Experienced professionals and doctoral study: a performative agenda

Simon Kelly[a]
John Nicholson[b]
Paul Johnston[c]
Dennis Duty[d]
Ross Brennan[e]

[a] York Management School, University of York, York YO10 5GD, United Kingdom, simon.kelly@york.ac.uk
[b] Huddersfield Business School, University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield HD1 3DH, United Kingdom, j.nicholson@hud.ac.uk [AUTHOR FOR CORRESPONDENCE]
[c] Sheffield Business School, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield S1 1WB, United Kingdom pj6181@hallam.shu.ac.uk
[d] Huddersfield Business School, University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield HD1 3DH, United Kingdom, d.duty@hud.ac.uk
[e] Hertfordshire Business School, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield AL10 9AB, United Kingdom, d.r.brennan@herts.ac.uk

Abstract

The paper considers doctoral supervision between a candidate grounded in practice and a practice sensitive supervisor. The paper presents five autoethnographies to embellish a . conceptual argument. The contribution made lies at the nexus between three literatures; doctoral supervision, engaged scholarship and performativity. The paper contributes to the performativity literature by adding a principle of performative co-creation to frameworks which consider the emergence of performativity after theory formation. A core contention is the by considering engaged scholarship, the potential for performative outcomes in doctoral programs can be enhanced. The paper enters the black box of the emergence of performative theory and asks whether the formation of a theory can affect its eventual performative effects. Taking the doctoral supervision process as a performance, a series of tensions in the supervision process are identified and four acts are proposed to unlock the potential of performative outcomes. It is suggested that doctoral candidates engaged in practice are more likely to identify practice based on anomalies, experiment with the subsequent theory in a professional context due to their ongoing embeddedness in communities of practice. The authors suggest that this has particular relevance to industrial marketing scholars due to high levels of embeddedness in practice.

1.0: Introduction

The purpose of this article is to provide a reflectively informed conceptual account of experienced professionals undertaking doctoral study and those supervising them during the process. The conceptual proposition advanced in the paper is that professional doctoral programs in a B2B context should hold the ambition to produce performative theory, and are well placed to do so due to their ongoing grounding in organizations where their theory can subsequently be experimented with and disseminated within communities of practice. Drawing on autoethnographies by the authors, problems are identified with a model of supervision for experienced professionals that uncritically assumes the ascendancy of the supervisor's knowledge over the student's, when in contrast the professional understanding and familiarity with the subject of the student may exceed that of the supervisor.

Our contribution lies at the nexus of three literatures; the pedagogic literature discussing doctoral supervision, the discourse surrounding performativity and the debate surrounding engaged scholarship. Taking a recent process theory of performativity by Marti and Gond (2018) as a base point, we attempt to add a precursor stage to the framework by asking what happens before a theory is formed that could later enhance the performative potential of that theory? We thus challenge an underlying assumption that all models of theory development can equally lead to the development of theories that subsequently become (or do not become) performative. Put another way, we propose that the emergence of a performative theory should be considered before the theory is formed. We see little published work that has addressed the 'black box' of the emergence of a performative theory, what we will suggest as a weakness in understanding 'performative theorizing' and the felicitous conditions in which it is performed. In addressing this absence we respond to the call be D'Adderio, Glaser and Pollock's (2019) call for consideration of performativity as an ongoing journey. Our contribution to the performativity theory is to add a precursor stage which we call performative co-creation to the emergent model of performativity proposed by Marti and Gond (2018) to better understand such an ongoing journey from the start of a theoretical journey. By further drawing on the engaged scholarship literature to inform this notion of performative co-creation, we posit that an 'engaged' doctoral program is likely to enhance the potential of performative theory to later emerge. Specifically we focus on an engaged doctoral supervisor − one that has a sensitivity to practice, and an engaged doctoral candidate that maintains one foot in practice during supervision and may therefore hold a greater motivation to contribute to practice on completion of their study. Like Pattinson, Ciesielska, Preece, Nicholson, and Alexandersson (2018) we take 'performance' to be the focal interplay between two interactants (supervisor and

supervisee), albeit the first stage of an 'ongoing' emergent performance involving multiple other actors and potentially leading to the emergence of a theory that later is assessed as performative, We align our pedagogic contribution here with the assertion by Maxwell and Smyth (2011: 222) that rather than focusing on what the 'supervisor' does, in contrast… "the primary emphasis should be on the relationship – the supervisor working with the student to achieve the research goals of the student." We extend this contention to include also − what are the life goals of the doctoral student beyond completion of study? We find that career post-doctoral aspirations of doctoral students have largely gone without significant consideration in existing models of doctoral supervision. Our contribution here is to propose a series of four acts in the performance that provide guidance for doctoral supervisors and candidates. In juxtaposition, consideration of these three literatures allows us to contribute to the pedagogical discussion of supervision. We thus respond to the call by Klein and Rowe (2008), for the development of a new models of supervision that encourage engagement of professional persons in doctoral study. This paper further adds to a series of recent specific contributions to *Industrial Marketing Management*, particularly from members of the editorial team who have written on the subject of pedagogy and academic craft. Such topics, which seek to contribute to the field of industrial marketing while having broader academic appeal, have included *writing top class academic papers* (LaPlaca, Lindgreen, & Vanhamme, 2018; Nicholson, LaPlaca, Al-Abdin, Breese, & Khan, 2018), *revising for academic journals* (LaPlaca, Lindgreen, Vanhamme, & Di Benedetto, 2018), and *methodological contributions* (Midgley, Nicholson, & Brennan, 2017; Ullah, Akhtar, & Zaefarian, 2018). However, we also note and respond to calls within *Industrial Marketing Management* to continue to make explicit contributions to practice. For instance, in his testimonial to the 25 year tenure of Founding Editor Peter LaPlaca's legacy to the journal, Michael Kleinaltenkamp (2018, p. 126) notes that "B2B marketing research obviously does not lack relevance. This is even more the case since a majority of the researchers in the field of B2B marketing find their academic determination after having already had a career in practice." Hence, while our contribution we hope, and indeed intend, to have wider relevance, we feel has enhanced local relevance due to the history of many IM academics contributing to this journal having had, and continuing to have one foot in practice. Kleinaltenkamp (2018, p. 125) also notes that:

> "Another reason for that might be that many PhD students in Europe are
> aiming at and have the opportunity to pursue a career in practice, which, as

a result of the industry structures, in the majority of cases leads them to work
for firms that are active in B2B markets" (Kleinaltenkamp, 2018, p. 125).

Hence, many members of the IMM community are supervising doctoral students who intend to return to practice (or indeed never left it) on completion of their study – indeed this is the experience of the author team and their motivation for writing this paper. Through this paper, we offer a performative agenda for IMM scholars that may lead to the development of more performative theories. We argue that this agenda, if properly communicated to practice, would increase the likelihood of doctoral engagement by experienced professionals and therefore would be a performative act that would ultimately bring performative theory into being.

The paper is structured as follows. First, we outline our theoretical background, reviewing and discussing engagement scholarship and engaged doctoral study, followed by a review of the performativity literature. We outline briefly our approach to autoethnography and then present five evocative vignettes to add more substance to an essential conceptual argument. We then show how these vignettes helped us to identify the key tensions in an engaged performance between an engaged supervisor and an engaged doctoral candidate. We finally present a conceptual argument for performative co-creation, before concluding with our performative agenda, summary of our discussion and its limitations.

2.0: Theoretical background

2.1: Towards an engaged agenda and doctoral supervision

Engaged scholarship can be seen as a reaction to an ongoing discussion relating to academic utility for the world of practice (Boyer, 1996). In setting out to achieve this wider usefulness, engaged scholarship also reflects the zeitgeist of promoting science-informed management practice (Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009). Therefore the agenda for business-to-business marketers and scholars, in general, is to generate practically relevant findings and we will argue, are more likely to lead to the emergence of performative theory that demonstrably create change in business. Klein and Rowe (2008, p. 683) confidently state the need for the involvement of…

"professionally qualified doctoral students in doctoral study: We need
their unique capacity to serve as future boundary spanners between
academia and practice and the contributions to knowledge that they can
make if properly trained."

