6.2.4 Unexpected findings

Although akrasia was covered in the literature review, it was not anticipated to form an important part of the research findings and arose because the combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided for an exemplar of 'best interests' in the acquisition context, against which narratives could be analysed. The ability to offer a sociological explanation of akrasia that builds upon the existing empirical body of research is a cross-disciplinary contribution that links philosophy, applied ethics, behavioural science and sociology. Since akrasia was not the focus of the research, this result provides an opportunity to pursue further investigation and greater integration with behavioural science.

6.2.5 Limitations

The research was constrained to the case study detailed in Chapter 3 and, necessarily, by the unrepresentative population involved in Defence acquisition. (As shown in the results and findings, this is largely male and middle-aged in the Defence Industry, and with women and ethnic minorities underrepresented in the MOD; Defence Statistics, 2014.) This was addressed in part through the methodology selected and the use of an ideal type, which – by construction – does not exist in the social world but instead sets up an exemplar of how narratives function, which can then be generalised to different demographic contexts. Nevertheless, in practice this meant that only 9% of survey respondents were female and that the interviewees were exclusively male, so focusing on women's experiences and how they differ (as narrated) from men's could extend the research.

While the data collection exceeded this researcher's expectations and was sufficient to permit detailed analysis, additional survey responses would have made the quantitative case more powerful. In particular, the underrepresented populations could have been deliberately targeted (notably women) to assess whether the prominence of Rank/Position/Role as capital extends across genders. Given the surprisingly widespread use of comments in reply to each

survey question, generating effectively an additional data set, further attention could have been paid to this to design the survey to achieve more detailed notes to support the subsequent narrative analysis. Extra interviews would also have assisted with this, but at the cost of considerable time and the ability to manage still greater narrative data, which was already challenging.

The research was also not longitudinal, except insofar as narratives are created over time and cannot be isolated as temporal instances because their meanings must always be interpreted (Biernacki, 2012). Given that the researcher was at the centre of the case study, which was repeatedly hastened by senior MOD leadership, it was not possible to repeat the quantitative or qualitative data collection over a longer period for comparison. Furthermore, since a specific case study was employed and both the MOD and Defence Industry populations were unrepresentative of wider society (with young people, women and ethnic minorities disproportionately omitted), the results could be challenged as only applying to a narrow context. This may be contested because of the methodology used and because the ideal type can – by design – be generalised. Moreover, 'representation' in Bourdieusian terms is associated with possession of capital and field position, not gender or other identifying characteristics. Nevertheless, further work could be undertaken in another sector to investigate how other populations narrate challenges to existing practice.

This research provides for no recommendations on codes of ethics in acquisition because it concludes that these can have no impact. However, it did not survey in depth the voluminous philosophical literature on ethics, so it was not possible to consider normative objections that could be made; that is, to review the philosophical arguments at length and in still greater sophistication, which would require significant interdisciplinary work. Similarly, while the literature review considered the influence of neuroscience and behavioural science, the research did not explore the implications of the results at the level of brain functioning, which is beyond the scope of this study.

Finally, the literature review on which the research is based is restricted to (almost exclusively) works in English and relies in particular on translations from the original French for Bourdieu's work. This investigation has not considered research in other languages, except insofar as this has already been translated, which is a limitation to the extent that important literature may, therefore, have been missed.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Purpose

The challenge of this research was to consider why people behave as they do in the context of UK Defence acquisition, as well as why they should not act otherwise – the matter of *ethics*. In the hypothetical cases proposed in the introduction, acquisition agents faced a number of incentives to respond unethically, especially if they could deliver improvements in military capability as a result. The default response is that social actors are guided in their conduct by ethics and, therefore, that the acquisition context is no different.

Taking the case of acquisition and the increasingly close relationship between customer and supplier therein, the research aim was to understand how ethics functions in narratives of Defence acquisition – the interrelated stories that people tell one another about what happens across the public/private sector interface. This was addressed by exploring how people talk about the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry, and by considering what this reveals about the role of ethics.

7.2 Methodology

This work began with the proposition that ethics in business functions to legitimise narratives rather than as a normative framework to guide or assess behaviour. The applied ethics context of the acquisition of UK military capabilities was used to identify a case study, in which the MOD is exploring options for collaboration with Industry to address critical skills shortages.

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to thematically analyse the existing research and identify any gaps. This focused initially on normative approaches to ethics, which have been standard in business ethics and ethics more generally, setting out philosophical bases for how people ought to behave with limited empirical support in the form of thought experiments. The second part of the review considered descriptive studies, which emphasise the role of people's cognitive abilities and the influence of social structures in how decisions (ethical or otherwise) are made. Bourdieu's theory of practice was

justified as an appropriate theoretical framework to explore the research questions.

A critical case study was then undertaken in in two stages. In the first, quantitative step, a survey of MOD and Industry personnel was created to explore ethics in acquisition while attempting to minimise social desirability bias. This involved pairs of questions to ask how aspects of the relationship between the MOD and Industry *are* and how they *should* be, reproducing the standard is/ought demarcation of the ethics literature. The second step was to undertake qualitative analysis, both of the comments that had been received as part of the survey and, more substantially, of ten narrative interviews that were conducted on the basis of the survey results. This quantitative and qualitative data was then used to develop an ideal type that captured the primary elements of public/private sector interaction from the case study, together with the associated behaviours.

7.3 Findings

To return to the aim of the research, the overall research question addressed was: *How does ethics function in narratives of Defence acquisition?*

This was examined via two sub-questions:

- How do people involved in Defence acquisition talk about the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry?
- What does this reveal about the role of ethics in narratives of Defence acquisition?

The literature review revealed that normative ethics, although the traditional (philosophical) approach to business ethics, has been undermined by recent empirical work in descriptive ethics. In particular, research in neuroscience and behavioural science has demonstrated that people's cognitive limitations mean that their ethical reasoning abilities are bounded and not as rational as they assume; as a consequence, people tend to use heuristics to help them or else behave in ways that are self-defeating. Furthermore, the sociological literature

argues for greater attention to social structures, notably the power of narratives in shaping beliefs and behaviours.

The quantitative component of the case study indicated that something is preventing the acquisition system from operating as its people otherwise would have it. Specifically, when asked how some aspect of the relationship between the MOD and Industry *is* and then how it *ought* to be, the data showed a movement in people's responses from 'is' to 'ought'.

The qualitative analysis of the narratives then established that this is/ought shift could be explained by acquisition being a practice in the Bourdieusian sense, as detailed in the methodology. This meant that the influence and interaction of field, capital and habitus – Bourdieu's key concepts – on how people behave would incentivise them to use narratives involving normative ethical claims as a means of delegitimising options that threaten their field position and capital accumulation. The disparity between the survey responses and the narratives also suggested that this behaviour is an example of akrasia (acting against one's best interests).

Finally, the ideal type proposed that the general characteristics of the intersection of the public and private sectors would be:

- Using contractual conditions to support an unspoken deontological ethics.
- Employing narratives of duty to exacerbate this tension, which then ends up justifying public sector control as the dominant social actor.
- Using ethical supremacy to scapegoat the private sector for public sector shortcomings.
- Encouraging public sector 'othering' of Industry as part of an illusio that guarantees field position and capital accumulation.
- Paying lip service to codes of ethics and ostensibly permitting challenges to business practices, assuming they will fail.

These characteristics would be associated with several behaviours:

- Appealing to the inevitability of conflict between public and private sectors.
- Privileging public sector way of doing things.
- Emphasising blockers to avoid threats to capital and illusio.
- Discounting the future benefits of collaboration between public and private sectors to favour capital accumulation or preservation now.
- Using ethical narratives to undermine alternatives.

Therefore, answers to the original research sub-questions can be given:

- *How do people involved in Defence acquisition talk about the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry?* This relationship is talked about in adversarial terms, employing a doxa of ethical separation that demarcates an altruistic public sector from profit-motivated private companies. This ethical distinction is reinforced through the characteristics of interaction and the behaviours that were identified in the ideal type above.

- *What does this reveal about the role of ethics in narratives of Defence acquisition?* The results suggest that the role played by ethics is not to make normative judgments of behaviour or to guide the business of acquisition, but instead to help people retain or improve their relative social power by using ethical language to delegitimise possibilities that threaten social capital and field position. This implies that people are effectively adopting a heuristic of 'what will best preserve or improve my field position?'

7.4 Implications

The research has several implications that represent original contributions to knowledge and answer the research question of how ethics functions in narratives of Defence acquisition. Firstly, the research involved an application of Bourdieu's theory of practice to the context of public/private sector integration, which does not appear to have been undertaken previously, and uniquely to Defence acquisition. This extends the utility of the theory, applying its concepts

to ethics in a novel way and confirming the methodological value of this approach.

Secondly, the finding that people consider the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry to be less collaborative than it should be is of interest to acquisition professionals and policy makers in both the public and private sectors, particularly when UK Government intent in the Strategic Defence and Security Review of 2015 has been to encourage greater collaboration. The disparity between 'is' and 'ought' in the data imply that Defence acquisition should be moving towards this, so the argument that the acquisition system should be understood as a Bourdieusian practice is offered as a best explanation for why the UK has achieved limited success in integrating customer and supplier roles to deliver improvements.

Thirdly, the detail of the narrative analysis implies that akrasia can be accounted for in sociological terms that complement the existing behavioural science explanations. That people in a practice desire to retain their capital and field position, and that this is embodied as a disposition to uphold the associated illusio, regardless of what reason dictates, means that they can be incentivised to act against their best interests. The implication is that preserving field position and capital possession can cause a motivated blindness, which is a behavioural limitation that complements both bounded ethicality and hyperbolic discounting. In short, when people can sustain or improve their field positions by acting in particular ways, even if these are actually wrong for them or for their organisations in the longer-term, this will be the akratic behaviour that is inscribed into their habitus.

Fourthly, this link to akrasia implies that it is misguided to seek a normative ethics of acquisition because this has no connection to why people behave as they do. That acquisition should be understood as a practice that involves akratic actions does not mean that people lack individual agency, but it does indicate that they are required to adjust to symbolic power if they wish to be successful in their organisations. The research suggests that even if it were possible to offer a normative code of ethics, which the literature review

demonstrated is highly unlikely, when this aim is set against the incentives involved in a practice and of hyperbolic discounting, there is no sense in which the code would result in people behaving other than as they already do. Furthermore, symbolic violence means that the structure of the field will have been naturalised as people progress within in, so they will not be inclined by their habitus to challenge how things are done if or when they themselves reach positions of influence.

Finally, the research developed a novel methodology that established a correspondence of Bourdieu's methodological stages to the domains of critical realism. Although Bourdieu has been characterised as a critical realist before (Vandenberghe, 1999), the re-describing of his approach in critical realist terms offers an opportunity for subsequent research to work through the steps in an organised manner. This increases the accessibility of Bourdieu to business ethics research, as well as enhancing both the repeatability of the research and the ability of other researchers to falsify it.

Therefore, the research question can be answered. The question was: *How does ethics function in narratives of Defence acquisition?* The research suggests that:

> The actual function of ethics in acquisition is within narratives that include normative ethical statements as a means of delegitimising options that threaten people's field positions and capital accumulation.

Ethics thus serves as part of a rhetorical strategy to maintain dominance over illusio and to shape the doxa within a field. On this view, a code of ethics has no utility and hence cannot be recommended. Moreover, this is not just because symbolic power will overrule the code, but also because advocating one is to deflect attention from the influence of this power by shifting it to a set of norms that ostensibly stand outside or above the organisation(s).

7.5 Gaps

The philosophical literature on ethics is vast, spanning thousands of years, and it is entirely feasible that normative theories will eventually come to account for

empirical criticisms, including social and behavioural factors. Therefore, it is not possible to advocate definitely that ethics should be discarded in favour of greater attention to behavioural science. In particular, people have plural identities and do not enter a specific context without bringing elements of these with them, such as ethical codes that may be related to religion, philosophy or upbringing. While these may themselves be subjected to analysis via the theory of practice, it is unclear how a sociological investigation could wholly detach a business practice from plural identities to ascertain the extent of influence.

Given the methodology employed, the ideal type developed in this research can be generalised by analogy from the acquisition context and the specific case study therein, thereby serving as an exemplar for further research. However, it is not clear whether the elements of this type extend into public and private sector organisations or are only relevant at the interface. These organisations are diverse internally and it is not the intention of the research that the ideal type or the associated behaviours should be taken to apply across them without local variation, especially relative to the value and types of capital therein. This is consistent with the sociological use of an ideal type. Given the importance associated with rank or grade as symbolic capital for the MOD, it would be worthwhile to identify if this persists in some form for people who move into the Defence Industry and if it has an equivalent in other public sector acquisition functions.

Although this research has concluded that a code of ethics for acquisition is inappropriate, this does not imply a positive recommendation that the acquisition system should exclude such a code from consideration if there are benefits to adopting one that are determined to outweigh the criticism that such a code will have little or no effect. In this event, however, this research should enable attention to be focused on symbolic power, rather than on norms.

7.6 Recommendations for further research

This research applied Bourdieu's theory of practice but it was not longitudinal, except to the extent that people are constantly recreating their narratives. Therefore, additional research could be undertaken to repeat the narrative

analysis over a set interval, attempting to thereby understand how the narratives develop with time, particularly insofar as the case study matures or is cancelled. It would be particularly interesting and useful to test how narratives adjust if senior MOD and Industry stakeholders decide to commit to a more collaborative approach, or else to analyse the discussion of the commitment to collaboration on critical skills if this ultimately fails.

Further research could challenge the conclusion that there is no need for an ethics of acquisition by exploring the extent to which Integrative Social Contracts Theory can be adjusted to incorporate Bourdieusian practice as constitutive of micronorms, preserving the possibility of hypernorms (potentially via an overlapping consensus that includes both public and private sectors). The aim of such research could be to argue that practice is important but is delimited by hypernorms, although this would still imply that ethics specific to a context such as acquisition would be overtaken or replaced by macro-level (societal) norms.

The suggestion that Bourdieu's theory of practice provides a sociological explanation of akrasia could be pursued in greater depth by leveraging the existing research on hyperbolic discounting in understanding self-defeating behaviour, building upon it by seeking to undertake narrative analysis focused specifically on akrasia. The challenge would be to identify – or else design sociological research that is able to posit – another example of 'best interest' that people act against via practice.

Finally, these conclusions, in the form of the ideal type set out, should not be taken to represent an enduring social reality. Indeed, the case studied relied upon in this research requires an assumption either that the ideal type identified here does not exist or that it can serve as a motivation to transform social reality (and, thereby, the ideal type). Specifically, by setting out an explanation that captures the current structure and the lived experience of the Defence acquisition field for the people surveyed, including accounting for why people in power do not use their agency to change it, the research has constructed a social reality that needs to be challenged.

That is, a critical realist could use this characterisation of social reality to challenge people within the case study context: 'You say you want to work collaboratively, but this is the social reality'. Both those people in dominant positions and those who are dominated may then react strongly to this 'fixed' reality by making plans to change it. If this was successful, then the ideal type would not hold any more: the research results would have been falsified, but it would have contributed to the change to make this so. For the likes of Bourdieu (1995) or Bhaskar (1998), this should be the aim of sociology.

The overall contribution to knowledge is then that, given that the social world of this case study can be accounted for by overlaying the theory of practice and then developing, through abduction/retroduction, an ideal type, this exemplar would be likely to function as an explanation in any other context in which similar circumstances exist. To test the fecundity of the ideal type, the research methodology could be employed in another public sector procurement context, such as a health service; within the private sector, whether a defence company or not; or within another nation's acquisition system. It should also be repeated in a more gender-representative context to explore whether women's experiences in the actual are explained in the same way as men.

