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Professional status of executive coaching:

A study of the South African market

A research report submitted by

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (Business and Executive Coaching).

Wits Business School

Johannesburg, 2017

“It is the very success of a developing profession that brings on demands for inquiry of that profession.”- Chris Argyris (1975)

ABSTRACT

The study occurs against a backdrop of the growth of the coaching industry globally as it increases in popularity (Linley, 2006; Filley-Travis & Lane, 2006) particularly in organizational settings, where coaching is increasingly being relied upon as a significant part of learning and development (Joo, 2005). Despite the exponential growth, there is still no recognition of professional status by the state and society at large in the way that other professions are recognised. In 2008 the global coaching convention resolved to explore the feasibility of professionalisation in the different markets. Locating this global discussion on professionalization of coaching in the South African market, this study was conducted to establish the status of this market and to provide an understanding of the factors underlying the professionalization of coaching in South Africa and their respective contribution to the status quo. The study approaches the developments from several perspectives including the sociology of the professions and stakeholder theory.

Taking a qualitative research methodology approach, data was obtained from semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and archival data including policies, legislation and websites. The Burrage multi-actor framework (Burrage, Jaraush, & Siegrist, 1990) was used as a guideline for sampling in order to provide a multiple stakeholder perspective. There were different discussion guides for the different stakeholder groupings. In total, there were fourteen interviews conducted. Data was analysed using Atlas software.

Findings of the study reveal that the developments in the South African executive coaching industry have not followed the path of traditional professions as described by Willensky (1964). The prevailing position reflects a mixture of traditional and modern characteristics of professionalisation. To a large extent, there was consensus on the issues that are common across all stakeholder groupings, although there was some dissent as these stakeholder groupings have varying motives and positions. There was greater divergence of view within professional associations as a single stakeholder group. Part of this is reflected in the disparate occupational strategies pursued.

DECLARATION

I, Hlonipha Nobuntu Masiza, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (Business and Executive Coaching) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Hlonipha Nobuntu Masiza

Signed at .....

On the ..... day of 2017

DEDICATION

This research paper is dedicated to the memory of Markus Moses

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend a word of appreciation to the following people, without whose support this research project would not have been concluded:

Participants for offering your time to contribute and the interest you showed

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Dr. Kerrin Myres, for the generous support

My family:

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1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research was to explore the status of professionalization of Executive Coaching in South Africa. The study approached the issue from several perspectives including the Sociology of the Professions and multi-stakeholder theory perspective. Using primarily Willensky's multi-stage temporal analysis of the evolution of professions (Willensky, 1964) as a foundation, an assessment was made through canvassing the opinions of the various stakeholders of Executive Coaching. The identification of relevant stakeholders was guided by the Burrage Multi-actor model of professional formation (Burrage, Jaraush, & Siegrist, 1990). This framework is useful because, professionalization is an outcome of negotiations between different actors, each with their own objectives, resources and power bases (Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2012).

In 2008, the global community of coaches held the Global Coaching Convention in Dublin and produced the Global declaration on coaching. Amongst other things, the declaration set out to explore what might constitute a profession of coaching. The following are excerpts from the Professional Status appendix of the Dublin declaration on coaching (2008) found to be relevant and of direct interest to this study:

> "Do all parts of the coaching community want to see the creation of a coaching profession?"
>
> "Will the politics of the coaching community get in the way of creating a profession?"
>
> "By 2010, we seek a collaborative approach with the wider coaching community, and in particular the different professional bodies and stakeholders to establish the core elements of what might constitute a profession of coaching. In particular, we expect these bodies to come to agreement concerning guidelines concerning professional ethical codes, core competencies and knowledge base."

> “By 2010, the collaborative approach will have produced commonly understood criteria for levels of professional education and professional status within coaching.”
>
> “How will the profession effectively sanction itself where professionalism is breached?”
>
> “How does the coaching community influence regulation/legislation in such a way as to enable a coaching profession to exist?”
>
> (The Dublin Declaration on Coaching, 2008 pp 6- 8)

Following the Dublin Declaration, professionalization of coaching and various elements of professionalization have been researched in various markets (Lane, 2010; Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh and Parker, 2010; Svaleng & Grant, 2010; Griffiths & Campbell, 2008 and Sherpard, 2005). Many of the studies have identified the obstacles to professionalization of coaching (Gray 2011, Grant & Cavanagh, 2004) whilst some have identified and recommended pathways to achieve professionalization (Lane, 2010; Drake, 2008 and Rostron, 2009). It is clear that the various initiatives and pace of development in various markets are at different places as influenced amongst other factors by regulation, culture, size of the market and maturity of the industry.

Locating the global discussion of professionalization of coaching in the South African landscape, the study aimed to establish the position of this market in the journey towards professionalization. Through interviewing various groups of stakeholders and looking to policy documents, websites etc. as secondary data, the study also describes the initiatives currently underway and provides insights into unique challenges, imperatives and opportunities, where professionalization of coaching is concerned.

Context of the study

Executive coaching is relatively young as an occupation. Available literature (Gray, 2010; Hamlin & Beattie 2009 and Clegg, Rhodes, Kornmberger, & Stilin, 2005) acknowledges this fact and often coaching is referred to as an emerging field. The evidence of this is in the fact that there is still very limited research that has been conducted on the field (Passmore & Gibbes, 2007; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011; Gray, 2010; Feldman & Lankau, 2005 and Kampa-kokesch & Anderson 2001). De Haan and Duckworth (2013) describe coaching research as still being in its infancy and they ascribe this, in part, to lack of funding. This paucity of research is further accentuated by the exponential growth that coaching has enjoyed in the last twenty years (Gray, 2010). As Linley (2006) points out, due to increasing popularity of coaching, the practice has outgrown the research significantly.

A survey conducted by Price Water House Coopers on behalf of International Coaching Federation, showed that there were 47000 coaches across the world in 2011. That, in comparison with 30000 coaches as found by the previous study conducted in 2007, proves that coaching is a growing practice. It is also worth mentioning that this study placed the value of coaching as an industry at $2 billion in 2011, compared with $1.5 billion in 2007. Another finding of the PWC ICF study is that 32% of coaches had less than two years coaching experience in 2007. And even though in 2011 it was found that 49% of the coaches had at least 5 years' experience, it is still fair to see this as proof that coaching is a new occupation.

This growth and expansion over recent years has attracted practitioners entering coaching from a variety of backgrounds, including retiring executives, human resource professionals, academics and management trainers, clinical and occupational psychologists, counsellors and psychotherapists. (Mook in Brennan, 2008; Cavanagh, Grant & Kemp, 2005 and Grant & Cavanagh, 2004). Some of these practitioners have coach-specific training and experience whilst many don't.

As coaching evolves, and more organisations are relying on coaching as a significant part of their learning and development strategy (Joo, 2005), clients are becoming increasingly selective when hiring coaches. Consumers of coaching services in organisations are looking for ways to identify coaches more systematically, ensuring quality, efficacy and return on investment. They are also growing weary of what Gray (2011) refers to as "pseudo-qualified coaches". This has brought urgency to the question of who should be conducting executive coaching and what training, experience and credentials these individuals should have.

It is for these reasons that Grant and Cavanagh (2004) suggest that the coaching industry has reached a key point in its maturation. Whilst there is a view that "Perhaps the 'time' of coaching has come" (Gray, 2011 p 5), there is an alternative view suggesting that the industry is a long way from being ready for professionalization (Brennan & Prior, 2005; Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Gray 2011, Lane, 2010, Benett, 2006 and Spence, 2006). Reasons given to advance this position include lack of a scientifically-premised comprehensive theoretical framework and a defined body of knowledge (Bennett, 2006; Grant and Cavanagh 2004). In its extremes, this argument begs the question of whether coaching exists as an area of practice distinct from the likes of Human Resources Development (Hamlin, 2008 and Beattie & Hamlin, 2009) and Psychology (Berglass, 2002; Bluckert, 2004; Spinelli, 2008; and Bachkirova, 2007). Other factors stated as reasons for the lack of readiness include the fragmented state of the industry- in particular the many professional bodies/associations and training schools (Lane 2010, Lane, Stelter, & Stout Rostron, 2009), no shared knowledge amongst practitioners, no barriers to entry, no recognition of professional status by the state and society at large and no evidence of regulation, all of which are considered defining landmarks in professionalisation.

A review of the literature shows that there have been studies of coaching practices, profiles and trends in various countries (Brennan, 2008; Brooks & Wright, 2007; Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009; Lane, 2010 and Steenkamp, 2012). Furthermore, several surveys conducted in Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand (Brooks & Wright,

2007; Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Grant & Zackon, 2004; ICF, 2012; Spence, Cavanagh, & Grant, 2006; Whybrow &Palmer, 2006;) provide a picture of the current practices, including coaching domains and frameworks.

These studies have generally found the following about the industry:

1. No recognition of professional status
2. Coaches tend to come from varying background with varying qualifications and education levels
3. Many coaches are not trained in coaching
4. Coaching specific University qualifications is a recent development
5. There are concerns about “fly by night” coach training interventions
6. There are numerous professional bodies
7. There are no barriers to entry
8. There are no enforceable ethics and regulations

Whilst there is also some literature on the professionalization of coaching from a global perspective (Lane, 2010; Svaleng & Grant, 2010; Grant & Zackon, 2004; and Gray, 2011), there is currently no research on the professionalisation of coaching in South Africa. That informs the empirical objectives of this study. It is important to have South African specific research because different societies and economies have different patterns of professionalising (Neal & Morgan, 2000; Sabini, 2014) and different systems of occupational power, authority and status.

To further support the need for research that is specifically nuanced in the South African context, is a 2011 COMENSA survey of South African coaches that found that accreditation, credibility and professionalization came up as concerns amongst the coaches surveyed. This follows the global trend as the ICF study also shows professionalization to be an issue- 52% of coaches surveyed indicated that their clients expect them to be credentialed.