We consequently accept Klein and Rowe's link between an effective, as we shall say, 'engaged' doctoral program, and the potential for subsequent relevant and performative findings. Engagement can be defined as "reciprocal practices of civic engagement into the production of knowledge" (Barker, 2004, p. 124). Whilst seldom associated, we choose to link in this article the debates of engaged scholarship and performativity. Whilst performativity of a theory is argued to be only assessable retrospectively, we attempt to associate engaged scholarship with performativity by considering the felicitous conditions in the formation of a theory that allow for a greater chance, at a later date, for a theory to have effect on and in practice. Our core contention is therefore that engaged scholarship increases the chance of theories later becoming performative. We therefore specifically consider performative co-creation as a performance between supervisor and supervisee in a doctoral program. The crux of our argument is that the ambition of an engaged doctoral program should be to generate performative theory, and that this ambition is facilitated by an engaged doctoral candidate's ongoing embeddedness within industry. This contrasts with a more traditional model of supervision designed to focus on academic metrics and benchmarks such as attendance at leading conferences and publishing in academically ranked and regarded journals (that practitioners may seldom read). We are drawn to the comment by Halse and Malfroy (2010, p. 80) when speaking of traditional modes of supervision as:

> "…an intellectual and social enterprise, where personal boundaries were sometimes blurred but the roles of supervisors and students were clear: the supervisor provided oversight and guidance; the doctoral student was responsible for producing a seminal thesis that would secure his or her place as an authority in their field. Such representations may reflect the sort of romantic yearning for an imagined golden past."

This model uncritically assumes the ascendancy of the supervisor's knowledge over the student's. The hierarchical notion of 'supervisor' can seem unhelpful in this regard when perhaps 'advisor' or 'mentor' is a more appropriate term (Maxwell & Smyth, 2011; Malfroy, 2005) Klein and Rowe (2008, p. 676) suggest that newly designed programs need to be developed that are attractive to professional candidates, a contention that we will support in this paper. They suggest that:

> "If some doctoral programs were specifically designed to build on this intellectual capital, more doctorally qualified faculty would produce practically relevant research in the eyes of "expert" practitioners."

We will suggest that in this revised model the expert/novice dynamic may become significantly blurred and, indeed, in some cases reversed. A more helpful term would be to consider this

exchange as a more democratic *co-creation* of value which we will work towards defining in this paper. Indeed, Malfroy and Yates (2003) equally proposed that new knowledge was *collectively* produced between experienced professionals entering doctoral study from and during service in a professional business or organizational context, and supervisors. However, such a dynamic inevitably creates tensions. Buckley, Ferris, Bernardin, and Harvey (1998) propose some of these "areas of tension" in academic-practitioner interaction: first and notably, there is a *theoretical versus pragmatic focus* that affords primacy to academic outcomes. Many leading marketing scholars have become proponents of marketing as a scientific endevour (Bartels, 1951; Buzzell, 1963; Converse, 1945; Demirdjian, 1976; Hunt, 1983; Hunt, 1993; Hutchinson, 1952) while others have spoken passionately that this should not be the exclusive ambition to the cost of practical findings (Brown, Bell & Carson, 1996; Egan, 2009). Implicit in this dichotomy seems to be an assumption that a finding cannot be both scientifically *and* practically useful. This tension has been explored as the rigor-relevance gap both in marketing (Baines, Brennan, Gill, & Mortimore, 2009; Baraldi, La Rocca & Perna, 2014; Brennan, Canning & McDowell, 2014; Cederlund, 2014; Gummesson, 2014) and in the broader management literature (Fincham & Clark, 2009; Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009; Kieser & Leiner, 2009). Cuervo-Cazurra et al. (2013, p. 285) and Doh (2010, p. 98) warn of practical contributions being an "afterthought" at the end of a paper producing findings of "dubious practicality."

Buckley et al.'s (1998) second tension is between *data-supported versus a focus on logic*. Scientific methods generally favor a deductive approach designed for maximum generalization, discouraging subjective interventions by the researcher based on their experience. In this sense, an experienced professional should reject their instinctive and experientially informed sense that a finding is impractical, instead favoring reliance on rigorous generalization driven by academic literature and research. Instead, pracademics may be inclined to deploy an abductive and experimental approach favoring the elimination of unpromising findings in the development of a relevant theory (Klein & Rowe, 2008, Van de Ven and Johnson, 2006). Buckley et al.'s (1998) third observed tension is a reliance on *scientific method versus case examples and common sense*. Some scholars feel that the rigor-relevance gap has arisen due to the predominance of positivist epistemologies (Barker, 2004; Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009). Klein and Rowe (2008, p. 683) state the need for the involvement of pracademics in doctoral study and make a further link to the adoption of qualitative approaches − "we need their unique capacity to serve as future boundary spanners

between academia and practice and the contributions to knowledge that they can make if properly trained in qualitative research methods." However, the issue we suggest may be more than just a reliance on the dominant functionalist paradigm. Midgley et al., (2017) discuss a paradigm barrier in industrial marketing research, and suggest that this can be overcome by taking a methodologically pluralist approach, allowing theoretical, methodological and methodical choices to be led by the practical business problem and the solutions sought, and that the methodological traditions and methods be decoupled from paradigmatic traditions.

Buckley et al.'s (1998) fourth tension is a focus *on academic-oriented versus practitioner-oriented journals*. Supervisors must therefore respect the ambition of EDCs to publish in practitioner journals. Klein and Rowe (2008, p. 682) speak of:

> "…finding a form of representation and communication of their research
> results that can speak to the professional [community of practice] that
> was studied, so that their former peers can see the practical implications
> of the research results. This goes far beyond the usual confirmation of
> the internal validity of the research results with the study participants".

In an abductive loop we used these conceptual categories to begin thematic analysis of our vignettes and through which further tension were identified. We next briefly outline the meaning of performance, performativity and performative theory.

2.2: Performativity

The early conceptualization of performativity is "doing things with words" (Learmouth, 2005; p. 617). Authors deploying this approach discuss a perlocutionary act – the bringing into being of what has been said, or a change in an audience based on what they have heard. For instance, in the context of doctoral examination, an examiner uttering congratulations that the candidate has passed their viva with minor corrections, is perlocutionary and brings into being a doctorate. In advocating a performative agenda, Felin and Foss (2009) suggest that scientists no longer have to choose between understanding the world and changing it. Thus, performativity offers a challenge to the notion underpinning much research – that researchers are there to passively observe and report rather than intervene and change. Performative theory should be a theory that shapes practice and becomes self-fulfilling. Ligonie (2018, p. 464) succinctly suggests that performative theory considers

the "agency of concepts and models that scholars build." We are energized in this paper by considering whether experienced professionals entering doctoral programmes are more able to develop theories that later are seen as performative, and ask what are the felicitous supervisory conditions that make that more likely.

Marti and Gond (2018) propose a helpful performative process theory that flows through three stages. First, *generic performativity* denotes the likelihood that a theory leads to practical experimentation with that theory. Alternatively a theory might be superficially applied or ignored by practitioners. We posit that a practitioner involved in theory development might increase the chances of experimentation driven by that theory. Second, *effective performativity* involves the identification of anomalies. Marti and Gond discuss the differences between how such anomalies may emerge in the physical and social sciences. In the social sciences, the development of the theory itself may create the anomalies, rather than the anomalies emerging through testing. Hence, again we posit that practitioner engagement in theory building will increase the likelihood of a theory development through an engaged doctoral process leading to effective performativity. Third, Marti and Gond (2018: 492) propose that Barnesian performativity is where experimentation and the identification of anomalies leads to practices being changed more to fit the theory being examined and then become routinized in practice. They define practice shifts as "changes in practices that emerge because practitioners observe anomalies." However, this framework has been criticized as being too linear and a representation of theory (D'Adderio, Glaser, & Pollock, 2019), as objectified and standalone. In slight contrast, we do read into Marti and Gond's framework, space for more teleological reversals and interruptions which suggest these stages are not proposed as too deterministic by Marti and Gond. The stages do to us seem like a logical representation of the flow of activities through which a theory can become performative. However, we do align ourselves with D'Adderio et al. (2019) where they see performativity as ongoing journeys that constitute, reconstitute and de-constitute reality and can be thought of as a continuously unfolding. In proposing performative co-creation, we indeed consider additionally the felicitous interaction of elements in the formation of a theory in a way that it is more likely later to lead to committed experimentation of the theory in practice, which in itself is likely to lead to more identification of anomalies. We seek to explore how the performance of doctoral supervision increases the potential for performative theory to later develop.