7.7 Policy recommendations

Given the results of the research and the conclusions that have been reached, several policy recommendations can be made for the case study context and potentially beyond it. Firstly, the case study intent to share people across organisational boundaries should be enacted because this could help create capital and habitus that span the sectors, similar to what has been achieved in Singapore in the context of regularly moving people between Defence and Industry roles there (Karniol, 2006). This approach would potentially reduce the influence of the doxa embodied in the ideal type and thus adjust behaviours, whether through secondments or a more structured process. However, it is likely that a forcing function would be required, driven by senior stakeholders, to overcome the initial dominance of the doxa, such as by rewarding those who develop cross-border capital. Much as the development of a European identity

has been supported over time by student exchanges under the ERASMUS programme (Bennhold, 2005), a new doxa could not be generated in the short-term.

Secondly, the power of adversarial narratives could be reduced through increasing transparency on the part of both MOD and the Defence Industry, such as by sharing more of their future plans. Akin to recent policy intent in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015), this would provide the opportunity to set a combined demand signal for skills, reducing the incentive to compete for people through greater certainty of business and coherence in the associated resource requirements. However, the primary challenge to achieving this would be a willingness to commit to basing commercial decisions on the shared information.

Finally, any drive to adopt a code of ethics for Defence acquisition should be resisted in favour of work to map power structures within the acquisition field. In particular, unethical behaviour is more likely to be countered by incentives to behave differently than by prohibitions on specific forms of conduct, which are invariably already contained in corporate codes of ethics. Therefore, the focus of Defence acquisition should be on what people are attempting to support or delegitimise when they narrate their experiences in terms of ethics, not on providing them with ethical frameworks to justify their decisions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Research survey

	Question	Response	Comments
1	What sector do you work in?	- Royal Navy - Army - Royal Air Force - Civil Service - UK Defence Industry - Company?	
2	What is your gender?	- Male - Female - Transgender	
3	What is your rank/position?	- OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager - OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor - OR6-OF2/CS Bands E-C/Staff - OR1-5/Other	
4	What is your highest level of education obtained?	- Secondary School - Trade Certificate - Degree - Masters - PhD - Other (Please comment)	
5	What is your age?	19 or under 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70+	
6	To what extent do you believe the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?	- Fully - Mainly - Partially - Not at all - No opinion	
7	To what extent do you believe the MOD *should* trust the UK Defence Industry?	- Fully - Mainly - Partially - Not at all - No opinion	
8	To what extent do you believe the UK Defence Industry trusts the MOD?	- Fully - Mainly - Partially - Not at all - No opinion	

9	To what extent do you believe the UK Defence Industry *should* trust the MOD?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	
10	To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are dependent on one another?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	
11	To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry *should* be dependent on one another?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	
12	What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?	• 100-75% • 74-50% • 49-25% • 24-0% • No opinion	
13	What proportion of people do you believe *should* be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?	• 100-75% • 74-50% • 49-25% • 24-0% • No opinion	
14	What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?	• 100-75% • 74-50% • 49-25% • 24-0% • No opinion	
15	What proportion of people do you believe *should* be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?	• 100-75% • 74-50% • 49-25% • 24-0% • No opinion	
16	To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry have common values?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	
17	To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry *should* have common values?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	
18	To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence system is managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	

19	To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence system *should* be managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?	• Fully • Mainly • Partially • Not at all • No opinion	
20	Please add any other comments that you would like to make.		

Table A-1: Stage 1 data gathering - survey questions

Appendix B – Research ethics confirmation

B.1 Ministry of Defence JSP 536 Research Ethics approval

From: People-TESRR-Trg Cap AHd (Woods, Tim Capt)
Sent: 01 July 2015 08:22
To: People-CDP PgM EA (Newall, Paul Lt Cdr)
Subject: RE: Line Manager permission to conduct research

Paul,

I have reviewed your proposal and am content that this does not require MODREC scrutiny iaw JSP 536.

as ever
Tim W
Capt Tim Woods RN | AHd Capability, TESRR | 06.N.04 MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB | +44 (0)20 7218 6018 | military: 9621 86018

B.2 Cranfield University Research Ethics System approval

Reference: CURES/361/2015

Title: Social Contracting for the Defence Acquisition Ecosystem

Your proposed research activity has been reviewed by CURES and you can now proceed with the research activities you have sought approval for.

Please remember that CURES occasionally conducts audits of projects. We may therefore contact you during or following execution of your fieldwork. Guidance on good practice is available on the research ethics intranet pages.

If you have any queries, please contact cures-support@cranfield.ac.uk We wish you every success with your project.

Regards

CURES Team

Appendix C – Interview consent form

Researcher	Paul Newall 6M MOD Main Building London SW1A 2HB Email: paul.newall323@mod.uk Tel: 07766 577851
Research aim	To examine the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry in Defence acquisition.
Interviewee contribution	You will be invited to tell the story of how you perceive the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry. You may be asked to expand on some of your answers.
Information gathering	Other interviews will be conducted and the results will be analysed by the researcher.
Information recording	If you consent, the interview will be recorded and transcribed for use in analysis. Notes will also be taken. You will be able to review these if you wish.
Confidentiality of information	Your responses in the interview will be made anonymous such that there will be no way for anyone to connect you with the content. Only the researcher will know your identity.
Information storage and disposal	The recording and transcript files will be stored in a password-protected file. The anonymised transcript may be submitted to Cranfield University as part of the marking process. The recording, along with hard and soft copies of the transcript, will be destroyed after Cranfield University's data requirements have been satisfied.

Please complete the following details:

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information regarding my participation in this research. I also I confirm that I consent to participate and that my organisation does not constrain or limit my participation in any way.

Name (Block Capitals):

Signature:

Date

Appendix D – Survey results and analysis

D.1 Overview of results

As referred to in the results and findings, this appendix contains the data obtained from the research survey. To reiterate, the data were analysed to determine the relationships (if any) between variables using SPSS software, treating each of the questions in the survey as a variable and each of the identifying characteristics (Sector/Service, Rank/Position/Role, Education Level, Age and Gender) as supplementary variables. Given the survey responses obtained (n=124) and as a consequence of using snowballing rather than stratified sampling, some supplementary variables – age and gender – did not achieve sufficient diversity to make analysis meaningful (that is, the majority of respondents were male and aged 40-59, reflecting the trend in Defence as a whole); therefore, they were not subjected to the additional correspondence analysis.

Accepting this caveat, for each variable and supplementary variable pair, the results display the crosstabulation followed by the correspondence analysis. Both follow the design of the survey, in which questions were based on the standard is/ought demarcation in ethics: each request of the respondents was for their opinions on how an aspect of the relationship between the Ministry of Defence and the UK Defence Industry currently *is* and how it should be (*ought*). The data thus show how the opinions 'move' from is to ought as people describe what should be straightforward assessments of how things are, followed by a normative opinion, thereby aiming to reduce social desirability bias. The subsequent correspondence analysis is displayed via symmetrical normalization to standardize and allow comparison between the variables.

D.2 Survey results

D.2.1 MOD trust of the Defence Industry

The first set of results assesses the extent to which the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry against each supplementary variable. Assuming that 'fully' and 'mainly' are a proxy for trust in the responses, the data show a shift from 'is' to 'ought' (33% to 71% here, which is consistent across the other supplementary variables in the subsequent tables):

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	2	6	17	3	0	28 (26%)
	Army	0	8	14	0	0	22 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	0	9	13	0	0	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	0	9	11	1	1	22 (20%)
	Defence Industry	0	2	13	0	0	15 (14%)
Total		2	34	68	4	1	109

Table D-1: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against MOD trust of Industry (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD should trust the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	6	14	7	1	0	28 (26%)
	Army	1	12	7	1	0	21 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	1	15	6	0	0	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	2	14	5	0	1	22 (20%)
	Defence Industry	4	8	3	0	0	15 (14%)
Total		14	63	28	2	1	108

Table D-2: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against MOD trust of Industry (ought)

Of note, the questions – in common with the others – asked about belief, so it was appropriate to ask Industry personnel about what the MOD should do (and vice versa in the converse questions that follow). Notwithstanding the limited data set (n=124) and the low proportion of Industry respondents (n=15), the movement from 'is' to 'ought' is consistent across MOD and Industry here.

As detailed in the methodology, in utilising Bourdieu's theory of practice it is not enough merely to tabulate the data. Establishing the relationship, if any, between positions within the field and the dispositions (habitus) of the people occupying them is achieved through correspondence analysis (Bourdieu, 1996b). This then serves as a geometric representation of the interrelationships between variables, or the 'distances' between row and column cells in the crosstabulations (Lebaron, 2009). Owing to the number of variables, it was not possible to display clearly a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). In particular, MCA is complicated by the research design and intent to map movement between 'is' and 'ought' in ethics, so standard correspondence analysis was used.

Figure 5-1 thus graphically displays the first pairing of 'is' and ought' via SPSS outputs; specifically, how MOD trust of Industry is interrelated with Sector/Service through proximity two dimensions:
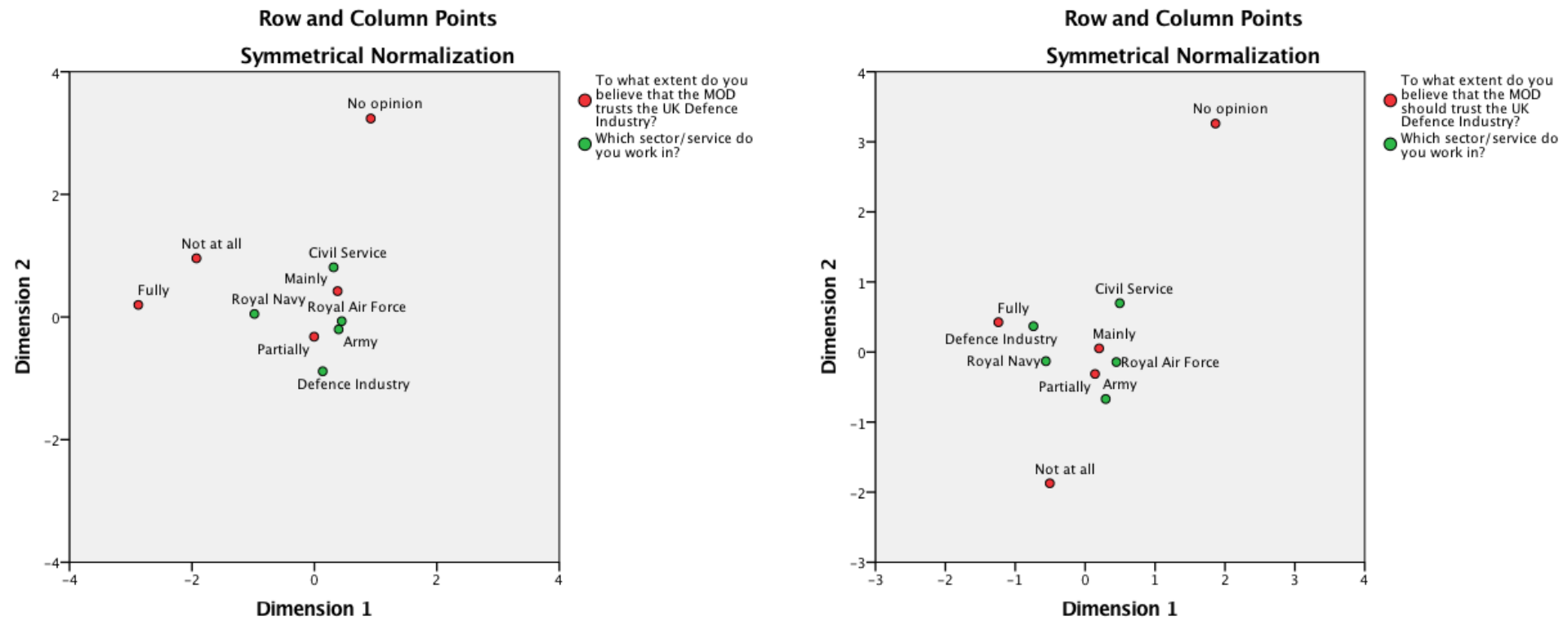
Figure D-1: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and MOD trust of Industry (is/ought)

The correspondence analyses here are skewed by the single 'no opinion' response, but suggest the same shift or 'movement' displayed in the crosstabulations. However, the additional information is a closer 'ought' association of the Royal Navy and Defence Industry with 'fully'.

A similar shift (33% to 71%) is displayed in the association of trust with rank/position/role:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	1	14	0	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	0	18	28	2	1	49 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	2	15	21	2	0	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	0	5	0	0	5 (4%)
Total		2	34	68	4	1	109

Table D-3: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against MOD trust of Industry (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD should trust the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	2	10	3	0	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	6	27	14	1	1	49 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	5	23	10	1	0	39 (36%)
	OR1-5/Other	1	3	1	0	0	5 (5%)
Total		14	63	28	2	1	108

Table D-4: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against MOD trust of Industry (ought)

Here the data are skewed towards more senior ranks, as could be anticipated given the level of personnel involved in acquisition. Indeed, given that snowballing was employed to obtain more results, this skewing helped to illuminate the structure of the acquisition field (as those involved in it perceive it). The correspondence analysis also displays a shift from 'is' to 'ought' and an equidistant clustering around 'fully'/'mainly' for the latter:
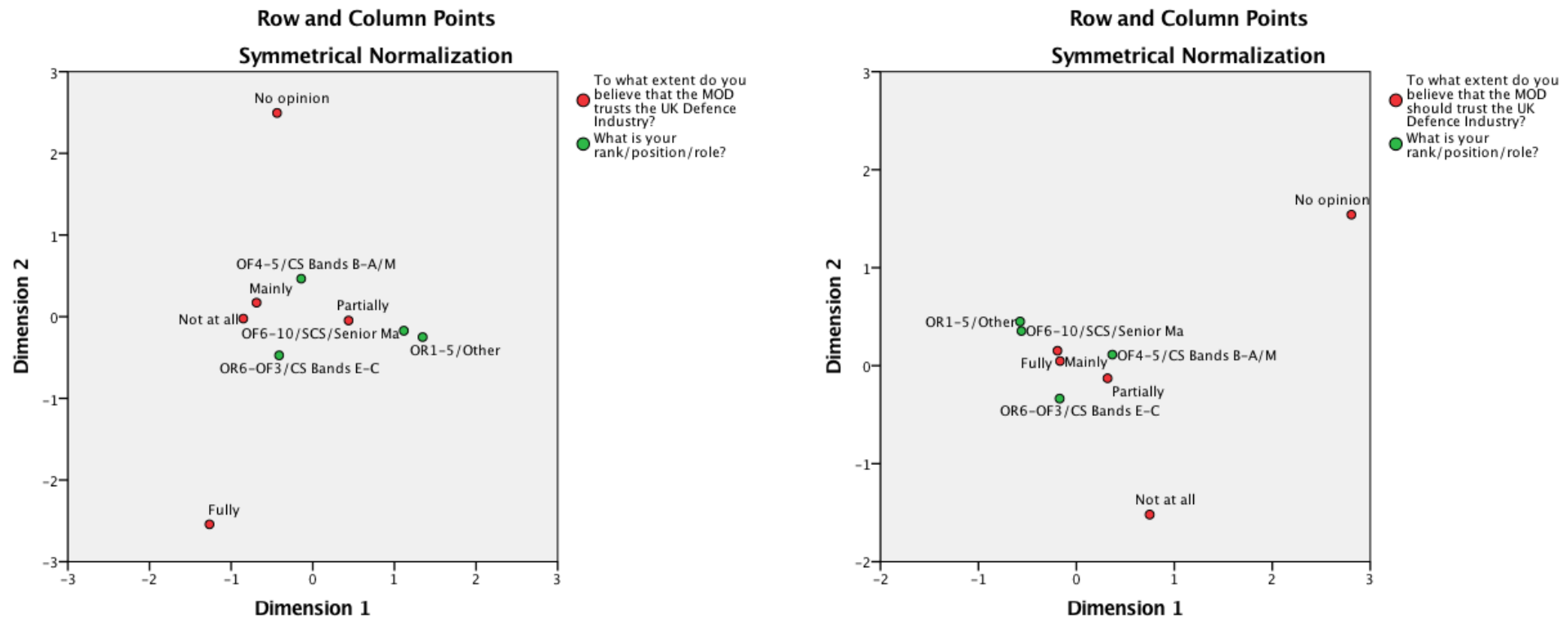
Figure D-2: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and MOD trust of Industry (is/ought)