According to Bluckert (2004), the drivers for professionalization of coaching come from both within and outside the coaching community. As the debate is no longer confined amongst coaching community, a multi-stakeholder view becomes important for this study. Emerging occupations in this day have to deal with the pressure exerted by a variety of stakeholders, including established (traditional) professions, big corporations and the State. The conditions that allowed for professions to decide the rules under which professional services can be dispensed, have been challenged (Sabini, 2014). This suggests a need to recognise other role players of influence, as laid out by Burrage, Jaraush & Siegrist (1990).

Problem statement

Main problem

Research the status of professionalization of executive coaching in South Africa

Sub-problem 1

Assess the progression of the executive coaching professional project using the Willensky model

Sub-problem 2

Obtain stakeholder perceptions of professionalization of executive coaching

Significance of the study

The study will fill a gap in research and add to the growing body of knowledge in South Africa. The issue of professionalization in coaching has been topical in literature (Drake, 2008; Bluckert, 2004; Brotman & Liberi,1998; Grant & Cavanagh 2008; Rostron, 2009) and has featured in various industry studies. These include Norway (Svaleng & Grant,

2010), New Zealand (Brooks and Wright, 2007), Australia (Binstead and Grant, 2008), United Kingdom (Lane, 2010) United States of America (Brennan 2008). South Africa is no exception and in 2011 COMENSA surveyed coaches in South Africa on a range of issues and professionalization was highlighted by the respondents as one of the key issues. Other South African industry studies (Atlee, 2013 and Steenkamp, 2012) also make reference to the topic of professionalization. This study will be the first to look in-depth at professionalization of coaching in South Africa.

It is hoped that this study will provide guidance to the following groups of stakeholders:

a) *Academics and researchers*

Within the field of sociology of professions, the academic element is an important element in the professionalization discussion and academics are thus interested parties. As more academic institutions offer coaching qualifications, this study could contribute towards curriculum and a greater awareness of the landscape in as far as coaching is concerned. Given that coaching is a relatively new field, this research will contribute to the growing body of knowledge.

b) *Coaches*

This research could set the foundation for a discussion on whether coaches want to professionalise and what form this must take. The 2011 Comensa study also highlighted the need of those who practise coaching to have the public educated about what coaching is. Outcomes of this study will help refine what coaching is, distinguishing it from what it is not.

c) *Clients- coachees and corporate clients*

According to the coaches surveyed in the ICF study, a big number of clients expect coaches to hold some credentials. Another possible outcome is a better quality service to the consumers of coaching services. There also seems to be an

increasing level of frustration amongst people who buy coaching services on behalf of companies. Professionalisation could give clients a greater level of comfort in terms of quality assurance and a clear idea of what to expect from a coaching service. The outcome of this research could contribute to helping in making decisions on how to select coaches.

d) *Related professions*

The distinction between coaching and psychology is not always clear to all concerned. Similarly, the uniqueness of coaching from HR Development is also not clear and debated. Elements of professionalization that will be examined will contribute towards a better understanding of what coaching is and is not and how it relates or differs from related professions.

e) *Professional bodies of coaching*

The various bodies have initiatives towards professionalization and this research will provide knowledge that will inform their initiatives and give further insight into their occupation.

Delimitations of the study

The focus of this study is on **executive** coaching. Thus, other forms of coaching will be excluded.

From a stakeholder grouping point of view, recipients of coaching and line managers have not been included as they are participants in coaching, rather than experts in the process and industry.

Definition of terms

Executive Coaching:

For purposes of this study, the Kilburg (1996) definition of executive coaching will be adopted as a working definition:

“a helping relationship between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and, consequently, to improve the effectiveness of the client’s organization within a formally defined coaching agreement”. (Kilburg, 1996, p. 67)

Professionalisation:

Professionalisation is the process whereby a gainful activity moves from the status of ‘occupation’ to the status of ‘profession’ (Emener and Cottone, 1989).

Professional Project:

A Professional project refers to pursuance of professional status and recognition. It requires being deliberate in setting out to be a profession and probably pursuing a process model.

Occupational Strategy:

A collective intention of individuals in occupations and some outwardly coherent way to act, in pursuance of a collective goal of achieving control over the supply and demand of labour.

Assumptions

- The respondents will be willing to share their knowledge and information
- The respondents will be honest about their views on this subject
- The coaches will honestly disclose their credentials without fear of being judged
- The research assumed that views on coaching would primarily be of business coaching context, where an employer is a sponsor or buyer of the service

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section commences with a broad overview of executive coaching and accompanying literature. It is then followed by a review of the literature on other three key themes of relevance to the study. The first area covers theory regarding professions and professionalisation. The aim is not to present the entire body of theories on the sociology of professions, but rather to focus on aspects particularly relevant to the professionalisation of coaching. The second area is a review of literature and research on coaching professionalisation. Lastly, there will be a review of stakeholder literature as is relevant to professional formation.

2.2 Background discussion

Following the growth of the coaching industry in the last few years, there have been calls for professionalization of this practice from the different stakeholders. There have also been a few studies into the issue of professionalization. Some studies have looked specifically at the professionalisation of coaching i.e. the requirements and viability thereof. Other studies have looked broadly at the practice of coaching, and identified professionalisation as a key issue in the industry.

“The escalating demand for coaching worldwide has motivated practitioners, consumers and educators of coaching to advocate for professionalization of the industry to safeguard quality, effectiveness and ethical integrity” (Rostron, 2009, p.76).

Although the Global Coaching Convention of 1998 resolved to work on strategies that will see to the professionalization of the coaching industry, available research reveals that there isn’t consensus on how far this industry is from being a profession. This prompts the question what makes a profession a profession? To make an assessment of how far along the journey, one needs to understand the process of professionalization. Professionalization has been studied extensively by Sociology scholars and this theory could help frame the discussions for the coaching industry and provide benchmarks as informed by other industries that have pursued professionalization over the course of History.

2.3 Executive Coaching

There is no single agreed-upon definition of Executive coaching. The term Executive Coaching in this study specifically refers to executive coaching as defined by Kilburg (1996):

“a helping relationship between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and, consequently, to improve the effectiveness of the client’s organization within a formally defined coaching agreement” (Kilburg, 1996, p. 67)

Executive Coaching is one of various genres of coaching. Other genres include Life coaching, Team coaching, Peer coaching, Transformational coaching, Skills and performance Coaching etc, Executive Coaching is distinguished for its specific use in the various business contexts and often targeted at individuals occupying leadership roles (executives) with significant responsibility for the current and future success of the organisation. This can be extended to include other high performing individuals on an accelerated growth path. Sometimes executive coaching is used for poorly performing individuals, but there has been a significant shift from this being its primary use in organisations. It is now seen increasingly as an investment towards making the executive more self-aware in order to carry out their leadership role more effectively. Whilst there are opposing views on how old coaching has existed for (Passmore, 2010), it is widely accepted that the development of workplace coaching and even more so executive coaching are emerging practices, only arising and gaining popularity in the 1980s (Stout-Rostron, 2006).

Several other factors in practice distinguish Executive Coaching from other genres of coaching.

- The primary client is the organisation rather than the individual that is being coached
- The intention is always to align the goals and capabilities of the individual with the aspirations, goals and expectations of the organisations.

- The overall purpose of the coaching will be agreed upon upfront, usually in a three-way meeting by coach, coachee and line manager, and appropriate feedback will be provided, with an understanding of non-disclosure of confidential details-honoring ethical principles.

Executive Coaching is used for a range of benefits. These include:

- Enhanced personal and organizational performance
- Better work-life balance
- Higher motivation
- Better self-reflection
- Optimized decision making
- Improved change management

Coaching, as a whole, has developed from a multi-theoretical background, with intellectual roots in a range of disciplines. These include Psychology, Anthropology, Biology, Philosophy etc. and have formed the foundation of coaching theory and the variety in coaching theoretical approaches and models. Below are some of the commonly used theoretical approaches that are commonly used in executive coaches with a brief description of what they entail:

a) Cognitive Behavioural Coaching

Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) entails the intergrated use of cognitive, behavioural, imaginal and problem solving techniques and strategies (Williams, Edgerton and Palmer. It is based on the premise that “the way you think about events profoundly influences the way you feel about them”, ultimately impacting behaviour. It follows then, that to change behavior one must change thought patterns. A coach using CBC techniques aims to facilitate awareness of unhelpful cognitive schema that stand as barriers to goal attainment. In addition, they equip the individual with more effective thinking and behavioural skills, enabling them to become their own self coach. It is useful in assisting executives and leaders manage their own psychological processes.

b) Gestalt

Gestalt coaching finds its theory and practice from Gestalt therapy and Gestalt psychology. As Gestalt is a German word meaning “meaningful, organized whole”, it is one of the approaches geared towards meaning- making.

Defining features of Gestalt coaching are:

- A focus on the need fulfilment process- People are always doing their best to satisfy their needs and achieve desired goals. The paradoxical process of change starts with a heightened awareness of “what is”. Only with this awareness of the “as- is” as a whole can change be initiated and individuals energized to take action.
- Individual behavior cannot be understood in isolation. In examining the “what is”, context must be factored in. The Gestalt coach thus needs to take the field perspective i.e. an appreciation of systems and levels beyond the individual.
- A focus on how to use self- Presence and the intentional use of the self as an instrument of change
- A focus on the coaching relationship – authentic dialogue

c) Psychodynamic Approach to Coaching

The psychodynamic approach to coaching provides a method that explores the impact of the unconscious mind and past experiences in shaping present ways of behaving.

Regulation of emotions is central to Psychodynamic Coaching and default tactics include defense mechanisms such as repression, denial and projection. As these mechanisms can be counter-productive, the coach’s goal is to expand the coachee’s capacity for emotional regulation, so that the need for defensive strategies declines.

d) Solution-focused Approach

The Solution focused approach (SF) to coaching starts with defining a desired future state and then design a pathway that assists the client in achieving that state. A distinct feature of this approach is the eschewing of the problem state definition. The SF approach is based on two assumptions:

It holds that it is the way in which the client (and coach) think and talk about events that constructs those events as problematic.