We note the lack of an adequate explanation as to how performative theories come about, in essence, from what felicitous conditions performative theories emerge. Marti and Gond (2018, p. 487) speak of this being a problem of "success bias" which we read as being the tendency to retrospectively ascribe performativity. They also suggest, "the literature lacks a clear understanding of the conditions that determine whether theories become performative or not." In their article they address the boundary conditions between a theory being proposed and it becoming performative, but we still do not read into current literature an adequate explanation of performative theorizing − how a theory that later becomes adjudged as performative 'becomes'. We therefore turn to recent work that has tried to conceptualize performativity as a performance. Pattinson et al. (2017) recently deploy the metaphor of the Argentine Tango to advance a performative theory of effectuation processes, envisioning the spontaneous acts of the dancers as innovation and the felicitous conditions generated by the other dancers, the dance floor, music, spectators and mood to generate innovation. This perspective seems to support the view of performativity as being "inextricably intertwined with the actors, artefacts, and practices that co-produce it" (D'Adderio et al., 2019, p. 2). We are drawn here to the notion of performative praxis (Cabantous & Gond, 2011) as "sets of activities that enable theories to become social reality" (Gond, Cabantous, Harding, & Learmonth, 2016). We ask what are the performative acts or praxis that lead to the development of performative theories co-produced between EDCs and their supervisors? Co-production is of central importance in our following narrative, and as such, "activities, practices, doings and sayings, in a particular site, have [performative] effects" (Mason, Kjellberg, & Hagberg, 2015: p.3) – we argue in real time. Taking Pattinson et al.'s (2018) tango metaphor to the doctoral supervision process, value co-creation leads to successful value co-creation. A successful outcome may not however lead to findings that have impact in practice, put another way it may not generate a performative theory or may more loosely not produce findings that are performative. We thus suggest that the performative act be semantically separated from performative theory but seek recognition of how the performative acts (praxis) of supervisors and EDCs can lead to a greater chance of leading to the emergence of performative theories of industrial marketing.

We therefore conclude this section by clarifying our use of three terms drawn from this literature, performativity, performative theory and performance. *Performativity* we take forward a facet of language that leads to some effect on action, in our case we speak of a performative agenda for doctoral supervision. We speak of a *performance* as the emergent interplay between a supervisor, supervisee and other actors and within a

felicitous context that holds the greater potential for a *performative theory* to later emerge. Performative theory we take forward as a theory that has effect, that is causal and which becomes self-fulfilling in that practices move to resemble the theory.

3.0: Methodology

3.1: Autoethnography

Rather than simply write a conceptual paper from hidden reflection we aimed to add some greater substance to our reflections by writing and analyzing five auto ethnographies from the author team and offering these as some evidence of our experiences. Our approach to data gathering and analysis in this paper is therefore 'light touch' but we feel offers a more thorough exploration that in a simply conceptual presentation. Notwithstanding it remains critical that we acknowledge the nature and uses of autoethnography. Its central ethos is to situate the individual within the research context as both observer and observed. It initially developed as a progression from the traditional ethnographic approach where the observer remained outside the action and interpreted what they observed (Denzin, 1997, Ellis & Bochner 2006, Anderson 2006, Duncan, 2004). Autoethnography has therefore been argued to study the world from the reflective perspective of the researcher (Denzin, 1997), what Spry (2001) defines as "…a self-narrative that critiques the situatedeness of self with others in context" (p.710). The inception of autoethnography spawned a significant level of interest in the technique, especially in work that tended to reject traditional analytical ethnography for an approach that became labelled "evocative autoethnography" (Anderson 2006). What resulted was a dichotomous polemic between the advocates of evocative autoethnography and a more traditionalist following rooted in analytical ethnography, or what became known as analytical auto-ethnology (Learmonth & Humphreys, 2011).

Central to evocative autoethnography, is that the text needs to be "evocative" and as such lends itself to many forms of delivery, whether written, spoken or performed (Sughrua 2019, Ellis & Bochner 2006). The authenticity of self and performance is central to the project, and for Ellis and Bochner (2006) it is the evocativeness that should resonate and enable readers to create their own understandings, thus allowing vicarious learning from another's experience. Anderson (2006), suggests that the rejection of traditional analytical autoethnography, for the evocative style has shadowed the potential for a more analytical ethnography. He goes on to suggest that evocative autoethnography is potentially undemocratic, and inaccessible requiring

as it does "considerable narrative and expressive skills" (p. 377). In order to elucidate the nature of analytical autoethnography he presents four main elements in which the researcher is:

> "(a) a full member in a research group or setting; (b) uses analytic reflexivity; (c) has a visible narrative presence in the written text; (c) (sic) engages in dialogue with informants beyond the self; (d) is committed to an analytical research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena." (p. 375)

There is a sense that there is a place for both evocative and analytical autoethnography to co-exist in Wall (2016: p.8) who whilst acknowledging the still existing schism, argues for what she sees as a moderate form of autoethnography. This she indicates by arguing that autoethnography can manifest itself in many forms, and rather than represent analytical and evocative autoethnography as two extremes they are better represented as being two ends of a continuum.

3.2: Procedures

We draw on Wall's (2016) useful continuum to position our use of autoethnography. Also we respect Duncan (2004) who explains that her use of autoethnography was utilitarian, it was the only/best way of investigating her research problem. We too were attracted to a technique that provided both a sense of emotion that was felt by all the authors when talking about their experiences, but also might provide suitable material to feed a thematic approach to our analysis. We would position our approach somewhere in the right hand quadrant of Wall's continuum and in doing so acknowledge the value in both the evocative and analytical aspects of autoethnography.

There were few instructions as to what was included beyond a requirement for each author to write about their experiences of being an experienced doctoral candidate (EDC), and also where applicable, experience of being an experienced doctoral supervisor (EDS). Notwithstanding the collective, and expected similarity in flavor, each of the five abridged autoethnographies provided interesting differences in the journey covering a range of issues with varying levels of depth. Additionally, there was some variation in the period covered within each story. For instance vignette 2 recounts a journey of 20 years whereas other vignettes focused on a relatively compressed period.

Data analysis took place in an abductive loop, initially inspired by the tension identified by Buckley et al. (1998), then expanding as we identified further tensions and dimensions of tensions to those proposed by Buckley and colleagues. We then considered the elements in these tensions which were negotiated in the supervision performance.

4.0: Evocative vignettes

Similar to the approach taken by Whitehurst and Richter (2018) and much like the approach adopted by (Strumińska-Kutra, 2016), drawing on the experiences of the authorial team, we use an evocative and analytic autoethnographic approach to study engaged scholarship in the context of doctoral supervision. Mason, Kjellberg and Hagberg (2015, p. 2) suggest that "studying the performativity of marketing offers a response to calls for marketing researchers to reflect on their roles during and after research encounters." In this section we present five evocative autoethnographic vignettes, in which the authors provide reflections on their personal experiences as EDCs and EDSs. We then analyze these evocations to identify a series of tensions which we use to further develop our notion of performative co-creation. .