The shift (again 33% to 71%) is repeated for the same question with regard to education level:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	1	1	2	0	0	4 (3%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	1	1	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	0	5	7	0	0	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	1	5	15	0	0	21 (19%)
	Masters	0	21	38	3	1	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	1	4	0	0	5 (5%)
	Other	0	1	1	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		2	34	68	4	1	109

Table D-5: Crosstabulation of Education Level against MOD trust of Industry (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD should trust the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	3	1	0	0	4 (3%)
	Trade certificate	0	2	0	0	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	2	7	2	0	0	11 (10%)
	Undergraduate degree	5	10	5	1	0	21 (19%)
	Masters	7	38	16	1	1	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	3	2	0	0	5 (5%)
	Other	0	0	2	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		14	63	28	2	1	108

Table D-6: Crosstabulation of Education Level against MOD trust of Industry (ought)

In this instance, the survey population is heavily weighted to Undergraduate degree and Masters level (77% of respondents), which is suggestive of the professionalisation of the acquisition field. However, the correspondence analysis displays no clear relationships, which implies that education level is less important as a form of capital:
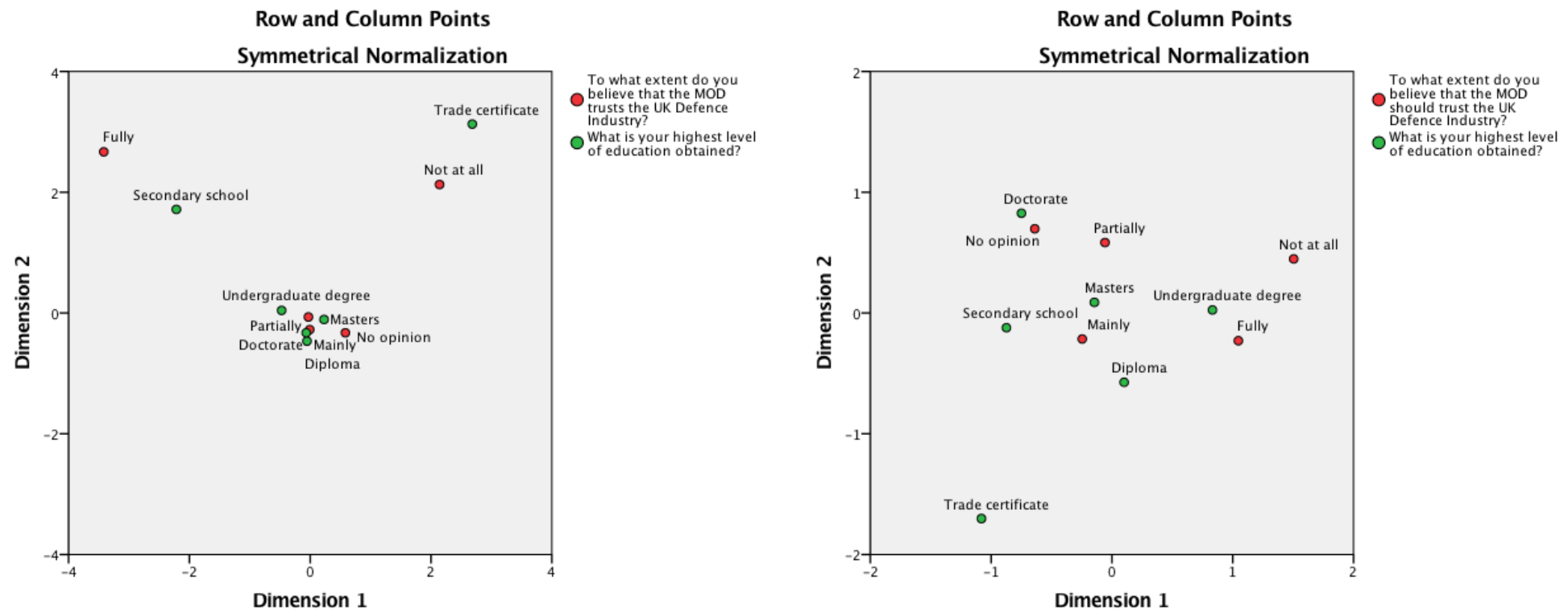
Figure D-3: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and MOD trust of Industry (is/ought)

The shift (33% to 71%) is shown again with respect to gender and age, but the representation of these supplementary variables is that of an overwhelming male and middle-aged (40-59) group with too few data points outside this range for correspondence analysis to be able to reveal anything:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	2	30	63	4	0	99 (91%)
	Woman	0	4	5	0	1	10 (9%)
Total		2	34	68	4	1	109

Table D-7: Crosstabulation of Gender against MOD trust of Industry (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD should trust the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	14	59	24	2	0	99 (91%)
	Woman	0	4	4	0	1	9 (9%)
Total		14	63	28	2	1	108

Table D-8: Crosstabulation of Gender against MOD trust of Industry (ought)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD trusts the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	1	2	0	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	1	4	8	0	0	13 (12%)
	40-49	1	16	29	3	0	49 (45%)
	50-59	0	13	27	1	1	42 (39%)
	60-69	0	0	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		2	34	67	4	1	108

Table D-9: Crosstabulation of Age against MOD trust of Industry (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD should trust the UK Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	3	0	0	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	10	2	0	0	12 (11%)
	40-49	6	28	13	2	0	49 (46%)
	50-59	8	20	13	0	1	42 (39%)
	60-69	0	1	0	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		14	62	28	2	1	107

Table D-10: Crosstabulation of Age against MOD trust of Industry (ought)

D.2.2 Defence Industry trust of the MOD

This question is the inverse of the previous one; therefore, since (again) it sought to discover the perceptions of the respondents rather than a true representation, it was appropriate to ask it of both Industry and MOD personnel. When crosstabulated with Sector/Service, this time the shift from 'is' to 'ought' was 27% to 78%:

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry trusts the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	1	6	18	2	1	28 (26%)
	Army	1	4	16	1	0	22 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	0	9	12	1	0	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	0	6	11	4	1	22 (20%)
	Defence Industry	0	4	10	1	0	15 (14%)
Total		2	29	67	9	2	109

Table D-11: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Industry trust of MOD (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry should trust the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	7	13	5	2	1	28 (26%)
	Army	4	12	6	0	0	22 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	2	17	3	0	0	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	6	11	3	1	1	22 (20%)
	Defence Industry	3	10	2	0	0	15 (14%)
Total		22	63	19	3	2	109

Table D-12: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Industry trust of MOD (ought)

In the correspondence analysis, it is apparent that this shift is represented graphically in the movement from 'partially' to 'fully' by the Royal Navy and Civil Service, but it is also interesting that the Royal Air Force and Defence Industry remain closer to 'mainly' and the Army to 'partially':
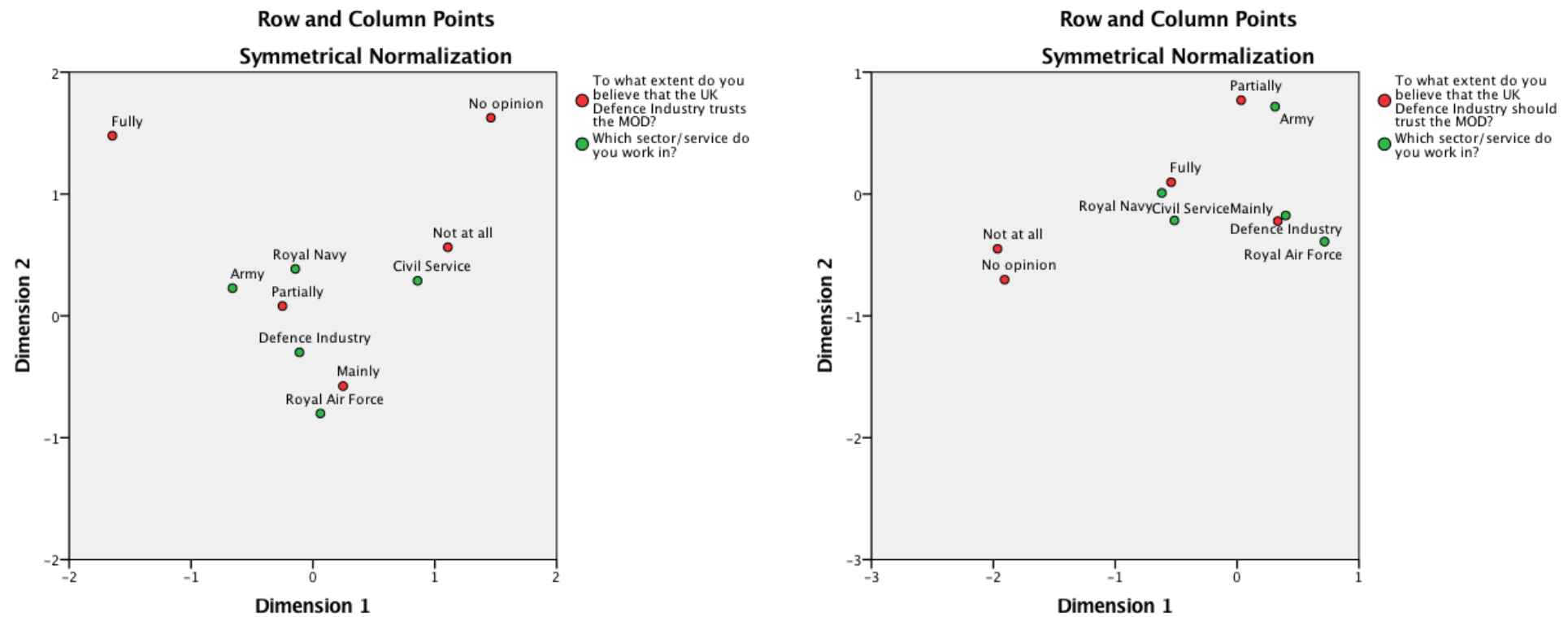
Figure D-4: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and Industry trust of MOD (is/ought)

This suggests that the is/ought shift is greater in the maritime context, while the Royal Air Force and Defence Industry are already familiar with some (but not full) interaction from existing availability contracts where enterprise approaches have been pursued more (Purchase *et al.*, 2011) and the Army is less connected because of an assumption that its functions are less amenable to outsourcing. ("You cannot surge trust." – Army response to the potential implementation of the Whole Force Concept of Defence Reform; field diary, 22 September 2015.)

An identical shift is present in the crosstabulation data for Rank/Position/Role:

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry trusts the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	1	14	0	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	0	14	29	4	2	49 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	2	13	21	4	0	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	1	3	1	0	5 (4%)
Total		2	29	67	9	2	109

Table D-13: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Industry trust of MOD (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry should trust the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	4	9	2	0	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	9	26	10	2	2	49 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	7	25	7	1	0	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	2	3	0	0	0	5 (4%)
Total		22	63	19	3	2	109

Table D-14: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Industry trust of MOD (ought)

The correspondence analysis data are less clear, although 'fully' is again closer to the centre and hence there is movement towards it (and towards 'mainly'):

254
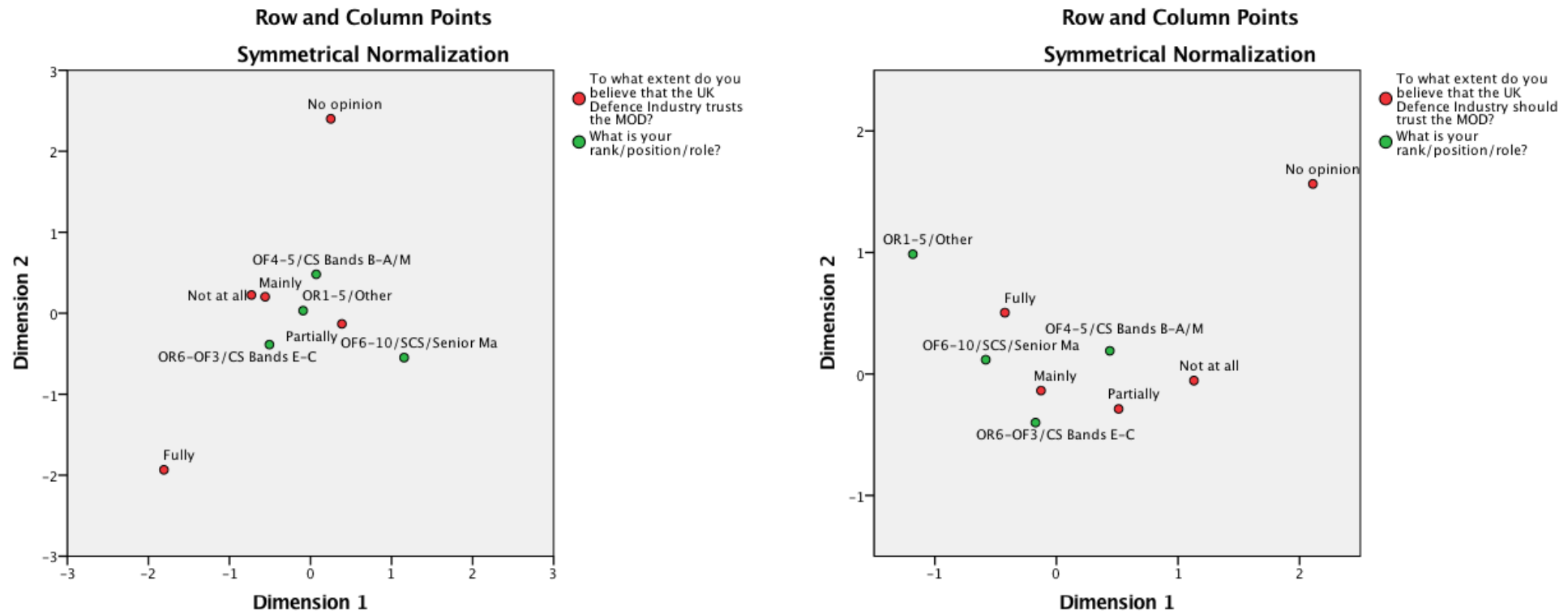
Figure D-5: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and Industry trust of MOD (is/ought)

The is/ought shift is repeated for Education Level:

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry trusts the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	0	3	1	0	4 (3%)
	Trade certificate	0	1	0	1	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	1	4	6	1	0	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	1	8	11	1	0	21 (19%)
	Masters	0	14	42	5	2	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	1	4	0	0	5 (5%)
	Other	0	1	1	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		2	29	67	9	2	109

Table D-15: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Industry trust of MOD (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry should trust the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	2	2	0	0	0	4 (3%)
	Trade certificate	0	2	0	0	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	3	6	2	1	0	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	5	13	2	1	0	21 (19%)
	Masters	12	37	11	1	2	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	3	2	0	0	5 (5%)
	Other	0	0	2	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		22	63	19	3	2	109

Table D-16: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Industry trust of MOD (ought)