Secondly, the client fundamentally has all they need to create the solution state.

e) Cognitive Development

This approach is based on an appreciation of an individual's development from a point of view of multiple trajectories, also known as developmental lines. Examples of developmental lines include cognitive, emotional, moral, spiritual. Each developmental line has various milestones known as stages of consciousness. Progressing through the developmental line is sequential and unfolds in the same way, but at a different pace for each individual. An example has been given where a person could be at the highest stage intellectually, lowest interpersonally and in the middle, morally. The cognitive-developmental coach first and foremost, identifies what developmental lines are the most important for the coaching task and where along the continuum of these lines a person may be. They then apply mechanisms of change and transition between the stages in order to provide the client with appropriate support and challenge.

f) Ontological

Ontological coaching is borne of various theories, most notably, Biology of cognition, philosophy of language, philosophical investigations of the body and phenomelogical and hermeneutic studies. There are five premises:

i. Humans exist in three interrelated domains viz. language, emotions and body
ii. The interplay between the three domains shapes perception and behavior and can be equated to the structure of the nervous system
iii. Humans are self-referencing beings
iv. Humans are relational
v. Change occurs by disturbance in one of the three domains to generate new meaning.

The coach's goal is thus to facilitate change and trigger a shift in the interplay between the three domains (also known as a way of being), thereby enabling the coachee to develop new perceptions and behaviours.

g) Neuro-Linguistic Programming

Although Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) has roots in established psychological strands, it does not have an explicit and distinct theoretical foundation.

In order for individuals to develop, they need to appreciate how they create their own reality and thus their own possibilities and limitations. The key to NLP coaching is therefore to develop and increase self-awareness to the level where they recognize that whenever they are stuck, their thoughts, emotions and language can be reconfigured to produce different behavior and results.

Using the main pillars of NLP viz. Outcome, Acuity, Flexibility, NLP coaching focusses on three main questions:

- Does the client know specifically what they want?
- Can they keep their senses open so they know what they are presently getting?
- Do they have the flexibility to keep changing till they get what they want?

NLP coaching uses a variety of techniques including matching and pacing, leading, Anchoring, metaphor etc. NLP is useful in executive coaching due to the theme of systems thinking embedded in it. This allows for intervention at both individual and organizational level.

2.4 Professionalisation

The literature review investigates how traditional professions have developed. In doing so, a summary of the different approaches to the study of professions will be presented, with a specific focus on the process of professional formation. This section will conclude with a discussion on recent debates in the study of professionalization.

The term ‘profession’ derives from the Latin word ‘profiteor’ meaning to profess, thereby ascribing depth of expertise. By definition, the term profession refers to an occupation, usually full time, and involving academic training, formal qualifications and membership of a professional regulatory body that confers professional status upon its members. The

more commonly applied definition of a profession is that it is a vocation in which a theoretical and scientific body of knowledge is applied in a learned fashion, and to which one is called or admitted (Brooks & Wright, 2007). According to Kultgen (1988), there are two kinds of professions: traditional professions like medicine, law, architecture and the ministry, and contemporary professions, such as engineering and accountancy. The traditional professions are also referred to as archetypal professions, due to the fact that historically, they have become a model that other professions aspire to or benchmark against in assessing professional status. More recent literature covers newer conceptualisations of professions, which will be elaborated on later in this chapter.

Professionalisation is the process whereby occupations become recognized as professions (Neal & Morgan, 2000). This process is typically characterized by the occupation transforming itself through various initiatives like the development of formal qualification based upon education, apprenticeship, and examinations, the emergence of regulatory bodies with powers to admit and discipline members, and some degree of monopoly rights (Bullock & Trombley, 1999).

There are numerous theories and models of professionalization. They mostly can be categorized into three schools of thought- Traits models, Process models and Power models. This literature review is not intended to analyse the entire body of theories on the sociology of the professions in depth. The focus is on the theories which serve the purpose of this thesis, particularly the Willensky (1964) process model as it is considered to be particularly useful in describing the process a community or an organization will follow if it decides to professionalize an occupation from scratch.

Traits models attempt to identify the traits attributes or characteristics necessary to define a profession, frequently including the “combination of expertise, collective organisation and collegial control, ethical standards, and work in a ‘public service’” (Brint, 1993). When using these models, criteria are developed first to define the standards of the profession. An occupation is not considered a profession until all of the criteria are met, and the profession in question provides a service that is for the public good.

There is an implication of power and privilege surrounding professional status (Brint, 1993). The power model, sometimes referred to as the market model focusses on the motivations for professionalization and how these motivations emerge. For example, do stakeholders seek professionalization in order to improve the quality of services provided, to establish a monopoly over these services, or both? Many view the regulation of entry by professional associations and local and state governments as a motivation by a profession's interest in "creating a monopoly situation to limit competition and raise prices (Law & Kim, 2005, p. 3)." Evetts (2011) describes these different positions as the ideology vs normative values debate in the motives for professionalization. In more recent work, Evetts (2011) argues that the two debates are not mutually exclusive.

2.4.1 Willensky Model

This study follows the process approach, looking at professionalization as a sequential and evolutionary process. A process model would be deemed most appropriate to begin the initial stage of professionalization. Such a construction was characterized by Wilensky (1964) who identified five sequential stages in the professionalization process. Willensky's work is considered the most significant empirical contribution to the evolutionary approach to the analysis of professions. He uncovered a typical process and rites of passage, spotting a sequence that emerged. Used not only as historical analysis as Neal & Morgan (2010) applied it in the historical analysis of development of professions in UK and Germany, but this multi-stage model has also been used by members of those occupations that aspired to professional status- a game plan for how to achieve professional status.

This model was arrived at following extensive studies that Willensky (1964) conducted comparing occupations that were clearly recognized as professions and their development path towards professionalization. The conclusion he reached was that there is a typical sequence of events in the formation and development of professions, summarized as follows:

1. The occupation becomes full- time

   This first step marks a transition as the work carried out is not necessarily brand new. The example made by Willensky (1964) is that the sick have always been nursed. However, over time, with technical and organizational developments, that work became full time, as distinct to when the work was carried out as a part of another occupational task or profession. At this early stage, the practitioners come, of necessity, from another occupation. Many middle-class service occupations were by modern standards part-time or carried out on an ad-hoc basis. Professions in Germany developed, initially, through specialization, which led to a particular service task becoming a full-time occupation (Pettigrew, 1971). Becoming full time provides an occupation with an increased and more sharply defined public profile; it entails routinization of work and a relatively high level of commitment to the development of the profession. In addition, it allows for a life time commitment to that work, also called terminal occupation. This is associated with the incorporation of one's occupation into their identity.

2. Founding of a training school

   What typically follows is that academic routes to qualifications are established in cooperation with the higher education authorities/universities. The early recruits into the profession, or a professional association press for the establishment of a training school. This stage is characterized by high levels of activism. The first teachers are usually protagonists or even founders of some technique. If these training schools do not begin within universities, they always eventually seek contact with universities, and there is a steady development of standard terms of study, academic degrees, and research programs to expand the base of knowledge. A group of people then become academics in that field, rather than practitioners. Within a university set-up these people also contribute to research and the growing of the body of knowledge. Higher standards increase the length and cost of training. In the successful professional projects, the standardized training becomes requisite to entering the profession.

For many of the established professions, university training schools appear on the scene before national professional associations do. In the less-established professions, the reverse pattern is typical. This under-scores the importance of the cultivation of a knowledge base and the strategic innovative role of universities and the early teachers in linking knowledge to practice and creating a rationale for exclusive jurisdiction. Where professionalization has gone farthest, the occupational association does not typically set up a training school; the schools usually promote an effective professional association. However, there are situations where the professional associations have remained in control of the system of professional education by means of course accreditation, control of occupational training, and by awarding the professional qualification in question.

Higher education is sometimes followed by prescribed vocational training like an internship or articles, during which there is learning by observing and copying the practices procedures and techniques of established practitioners. This also serves the purpose of socializing the new recruits and cementing the professional identity. (Dingwall, 1975)

3. Formation of a professional association

In order to obtain greater status and to be better able to compete against less competent practitioners, a professional association is formed and membership limited to the better-qualified or more prestigious practitioners. The professional association is usually formed by the advocates of prescribed training. The membership of a recognized professional association gives higher status, and usually results in higher fee-earning possibilities (Law & Kim, 2005). At this stage, there are commonly several competing professional associations but in due course one usually emerges as the leading association for the occupation in question.

Professional associations gradually emerge with the primary aim of obtaining legal protection and state regulation of the profession in question. In addition to this, activists in the association engage in debates around the identity of the occupation, its professional status, what the professional tasks are, how to raise the quality of recruits etc. At this point they may change the name of the occupation. According to Willensky (1964), many don't succeed as morticians are still called undertakers, for example. The change in name may function to reduce the association with the previous less professional occupation and exclusion of those who did not go through the prescribed training. This makes the development of internal conflict among practitioners of varying background inevitable. Conflict and competition with outsiders who do similar work also develops as the process of defining and redefining areas of competence is underway.

4. Political agitation for protection of the occupation concerned by law

   The Legal protection sought after by the professional association can either be for title (e.g. Chartered accountant) or for performance of work (for example performance of a psychological act that can only be done by a qualified psychologist). This protection of job territory is intended to protect members of the professional association from competition from practitioners who are not members and not qualified.

5. Establishment of a code of ethics

   The code of ethics includes rules on expelling the unqualified and unscrupulous. It also seeks to eliminate internal competition whilst protecting clients and advancing values and norms that put the client first. The two most emphasized behaviours in this regard are:

   1. Demonstrating the highest level of technical competence possible
   2. Having an awareness of one's professional/technical limitations and a willingness to recognize other professionals' skills and refer clients as is necessary

Whilst Willensky's (1964) writing focusses on the process of becoming a profession, some broader issues relevant to professions are embedded.

The establishment of training schools would lead to training being requisite for entry into the profession and increasingly entry would be restricted on the basis of credentials. This marks the introduction of Barriers to entry into a profession, a concept based on dermacation and some protection, thereby making entry not automatic, but rather conditional. Educational qualification is one of various barriers to entry into a profession. Barriers to entry is one of the most prominent and cited features of Professionalisation (Dingwall, 1976; Denzin & Mettlin, 1968; Bennett, 2006) and elaborated on later in this chapter.