Vignette 1: Doctoral student with 30 years of professional experience

I am a 'pracademic', a term I use to identify myself colloquially as someone who has 'blended' experience as a practitioner and academic. My practical experience amounts to over 30 years in industry, almost wholly in business-to-business contexts. During my 12 years as an 'academic' I have continued to practice through my own B2B marketing consultancy.

The motivation for my doctorate was a desire to understand more about how sales and marketing interact to develop value propositions. This desire was driven by a history of working as a senior marketing practitioner in large organizations, which had attempted to move towards a more customer-centric approach to developing value propositions with varying degrees of success. Having the opportunity to try and understand more deeply, unpack, and explain the phenomenon of sales-marketing interaction for value proposition production to try and help move practitioner understanding forward was an exciting prospect for me as a novice academic researcher.

During the early phases of the doctorate I felt my practitioner experience was seen by the program and supervisory team as a barrier to research objectivity that drove me towards a neo-empiricist research approach. However, I feel that adopting this 'objective' approach led to the production of anodyne work that left my considerable commercial experience out of the

analysis during the write up of essays, which were deemed to be 'non-doctoral'. This left me feeling frustrated and caused me to question the worth of continuing on the doctoral journey. The overemphasis on research philosophy also dampened my enthusiasm as it took my focus away from doing pragmatic research to help practitioners.

I was rescued by a new Director of Studies (DOS), who emphasized the centrality of my 'pracademic' commercial experience and encouraged me to put 'myself' back into the thesis. A watershed conversation with the DOS led to the deployment of a novel research methodology in which engaged scholarship was central. Adopting an engaged scholarship approach allowed me to put my commercial experience back into the interpretation of respondent data and helped bridge the schism between practitioner relevance *and* academic rigor in my thesis.

In practical terms the novel research approach unfettered me in a number of ways. The 'commercial' literature and research that I had been led to believe could not be used in the thesis was now permissible, and enormously enriched my work. I was able to include experiences from my commercial life as commentary to enhance data analysis which made the process much more enjoyable and rewarding. Writing in the first person, whilst strange at first, was an additional liberating factor which gave me my own voice in the thesis. Finally, my DOS encouraged me to 'get angry' in my analysis of existing theories to bring out the passion I showed in discussion about my field of study, which had been absent in my essays. My anger revolved around the performativity of theories espoused in the academic literature.

Overall my new DOS provided fresh insight and helped me to focus on both a scientific and practical contribution, not simply on academic literature gap-spotting. My self-perception of what I could contribute to the research process from the perspective of a former senior practitioner was enhanced, not least by the fact that both the DOS and my supervisor valued my greater experience of the matter at hand and saw the supervisory relationship as being a set of conversations, not uni-directional instruction – adopting the role of advisor rather than supervisor. Presenting a paper I co-authored and meeting the kind of academics who are part of the IMP gave me confidence that I can make a contribution to a practitioner-connected body of academics.

Seeking out contributions from academic literature and appreciating the power there is in synthesizing academic and commercial literature for both academic and practitioner audiences will be of immense lasting value to me. My renewed enthusiasm was driven by a feeling I can contribute to an industrial marketing audience and their associated academic journals..

Ironically, my trepidation is centered around the perception of contribution made to the world of practice. Often academic research can lead to outputs that seem descriptive, trivial and obvious to the practitioner. Having been the 'so what' muttering practitioner sat across the table from academics during my time in industry I don't want that to happen to me. I wish to develop theories that change practice.

Finally, the biggest challenge of my thesis was adjusting to a formulaic doctoral writing style that appeared to require more narrative than anything I had written previously. I feel that writing in a 'doctoral' style can create unnecessary distance which causes practitioners to accuse academics of 'talking funny'! I look forward to my debut as a doctoral supervisor I would resolve, through conversation, to encourage 'pracademics' to put themselves and their previous experience into their work. Helping them appreciate the need for producing contributions that develop both theory whilst changing practice would be the over-arching goal.

Vignette 2: Doctoral student with 20 years of professional experience and 20 years academic experience

By my mid-30's I had worked for several blue-chip companies in operations roles reaching middle management level, and was also involved in business process consultancy. A key role that I enjoyed was the education of clients and it was this that sparked an increasing engagement with both learning and teaching, but also an increased appetite for a deeper understanding of my discipline. I subsequently gave up the day jobs (although kept the consultancy work) and decided to take an MBA followed by an educational qualification, with a view to embarking on an academic career. I worked for a while in tertiary vocational education and whilst this helped me improve my teaching craft, it did not satiate my thirst for further understanding.

I intuitively knew that I needed to be in higher education but entry barriers seemed quite forbidding. However, I came across an initiative run by a UK research funding council that specifically aimed to get practitioners into higher education, applied and was accepted as one of the 12 scholarships. We were assigned to one of the 12 institutions on the scheme. I had what at the time I considered to be the great fortune to be allocated to a 'Russell Group' institution (the Russell Group comprises 24 research-intensive British universities). This initial optimism gradually dissipated as I realized that research output was the priority. My colleagues were all highly esteemed in their discipline, but few of them had significant practical experience. I was still involved in consultancy work and used my contacts to develop collaborative work such as student placements, consulting projects and other lucrative

collaborative activities. Also, teaching practitioners on various postgraduate programs was highly enjoyable, and generated further consultancy work. I started a PhD but because of the ethos toward theoretical output, and my preference for doing practical research that would be of some direct use, I gave it up. This was at about the same time that I was informed that my contract would not be extended. I was on the verge of going back into industry but chanced upon an advert for a lecturer in a 'post-92' university (a former polytechnic). The environment was quite different, most notably there was less pressure to do research and more emphasis on teaching and collaborative activities, especially through the very strong links with the local business community. I essentially picked up where I had left off at my first institution and had one foot still firmly planted in practice. Although I had little intention of doing a doctorate, that changed when I was given the role as first year tutor on a large course. My operations management practitioner instincts kicked in and I applied that knowledge to managing the first year cohort.

This is when the penny dropped, it was clear that I had to produce some research myself. At first I considered writing papers but realized that the size of the issue needed a doctoral approach. I had data for a five year period, but I immediately began to struggle with how I would approach writing this up. A more immediate issue was finding a supervisor who could help through the early stages of shaping the thesis but this was a challenge because of the lack of experience and interest in what I was doing. I ended up following the EdD (Doctor of Education) route, so it was deemed a pedagogical topic because some elements had a pedagogical slant. This left me in a difficult position because I felt it wasn't strictly a pedagogical topic. I viewed the issue as very much a business-management problem because it was related to aspects of institutional performance and fed into the general concept of the management of higher education.

I could write the literature review but I had a problem visualizing what the methodology would look like. My experience had generated the assumption that methodology should conform to clear parameters. I happened to be discussing my work with a senior research academic and was conveying the difficulties I was having trying to fit my methodology into what I saw as academically acceptable methodological theory. After a while my patient audience stopped me and asked me to explain what I was actually doing, how I was doing it, and what data I was collecting. After explaining they said "There you go, that's your methodology, now write what you did, not what you think academia wants". This was a cathartic incident and helped me shape my work into a more practical form that suited what I was doing. I felt unfettered, and

the thesis simply unfolded. The shackles of what I saw as academic correctness were permanently removed. The restrictions I felt in terms of the need for academic rigor, were in retrospect self-imposed in the conditioning facilitated by 15 years in HE. It took a few chance meetings with well-meaning academics to shake me out of that conditioning.

I could now visualize how my thesis would look using a combination of what I realized was technical action research (non-participatory action research) by a practitioner all neatly encased in a case study strategy. I was now using my own terminology to explain the process and felt comfortable doing so and at times felt I was on a consultancy assignment. The first two years, or "episode 1" as I called it covered the data collection, observation and intervention plan. Episode 2 covered the subsequent five years of collecting data after initiating the intervention.