The associated correspondence analysis again shows the movement of 'fully' and (to a lesser extent) 'mainly':
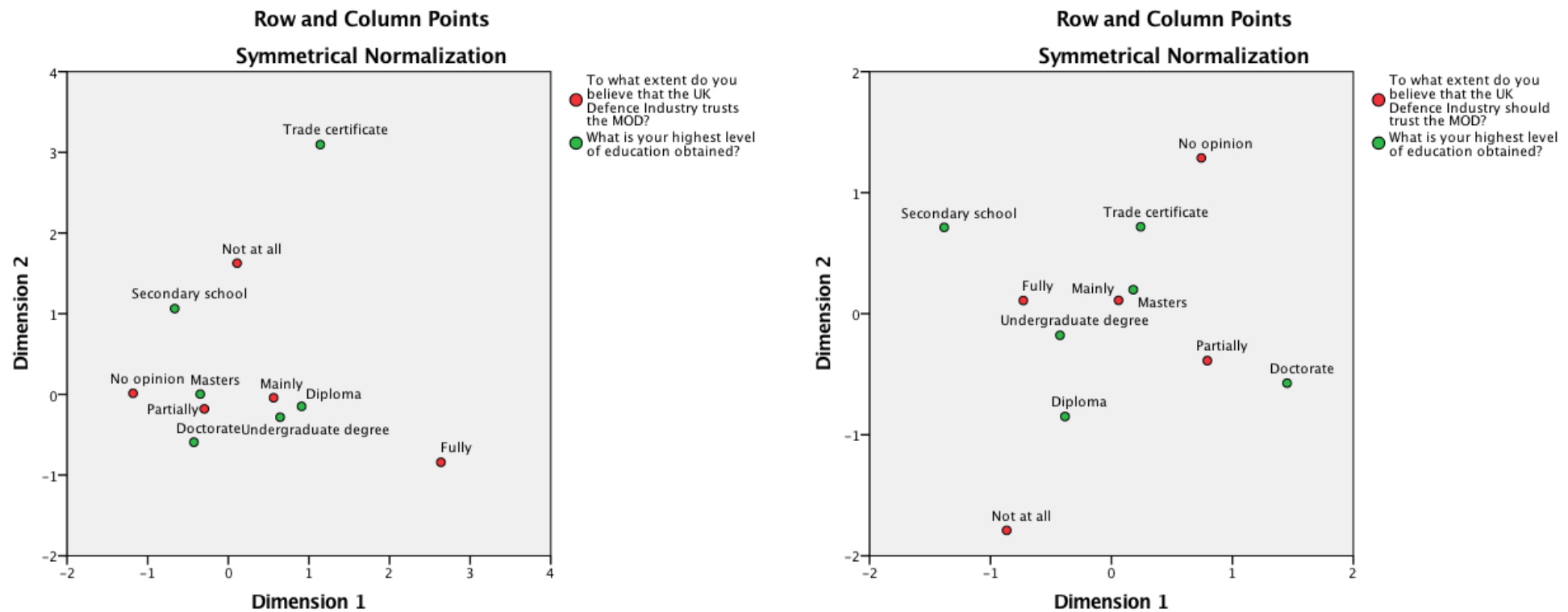
Figure D-6: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and Industry trust of MOD

As with the previous question, Education Level appears to be less influential than Rank/Position/Role and Sector/Service, with the latter most dominant.

Finally, the data for Gender and Age continue the is/ought shift:

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry trusts the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	2	28	60	8	1	99 (91%)
	Woman	0	1	7	1	1	10 (9%)
Total		2	29	67	9	2	109

Table D-17: Crosstabulation of Gender against Industry trust of MOD (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry should trust the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	22	59	14	3	1	99 (91%)
	Woman	0	4	5	0	1	10 (9%)
Total		22	63	19	3	2	109

Table D-18: Crosstabulation of Gender against Industry trust of MOD (ought)

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry trusts the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	0	1	2	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	1	2	9	1	0	13 (12%)
	40-49	1	15	31	1	1	49 (45%)
	50-59	0	12	24	5	1	42 (39%)
	60-69	0	0	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		2	29	66	9	2	108

Table D-19: Crosstabulation of Age against Industry trust of MOD (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the UK Defence Industry should trust the MOD?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	2	0	1	0	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	1	10	2	0	0	13 (12%)
	40-49	8	28	11	1	1	49 (45%)
	50-59	11	23	5	2	1	42 (39%)
	60-69	0	1	0	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		22	62	19	3	2	108

Table D-20: Crosstabulation of Age against Industry trust of MOD (ought)

D.2.3 MOD and Industry mutual dependence

The next pair of questions concerned the interdependence of the MOD and Defence Industry, seeking to understand how close the relationship between them was perceived to be from a more practical or business perspective rather than in terms of mutual trust. Looking first at Sector/Service, the is/ought shift is reversed (82% to 59%) and moves from 'fully'/'mainly' to 'mainly'/'partially', with 'not at all' responses increasing (albeit only from zero to 3):

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are dependent on one another?			
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	15	8	4	27 (24%)
	Army	5	13	4	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	5	11	6	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	7	10	4	21 (20%)
	Defence Industry	9	5	1	15 (14%)
Total		41	47	19	107

Table D-21: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Mutual Dependence (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should be dependent on one another?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	8	11	9	0	28 (26%)
	Army	3	11	8	0	22 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	4	9	8	1	22 (20%)
	Civil Service	4	3	12	2	21 (20%)
	Defence Industry	7	4	4	0	15 (14%)
Total		26	38	41	3	108

Table D-22: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Mutual Dependence (ought)

The correspondence analysis of this data reflects this, but only the closeness of the Defence Industry with 'fully' (for 'is' and 'ought') is made apparent:
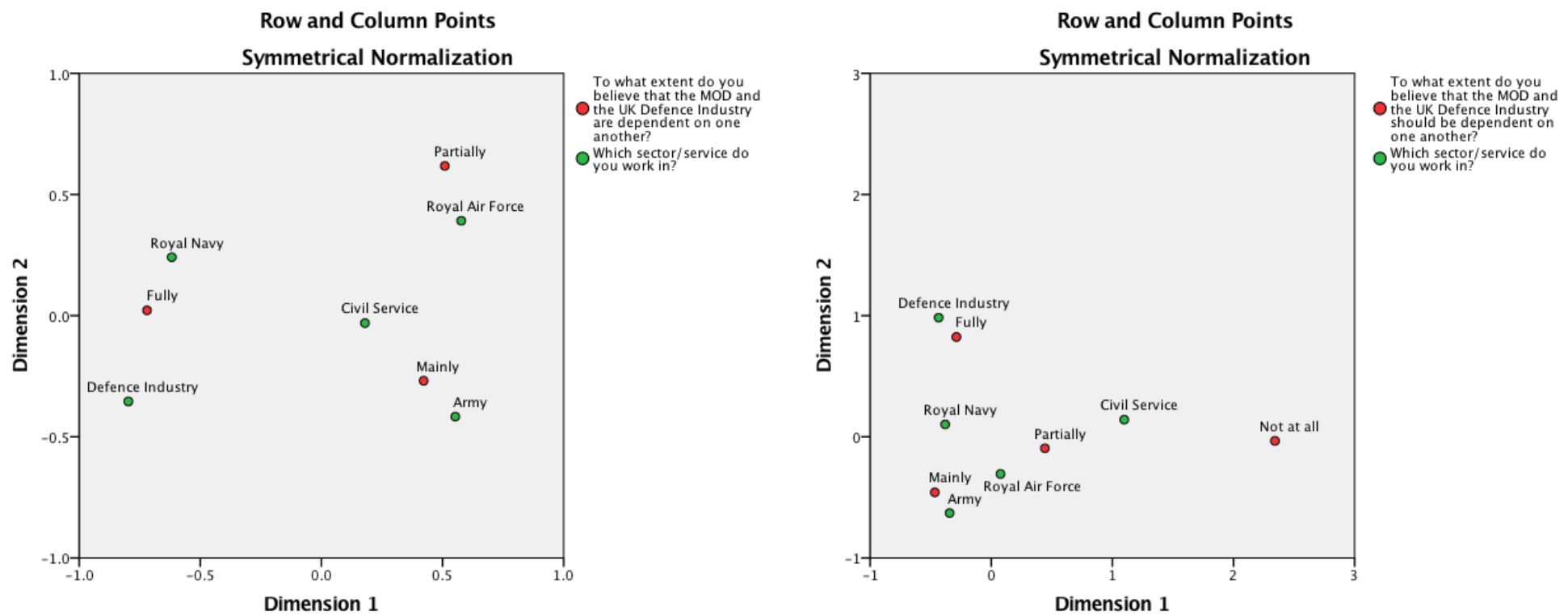
Figure D-7: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and Mutual Dependence (is/ought)

The same shift is seen in the crosstabulation data for Rank/Position/Role:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are dependent on one another?			
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	3	8	4	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	22	19	7	48 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	14	18	7	39 (36%)
	OR1-5/Other	2	2	1	5 (5%)
Total		41	47	19	107

Table D-23: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Mutual Dependence (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should be dependent on one another?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	3	6	6	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	12	19	16	1	48 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	9	12	17	2	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	2	1	2	0	5 (4%)
Total		26	38	41	3	108

Table D-24: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Mutual Dependence (ought)

The correspondence analysis also displays the shift:
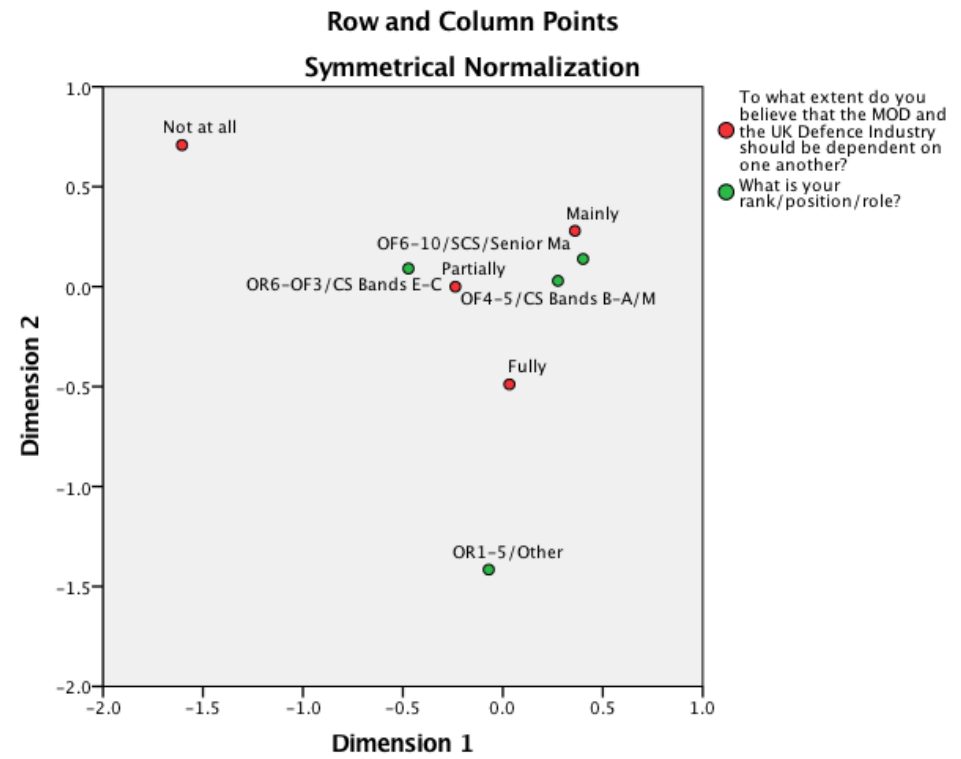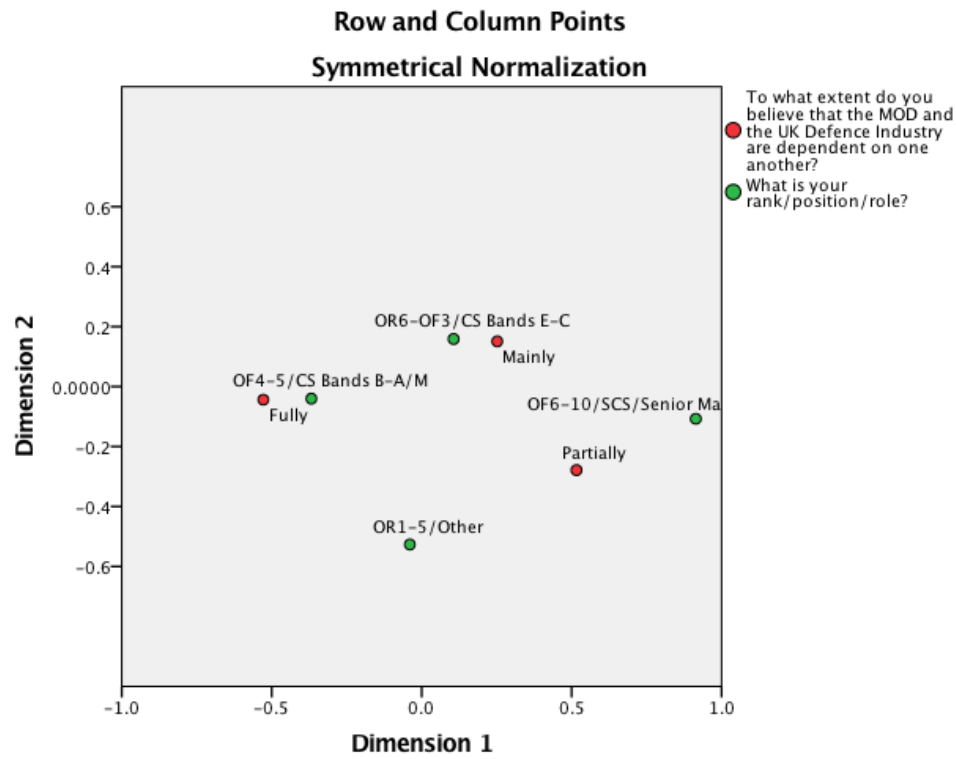
Figure D-8: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and Mutual Dependence (is/ought)

There is limited movement to suggest any interpretation of the data, but the shift continues with respect to Education Level:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are dependent on one another?			
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	1	2	1	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	1	1	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	5	5	2	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	13	7	1	21 (20%)
	Masters	19	28	15	62 (57%)
	Doctorate	1	3	0	4 (4%)
	Other	1	1	0	2 (2%)
Total		41	47	19	107

Table D-25: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Mutual Dependence (is)

261

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should be dependent on one another?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	1	1	2	0	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	1	0	1	2 (2%)
	Diploma	4	4	4	0	12 (10%)
	Undergraduate degree	6	8	7	0	21 (20%)
	Masters	14	22	26	1	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	1	2	1	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	0	1	1	2 (2%)
Total		26	38	41	3	108

Table D-26: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Mutual Dependence (ought)