Having these schools at universities plays a central role in establishing a body of knowledge that is empirical (through academic degrees and research programmes), shared (by having standard terms of study) and exclusive, thereby ensuring exclusive jurisdiction (Brint, 2001). Lastly, Willensky's (1964) work supports other authors (Evetts, 2011) in the view that professional associations play a central role in professional identity, positioning and definition of core professional tasks. They also engage with the nation state to obtain protection from the law.

These broader issues have been highlighted by other authors in sociology and certainly seen at play in the development of Executive Coaching and Coaching as a whole.

2.5 Professionalisation in Coaching

Scholars differ on the readiness of the coaching industry to transcend to a profession. Some, like Grant and Cavanagh (2004) have argued that the time for coaching has come to move from a service industry to a profession. This position is one also held by Bluckert (2004) and Maher & Pomerantz (2003) who have stated that the coaching business is now large and mature enough to contemplate a move in the direction of increasing

professionalization. On the other hand, there are some who believe that the industry is still in infancy and a long way from meeting requirements of a true profession (Gray, 2011). Grant et al. (2010) also believe that “coaching is unlikely in the near future to achieve the status of a true profession” (pg10). Benett (2006) reviewed the literature and argued that there is a long way to go before coaching can be defined as a profession. The literature review indicates that nonetheless, there is definite movement towards professionalization (Grant, et al., 2010). One of the significant milestones of this journey has been the establishment of the Global Coaching Convention (GCC) in 2007. The key objective of the GCC was to identifying strategies for taking coaching towards professionalization. The key recommendations from the GCC thus include elements of professionalization viz. defining and regulating coaching by the coaching community, establish criteria for levels of professional education and training, a universal code of coaching ethics.

The rest of this section is a review and presentation of literature specific to the issue of professionalization of coaching and how various elements, emerging from literature, contribute to the status quo in the various markets. In the recent past, a few scholars (Bennet, 2006; Lane, 2010; Drake, 2008, Brottman & Liberi, 1998) have written on the professionalisation of coaching and specifically the obstacles that prevent or delay progress along the professionalisation path. These are now examined in full.

2.4.1 BARRIERS TO ENTRY

Barriers to entry is one of the most prominent requirements for regard as a profession, yet, according to Bluckert (2004), due to the unregulated nature of coaching there have been no real barriers to those wanting to call themselves a coach. A lot of other authors make reference to lack of barriers to entry (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Bono 2009). Findings from an Australian survey indicate that anyone can call themselves a coach. Brennan (2008) also found no formal barriers to entry in the United States of America. Brooks and Wright (2007) had similar findings in New Zealand.

This is a marked difference from established professions where barriers to entry include, distinct skills, prescribed educational qualifications, credentials, membership and/or

affiliation. This also accounts for the varying and diverse backgrounds found by Binstead and Grant (2008); Brooks and Wright (2007); and Steenkamp (2012) in studying profiles of coaches.

2.4.2 A DEFINED BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

It has been said that the future of professionalization depends on the development of a body of knowledge. All of the key criteria for professionalization of the industry rely, at some level on the development of a shared body of applied knowledge that forms the foundation of coaching. A defined body of knowledge is the most fundamental requirement for professionalization and it provides a foundation for all other criteria of professionalization. To that effect, many definitions, theories and models of professionalization refer to requirements relating to the body of knowledge. Generally, the sociological criteria where body of knowledge is concerned are that it be empirical, exclusive and common/shared amongst practitioners. In short a profession is based upon a common body of knowledge theory and skill that is generally not known to the public and is based on scientific research that is unique to the profession. To elaborate on each of these sociological criteria:

1) Empirical/theoretical

A profession is based upon a common body of knowledge, theory, and skills that is not generally known to the public, and is based on scientific research which is unique to the profession (Dunlop, 1969; Elliott, 1972; Emener and Cottone, 1989). The field of coaching currently lacks a holistic theoretical framework derived from sound empirical body of knowledge. There is little rigorous peer-reviewed empirical work on executive coaching (Bono, 2009).

Lowman (2005) suggested that executive coaching has “caught on more as an area of practice than as one of theory or research” (p. 90). This has resulted in much of the process and practice of executive coaching shrouded in mystery. Lane (2010) and Grant and Cavanagh (2006), on the other hand, reported a rapid increase in the numbers of

research articles in the new journals. Yet this growing research has still not caught up to the practice and thus is still not sufficient (Benett, 2006; Feldman & Lankau 2005; Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011) to provide a scientific foundation and theoretical frameworks. According to Joo (2005) practice is still well ahead of theory. Most existing executive coaching frameworks are not evidence-based or empirically validated (Griffiths and Campbell, 2008).

This raises important questions about the legitimacy of coaching as a practice particularly in the context of professionalisation with some questioning if it has become yet another fad (Bluckert, 2004). Companies are increasingly looking for Return On Investment put into coaching. The truth is whether or not coaching does what it proposes (i.e. improve the performance of executives and ultimately the organization) remains unknown due to the lack of empirical evidence for what happens, why it happens, and what makes it effective or ineffective (Kilburg, 1996; Joo 2005). To have confidence of the efficacy of coaching across the diverse contexts in which it is practised we must have well-conducted, peer-reviewed coaching-specific research. At present there is little empirical research validating the efficacy of executive and life coaching (Kilburg, 1996),

There is increasing awareness among coaches of the need to ground their practice in a solid theoretical understanding and empirically tested models (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004). As a result we are beginning to witness growth in coaching-related research base and the theoretically grounded approaches central to evidence- based coaching practice Grant & Cavanagh, 2004). A lot of this work is carried out by academics who are also practicing coaches. However coaching has received more attention in the practitioner community than among academics. Even within the academic literature, empirical investigations are the minority (i.e., 18%; Grant, 2006 in Grant and Cavanagh 2004) proving yet again that practice is ahead of theory. What is required is even more academic literature and empirical research. The recent increase in Masters Degrees with a research requirement and doctoral level research in coaching is encouraging. Coupled with that is the increase of partnership between coaching corporations and universities to further research. To support this necessary theoretical and empirical development, the establishment of

journals, symposiums and conferences, which incorporate good quality peer-reviewed publishing processes, is important (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004).

2) Exclusive body of knowledge

Willensky (1964) identified absence of an exclusive base of knowledge as a barrier to professionalization as it threatens exclusive jurisdiction necessary for professional authority and monopoly of skill. Grant (2005) considers coaching to be a cross-disciplinary occupation. Gray (2011) adds “indeed, professions tend to be quite eclectic” (p.8). Whilst this means that ‘no existing profession holds a corner on the market of coaching knowledge’ (Grant & Cavanagh 2004, 2), the boundaries with other existing professions have not been clear. This is not unique to coaching and is a challenge that typically faces emerging professions. As Pettigrew (1971) observed, emerging occupations tend to take on expansionist tactics in pursuit of social accreditation and in the process may be seen as encroaching on jurisdiction of occupations that already exist. Naturally, the existing professions respond with pursuing professional dominance, in which they control their own work but also define limits of the work of other occupational groups. (Gilbert,1998).

Coaching and psychology

The most contested boundary is with Psychology as a body of knowledge and its practice and/application. The boundary between coaching and psychology (particularly therapy) is not always clear (Bono, 2009; Cavanagh, 2005). Some psychologists are dismissive of coaching as a profession distinct to psychology. Some see coaching as an extension of psychology (Grant, 2011). The establishment of coaching psychology as an applied area of psychology has advanced this argument that coaching is a sub-discipline within psychology. Apart from professional encroachment, these practitioners express concern that coaches are conducting psychologists’ work without being adequately trained for it. Berglass (2002) argued that coaches that are not trained as psychologists pose danger because they are not trained to recognize and understand the deep seated psychological problems that may be the source of the executive’s problem.

The essence of the opposing argument is the assertion that coaching does not centre

around people who have clinical mental health disorders (Grant, 2001; Grant & Stober, 2006; Palmer & Whybrow, 2005). Instead coaches aim to assist the coachees in expressing their own purpose and goals and to work towards achieving their ambitions, increasing their performance, or gaining a new skill or personal development (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007). The authors further differentiate coaching from psychology by noting that coaching is multidisciplinary in nature. According to Grant and Cavanagh (2007), coaching draws on the behavioural sciences as well as the methods and knowledge gained from other areas such as "business and economics, education, philosophy and religion"

The GCC (2008) noted tension between coaching and psychology, partly because often coaching makes use of this body of knowledge- psychology. GCC cautions that coaches understand the boundary issues and respect regulatory frameworks of other professions where they exist.

Coaching and Human Resources development

Coaching has also been conceived as a necessary area of expertise and skill set among contemporary HRD professionals. According to Hamlin et al (2008), coaching is now conceptualized as a core component of HRD particularly in the area of management and leadership development. A conclusion drawn by Hamlin after his studies comparing various conceptualizations of the variants of coaching and the various definitions of HRD (Hamlin, Andrea, & Beattie, 2009), is that the emergent field of professional coaching could fit within the existing HRD field. Others in support of this view include Plunkett and Egan (2004) who identified executive coaching as a 'fast growing human resource development (HRD) role'.

This brings to question the feasibility of Grant and Cavanagh's (2004) call for a move towards creating a coaching profession with a clear identity, clear boundaries and a unique common body of empirically tested knowledge, sharply differentiated from other related professions, not least from the HRD profession.

On the other hand, various writers on coaching and the emergent coaching industry perceive coaching as being distinctly different to both training and consulting. For example, Grant (2001) argues that training is based on training agendas that are pre-determined by trainers, are normally not very flexible, and are designed to impart specific competencies and training is thus a more rigid, externally determined process than coaching. Similarly, Clegg, Rhodes and Kornberger (2003) argue business coaching differs from traditional training in that 'it is process based, rather than curriculum or content based, and it occurs both in the workplace and through work' (p.3), whilst Lawton-Smith and Cox (2007) argue that coaching differs from training because 'there is also the need to manage a process of development for the person' (p.5).

It is clear that problems of differentiation are inevitable and resolving such problems can present a challenge for both the emergent field of coaching as it attempts to professionalise and the firmly established related professions.