I consider myself a 'pracademic', with one foot in academia and one foot in the world of practice. That world of practice is geographically located in the same place as me the academic. It has made me aware that we, as responsible business schools, should look to our own internal practices, especially in a climate of commercialization and competition. If ever I am asked what is my finest achievement is in HE, it will not be the doctorate itself. It will be what the doctorate achieved in terms of improving the lot of students. My next step is to write a practitioner guide to managing retention.

Vignette 3: Doctoral supervisor with 8 years of doctoral supervision experience

I began to supervise an EDC, James, about seven years into my academic career and it was one of the first doctoral supervisions I undertook. I largely drew on master's student supervision as a model of supervision at that time, which involved me 'explaining' how to do research including how to draw research questions from literature. There was an early conversation where I passionately advocated drawing on subject matter from outside the candidate's embedded community of practice (COP) since to do otherwise, I argued, would lead to bias in the data collection. Today I regret offering that advice and now see the value of an EDCs grounding in practice, which includes their ability to gain candid access to the problem area. In contrast, six years later I intervened in the supervision of another EDC, Andrew, and was struck immediately by the passion he had for his COP. It also struck me that the candidate was more passionate in speaking about his findings, rather than when writing about them. Previously, he had been advised to develop a value neutral approach, bracketing out his experience and drawing inference only from academic literature and findings. Drawing on experience from supervising James, I resolved therefore to encourage Andrew to write a first

person critique. Subsequently the narrative moved from being rather dry and neutral to become, as I saw it, deeply critical and interesting. I was also taken with his utter frustration with some of the conclusions in the academic literature relating to his COP and I remember suggesting he should take a strongly critical perspective when writing the literature review. Our co-created solution was to write a biographical section at the start of the thesis so that a reader could identify epistemic reflexivity in relation to critiques on the literature and in analysis of the findings. What emerged was a critique of academic literature from a practitioner perspective.

A further EDC I supervised was Alex. I started from Day 1 of Alex's supervision, and I look back on his problem development as something substantially grounded in his COP and the problems he was wrestling with professionally. This process started with me constantly pointing out that a doctoral thesis must be grounded in a theoretical contribution and that a practical contribution was a fortunate by-product. Again, I regret having held that stance but feel this is probably a common approach to supervising EDCs; this is a view that today has emerged from this experience into a notion of co-created research. The question was grounded in a practical business problem from the start, but in due course theoretical implications arose from the research. I also denigrated Alex's ambition to publish in professional journals rather than academic ones and here I think I had my eye on co-authored publications in academic journals, and meeting my career ambitions more than allowing Alex to prioritize his own. I now recognize the need for an EDC to gain standing in his professional community as much as within an academic community. What I took away from this process was not to force research questions into a body of literature too early in the process of supervising an EDC.

I realize now that this tension between practice and academic skills was a negotiated process of co-creating a thesis that was both rigorous and relevant. Two of the EDCs now hold academic posts so adding the rigor element as a supervisor in the co-creation process did keep open the option for those EDCs to move into academic posts. In one of the cases, the candidate remains in a professional post but maintains the interest in contributing to both academic and professional literature. With Andrew and Alex, I was struck by their engagement with professional literature that was largely unknown to me during their thesis journeys. While there are many comments by marketing academics that professionals don't engage with academic literature, I became aware of how little I engaged with professional literature. One important aspect from the supervisor's perspective is that an academic output from the thesis of a certain standard that inspires professional dissemination warrants merit as and is evidence of social impact. Through these three supervisions I developed a stance on supervising EDCs that altered

my view of the expert/novice relationship and drew me to reflect on the very notion of being a 'hierarchical supervisor'. Instead I now emphasize the process of co-creating problems and producing rigorous but practically relevant findings.

Vignette 4: Doctoral student with 20 years of business experience and 5 years of doctoral supervision experience

After 20 years in business including participation in a management buyout and holding several senior and board level positions in marketing I changed career and joined a business school lecturing in strategic management and marketing. This move satisfied my interest in reaching deeper understandings of business practice, and helping undergraduate, postgraduate and organizational practitioners in both the private and public sectors make sense of their worlds, and cast a more critical eye on marketing work.

My undergraduate education was in international relations and history but my business education pathway ensured that I was weaned off my early leanings to subjectivity and interpretation. My Diploma of Management Studies and MBA saw me become a neophyte of the objective managerialist paradigm and a fan of normative tools and techniques. I had discovered what was claimed to be the expert superiority and generality of the management method. I had apparently discovered the theoretical answer to management's everything.

I did my MBA part-time. However, during that period I eventually changed my zealous, managerialist attitude, becoming disenchanted with the claims of objective, value free analysis, predictability and causation that never seemed to occur in my management practice. Where were concepts like managerial power and value judgments in all of this? Indeed, the plethora of management models and formal market-customer-competitor analyses I prepared for formal planning documents only seemed to be used as part of ritual planning cycles, whereas 'real' business was done face-to-face without the need for this theoretical bureaucracy.

My management education experience brought into sharp focus the tension between my theory of management and my experience of work. I now see this as more a tension between my attitude and expectations of the role and purpose of management theory and its connection to my practice. The philosophical credentials of my formative marketing analysis and decision education were never openly declared or contrasted with alternatives. This meant I originally expected (uncritically bought into the belief) that management theory was able to provide crisp, clear insight and definite, success assured, courses of action. Do detailed and structured

analysis and the answer will pop out! I experienced dissonance because my managerial experience suggested otherwise.

My doctoral study and then supervisory journey followed. The school strongly emphasized a grasp of alternative philosophical and methodological perspectives and so my world became highly abstracted from the everyday. At the end of the process however I believed I had developed a more profound insight into the nature of managerial reality and how people knew that reality and so the doctorate did improve my understanding of my practice and sensitized me to the assumptions others would make.

My first doctoral supervision was with a DBA student. This involved supervising a long term colleague and friend who had extensive senior management experience with a large public company. The supervision presented me with some interesting personal challenges, such as how to give frank and candid feedback to a strong character (especially when I had only recently completed my doctorate), how to resist stepping in and resolving their dilemmas, puzzles and ponderings, and how to avoid being too directive in terms of methodological approaches. The student was emphatically practitioner-minded and initially positioned themselves as skeptical of the worth of abstract philosophical and methodological ideas and approaches for a DBA, a supposedly practically-orientated research degree. The antipathy to theory weighed heavily on me and I often wondered if it was my job to actively persuade the student of its worth and necessity or to simply support them reaching that conclusion for themselves. As time went by our supervisory conversations resolved this. This was very much a process of dialogue rather than supervision. We were in fact simultaneously trying to reach an understanding of the student's doctoral project. This was something very different from me advising the student how to undertake steps in the research process. The student gradually became more interested and amenable to how research theory could play a part in their thesis during these conversations. I would share the experiences and choices I made for my doctorate and also declared where I felt unsure about the way forward. Once the theoretical genie was out of the bottle this led to the student exploring very broad areas of literature to sensitize their data interpretation, often far removed from the normative practitioner focused literature of their core research topic. These so called 'outwith' literatures provided a new way of seeing dynamics and interactions between sales and marketing professionals and led to challenges to conventional thinking about the tensions between sales and marketing. This in turn provided a way for practitioners to change their conversation about their sales and marketing work, which in turn held the possibility of revitalization and improved prospects of commercial success.