In this instance, the single case (Trade Certificate) can treated as an outlier that skews the picture, which otherwise displays the same shift:
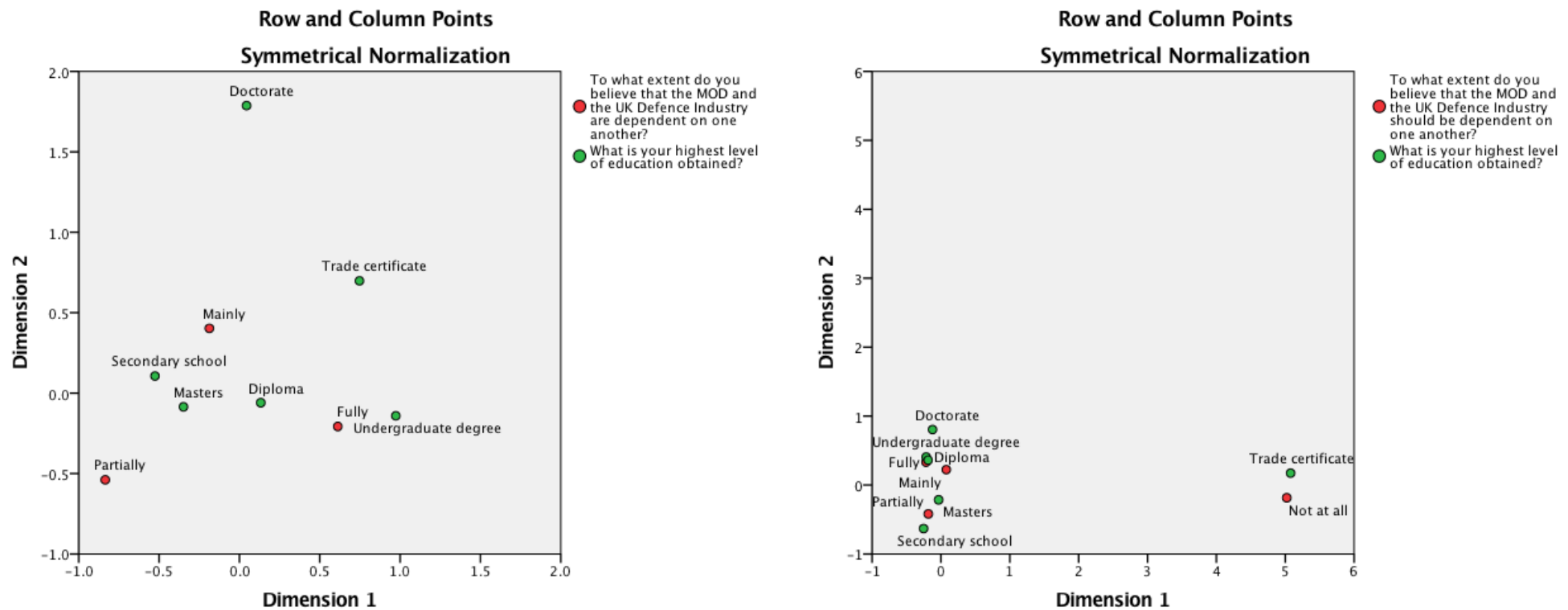
Figure D-9: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and Mutual Dependence (is/ought)

Finally, the crosstabulation data for Gender and Age reproduce the result:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are dependent on one another?			
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	37	43	17	97 (91%)
	Woman	4	4	2	10 (9%)
Total		41	47	19	107

Table D-27: Crosstabulation of Gender against Mutual Dependence (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should be dependent on one another?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	25	36	34	3	98 (91%)
	Woman	1	2	7	0	10 (9%)
Total		26	38	41	3	108

Table D-28: Crosstabulation of Gender and Mutual Dependence (ought)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry are dependent on one another?			
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	1	2	3 (3%)
	30-39	5	7	1	13 (12%)
	40-49	17	23	8	48 (45%)
	50-59	18	15	8	41 (39%)
	60-69	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		41	46	19	106

Table D-29: Crosstabulation of Age against Mutual Dependence (is)

| | | To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should be dependent on one another? | | | | |
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	1	2	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	7	6	0	13 (12%)
	40-49	14	15	20	0	49 (45%)
	50-59	11	14	13	3	41 (39%)
	60-69	1	0	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		26	37	41	3	107

Table D-30: Crosstabulation of Age against Mutual Dependence (ought)

D.2.4 Movement of people from MOD to Industry

Having explored perceptions of trust and interdependence, the next question focused specifically on the movement of people between public and private sectors with respect to Defence, seeking to use this as an indirect proxy for understanding the extent to which respondents would countenance integration. The expectation was that this would reveal an acceptance of movement from the MOD to the Defence Industry, but that this would be sharply distinguished from a belief that little or no movement should occur in the opposite direction. The crosstabulation data for Sector/Service bear out the first part, with the only change between 'is' and 'ought' being one data point:

| | | What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry? | | | | | |
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	0	8	13	5	2	27 (24%)
	Army	0	5	4	10	3	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	0	6	5	8	3	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	1	3	5	7	5	21 (20%)
	Defence Industry	0	1	7	5	1	14 (14%)
Total		1	23	34	35	14	107

Table D-31: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Movement from MOD to Industry (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	1	8	10	7	2	27 (24%)
	Army	1	3	5	9	4	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	0	6	3	9	4	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	0	1	7	7	6	21 (20%)
	Defence Industry	0	4	8	3	0	15 (14%)
Total		2	22	33	35	16	108

Table D-32: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Movement from MOD to Industry (ought)

Note, however, that when combined with the correspondence analysis this reveals that the results are not identical and in fact there is movement across the Sectors/Services. In particular, the Civil Service data show a shift from 'is' (19% either '100%-75%' or '74%-50%') to 'ought' (5%), although the number of data points is low (n=21). The correspondence analysis also shows the position change of '100%-75%':
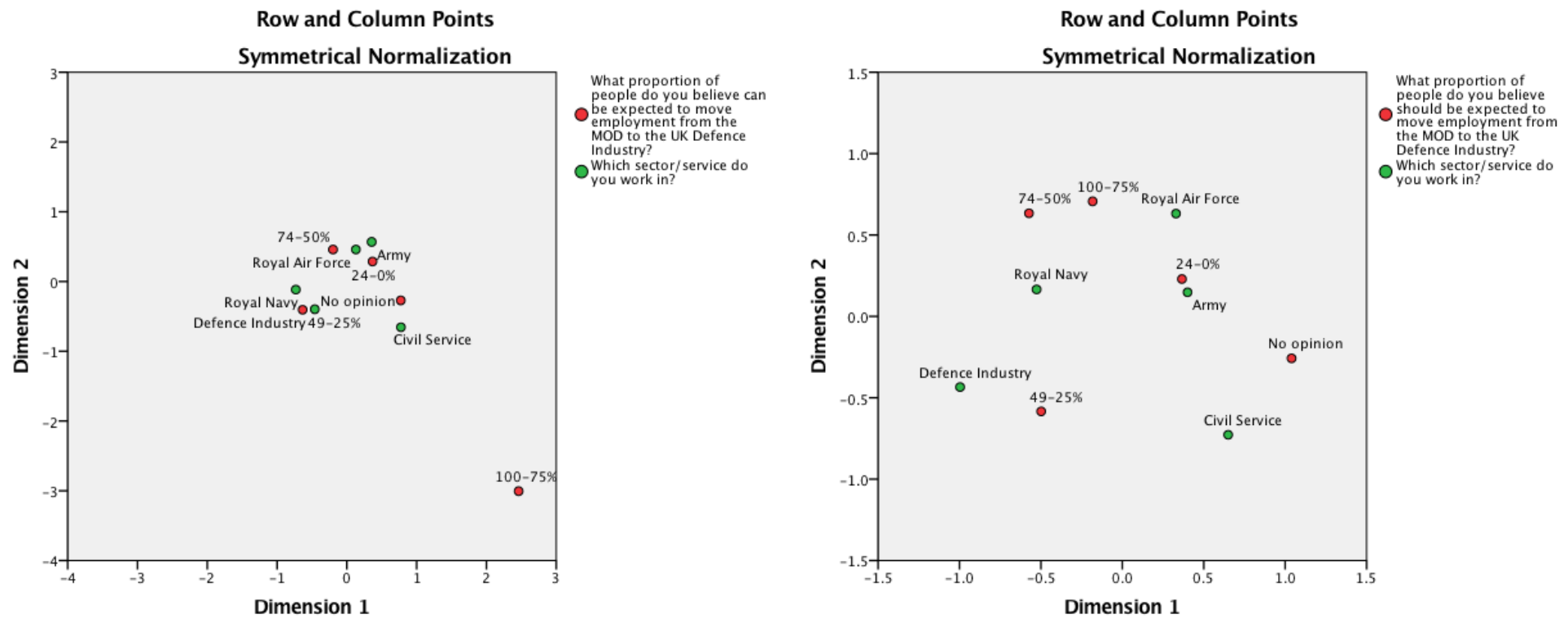
Figure D-10: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and Movement from MOD to Industry (is/ought)

The data are repeated for Rank/Position/Role:

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	1	3	8	2	14 (13%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	1	12	14	15	6	48 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	0	10	14	11	5	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	0	3	1	1	5 (5%)
Total		1	23	34	35	14	107

Table D-33: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Movement from MOD to Industry (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	3	4	6	2	15 (13%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	1	11	13	15	8	48 (45%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	1	8	13	12	6	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	0	3	2	0	5 (5%)
Total		2	22	33	35	16	108

Table D-34: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Movement from MOD to Industry (ought)

The correspondence analysis also reveals little additional detail:

266
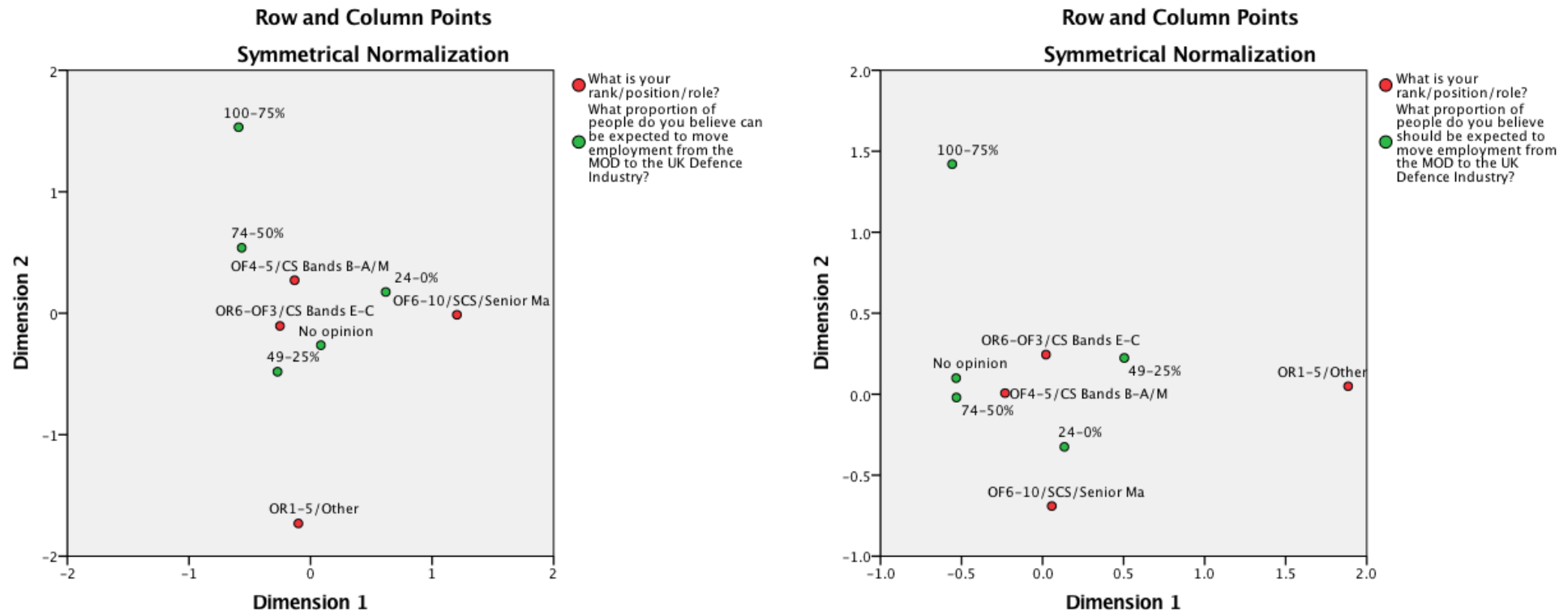
Figure D-11: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and Movement from MOD to Industry (is/ought)

The crosstabulation data for Education Level shows relative stability between 'is' and 'ought', especially at Masters level:

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	0	1	2	1	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	1	1	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	0	2	3	5	2	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	0	5	9	4	2	20 (19%)
	Masters	1	15	17	21	9	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	0	2	2	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	1	1	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		1	23	34	35	14	107

Table D-35: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Movement from MOD to Industry (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	1	1	1	1	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	1	1	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	1	0	6	4	1	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	0	6	7	6	2	21 (19%)
	Masters	1	14	17	20	11	63 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	0	1	3	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	1	0	0	1	2 (2%)
Total		2	22	33	35	16	108

Table D-36: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Movement from MOD to Industry (ought)

The correspondence data is also consistent:
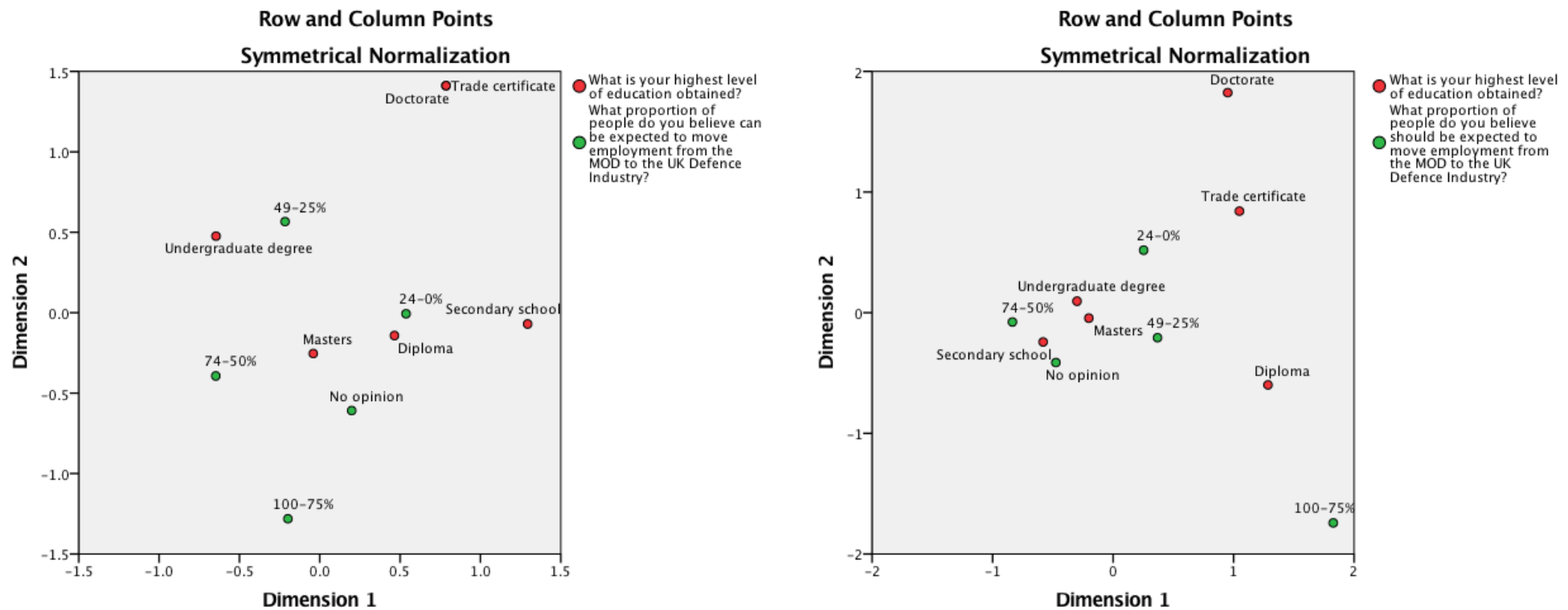
Figure D-12: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and Movement from MOD to Industry (is/ought)

Finally, both Gender and Age provide no exceptions:

| | | What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry? | | | | | |
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	1	19	32	32	13	97 (91%)
	Woman	0	4	2	3	1	10 (9%)
Total		1	23	34	35	14	107

Table D-37: Crosstabulation of Gender against Movement from MOD to Industry (is)

| | | What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry? | | | | | |
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	1	21	29	33	14	98 (91%)
	Woman	1	1	4	2	2	10 (9%)
Total		2	22	33	35	16	108

Table D-38: Crosstabulation of Gender against Movement from MOD to Industry (ought)

| | | What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry? | | | | | |
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	0	1	2	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	3	7	1	2	13 (12%)
	40-49	0	13	12	17	6	48 (45%)
	50-59	1	7	13	14	6	41 (39%)
	60-69	0	0	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		1	23	34	34	14	106

Table D-39: Crosstabulation of Age against Movement from MOD to Industry (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the MOD to the UK Defence Industry?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	0	2	1	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	1	1	5	4	2	13 (12%)
	40-49	1	12	17	12	7	49 (45%)
	50-59	0	9	8	17	7	41 (39%)
	60-69	0	0	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		2	22	33	34	16	107

Table D-40: Crosstabulation of Age against Movement from MOD to Industry (ought)

In summary, there is no shift from 'is' to ought' and this is constant across all the supplementary variables.