3) Common and shared

A further requirement of the professionalization of an occupation is that professional knowledge needs to be not only unique and exclusive to that profession, but also shared and held in common by those who belong to that profession. This shared knowledge needs to encompass a number of core areas. The creation of an intergrated knowledge base and language would assist the development of a unified coaching profession. In addition this aids the shared identity of professionals. This comes with a steady development of standard terms of study. Successful professionalization projects often have standardized training as a requirement to entering the profession. An example to demonstrate this is that medicine enjoys more acceptance than ministry whose doctrines are anchored in conflicting religious communities. Curriculum of the different established professions shows this standard, commonly held body of knowledge. Medical doctors are expected to have knowledge of anatomy, physiology and pharmacology. Chartered accountants have knowledge of tax, audit and accounting. And the ultimate demonstration of this is nationally set board exams required to enter such professions. In many of the established professions, there may be differentiation within the profession in terms of speciality/specialization. However, the base knowledge is by and large uniform. Literature

indicates that there is no commonly held and shared body of knowledge in coaching. In fact there is over-reliance on proprietary systems. The eclectic nature of most coaching poses a challenge in as far as this requirement is concerned and as Griffiths and Campbell (2008) point out “Every new set of standards and every new coach accreditation body which emerges, threatens the credibility of the coaching industry itself. Therefore, internationally shared frameworks for coaching are both necessary and overdue”.

2.4.3 COACH TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Entry to a profession requires an extensive period of specialised training often in institutions of higher education. Lane (2010) cites formal academic qualification as one of the core features of professionalization and this resonates with Willensky’s (1964) model in which formal extensive university education is an important milestone in the professionalization process. This is currently not a requirement for one to practice as a coach. The availability of university degrees in coaching is a fairly recent development and growing (Maritz, 2013). In South Africa, for example three universities offer a Masters programme in coaching. The establishment of the Graduate School Alliance for Education in Coaching (GSAEC), indicates a world-wide trend in the development of coach education. Up until this recent developments, coach training has been characterized by an absence of academic rigour, with many courses ranging from two days to 18 months in duration (Maritz, 2014).

Further, the lack of regulation of coach training has meant that many individuals who develop curricula are not certified. Those who are certified coaches may not have an educational background in designing curricula. Many providers are not registered with any governing body and their courses not accredited. Certification by self-appointed bodies is also as a result of a lack of regulation. Of the 41 coach training institutions registered in South Africa in 2012, Maritz (2013) found that none had their credentials checked or programmes assessed for any empirical basis.

Lack of standardization

"Everyone is doing it, and everyone is doing it differently" (Maritz, 2013, p.3)

Just like the practice of coaching, coach training has attracted people from diverse backgrounds. This means that there is a wide variety of methods and approaches and trainers who base their training on their own educational backgrounds and experiences. This absence of standardization combined with absence of established, sound theoretical frameworks, have resulted in coach training providers focusing on their own proprietary systems. It is no surprise then that as of 30 November 2012 there were 41 coaching training institutions registered with COMENSA.

The absence of consensus on core knowledge and skill and the consequent proliferation of coach training, contributes to the lack of shared occupational identity and sense of community amongst practitioners (Muzio et al., 2011). Waring and Waring (2009) and Wenger (1998) found that formal education, internships and other platforms of professional development play a crucial role in establishment and maintenance of a shared occupational identity. (Hass and Shaffir, 1982) demonstrated how medical school serves as initiation and introduction to cultural symbols like beliefs, practices and jargon. "These cultural symbols serve to identify and unite bearers of a community of shared interests, purposes and identity."

Coach Education Curriculum

The debate on psychology and coaching naturally extends to coach training. Should psychology form part of coach education curriculum? According to Clutterbuck (2008), a basic understanding of psychology is necessary to manage and work within boundaries. Berglas (2002) argued that coaches who lack rigorous psychological training do more harm than good. When selecting coaches, Grant (2001) suggests that organisations insist on coaches having training in mental health matters in order to know when to refer their coachees to relevant professionals if necessary. However, research shows that a background in psychology is not necessarily one of the most important criteria considered when selecting coaches. Results of the HBR survey (Coutu & Kauffman, 2009) also

indicated that coaches and even psychologists who participated in the survey ranked ‘background as a psychologist’ second from the bottom out of a list of credentials, suggesting they do not place high value in psychological training being a prerequisite to coach. A recent recommendation is for coach training schools to incorporate into their training curriculum a mental health scope of practice.

Less contentious but equally important is the knowledge of business as a requirement for coach training. Peltier (2001) cautions that a coach who attempts to provide coaching without significant knowledge of the business world or the corporate environment is destined to fail. Business and executive coach training should thus focus on both psychological insight and business or organizational expertise. Clearly, as means of achieving behavioural change, all forms of coaching must be linked into the broader knowledge base of the behavioural sciences. For business coaching, additional expertise in business and economics is also important, as is an understanding of adult education principles for those involved in coach training and education programs.

In addition to content of curriculum, there is also the issue of balancing academic and practical skills transferred during coach education. The requirement for academic rigour should not be at the cost of the value of practical learning. Redshaw (2000) criticizes the manner in which providers set out to ‘teach’ coaching. His view is that coaching cannot be taught, but should be coached, which means that any activity intended to develop coaches must be designed in such a way that it follows and demonstrates coaching principles, allowing participants to learn for themselves. Loosely speaking, one can categorise academic offerings to fall into one end of the continuum offering extensive theoretical foundation; and short courses certification programmes to be on the other end, often with focus on specific modalities. Balancing the two elements in putting up barriers to entry and a ranking within the profession has implications for currently practicing coaches, particularly those that fall in either extreme of the continuum. As Grant and Cavanagh (2004) pointed out, the road to professional status is not an easy one. Along that journey, potential members will be required to make many difficult, unpleasant and often unpopular decisions on “who should be in” and “who should be out” based on skills and knowledge.

A solid coaching-related education is crucial, not only as a means for prospective practitioners to acquire evidence-based knowledge and skills for professional conduct, but also as a means for developing a shared, professional set of values, professional identities and industry understandings (Waring & Waring, 2009). In the quest for a united coaching vision, quality educational systems, professional associations, conferences and peer-reviewed journals provide arenas for the development of common meaning and a joint identity, and are thus powerful symbols of the industry's progression down a path of maturity. The educational process serves as a socialisation process through which emerging professionals develop the requisite values, professional behaviours and a professional identity.

The fragmentation in coach education is closely linked to fragmentation in coaching community.

2.4.4 THE PROFESSIONAL BODIES/ASSOCIATIONS

Bennett (2006) mentioned two criteria for professionalization as formalized organization viz. a widely accepted established professional organization that represents the profession and those practicing coaching AND established community of practitioners- for example, forums for practitioners to develop relationships and exchange ideas related to the practice of coaching; publications that support establishment of the community of practice. Several other authors (Willensky,1964; Neal & Morgan, 2010) recognize the formal establishment of a community of practitioners as an important milestone or component of professionalization.

A further review of the literature shows that in coaching the problem is more the multiplicity of the associations and bodies. As coaching has grown as a practice so has the number of practitioners and in turn the number of coaching associations. According to Lane (2010), coaching associations in the UK include:

. European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC);

. Association of Coaching (AC);

. International Coach Federation (ICF);

. Association of Professional Executive Coaches and Supervisors (APECS);

. Special Group on Coaching Psychology of the British Psychological Society (SGCP);

. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, (CIPD)

In South Africa (even with a comparatively smaller coaching market) there is fragmentation similar to the UK and elsewhere in the world (Maritz, 2013). South African Coaching Professional memberships are scattered amongst the following bodies:

- COMENSA,
- International Coaching Federation,
- Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology of South Africa
- Psychological Society of South Africa,

- Health Professions Council of South Africa
- Africa Board for Coaching, Consulting and Coaching Psychology
- South African Board of People Practitioners

Each of these bodies represents diverse interests as well as overlapping memberships. Some coaches belong to two or more of these bodies simultaneously. The various associations have different requirements for membership, including credentialing systems and a different understanding of what constitutes a profession (Gray, 2011) and how to set out to achieve that status.

This growing fragmentation into various coaching associations poses a few challenges. For one it means that there is no one voice with authority, no collaboration and thus no sense of belonging and single community amongst the practitioners. This is seen as a weakness if the aim is to establish a single profession. A successful professional project requires a unified strategy and tangible collaborative outcomes. Historically, those occupations that have succeeded in achieving professional status have been characterized by a professional association that has emerged as the leading and

representative authoritative voice, even against an initial background of various competing bodies. Bluckert (2004) predicts a similar playout as he sees it as inevitable that a lead professional coaching body will emerge. In cases where statutory controls were introduced, the regulations concerning professional education, admittance to the profession, and control of professional practice and discipline were generally delegated to the leading professional body or bodies (Neal & Morgan,2000). A single united coaching association can be seen as a critical success factor for professionalization and membership to such a body by all coaches will enhance the sense of community and shared professional identity.

2.4.5 Professional Identity

Both education and professional membership have been found to be important contributors to a formation of professional identity. Whilst the education process shapes professional socialization (Page, 2005), membership of professional associations assists practitioners develop and maintain a shared work culture (Wenger, 1998). The education process consists of the formal parts, such as the required knowledge- theory, models, technology. There is also less conscious, less explicit learning taking place. This informal part of professional education is an initiation into the culture (a set of systems, beliefs and practices) of the profession (Hass & Shaffir, 1982). Both these elements help to encourage group identification and define their sense of belonging to a professional group.

A shared professional identity is associated with a sense of common experiences, understandings and expertise, shared ways of perceiving problems and their possible solutions. This common identity is produced and reproduced through occupational and professional socialization by means of shared and common educational backgrounds, professional training and vocational experiences, and by membership of professional associations (local, regional, national and international) and societies where practitioners develop and maintain a shared work culture. One result is similarities in work practices and procedures, common ways of perceiving problems and their possible solutions and shared ways of perceiving and interacting with customers and clients. In these ways the normative value system of professionalism in work, and how to behave, respond and

advise, is reproduced at the micro level in individual practitioners and in the work places in which they work (Evetts 2003). The reality in coaching has been that members of the various bodies see themselves as unique or different from members of other bodies (Lane, 2010; Griffiths &Campbell 2008) within coaching. Clegg et al. (2005) for example, found that most coaches in Australia regarded themselves as being very different to other coaches, and perceived themselves as offering unique and special services to their clients.