Vignette 5: Doctoral supervisor with 10 years of business experience and 20 years of doctoral supervision experience

I am the middle generation in a three-generation series of doctoral supervisor/student relationships all involving experienced practitioners. My principal doctoral supervisor was a practitioner-turned-academic, I am a practitioner-turned-academic, and several of my doctoral students (some current and some graduated) are current or former practitioners. One of the joys of doctoral supervision is how much you learn, as a supervisor, during the process. A key difference between supervising experienced practitioners and those without substantial business experience is what you learn. While one should not stereotype, nevertheless, those with limited business experience tend to be 'theory-hounds' who keep one on one's toes with respect to the literature, and quite possibly introduce their supervisor to new and emerging theoretical approaches. On the other hand, the experienced practitioner (who will, necessarily, become familiar with a body of theory) generally keeps a keen eye focused on the practical relevance of both their own research and the literature they review. In particular, once the academic stardust has cleared and the practitioner-student realizes that the literature is not a fount of practical wisdom at which they are blessed to have been invited to drink, I have found that puzzlement, disillusionment and even cynicism can set in. Puzzlement that complex and arcane methodologies and terminologies have been deployed by evidently clever people and yet yield no obvious practical benefit. Disillusionment that the section of the academic article that is manifestly meant to deliver the practical relevance, the 'implications for practice', is often merely a brief and uninteresting statement of such generality as to be of no use to anyone. Eventually this may lead to a certain cynicism, since realization dawns that academic publishing is arguably a business like any other, academics respond to incentives like anyone else, the incentives to publish are high, and so the over-riding academic priority is to deliver research of which editors and reviewers approve.

Those practitioner-students who survive this process may (in my experience I would say usually do) return to the fray wiser but stronger. It begins to dawn on them that a great deal of business knowledge is highly contingent. Generalizations have to be at a relatively high level of abstraction to have any hope of carrying legitimacy, but business-people have to make decisions in specific circumstances. Indeed, arguably, it is the ability of the experienced practitioner to take account of the specific circumstances when applying general business knowledge that constitutes the essence of their experiential knowledge. They begin to appreciate that it is more or less asking the impossible to expect to find concrete answers to

concrete business problems in general-purpose academic articles. At this point, the wisest among them begin to realize that they should not seek the solution to their business problems in academic literature; rather, they are themselves the conduit through which seemingly esoteric academic findings can be converted into something of greater practical value.

Of course this is an idealized view of the process and leaves out what may be (and indeed I can state with confidence often is) a fairly tempestuous process as the supervisor and the practitioner-student initially lock horns over the relative merits of 'book learning' compared to experience. I have found unwise to assert or suggest, to a practitioner-student, that academic knowledge is a higher or superior form of knowledge compared to experiential knowledge. It is also, I would argue, incorrect. Academic knowledge and experiential knowledge are complementary, not competitive. When supervising a practitioner-student the goal, at least as far as I am concerned, is to speak both to academics in their language of theory and methodology, and to practitioners in their language of business problems and solutions. The exact balance between the two will depend on the nature of the doctoral qualification and attendant assessment criteria; for a conventional PhD the balance is more academic, while for a professional doctorate it is more practical. When working with a practitioner-student, the first aim is often to disabuse them of the notion that academic knowledge is meant to provide a direct solution to practical problems, the second aim is to persuade them that nevertheless academic knowledge has some value, and the third aim is to convince them that they are ideally placed to act as the intermediary between academic and practical knowledge.

5.0: Analysis of autoethnographies

In this section we draw on the lead offered by Buckley et al. (1998) in examining the tensions inherent in developing an engagement agenda. Through thematic analysis, we identify six key tensions in an engaged performance.

Tension 1: Theoretical versus pragmatic focus.

Our reflections suggest that starting a doctoral process by the supervisor inducting the EDC into 'their' paradigmatic tradition is a poor first step towards performative theorizing. In vignette 4 we see an EDC who is initially skeptical of the value of learning about relatively abstract aspects of ontology, epistemology and methodology, eventually becoming the

supervisor of an EDC and finding great mutual satisfaction as both come to appreciate the useful role that such considerations can play. Here we see a self-aware process of mutual learning going on, and a supervisor/student relationship that is not predicated on the assumption that the supervisor is always the better-informed member of the relationship, or that academic knowledge outweighs professional experience. The identification of the research problem and questions in this EDC to EDS dynamic appears somewhat democratic rather than hierarchically imposed. It is from this analysis of the vignettes that the idea of a co-created performance initially emerged. The emergent act of the EDS in Vignette 4 was to initially feel the academic imperative to impose rigor on a devout pracademic; then, seeing the engagement of the EDC with philosophy and methods, being persuaded true to his practice based instincts to allow the EDC to pull back towards rigor and eventually both democratically settle on rigor 'with' relevance as their joint ambition. In was apparent that this balance was ongoing throughout the period of study and that some decisions were not firmed up until the write up. As such, the approach to methods and methodology appears pluralistic and fluid through the process, constantly searching for anomalies.

Tension 2: *Gap-spotting versus practice problems.*

Closely related to tension 1 was a movement away from gap-spotting in literature to at least an equal status for a practical problem. Many scholars have bemoaned the addition of practical contributions as an afterthought in academic scholarship. In an engaged performance, practical problems are at the fore in the early stage of the process. Through all vignettes, this focus maintained the commitment of the EDC in the doctoral program. As such, commitment to the subsequent developed theory we would suggest was high on the part of the EDC. Not surprisingly, a further theme that emerges is that the use of the practitioner literature in the field (such as practitioner-orientated journals, magazines and 'white papers') was often disparaged when identifying gaps, with EDCs encouraged to ignore source literature that they may have used as practitioners and concentrate exclusively on 'rigorous' academic literature.

Tension 3: Experience versus knowledge

Initial enthusiasm followed by a period of disillusionment experienced by an EDC is a recurring theme. The initial enthusiasm was associated with the notion that engagement with academic knowledge and in academic research should have provided a new and deeper understanding of marketing and management theory that was expected to illuminate and enhance marketing practice. Disillusionment arises because the prior business experience of

the EDC is not seen by the supervisor as something valuable to be built upon during doctoral research, but as a problem to be overcome. That is to say, the experiential knowledge of the EDC is regarded as lacking validity, and at best an irrelevant distraction from the development of properly 'scientific' marketing knowledge. This is because of the perceived primacy of theory in a university context (particularly in research-intensive universities), and the perceived illegitimacy of knowledge grounded purely in experience. In the vignettes, we see an example of an EDC who is actively discouraged from using his practitioner knowledge as a basis for doctoral research but then, serendipitously, encounters a scholar who advocates a new and different approach that embraces his experience. Indeed, in vignette 3 the very idea of a 'hierarchical supervisor' is questioned in situations where the doctoral candidate has lengthy business experience. The suggestion emerges that, where EDC supervision is concerned, rather than a supervisory process and a supervisor/student relationship, it might be better to think of a dialogue process leading to knowledge co-creation. Our vignettes suggest that EDCs are somewhat alienated in conventional doctoral programs because practitioner experience appears not to be valued, knowledge creation has to be justified primarily in terms of formal epistemological ideas, and there is a preference for abstract theorizing over concrete problem-solving.

Tension 4: Theory building versus theory testing

Scientific methods generally favor a deductive approach designed for maximum generalization, discouraging subjective interventions by the researcher based on their experience. In this sense, an experienced professional should reject their instinctive and experientially informed sense that a finding is impractical, instead favoring reliance on rigorous generalization. The vignettes suggest that an ongoing process of theory building occurred throughout the doctoral supervision which involved colleagues in the EDCs community of practice, as well as well the EDS. Instead, pracademics may be inclined to deploy an abductive and experimental approach favoring the elimination of unpromising findings in the development of a relevant theory at any stage over the process, and this flexibility does not favor early commitment to hypotheses.

Tension 5: Bracketing out versus getting angry

Related to the tension of experience versus knowledge is the tension posed between bracketing out prior knowledge and using it at the extreme to get angry with the academic literature from the perspective of a practitioner. We suggest that in this process lies the identification of

anomalies between theory and practice, resembling generic performativity. However, a danger here is that an EDC moves to confirm their own working theories in a reverse form of generic performativity. Such an outcome is unlikely to lead to subsequent experimentation. Hence the EDS here play a role in ensuring the experience does not replace but instead is complemented by rigor. Key from the vignettes is to write a reflective account of the EDC so they become explicitly aware of their position in relation to the context of study and for the EDS to be a critical friend in ensuring that the theorizing process is not uncritically moving theory towards the autoethnography. However, getting angry seems key in performative theorizing by moving a rigor dominant performance to a rigor with relevance performance.