D.2.5 Movement of people from Industry to MOD

Beginning with Sector/Service, the prediction that movement from the Defence Industry to the MOD would find less favour was disconfirmed. Instead of the constancy of 'is' and 'ought' in transition from the MOD, transfer of people to the MOD elicited a positive shift (3% to 5% of respondents for 100-50% movement or 14% to 34% for 100-25% movement):

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	0	0	1	26	1	28 (26%)
	Army	0	0	2	18	2	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	0	2	4	12	4	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	1	0	3	13	3	20 (18%)
	Defence Industry	0	0	2	13	0	15 (14%)
Total		1	2	12	82	10	107

Table D-41: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Movement from Industry to MOD (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?				
		74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	1	10	13	3	27 (26%)
	Army	0	6	13	2	21 (20%)
	Royal Air Force	3	4	7	8	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	1	4	9	6	20 (19%)
	Defence Industry	0	7	8	0	15 (14%)
Total		5	31	50	19	105

Table D-42: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Movement from Industry to MOD (ought)

Although a majority of respondents believe that little or no movement should occur (24-0%), the correspondence analysis suggests that this shift is associated most with some movement (49-25%) for the Royal Navy and the Defence Industry:
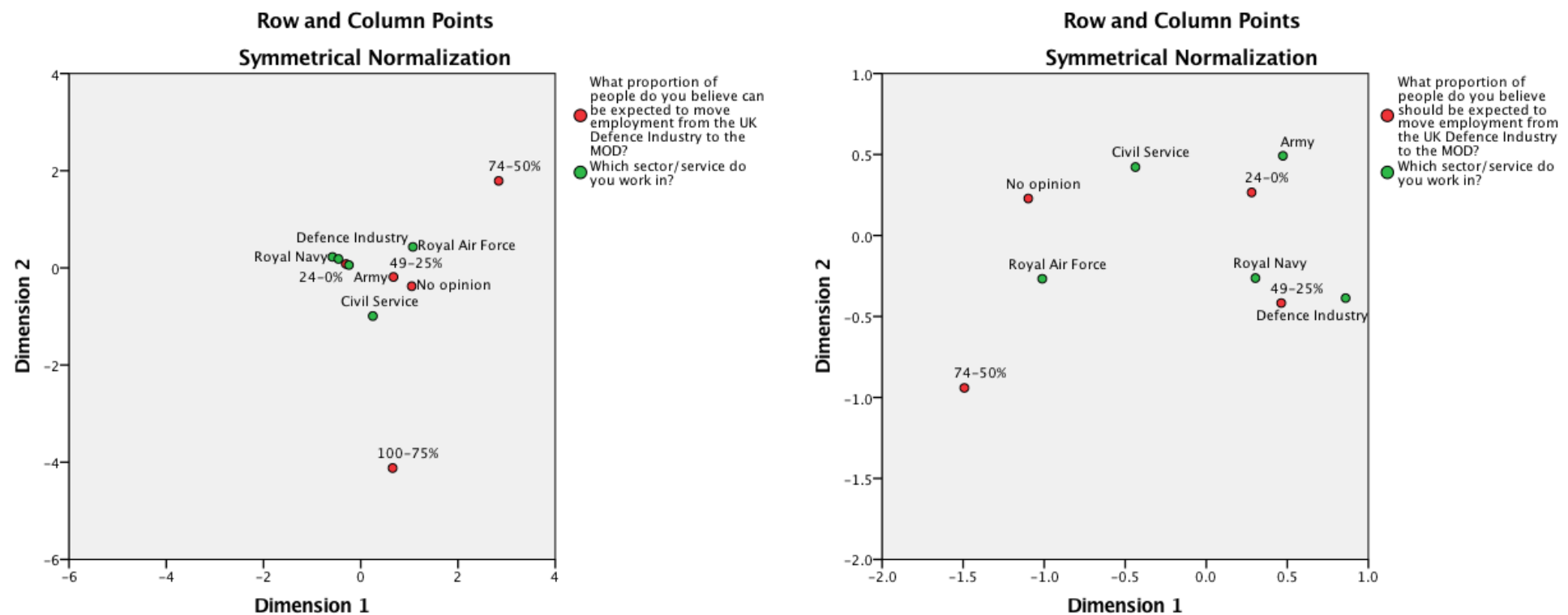
Figure D-13: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and Movement from Industry to MOD (is/ought)

The shift is displayed again for Rank/Position/Role and is concentrated on the 49-25% value:

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	0	0	14	1	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	1	2	6	34	4	47 (44%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	0	0	3	32	5	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	0	3	2	0	5 (5%)
Total		1	2	12	82	10	107

Table D-43: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Movement from Industry to MOD (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?				
		74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	5	9	1	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	4	14	21	6	45 (43%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	1	11	16	12	40 (38%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	1	4	0	5 (5%)
Total		5	31	50	19	105

Table D-44: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Movement from Industry to MOD (ought)

The correspondence analysis suggests that this shift is most closely associated with OF4-5/Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor, or those people most involved in the practical business of Defence acquisition:
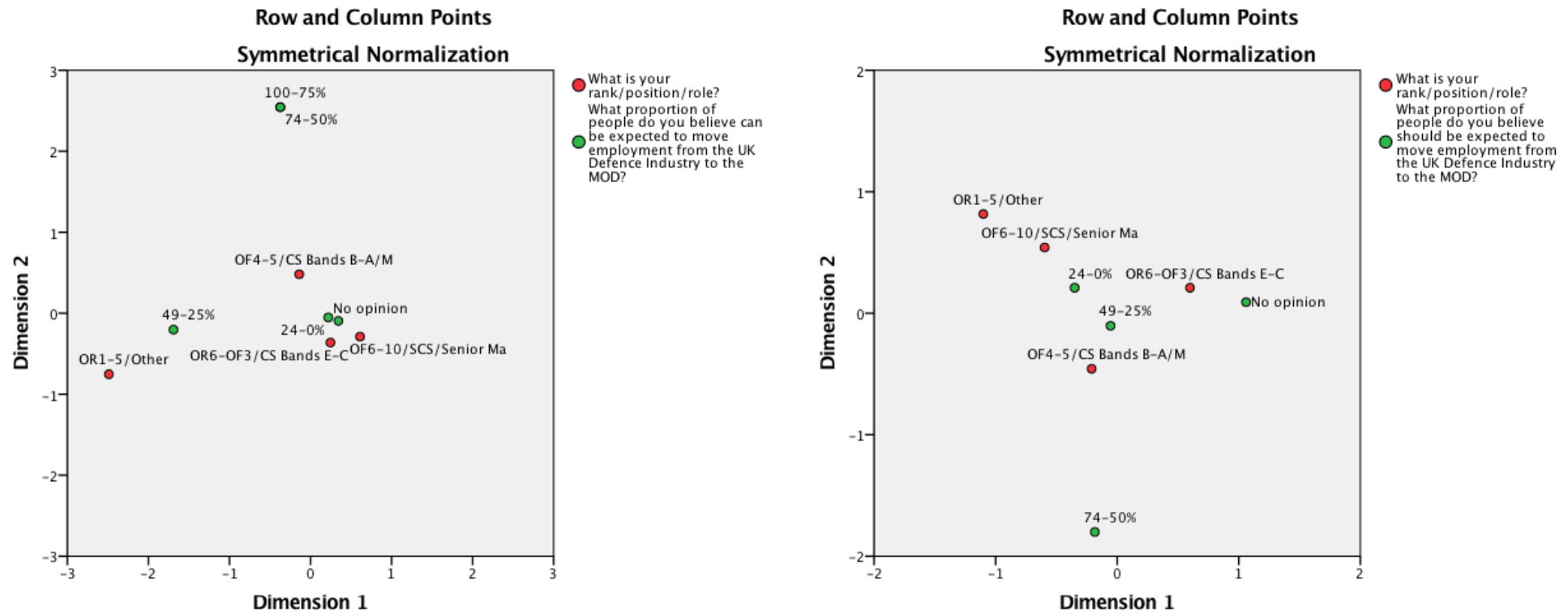
Figure D-14: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and Movement from Industry to MOD (is/ought)

The data are reproduced when crosstabulated with Education Level and the shift is most apparent at Masters:

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	0	0	3	1	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	0	2	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	0	0	2	9	1	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	0	0	4	16	1	21 (19%)
	Masters	1	2	6	47	6	62 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	0	0	4	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	0	0	1	1	2 (2%)
Total		1	2	12	82	10	107

Table D-45: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Movement from Industry to MOD (is)

273

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?				
		74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	2	1	1	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	1	1	2 (2%)
	Diploma	0	4	6	2	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	1	6	11	3	21 (20%)
	Masters	4	19	27	10	60 (57%)
	Doctorate	0	0	4	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	0	0	2	2 (2%)
Total		5	31	50	19	105

Table D-46: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Movement between Industry and MOD (ought)

The correspondence analysis shows the closer association of Masters, Undergraduate degree and Diploma with 49-25%:
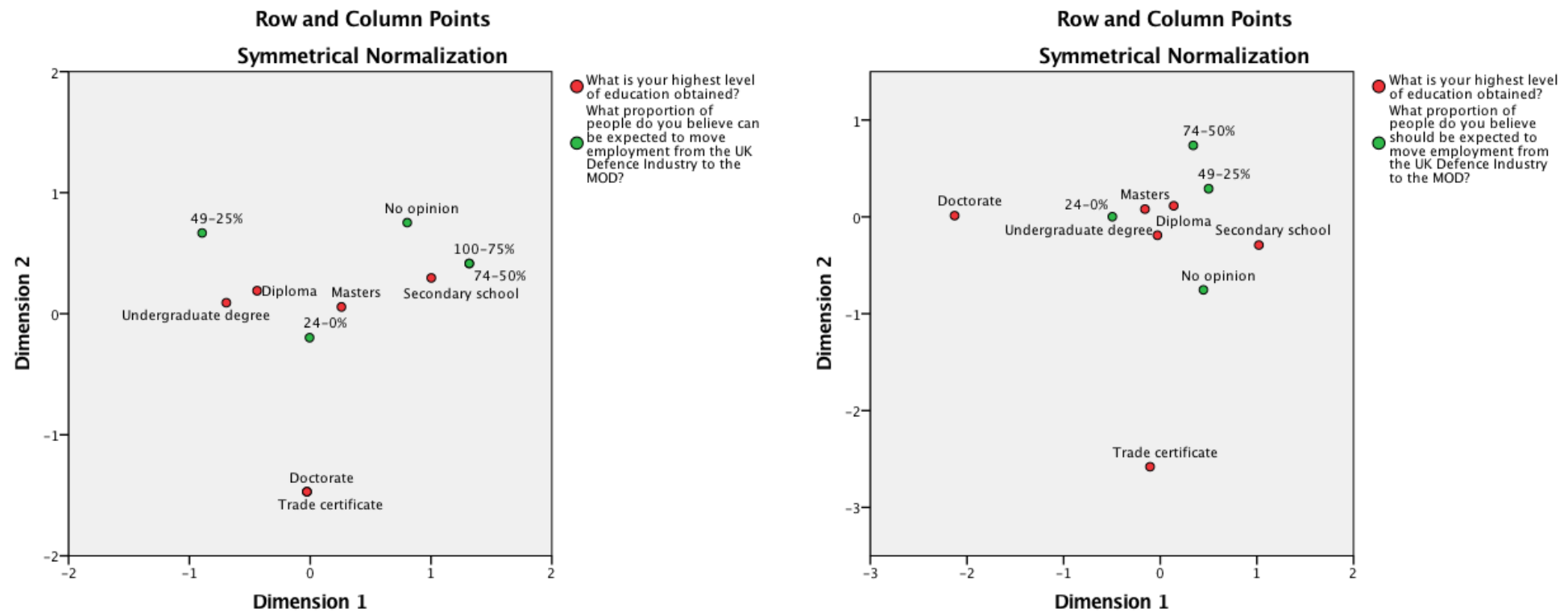
Figure D-15: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and Movement between Industry and MOD (is/ought)

Finally, the same shift in beliefs is displayed for Gender and Age:

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	1	2	10	74	10	97 (91%)
	Woman	0	0	2	8	0	10 (9%)
Total		1	2	12	82	10	107

Table D-47: Crosstabulation of Gender against Movement from Industry to MOD (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?				
		74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	4	28	46	17	95 (90%)
	Woman	1	3	4	2	10 (10%)
Total		5	31	50	19	105

Table D-48: Crosstabulation of Gender against Movement from Industry to MOD (ought)

		What proportion of people do you believe can be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?					
		100-75%	74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	0	1	2	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	0	2	10	1	13 (12%)
	40-49	0	2	6	35	6	49 (46%)
	50-59	1	0	2	34	3	40 (38%)
	60-69	0	0	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		1	2	12	81	10	106

Table D-49: Crosstabulation of Age against Movement between Industry and MOD (is)

		What proportion of people do you believe should be expected to move employment from the UK Defence Industry to the MOD?				
		74-50%	49-25%	24-0%	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	1	1	1	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	4	6	3	13 (13%)
	40-49	3	19	16	10	48 (45%)
	50-59	1	7	25	6	39 (38%)
	60-69	0	0	1	0	1 (1%)
Total		5	31	49	19	104

Table D-50: Crosstabulation of Age against Movement between Industry and MOD (ought)

In summary, the data suggest that there is some movement from 'is' to 'ought' with respect to people moving from the Defence Industry to the MOD, which stands in opposition to movement in the other direction. Although this shift is common across the supplementary variables, it is not yet clear why there is a difference.