The multiplicity of credentialing systems has made it difficult for buyers of coaching to make informed selection decisions as they encounter “professional” coaches whose credentials and claims to expertise they cannot verify with a recognized authoritative body (Lane, 2010). Buyers of coaching want to see a single professional lead body recognised by the field whom they can contact for advice, benchmarking, quality control and, in the case of problems, address their complaints (Bluckert, 2004). Currently they are frustrated with the lack of cooperation, rivalry and in-fighting between competing coaching associations (Maritz, 2013). This can tarnish the reputation of coaching as was the case in Norway, where according to Svaleng and Grant (2010), conflict between stakeholders, most notably competing coach training and coaching service providers led to failure of Norwegian coaching industry to come to a joint agreement on standards. This attracted negative media coverage which diminished the reputation of coaching.

The prevalent fragmentation of the industry and in many instances absence of collaboration will further delay the journey to professionalization and for this reason, Grant (2011) sees the pathway to professionalisation of coaching as bumpy at best, and derailed at worst.

2.4.6 REGULATION

Central to the process and sometimes definition of professionalization, is the question of regulation. Both the traits and process models of professionalization include regulation as a factor, with “agitation for state protection by membership bodies” as one of the stages in the Willensky (1964) model. In the Burrage et al. (1990) multi-actor model this is expressed as a relationship with or role of the state. Some authors have gone as far as to place a greater weighting on the role of state than any other stakeholder involved in professionalization as only the state has ultimate authority. This is the reason why one of

the key imperatives for professional bodies/membership associations is to agitate for state protection or sponsorship.

In very broad and simple terms the distinction amongst professions is between state regulation and self-regulation or industry regulation, although in reality there exists numerous variations in between.

Brooks and Wright (2007) for example, predict 3 possible outcomes for coaching professionalization pursuits in this regard:

1. an unregulated service industry,
2. voluntary credentialing where-in practitioners can choose to be registered or affiliated with professional bodies and
3. the truly professionalised where-in a practitioner must be licensed and is subject to all the requirements of belonging to a profession.

The Dublin declaration included the ideal of self-regulation in a calling for the “coaching community to come together to define and regulate itself” (GCC, 2008b, p. 4). This was further echoed by Rostron (2009) in the assertion that “There is a worldwide need for regulation of the coaching industry” p. 77. Whilst in a lot of the markets studies, there is either no regulation of the coaching industry or initiatives are underway towards self-regulation, there has been instances where states have been prompted to investigate and consider whether they should regulate coaching (Brennan, 2008). The following is a discussion of the pertinent issues that would be relevant in professional regulation of coaching in South Africa.

Statutory regulation of a profession in South Africa occurs where a profession is recognized and regulated via an act of parliament. This, the state may and often does through a professional body or association, that is also set up and recognized in law and referred to as a statutory professional body. On one hand this makes clear and enforceable the boundary around the practice of such a profession, thus granting exclusivity and jurisdiction. On the other hand, there is no autonomy and some consider autonomy an

important characteristic of professionalization (Dean in Svaleng and Grant, 2010). In these cases, the role of state can be experienced as too interventionist.

Self-regulation typically is where a profession is trusted by the state to regulate its affairs through often a professional/regulatory body with the power to admit, discipline and meaningfully sanction members. The importance of this is that it indicates a certain level of trust by the state in allowing the profession to run its affairs autonomously without interference. The key bargain that such bodies need to reach with the state is the trust in being autonomous but also a protection either of area of work and of even of title. As already mentioned, the ideal state for professions is a combination of autonomy and protection. Self-regulation reflects trust between states and professions and also the authority and legitimacy of professions and professionals to organize and run their own affairs. In comparing professionalization in different societies, the Neal and Morgan study (2000) found that the role that the state played in regulation of professions varied from one state to another. It is fair to say governments choose the level of their involvement based on harm that could be caused and duty to protect the public. Therefore, the state vs self-regulation distinction is not purely dichotomous. For example, state regulation can take on various forms, with some of these interventions referred to as softer forms of regulation. They could range from an admission exam administered by the state for licensing purposes to more indirect methods aimed at fostering regulation within the industry. Neal and Morgan (2000) found that the influence that the state had on universities in Germany, meant that the state could direct what professions were developed in line with the needs of the nation and economic policy. State regulation can also include professional education system, course accreditation, occupational training and even the awarding of professional qualifications.

Applying softer forms of regulation means rather than imposing licensing or registration, governments could promote best practice approach (Bennett, 2006), for example using the peer enhanced inspection model that would enhance the independent statutory inspections with peer expertise (Glover et al., 2009 in Evetts 2002). In other instances, the state can choose to have the regulations concerning professional education, admission to

the profession, control of professional practice and discipline delegated to a leading professional body. There are new forms of regulation, referred to as acquired regulation. Simply put, this is more about regulating regulators. Sometimes referred to as mediated professionalism or coerced regulation, these types of regulations are externally required but internally devised and operated.

As regulation is primarily about the relationship between the nation state and the profession, developments like globalization and international trade have challenged traditional conceptualisations of professional regulation. The establishment of the European Union and Euro-zone, has led to the coining of the term “euro-professionalisation” with implications for the nature of the professions in member states, their relationship with the various states and the relationship with other professions in other member states (Neal & Morgan 2000).

These policy decisions by government are based on risk profiling and responsiveness to developments like economic policy etc. For example following corporate scandals in the United States of America, the Sarbanes-Oxley act was passed and self-regulation mechanism of peer review for firms that audit public companies was replaced by Public Company And Oversight Board inspections, a statutory body (Anantharaman, 2012).

Similarly, there are varying degrees of autonomy and protection as may be offered by self-regulation. An example can be found in The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants is not a statutory professional body, making this profession self-regulated. However, other legislation like Companies Act and Auditing Professions Act offer protection and closure for those in this profession.

A possible substitute or variation for state regulation was presented by Dunmore & Falk (2001) in suggesting that economic competition between professional bodies can lead to stability in the market for auditors. This can be seen as a combination of state regulation, industry regulation and principles of the free market. Other considerations for the role of the state in professions and professionalization include cultural and institutional systems of the respective countries. Different societies have different patterns of professional and non-professional occupations and different systems of professional power, authority and

status. Professions are rooted in their nations' respective histories and resultant institutional frameworks. Evetts (2003) proposed that one asks why states allow professionalisation and even direct it at times. An example to demonstrate this is that of UK and German professionalization. In Germany, it was more state directed (from above) and the UK was more an example of professionalization from within (Neal & Morgan, 2010). This is because nation states can use professional projects to effect profound social change and redefine economic and social categories (Evetts, 2003). An example given by Perkin (1989) is the nation state and professions in creating capitalist order in the UK. Similarly, Sabini (2013) found that professions can be one aspect of a state founded in liberal principles, regulating certain spheres of social economic life. In contrast, other environments are hostile to professions due to their neo-liberalist position.

2.6 The South African Context

A key consideration in this study is the national South African context and the recommendation by GCC to place the understanding of coaching professionalization within each country and culture underscores this importance (Rostron, 2009).

SA society can be described as one in transition following the abolishment of apartheid over twenty years ago. This transition is happening at various levels of society and in numerous places, not least of which is economically and at the workplace. The legacy of racial discrimination has seen an imbalance in the proportion of black executives relative to black people that are economically active. To address this, the government introduced various statutes aimed at transforming the landscape. Most notably are the Employment Equity act of 1998, the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 and the Skills development act of 1998.

This carries two implications for coaching. Firstly is the contribution of coaching towards transformation in the various organisations and hopefully society at large. As Stout-Rostron puts it “coaches have unique opportunities to significantly engage and intervene in the on-going process of transforming the country from a racial tyranny into a free, open and democratic society”. Indeed coaching has been used as a leadership development tool to facilitate the progression of black executives and achieve equitable representation (Myers, 2013).

The second implication for the coaching industry is in how it can be a microcosm of the society they are aiding to transform. The current study is particularly relevant in this regard because of Murphy’s (1988, p. 163) thesis that exclusion and monopoly based on credentials often masks exclusion based on ascribed characteristics (such as race or ethnicity) since credentials depend upon social position within ‘‘status cultures” which facilitates access to information and the formation of alliances and social networks needed for professional advancement, rather than ability or mastery of technical skills.

Whereas professional credentials are often viewed as evidence of achievement and technical competency, Murphy (1988) shows that rather than rewarding individual achievement and accomplishment, the process of professional credentialing often privileges those who possess the linguistic and cultural competencies preferred by economic elites. Professional closure based on socially-embedded processes of identity, community formation, and linguistic and cultural competencies are less visible and more difficult to transform than formal entrance hurdles, and are often implicated in exclusion on the basis of race, class, and gender. Hammond et al found that professionalization could be used as means of covert closure and exclusion of black chartered accountants in South Africa.

One thus needs to be cogniscant of the following factors to be kept in balance with such a professional project: the benefits of professionalisation for the industry, customers and society at large; the contribution of coaching to transformation of the economy and society; and to guard against professionalisation of coaching being seen or experienced as further

closure and exclusion that may unfairly discriminate otherwise capable people from participating.

2.7 A multiple stakeholder perspective

Professionalization is inherently an exclusionary process and inevitably raises the question of who should be in and who should be out (Grant & Cavanagh, 2004). Emerging professions have to deal with the pressure exerted by a variety of stakeholders and professionalization can be the spatially and temporally contingent outcome of the negotiations between different actors, each with their own objectives, interests, resources, and capabilities (Burrage, Jaraush, & Siegrist, 1990; Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2007).

A glance at the history of other professions supports Abbott's view (1988) that professional work is defined and redefined through the continuous struggle between different occupational groups. Willensky (1964) describes as typical, the internal conflict amongst practitioners of various backgrounds and competition with outsiders who do similar and/or related work. The multiplicity of professional coaching associations, the divergent backgrounds of those individuals who practice coaching and the multi-disciplinary nature of coaching may well support Willensky's (1964) theory.