Tension 6: Professional versus academic credibility

A corollary to Tension 2 observed in vignettes 3 and 5, for example, is that when aiming to publish their work for a wider audience, the EDC is steered in the direction of academic journals and away from publications read primarily by practitioners and supervisors in these cases did not appreciate that the ECS's standing in the community of practice is as important, if not more important, to the EDC and standing in an academic community. So, the EDC who set out enthusiastically to learn about theory in order to contribute to practice, having encountered a number of hurdles on the journey, is finally told that the best place to publish their research is in journals that practitioners do not read. We suggest that a theory taken back into a community of practice by an EDC through their practitioner literature is more likely to lead to experimentation with that theory and refinement of that theory than one merely published for an academic community. The theme of co-creation emerges strongly from these six tensions and we move next to conceptually develop this idea.
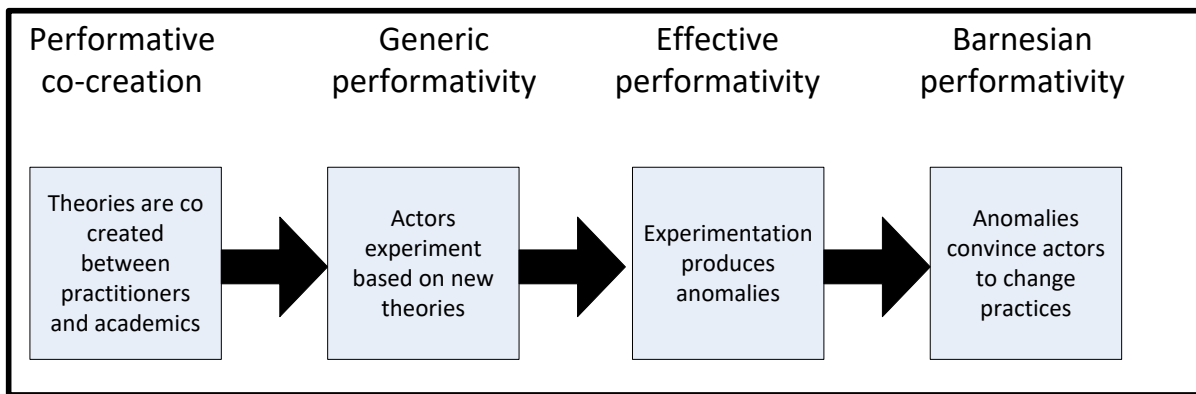
6.0: Performative co-creation

The central proposition is that an engaged doctoral program holds the potential for the subsequent emergence of performative theory. The word 'potential' here is important as we do not claim to present here a performative theory of supervision. To do so would require longitudinal study of traditional models of supervision and engaged supervision, tracing the effects of theories develop to see if there had subsequently been a greater tendency for theories develop that later shaped practice. If this could be established, then what we propose here may then be argued to be a performative theory of doctoral supervision. We make no such claim at this time. Instead, our analysis explores the felicitous supervisory conditions in which a

performative theory might best emerge. Performative theorizing includes the act of theory building, and when conducted between an EDS and an EDC still embedded in practice, the co-creation of that theory will involve not only the supervisor, but professional colleagues in the EDCs community of practice. What the author team have experienced is the tendency for EDCs to undertake a conjectural, explorative form of generic performativity in the theory building stage, both prior to gathering data, and in the analysis stage. In contrast, we perceive a more traditional supervision route where theories are exposed to practice only during data collection. To better conceptualize how performative theory emerges, we propose in Fig.1 to add a stage we call performative co-creation, of which performative theorizing is a part. Due to the EDCs continuing embeddedness in communities of practice, the EDS can gain a richer picture of the live business issue that needs to be addressed through the development of theory. Put another way, a research proposition grounded in a real world problem, anomaly or issue could most benefit from theorizing and we suggest, enhances the chances of that theory later becoming performative. Further, as the EDC is grounded in a community of practice, there is also an enhanced probability of the EDC being committed to experiment with the theory and seek out anomalies. We suggest that co-creation of a business problem can therefore, due to ownership of the theory by an EDC embedded in practice, lead to an enhanced chance of generic and effective and performativity subsequently emerging. By ownership, we mean to suggest that as an originator to of the theory concept or idea, the EDC will be committed to testing and identifying anomalies associated with their intellectual product.

We suggest that the additional of a stage, performative co-creation, into Marti and Gond's (2018) process theory of performativity. This stage explains not just how a formed theory emerges from formation to causing effects (being performative), but also how the theory forms through an engaged performance. In doing so we align ourselves with calls for performativity to be conceptualized as an ongoing journeys (D'Adderio et al., 2019; Garud and Gehman, 2016), which we contend has previously failed to adequately explain how potentially performative theories are formed.

Fig. 1: Authors' conceptualization of the position of performative co-creation in relation to the forms of performativity proposed by Marti and Gond (2018).

We have attempted a critical and subversive intervention into the context of doctoral supervision for experienced professionals, as such the combination of an engaging performance, and the positioning of performative co-creation in Marti and Gond's process theory of performativity. Our contention is that an engaged doctoral co-created performance leads to a greater commitment to testing and experimenting with theories developed, greater interest in communities of practice (COP) that have been involved in theory development and greater interest on the part of the EDC in gaining standing in the COP by demonstrating that their theory has shaped practice. Marti and Gond (2018) propose a boundary condition for generic performativity is the reputation of the academic proposing a theory, and we extend this boundary condition to suggest that the professional reputation of a pracademics in the COP could be equally motivation of experimentation.

7.0: Towards a performative agenda

We next move from an agenda informed by the analysis of our vignettes to a conceptual argument based on our identified tensions and proposed notion of performative co-creation, which we present as an agenda. Our conceptual argument is that the chances of performative theory emerging from doctoral study are enhanced by employing what we have called performative co-creation between an EDC and EDS. Using both evocative and analytic autoethnographies we have identified the activities that generated an engagement agenda. The first aspect of our conceptual performative agenda is therefore to define the element of the performance in 'performative co-creation'. In doing so we attempt to address the black box of the conditions that lead to the emergence of performative theory. We present this as a series of four acts.

7.1: An engaging performance!

Act 1: Casting the roles?

The selection of supervisors is clearly important. For an EDC, a supervisor should ideally have some practical credibility for there to be a chance of performative co-creation. Selecting supervisors who can be pragmatic and empathic towards a practice orientation seems to be an essential pre-requisite. The ideal supervisor is likely to be someone who will appreciate and value the practical experience of the doctoral candidate. Casting the right actors in the performance would seem an essential first task, and program directors looking to recruit EDCs should carefully consider the process of auditioning and casting supervisors, who for this purpose are best termed 'advisors', for the support of EDCs. Abandoning notions of 'supervision' in favor of co-creation seems to us essential. Equally there is an issue for program directors in ensuring that proposals are not filtered out by potential supervisors on the basis of fit with existing theoretical interests of supervisors. This 'fit' should be de-emphasized in favor of the biography and capability of an advisor as an EDS.

In order to bridge the perceived gap between practice and academia a useful further step is to ensure that practitioners and pracademics undertaking doctoral study feel that they can engage their whole-self in the research process. That is, EDCs should not feel that they have to *bracket out* their experience (part of their professional pride and self-identity as senior practitioners) during the process of doctoral study as something that is a hindrance to objectivity. Engaging their previous commercial experience, we suggest, is a necessary precondition of whole-self engagement in doctoral study.

Act 2: What's my motivation?

The EDS should also appreciate that while some EDCs have academic ambitions, others have no interest in such a career path and so have quite different motivations from their academic peers. Tension may exist because the supervisor is quite possibly operating under the standard academic imperative ('publish or perish') and conventional PhD candidates are often considered an agent in achieving this goal. Given the likelihood of co-authorship of findings from a PhD, there is every possibility of self-interest on the part of the supervisor to have doctoral student focus on highly ranked academic journals, and due to copyright issues, that publications in professional journals seen as 'wasting' strong material. A particular issue might be citation counting, with many databases used to analyze academic 'value' only classifying ranked academic journals. This view must be overcome, and indeed an increased focus on

impact in many countries − demonstrating the value of published findings in society − may provide a welcome impetuous towards this end.