D.2.6 Common values

The penultimate question pair targeted commonality of values between the MOD and Defence Industry. The first crosstabulation against Sector/Service shows the now anticipated shift from 'is' to 'ought" (22% to 64%):

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	0	10	17	1	0	28 (26%)
	Army	0	1	14	6	1	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	0	4	15	3	0	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	0	3	15	1	1	20 (18%)
	Defence Industry	1	5	7	2	0	15 (14%)
Total		1	23	68	13	2	107

Table D-51: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Common Values (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should have common values?					Total
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	4	13	10	1	0	28 (26%)
	Army	1	11	10	0	0	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	1	11	9	0	1	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	4	10	6	0	0	20 (18%)
	Defence Industry	5	8	2	0	0	15 (14%)
Total		15	53	37	1	1	107

Table D-52: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Common Values (ought)

The movement of 'fully' is clearly displayed in the correspondence analysis, together with its close association of the Defence Industry and the placement of 'mainly' at the origin:
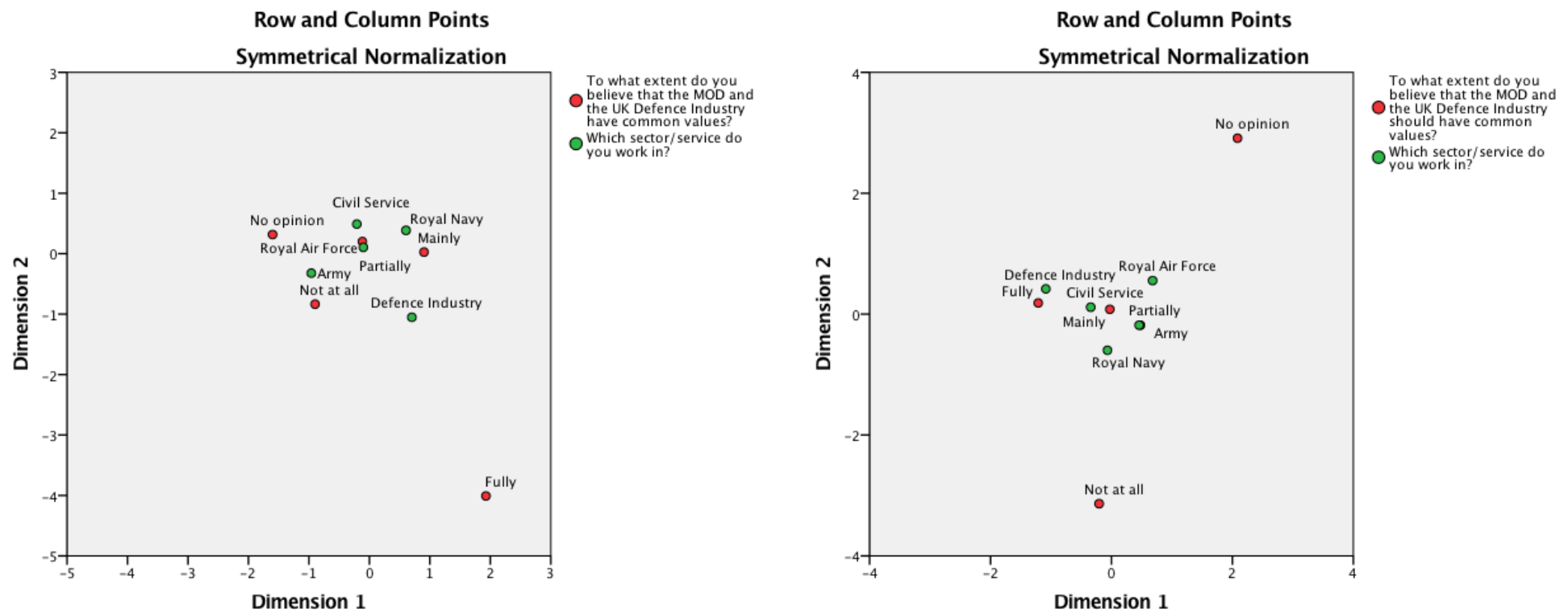
Figure D-16: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and Common Values (is/ought)

277

This is repeated for Rank/Position/Role:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	1	3	10	1	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	0	9	31	6	1	47 (44%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	0	9	25	5	1	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	2	2	1	0	5 (5%)
Total		1	23	68	13	2	107

Table D-53: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Common Values (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	1	8	6	0	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	5	22	18	1	1	47 (44%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	7	21	12	0	0	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	2	2	1	0	0	5 (5%)
Total		15	53	37	1	1	107

Table D-54: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Common Values (ought)

The correspondence analysis also demonstrates this with the movement of 'fully' again apparent, although lower ranks/roles are most closely associated with the origin and 'mainly':
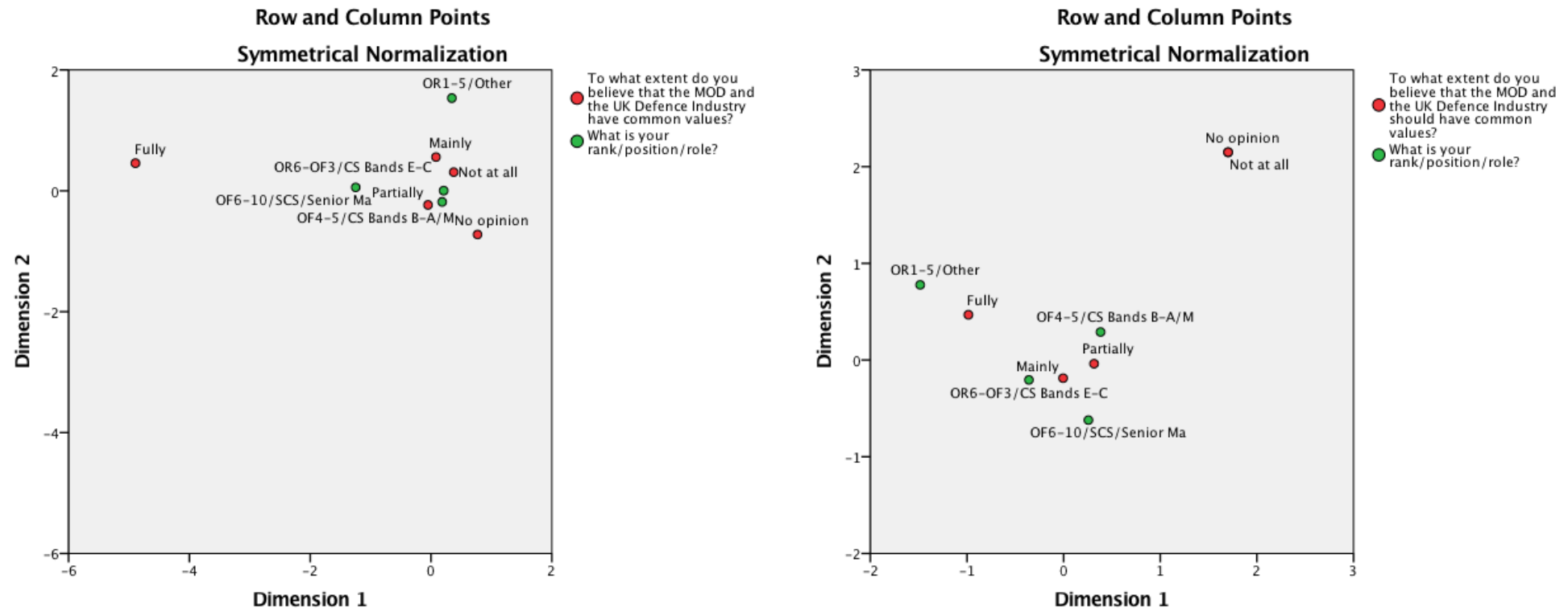
Figure D-17: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and Common Values (is/ought)

The crosstabulation with Education Level repeats the pattern:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	0	1	3	0	0	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	2	0	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	0	2	9	1	0	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	1	6	10	3	1	21 (19%)
	Masters	0	14	39	8	1	62 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	0	3	1	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	0	2	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		1	23	68	13	2	107

Table D-55: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Common Values (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	2	1	1	0	0	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	1	1	0	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	4	7	1	0	0	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	5	9	7	0	0	21 (19%)
	Masters	4	33	23	1	1	62 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	2	2	0	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	0	2	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		15	53	37	1	1	107

Table D-56: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Common Values (ought)

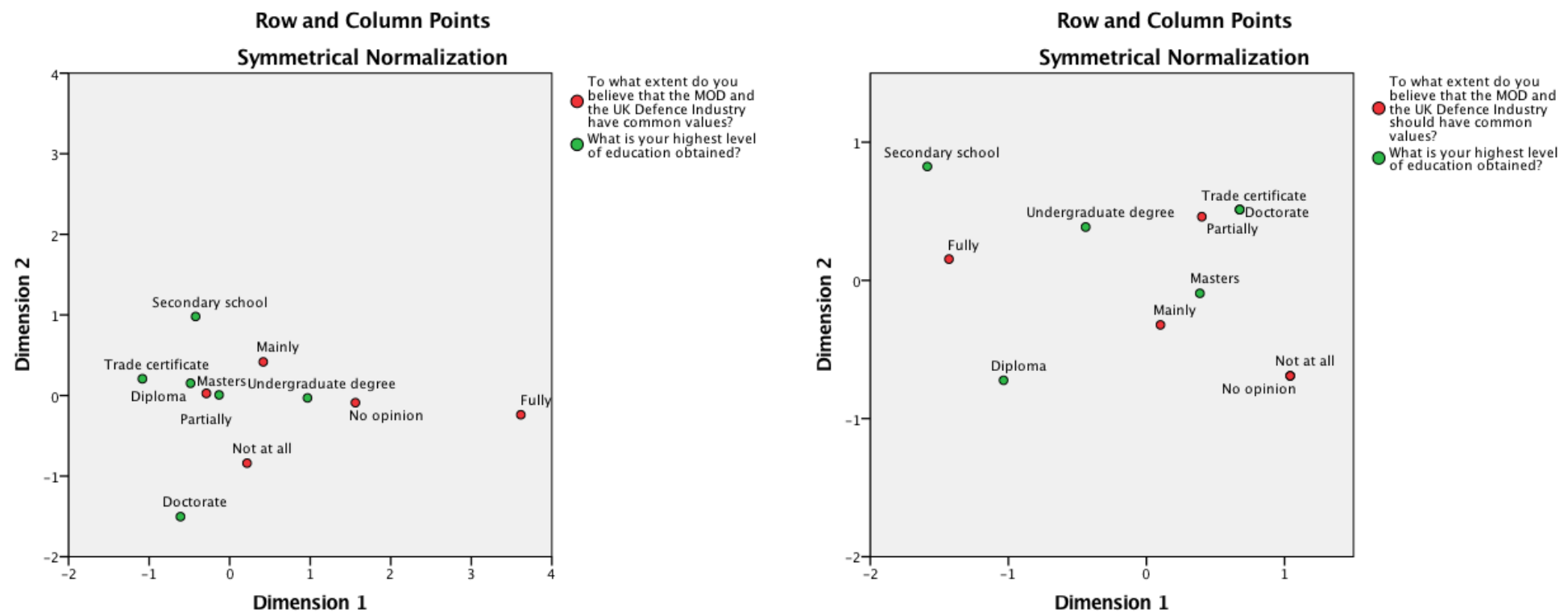Here again there is movement of 'fully' and a close association of 'mainly' with Masters level:

Figure D-18: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and Common Values (is/ought)

Finally, the shift is also shown in the crosstabulations of Gender and Age:

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	1	22	62	11	1	97 (91%)
	Woman	0	1	6	2	1	10 (9%)
Total		1	23	68	13	2	107

Table D-57: Crosstabulation of Gender against Common Values (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	15	48	32	1	1	97 (91%)
	Woman	0	5	5	0	0	10 (9%)
Total		15	53	37	1	1	107

Table D-58: Crosstabulation of Gender against Common Values (ought)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	0	3	0	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	2	9	1	1	13 (12%)
	40-49	1	12	28	7	1	49 (46%)
	50-59	0	8	27	5	0	40 (38%)
	60-69	0	1	0	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		1	23	67	13	2	106

Table D-59: Crosstabulation of Age against Common Values (is)

		To what extent do you believe that the MOD and the UK Defence Industry should have common values?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	3	0	0	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	1	4	8	0	0	13 (12%)
	40-49	6	29	13	0	1	49 (46%)
	50-59	7	17	15	1	0	40 (38%)
	60-69	1	0	0	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		15	53	36	1	1	106

Table D-60: Crosstabulation of Age against Common Values (ought)

These results suggest that commonality of values is presupposed as a default ('ought') across all supplementary variables, but is opposed in practice ('is').

D.2.7 Defence as a single enterprise

The final question pair asked about the extent to which Defence should be managed across the MOD and Industry (the Enterprise Approach of the case study). The crosstabulation against Sector/Service shows another shift, but not as large as for common values (11% to 45%):

		To what extent do you believe that UK Defence is managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	1	4	16	7	0	28 (26%)
	Army	0	1	8	12	1	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	0	2	10	10	0	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	0	2	10	7	1	20 (18%)
	Defence Industry	0	2	5	8	0	15 (14%)
Total		1	11	49	44	2	107

Table D-61: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Enterprise Management (is)

		To what extent do you believe that UK Defence should be managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
Which sector/service do you work in?	Royal Navy	7	8	10	3	28 (26%)
	Army	1	4	15	2	22 (21%)
	Royal Air Force	2	9	11	0	22 (21%)
	Civil Service	0	7	9	4	20 (18%)
	Defence Industry	3	7	5	0	15 (14%)
Total		13	35	50	9	107

Table D-62: Crosstabulation of Sector/Service against Enterprise Management (ought)

The correspondence analysis suggests that the shift is more closely associated with the Royal Navy and, to a lesser extent, the Defence Industry and Royal Air Force:
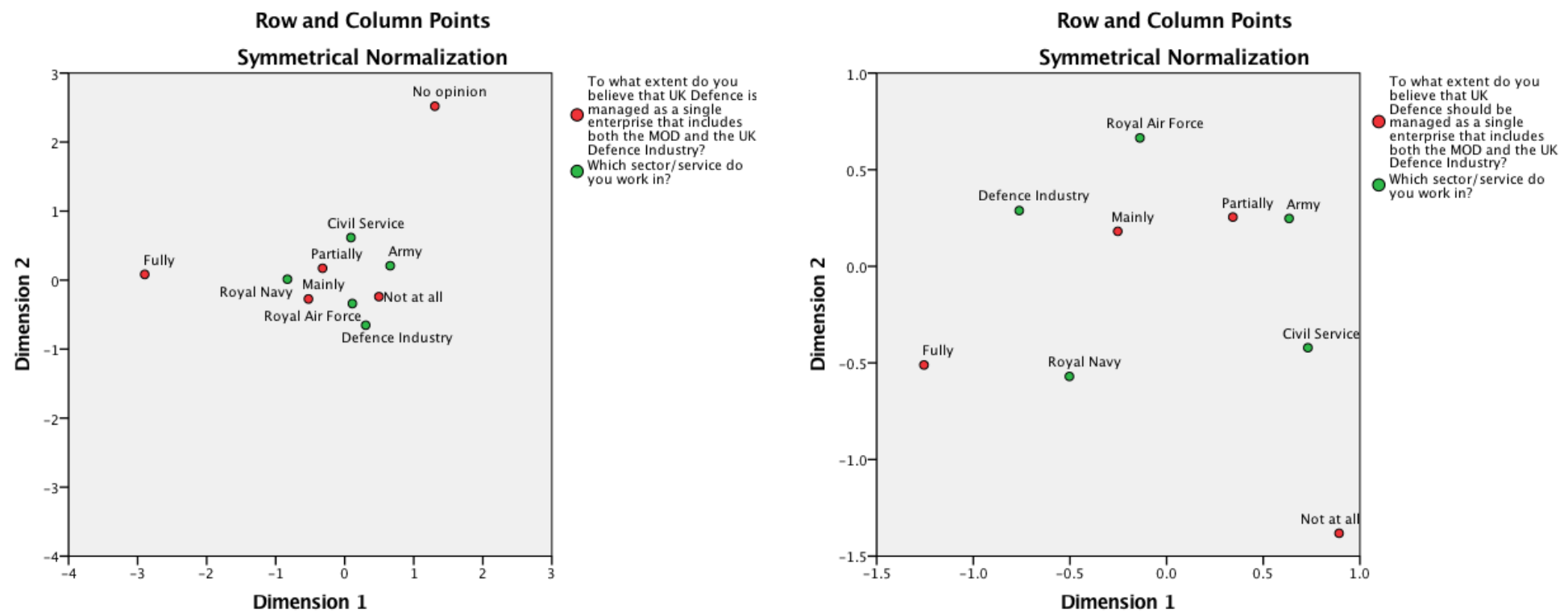