Adding various other parties involved in the coaching value chain and the various elements of the professionalization process requires that there be a framework to manage the possibly competing interests of those that would be affected by professionalization of coaching.

The relevance of stakeholder theory to the subject of professionalization of coaching is probably best demonstrated by the case of Norway coaching industry's attempt to standardise. In an aptly named article (Lessons from the Norwegian coaching Industry), Svaleng & Grant (2010) paint a picture of a professional project derailed (to the possible detriment of the credibility of the industry as a whole in that country) due to lack of stakeholder synthesis. The conflicts prevailing eventually led to a faction of the coaching

industry domineering and giving National Standards status to their own Neuro Linguistic Programming -based coach-related commercial offerings. Following this study, Svaleng & Grant (2010) recommend a new jointly held perspective in order for future constructive discussions between stakeholders of coaching, to be productive. Similarly, Rostron Stout (2009) calls for stakeholder synthesis as a critical success factor for professionalization of coaching.

A stakeholder is commonly defined as anyone or anything with a stake or interest in a certain issue, either as individual, group or organisation. This includes stakeholders who can affect the issue or stakeholders who are affected by it. Each stakeholder has a unique appreciation of the issue (Gray, 2011; Hemmati 2002). According to Hemmati (2002), the participants in a multiple stakeholder study should represent a microcosm of the system and must be part of the response or solution to the issue studied. It is for this reason that the multiple stakeholder approach is a guiding principle in sampling for purposes of this study, as will be elaborated on in the next chapter.

Stakeholder theory is of interest to this study because it is a theoretical framework that accommodates divergent groups of people with diverse and potentially competing interests. The diversity in so far as this study is concerned includes the various players along the value chain of coaching with different interests in coaching, the practitioners from different associations, with different backgrounds, education and experience, etc. and whilst there has been some studies on the various elements of professionalization, it is the aim of this study to use societal collaboration as brought by stakeholder management to include the critical voices that have been excluded thus far in the debates.

Whilst the stakeholder approach can be referred to as The Principle of Who or What Really Counts (Mitchell et al, 1997), it is important to note that an essential tenet of stakeholder theory is that one should strive to balance stakeholders' competing interests. Essentially, this theory places great importance on the incorporation of multiple perspectives instead of prioritising some over others. This constitutes the biggest challenge with applying this framework as diverse interests may collide. In addition, a pre-existing power dynamic amongst the different stakeholders may limit possibilities and therefore needs to be

managed carefully in order to benefit from the overarching benefit viz. collaboration amongst various players.

There are varying views in the literature as to whom should be considered a stakeholder and different researchers or practitioners use stakeholder analysis for different purposes or in different context. (Pouloudi & Whitley, 1997). This study adapts to the Burrage Multi-actor framework (Burrage, Jaraush & Siegrist, 1990), as following professionalization is seen as the spatially and temporally contingent outcome of the negotiations between different actors, each with their own objectives, interests, resources, and capabilities. (Burrage, Jaraush, & Siegrist, 1990; Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2007)

2.7.1 The Burrage model of professional formation

Burrage's multi-actor model is essentially multiple stakeholder theory applied to the process of professional formation (Burrage et al, 1990). According to Burrage et. Al (1990), during professional formation and settlement, professionalization is one of the possible outcomes of negotiations between practitioners of an aspiring profession and other stakeholders (players) in the social and economic arena. He identified other key actors involved in shaping occupational settlements as, training institutions, users and the state. Informed by Abbot's view that professional projects are influenced and constrained by competing efforts, aspirations and claims from other occupations, Muzio, Kirkpatrick and Kipping (2011) added a fifth player viz. other related professions. An important part of the process by which an occupation becomes a profession is the gradual institutionalization of various role relationships between itself and other parts of society as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

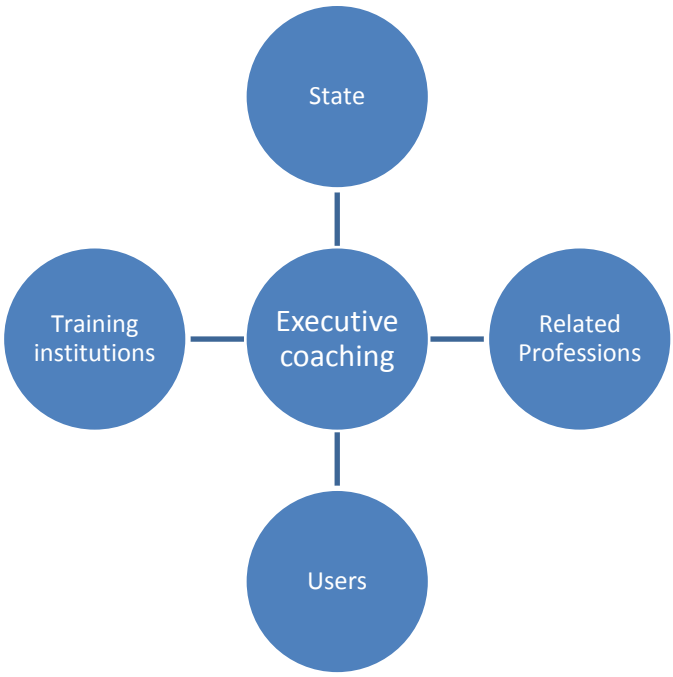


Figure 1: Burrage Multi-actor model (adapted)

Training Institutions

Training institutions, like universities provide the knowledge base and certify the technical competences of the professions. Universities also play a fundamental role in what Richard Abel (1988) has termed *the regulation of the production of producers*, as they provide the official credentials (an approved degree) that support professional closure regimes as educational qualifications are a common barrier to entry. The important role of universities and other training institutions was also highlighted by Willensky (1964) in highlighting the role played by these institutions in linking theory and practice in professions. This link is evident in the fact that in instances where professionalization is state sanctioned, the government takes a prescriptive stand with regards to university education. (Neal & Morgan, 2010).

Users

Users (or clients) exercise strong influences, through their procurement strategies and

preferences with regard to the ways professions practise and organize themselves. For instance, a poorly educated client base offers the ideal leads to considerable power and authority placed in the hands of the professionals. Similarly, where customers are educated, a different dynamic is at play, with customers in a more powerful position. The second scenario is assisted greatly by a regulatory environment that allows for a competitive market.

The State

The role of the state is an important one as only the state has the authority to grant and enforce monopolies and restrictive arrangements. Indeed, the most successful professions are those able to strike a regulative bargain, whereby the state protects professionals from unfettered competition but trusts them to put public interest before their own (Freidson, 1994: 202). The involvement by the state is informed by the political economy and for that reason, the move towards deregulation in many of the European nations is informed by the principles of neo-classical Economics, that promote the free market, competition and consumer choice. (Sabini, 2014).

Related professions

In addition to these four central actors Muzio et.al. 2011 further extend Burrage et al.'s (1990) framework to recognize the role played by other (competing) professions and employing organizations. As Abbott's (1988) assertion, individual professional projects are influenced by the rival ambitions, efforts and claims of other occupations. This is typically the case where the task environment is similar and/or related (Pettigrew,1971). The most severe skirmishes are known to occur between the emerging profession and the already established occupations closest to it as established professions strive to avoid the erosion of their social privileges and clientele (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009).

2.8 De-professionalisation and Re-professionalisation

"Is there any future for professions or are we witnessing the final demise of the guilds and of guild-like social institutions?" (Krause, 1996).

According to Evetts (2003), there are conflicting reports and views on whether professions are growing or are in decline, as a privileged category of occupations. What seems consistent however is that professions have been perceived as under threat, experiencing a reduction in their abilities to enter into 'regulative bargains' with states (MacDonald, 1995). Other research has found an increase in knowledge economy occupations that tend to find traditional professionalization irrelevant, unachievable, implausible and unnecessary (Paton, Hodgson & Muzio, 2013). These new expert professions have not only led to different occupational strategies (other than professionalization), but there have also been newer forms of professionalization because traditional models of professionalization may not be viable or applicable to the newer occupations. Newer forms of professionalization include Corporate Professionalization and Entrepreneurial Professionalization. These groupings employ distinctive strategies that depart from those of traditional professions such as law and medicine. An example is that of management consultants that abandoned the traditional professional project as it was not in keeping with their business model (Muzio et al. 2011). Instead, they are pursuing Marketization, an entrepreneurial strategy that is focused less on monopolization of theoretical knowledge and more on seeking 'to acquire in-demand expertise' with market appeal in particular sectors and domains. This is in line with what Haug (1975) referred to as democratization of knowledge as the reason for The Deprofessionalisation of Everyone (along with globalization, higher levels of education and technology). Similarly, there has been an increase in Corporate professionalization, marking a move from the solo practitioner model of a professional to professionals employed in large corporates. This trend has diluted the power of the professional associations. This table below (adapted from Sabini, 2014) illustrates the differences in types of knowledge and shift in power between the different occupational groups.

EXPERT GROUP	KNOWLEDGE BASE	POWER STRATEGY	KEY PLAYER	OCCUPATIONAL TYPE
Traditional Profession	Abstract, theoretical	Monopolisation and closure	Professional association	Doctors, lawyers, architects
Organizational profession	Technical	Credentialism	Corporates	Managers, administrators, technicians
Entrepreneurial professions	Esoteric, customised	Marketization	Market place/Customer	Business Consultants, Computer analysts

Table 1: Professional strategies

According to Fincham (2006), the two contextual factors that may render professionalization irrelevant as an occupational strategy for occupational groups like management consultants are the pace of change and high levels of differentiation and specialization. Muzio (2011) also pointed to the 'in-demand expertise' required and applied by management consultants, servicing of seemingly inexhaustible demand for new specialties and ability to continuously exploit management fashions.