In the vignettes, there is also a sense that EDCs had been guided to take a neutral stance when examining academic literature, rather than 'to get angry' with the perceived lack of relevance of much academic literature to practice. We suggest that where the EDC is referring to practitioner literature to identify the source of this irritation, it is important that the EDS encourages engagement with professional literature and therefore maintains the best chance of contributing to it. This may ultimately serve the self-interest of the supervisor by offering avenues to claim impact from the research. The EDS has a role here to ensure that a reverse generic performativity does not occur where the findings resemble the predispositions of the EDC. The use of autoethnographies may be a novel approach to beginning doctoral study and may support the EDS understanding what the EDC is angry about.

In addition, there is the risk that the EDS saw their own doctoral research as a process that transformed them from a practitioner into an academic, and (perhaps without much thought) believes that the EDC is on the same pathway. This perception may conflict with the desire of an EDC to achieve a doctorate in order to become a better practitioner and indeed enhance their standing in their communities of practice. We suggest that EDSs should not adopt a posture of naïve academic evangelism without full consideration of the ambitions of the EDC. It may require the establishment of mechanisms by Business School management whereby the normal pressures on academics are alleviated or, perhaps more likely, are replaced by a different set of pressures where the need to contribute to academic knowledge through publication in prestigious journals is closely matched by the need to demonstrate some contribution to practice or indeed of having had societal impact. While this may seem implausible and idealistic, if business schools are to co-operate with business organizations to help with the major challenges of our time, such as maintaining or improving living standards while avoiding catastrophic climate change, there is little point in thinking small.

Act 3: Agreeing on the script

The first stage of the doctoral performance would be the perusal of an initial research proposal, which, where an EDC is concerned, may well be 'relevance' dominant and 'rigor' light. In our vignettes, there is a sense of EDCs being 'dominated for rigor' by supervisors early in the process and also proposals being rejected for lacking recourse to academic literature. It is highly likely that the case made by the EDC when submitting a proposal for entry on to a

doctoral program will be heavily influenced by experience of practice supported by commercial research evidence and practitioner literature. To then leave the practitioner feeling that this has to be 'dumped' in order to be accepted onto a program risks alienating the EDC from the whole process before it even begins. We suggest that the EDS encourages the EDC to continue to engage critically with practitioner literature. Indeed, critically investigating and interrogating the distinguishing characteristics of 'academic literature' and 'practitioner literature' is potentially a very interesting conversation for the EDS and the EDC to have and is a form of generic performativity in that through this process, anomalies are identified.

The EDS should also appreciate and emphasize that a contribution is more than a simple act of spotting a gap in the academic literature and setting off rigorously in pursuit of filling it. Authors such as Corley and Gioia (2011) have emphasized that contributions can be both to science and to practice, and others show how there are alternative strategies for making scientific contributions such as problematization (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011; Nicholson, LaPlaca, Al-Abdin, Breese, & Khan, 2018; Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011). Practical problematization provides a route to challenge the underlying assumptions of a body of work, rather than accepting and contributing incrementally to it. A broader challenge to literature can be advanced using the EDCs practical grounding. Van de Ven and Johnson (2006) discuss the importance of developing problems from real world business situations, rather than basing them purely on gap-spotting in published literature. Indeed, Alvesson and Sandberg (2011) also point to the potential of revelatory 'practical' contributions yet we see little subsequent discussion of how this can be achieved. We contend that theories built from assumption challenging during the theorizing process are more likely to lead to the identification of anomalies and practice changing theories than those based on incremental contribution strategies. Further, those that are grounded in practical problems rather than gap spotting in academic literature are more likely to lead to performative outcomes in practice.

Act 4: Avoiding 'method' acting

By 'method' acting, we mean to suggest an act of imposing a method and tradition of inquiry as part of the supervision process. A second product of our autoethnographic analysis is that co-creation is a boundary spanning activity of which the business competency and the relevance-focus of the EDC and the rigor-focus of the EDS are essential components. The vignettes also expose a tendency for supervisors to force a paradigmatic tradition on EDCs early in the supervision process. The overt focus on research philosophy, ontology, and epistemology while essential in the long run, risks diverting attention from the thing that may

have created the EDC's interest in the first place − a real life problem perceived by practitioners. We advocate a critical pluralist approach whereby methods, methodology and philosophy are treated as dimensions of the study approach that can be used pragmatically, rather than being hierarchical levels of study, which are dominated by the paradigmatic assumptions at a theoretical level to which all other levels are then subordinate (Midgley et al., 2017). Through this approach there is scope for spontaneity and divergence from the norm throughout the doctoral process.

We suggest that EDS should focus on this rigor-relevance dynamic throughout the relationship (or we suggest, 'performance'). Through this approach, a theory is likely to present a challenge to practice, rather than just describe and explain it. At the outset, the EDS should appreciate that the candidate is likely to begin with a preference to contribute to practice, and that a practical business issue may be central to the research problem. Whilst practitioners are probably keen to learn how to solve managerial and organizational problems instrumentally, the idea of 'studying' abstract philosophical ideas may, initially at least, be perceived as pointless and demotivating. The role of the EDS is to encourage the EDC to appreciate that those abstract ideas will, later in the process, very likely assist the EDC to illuminate new understandings about the practical focus of investigation. Put another way, to improve the chance of producing theory that has agency.

8.0: Conclusion and future research

We have proposed in this paper a move away from "an imagined golden past" of doctoral supervision spoken of by Halse and Malfroy (2010, p. 80). Our contributions respond to calls from authors to propose new models of doctoral supervision (Klein & Rowe, 2008; Malfroy, 2005; Malfroy & Yates, 2003) and builds in perspectives of the life ambitions of EDCs in the supervision processes not covered in models of supervision such as that by Maxwell and Smyth (2011). By assimilating the engaged scholarship literature with the performativity literature, we add in a precursor stage to the processual model proposed by Marti and Gond (2018).we call performative co-creation to address the weakness we perceive in the performativity literature that largely ignores how a theory later assessed as performative, came into being. Whilst the intellectual content of a thesis must of course remain that of the candidate, such a co-production involves taking into account the professional ambitions of the candidate, not just imposing academic imperatives in a hierarchical mode of 'supervision'. We have offered challenge to the notion that all theories, no matter how formed have an equal chance of

becoming (or not becoming) performative. We introduce a discussion of the 'potential' for performativity. The central proposition we have advanced is that supervision arrangements between an EDS and an EDC hold high 'potential' for creating performative theory. This potentiality is enhanced through and increased focus on both rigor and relevance, while exploiting the doctoral candidate's ongoing grounding in practice. We suggest further that performative theory generation should become an ambition for professional doctoral program, and this seems particularly pertinent to IM scholars, although it has much broader resonance. Our practical contribution is to present a performative agenda for doctoral programs involving experienced professionals. We present guidance for EDSs and programs managers as a performance in four acts that we propose would increase the chances of subsequent performative theory emerging. We have thus extended the discussion of felicitous conditions in which a theory is experimented with, anomalies identified and practice moves to resemble the theory, to the felicitous conditions of performative co-creation and theorizing. The central argument in this paper is conceptual with some reflective/autoethnographic input, so there is clearly scope for additional empirical research to elaborate on these initial propositions, possibly deploying longitudinal approaches to see if an engaged doctoral program has a greater tendency for performative theories to emerge in contrast to more traditional models of supervision. To establish whether our performative agenda is credible, longitudinal case studies from supervision to post-doctoral qualification would be advantageous. Further acts in the performance may be identified. Such studies would advance an understanding of the boundary conditions of performativity. We further suggest that the underlying principles of the agenda espoused in this paper should be investigated within other contexts of academic/practitioner engagement, such as consultancy and knowledge transfer partnerships.

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