Figure D-19: Correspondence analysis of Sector/Service and Enterprise Management

These results are duplicated for Rank/Position/Role:

		To what extent do you believe that UK Defence is managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	0	1	7	7	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	0	4	22	21	0	47 (44%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	1	5	20	12	2	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	1	0	4	0	5 (5%)
Total		1	11	49	44	2	107

Table D-63: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Enterprise Management (is)

		To what extent do you believe that UK Defence should be managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your rank/position/role?	OF6-10/SCS/Senior Manager	3	5	7	0	15 (14%)
	OF4-5/CS Bands B-A/Manager/Supervisor	6	14	25	2	47 (44%)
	OR6-OF3/CS Bands E-C/Staff	4	13	16	7	40 (37%)
	OR1-5/Other	0	3	2	0	5 (5%)
Total		13	35	50	9	107

Table D-64: Crosstabulation of Rank/Position/Role against Enterprise Management (ought)

The correspondence analysis again shows the limits of the shift relative to commonality of values and places 'partially' at the origin:
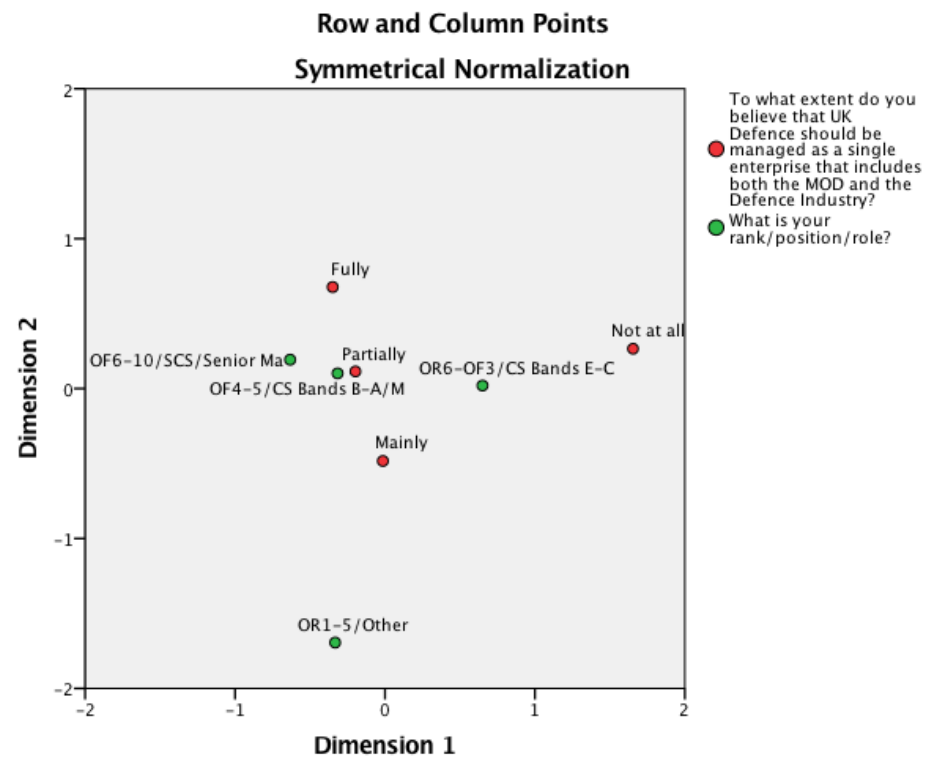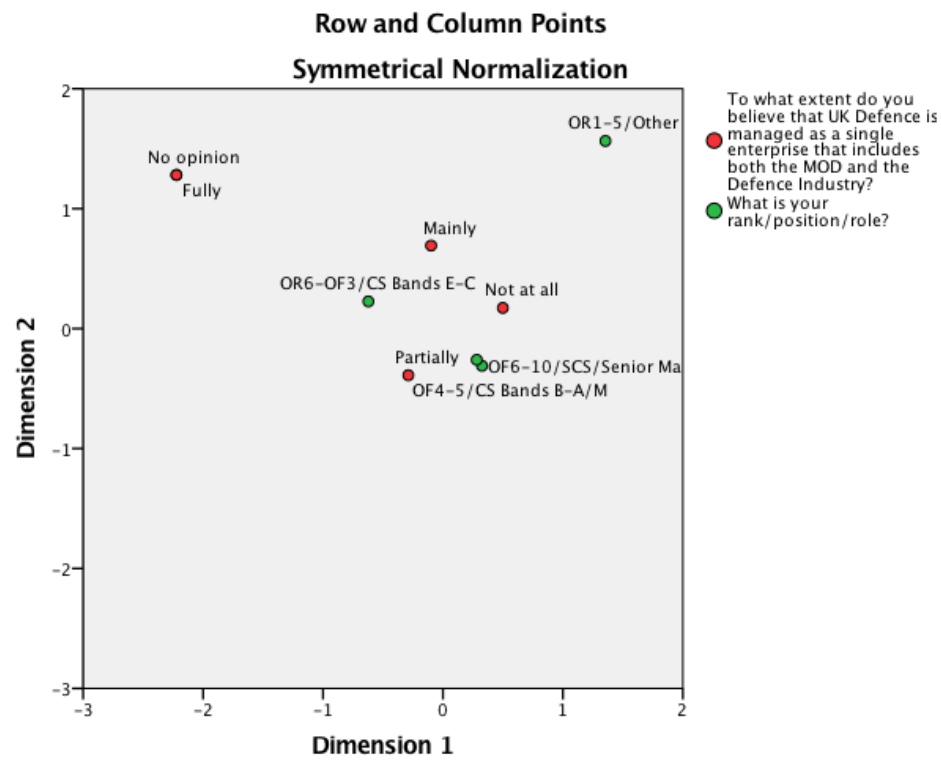
Figure D-20: Correspondence analysis of Rank/Position/Role and Enterprise Management (is/ought)

The data are reproduced for Education Level, with a shift of 8% to 35% at Masters:

		To what extent do you believe that UK Defence is managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?					
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	1	1	0	2	0	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	0	1	1	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	0	2	4	5	1	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	0	2	10	9	0	21 (19%)
	Masters	0	5	31	25	1	62 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	0	2	2	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	1	1	0	0	2 (2%)
Total		1	11	49	44	2	107

Table D-65: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Enterprise Management (is)

		To what extent do you believe that UK Defence should be managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry?				
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your highest level of education obtained?	Secondary school	1	1	2	0	4 (4%)
	Trade certificate	0	2	0	0	2 (2%)
	Diploma	1	4	6	1	12 (11%)
	Undergraduate degree	3	11	5	2	21 (19%)
	Masters	8	14	35	5	62 (58%)
	Doctorate	0	2	2	0	4 (4%)
	Other	0	1	0	1	2 (2%)
Total		13	35	50	9	107

Table D-66: Crosstabulation of Education Level against Enterprise Management (ought)

The correspondence analysis displays the movement of 'fully', but associates Masters level education more closely with 'partially' and Undergraduates with 'mainly':
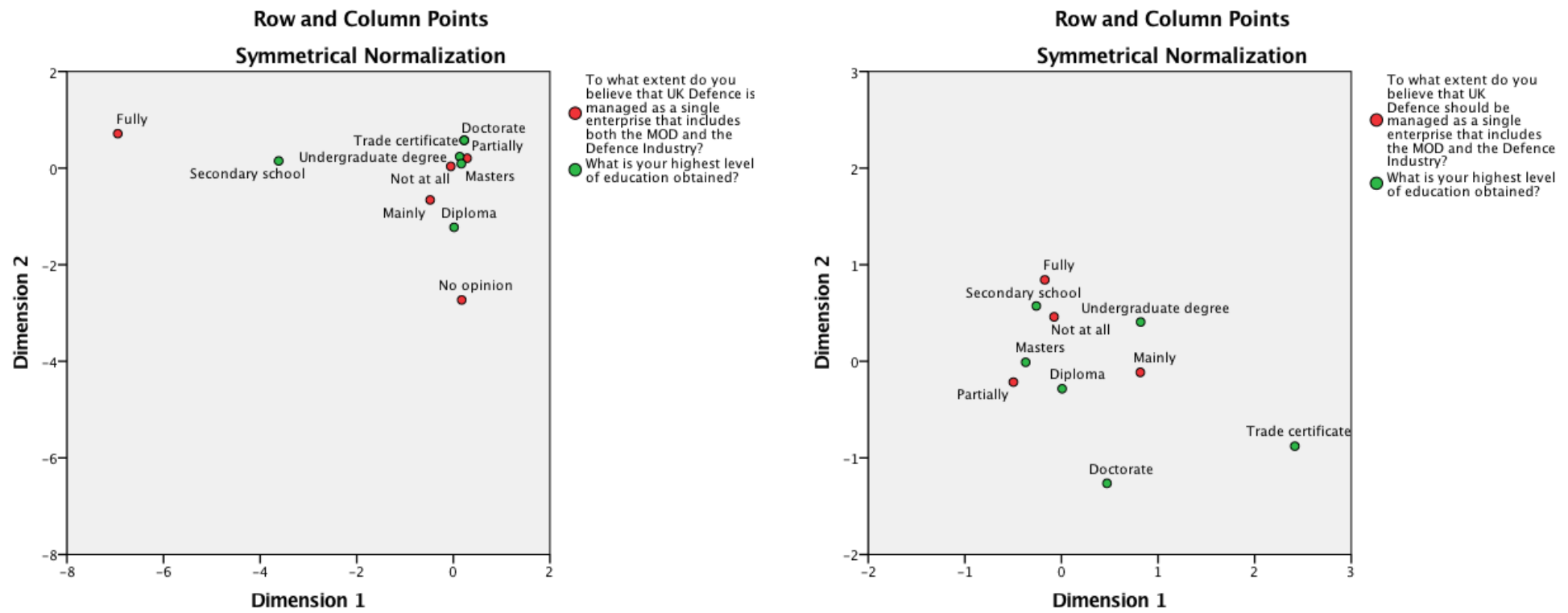
Figure D-21: Correspondence analysis of Education Level and Enterprise Management (is/ought)

Lastly, the data for Gender and Age demonstrate the shift to the same degree:

| | | To what extent do you believe that UK Defence is managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry? | | | | | |
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	1	10	43	41	2	97 (91%)
	Woman	0	1	6	3	0	10 (9%)
Total		1	11	49	44	2	107

Table D-67: Crosstabulation of Gender against Enterprise Management (is)

| | | To what extent do you believe that UK Defence should be managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry? | | | | |
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your gender identity?	Man	13	31	46	7	97 (91%)
	Woman	0	4	4	2	10 (9%)
Total		13	35	50	9	107

Table D-68: Crosstabulation of Gender against Enterprise Management (ought)

| | | To what extent do you believe that UK Defence is managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry? | | | | | |
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	No opinion	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	0	1	2	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	1	9	3	0	13 (12%)
	40-49	1	5	20	22	1	49 (46%)
	50-59	0	5	19	15	1	40 (38%)
	60-69	0	0	0	1	0	1 (1%)
Total		1	11	49	43	2	106

Table D-69: Crosstabulation of Age against Enterprise Management (is)

| | | To what extent do you believe that UK Defence should be managed as a single enterprise that includes both the MOD and the Defence Industry? | | | | |
		Fully	Mainly	Partially	Not at all	Total
What is your age?	20-29	0	2	1	0	3 (3%)
	30-39	0	4	7	2	13 (12%)
	40-49	8	15	22	4	49 (46%)
	50-59	5	13	19	3	40 (38%)
	60-69	0	1	0	0	1 (1%)
Total		13	35	49	9	106

Table D-70: Crosstabulation of Age against Enterprise Management (ought)

D.2.8 Summary

As stated in the results and findings, taken together (with the sole exception of the movement of personnel from the MOD to Industry), the survey responses show a definite shift from 'is' to 'ought'. This is a result that required an explanation because it demonstrates that the people surveyed regard the relationship between the MOD and the Defence Industry to be other than it might be. Furthermore, the correspondence analysis suggested that Sector/Service and Rank/Position/Role are more important in influencing the perceptions of the Defence acquisition field; therefore, these were given greater focus during the subsequent interviews and in exploring the survey comments because they were likely to be among the primary forms of capital that structure the field. In particular, the analysis suggested that the closest association with the case study's Enterprise Approach involves the Royal Navy and the Defence Industry, so – in accordance with the methodology adopted – it was in the relationship between the two that the generation of a critical case was most likely.

Appendix E – Glossary of key terms

Acquisition	The activities of setting and managing requirements, negotiating and letting contracts, project and technology management, support and termination or disposal, all based on a through life approach to acquiring military capability.
Akrasia	Acting against one's better judgment.
Capital	Accumulated labour that social actors struggle to define, gain and control, commonly described in economic, social or cultural terms.
Consequentialism	The ethical theory that an action is right or wrong insofar as it has positive or negative consequences respectively.
Critical realism	A social science research paradigm, according to which the social world consists in empirical experience, meanings and mechanisms, with the last necessary to explain social phenomena and serving to identify and challenge power relations.
Deontology	The ethical theory that what is right is determined by duties, instead of or even irrespective of consequences.
Descriptive ethics	The study and depiction of how people actually act, make ethical decisions and judge the ethical choices of others.
Doxa	The cognitive and evaluative presuppositions that people accede to in the social world.
Ethics	A systematic conception of right and wrong behaviour.
Field	Social structures in which social actors struggle over capital relative to their positions.
Habitus	Systems of durable, transposable dispositions that provide social actors with an unconscious calculation of what is possible, probable, improbable, or impossible for people in their specific locations in the stratified social order.
Heuristic	Rules-of-thumb that enabler quicker decisions by ignoring some information.
Ideal type	An analytical construct that serves to stress the logic of social relations and interactions, allowing this construct to then be applied to other contexts.
Identity	A sense of self-image that refers to the meanings that people attribute to themselves, whether as individuals or as members of groups.

Illusio	An acceptance by social actors of what is or is not conceivable and acceptable within a field.
Integrated Social Contracts Theory	An ethical theory that achieves an accommodation between macro norms that everyone in society should endorse and context-dependent micro norms that are actually applied within communities in daily life.
Narrative	A method of recapitulating past social experience as the conjunction of stories and a controlling plot.
Normative ethics	The philosophical consideration of ethical problems through identifying norms to govern conduct, often by invoking principles that determine whether acts are ethical or not.
Practice	The interaction of field, capital and habitus, which creates what social actors do in a specific field in specific circumstances.
Principal-Agent problem	A problem in business ethics in which shareholders provide resources for and direction on what a business should do, but the agents who carry out this intent choose to deviate from it to suit their own needs.
Shareholder theory	A theory of business ethics, which argues that it is the responsibility of business managers to maximise shareholder profit because companies are the private property of their owners; therefore, businesses can have no social or ethical responsibilities beyond this fiduciary duty.
Stakeholder theory	A theory of business ethics, which asserts that anyone with a stake in a business's activities is due ethical consideration, regardless of their legal position relative to the company.
Symbolic capital	Capital that has been legitimised through social actors recognising its possession as conferring authority.
Symbolic power	The power to establish exchange rates between forms of capital and, thereby, legitimate the way societies are structured and stratified into hierarchies.
Symbolic violence	Adjusting behaviour to social power as a practical adaptation rather than an act of consent, leaving power structures intact and resulting in the dominated misperceiving their positions as inevitable.