Other forces for de-professionalisation include:

- An inability to establish an exclusive base of knowledge because the offering is too fragmented and eclectic and solutions are context and client dependent.
- Flexibility, customer orientation and competitiveness are key
- The increasingly central role played by corporations (as purchasers or employers of the newer professional) , making the state and professional bodies less dominant actors This marks a significant difference from traditional professionalization.
- Political economy- in neo-liberal states for example, professionalization has been criticized from an ideological point of view

Implications for Executive Coaching

In an article about the future of the coaching profession, Lane, Stelter, & Stout-Rostron (2010) refer to the fragility of the term “profession” in late modern society and they ascribe the disintergration to the loss of monopoly over knowledge. Ironically, this loss of monopoly over knowledge is one of the reasons they provide for the rapid growth of the coaching industry. A further caution is expressed by Bachkirova. As was found by Paton, Hodgson & Muzio, (2013) in a study of modern professions, these authors doubt that traditional professionalisation is realistic or in the best interests coaching and its stakeholders. Hence Stout Rostron (2009) calls for a Synthesis amongst stakeholders viz. professional coaching bodies, educational institutions developing academic and practitioner programmes, and the organizations who are currently buying coaching interventions. She sees this as a critical success factor for professionalization.

2.9 Conclusion of Literature Review

The literature review reveals that coaching is an emerging yet rapidly growing industry. In addition, the professionalisation of coaching is topical and there are differing views on the readiness of coaching to be professionalized. Generally, there is agreement that coaching is not a profession as it does not meet most of the traditional requirements of being a profession.

Based on available literature, it seems that in many markets, there are efforts and discussions towards the professionalization of coaching in assessment of feasibility, a few of the possible obstacles have been covered in the literature. Many of these center around the diversity of stakeholders relevant to coaching. Coaches vary on almost everything-educational background, previous experience, methodology, coaching process, coaching tools etc. This fragmentation of the industry raises a potential problem as collaboration amongst stakeholders will be key. There is sufficient warning in the literature about the risk that this carries.

The appropriateness of professionalisation as an occupational strategy for modern occupations has also been questioned. Recent literature explores newer ways of professionalizing, and to take it a step further, some occupational groups are reported to have rejected the concept of professionalisation as is traditionally known. Whilst all indication points to the professionalisation of coaching being explored, there has recently been caution, citing concerns similar to those raised by other modern expert occupations like Management Consulting. What has also emerged is that professionalisation is not a matter of dichotomous positioning. In the way that there have been new occupations, there have also been newer ways of professionalizing. Of significant importance to this study is the changing and evolving dynamics amongst stakeholders, particularly the role and power held by nation states as evident in regulation.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the methodology that was followed to conduct this research. The theoretical research paradigm that informed and justifies the choice of research method and research design is discussed. The research instrument and its development is described, followed by a discussion of data collection and data analysis. The chapter

concludes with a discussion of methods that were employed to improve validity and reliability of the study as well as an overview of the ethical considerations taken into account.

3.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This research study falls within the interpretivist domain of research, where social reality is embedded within, and impossible to abstract from social settings. Interpretive research paradigm is premised on the assumption that social reality is not singular or objective, but is rather shaped by various human experiences and contexts. Truth and meaning are therefore created by the interaction of an individual with the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Thus, reality is "interpreted". It is therefore best to study these social realities by reconciling the various "truths" and subjective interpretations of the various participants.

This paradigm is appropriate for this study for various reasons. Firstly, it allows for a rich description of the content and perceived importance of factors to be provided (Symes, 2010). Content analysis using Atlas software facilitates this ranking of factors as the sorting of codes by prominence during coding analysis begins to suggest. Secondly, interpretivism assumes multiple and equally valid realities. This means "appreciating and describing social reality from the diverse subjective perspectives of the participants involved" (Bhattacherjee pg 137). This aspect resonates with the multiple stakeholders' perspective of the study because, as Gray (2004) points out, participants in a study can create different meanings of the same phenomenon. Lastly, within this domain, the researcher is recognised as a research tool that facilitates a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that is being studied. This interaction between the investigator and the object of investigation is central to interpritivism. In this study, as the researcher was an interested and/invested party in the subject, the design needed to be one that acknowledged the researcher as a tool and allow for expression of critical subjectivity.

The epistemological position of the research has a bearing on the theoretical perspective, methodology and choice of methods (Crotty, 1998; Gray, 2004). Interpretivism in this case, provides the primary foundation and anchor for qualitative research methods (Ponterotto

2005). Qualitative methodology refers to a broad class of scientific processes and procedures. It differs from Quantitative research it relies mostly on non-numeric data, such as interviews and observations, rather than numeric data such as scores and metrics used in Quantitative research (Harding, 2009).

The qualitative methodology that was employed for this research is phenomenology as it is not only a description, identify indicators and elements of the phenomenon that is being studied, but also an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation of the meaning of the lived experiences of the research participants in a context (Creswell 2003). This methodology was found best suited because this research topic is conceptual and subjective, requiring a methodology that allows respondents to describe their feelings and articulate their opinions.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a comprehensive plan for data collection in an empirical research project. It is a “blueprint” for empirical research aimed at answering specific research questions or testing specific hypotheses, and must specify at least three processes: (1) the data collection process, (2) the instrument development process, and (3) the sampling process.

The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce the experiences of persons with a phenomenon to a description of the universal. To this end, qualitative researchers identify a phenomenon and collect data from people who have experienced this phenomenon and develop a description of the essence of the experience for all the individuals. The data for this study was collected in a series of In-depth interviews with each respondent. These In-depth interviews enabled the informant to relate experiences and attitudes to the researcher in their own words. This not only allowed for rich descriptions of the phenomenon, but also perceived importance (Symes, 2010). Although open-ended questions were used, the interviews were semi-structured to ensure the necessary data is collected (Creswell 2003). This format was the most efficient means of collecting emotional as well as factual information. The advantages are the familiarity of respondents to an

interview structure, the ability to discuss complex issues and its adaptive characteristics. The disadvantages are the impact of the researcher on the process, confidentiality concerns of respondents and the possibility of differing interpretations of questions. Secondary to the interviews, the research was enriched by a study of policies legislation and websites.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

3.3.1 Population

The population was executive coaches in South Africa

3.3.2 Sample and sampling method

First, interpretive research employs a theoretical sampling strategy, where study sites, respondents, or cases are selected based on theoretical considerations such as whether they fit the phenomenon being studied (e.g., sustainable practices can only be studied in organizations that have implemented sustainable practices), whether they possess certain characteristics that make them uniquely suited for the study (e.g., a study of the drivers of firm innovations should include some firms that are high innovators and some that are low innovators, in order to draw contrast between these firms), and so forth. In contrast, positivist research employs random sampling (or a variation of this technique), where cases are chosen randomly from a population, for purposes of generalizability. Hence, convenience samples and small samples are considered acceptable in interpretive research as long as they fit the nature and purpose of the study, but not in positivist research

The sample was representative of the stakeholders as identified using primarily the Burrage model viz:

- Coaching practitioners
- Coaching associations/professional bodies

- Corporate clients
- Academics
- Regulators
- Related professions

3.4 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

This study was conducted in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The respondents were only defined according to the description above and other demographic factors like race and gender were not considered. In total, 15 interviews were conducted.

Table 2: Profile of respondents

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER SAMPLED
INDIVIDUAL COACHES	3
ACADEMICS INVOLVED IN COACHING	1
PROFESSIONAL BODIES	3
BUYERS OF COACHING	4
REGULATORS	1
NEIGHBOURING PROFESSIONS	2

TOTAL	15

It is important to note that a number of respondents did not strictly fit only one capacity and in some of their responses may have given views from mixed perspectives as shown is table 3.

Table 3: Multiple profiles of respondents

	Coach	Prof body	Regulator	Related Professions	Academic	Client
Anna	x	x			x	
Simon						
Coach 2	x	x		x		x
Karen	x			x	x	
Penelope						x
Christina						x
Motheo	x	x				
Coach 4	x					
Coach 1	x					
Coach 3	x					
John	x	x				
Peter				x		

Leanne				x		
Thuli						X
James			x			

3.5 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The primary research instrument took the form of a semi-structured interview as guided by the discussion guide that captured pertinent demographic information and a guide for open-ended questions (see Appendix A). The questions were derived from the literature review. Primarily, the questions were guided by the Willensky (1964) model and designed to establish if there was evidence as described in the framework. In addition, from a synthesis of prior research, other themes relating to professionalization and coaching were identified. Some of the questions, are a probe into these themes. Interviews were designed to provide the best opportunity for respondents to share information in a comfortable and familiar manner (Creswell, 2003). The semi-structured interviews also allowed for an adaptive quality and the researcher to explore interesting insights when they arose.

The research participants' information documents and a letter of consent were provided at the interview (see Appendix B).

3.6 PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTING DATA

Broadly speaking, data collection methods can be broadly grouped into two categories: positivist and interpretive. Positivist methods, such as laboratory experiments and survey research, are aimed at theory (or hypotheses) testing, while interpretive methods, such as action research and ethnography, are aimed at theory building. Positivist methods employ a deductive approach to research, starting with a theory and testing theoretical postulates using empirical data. In contrast, interpretive methods employ an inductive approach that starts with data and tries to derive a theory about the phenomenon of interest from the

observed data. Often times, these methods are incorrectly equated with quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative and qualitative methods refer to the type of data being collected (quantitative data involve numeric scores, metrics, and so on, while qualitative data includes interviews, observations, and so forth) and analyzed (i.e., using quantitative techniques such as regression or qualitative techniques such as coding) (Golofshani, 2003). Positivist research uses predominantly quantitative data, whilst Interpretive research relies heavily on qualitative data.

The interviews were pre-arranged with respondents as identified. These were conducted in environment of their choice. They took 45 to 60 minutes on average. Interviews were recorded and the researcher kept some hand notes. One of the recordings failed and for the analysis, the researcher relied on hand written notes that were transcribed as soon as possible.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data was analysed using qualitative content analysis. This is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). The goal of content analysis is to extract themes and contradictions within the data, providing knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this study deductive data analysis was applied because the study included application of pre-conceived categories/codes. In particular, assessment of the South African coaching industry was guided by various indicators as studied in the sociology of professions. There were new categories and codes added that emerging from the raw data.

This method followed the following steps:

1. Developed a code book based on literature review and interview guide
2. Read through all transcripts carefully and attaching codes to text as befitting
3. Developed new codes/sub-categories for uncoded data
4. Grouped codes that relate to each other into categories

5. Assemble the material belonging to each category and analysis

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The qualitative approach may have led to bias, particularly in assigning weight and importance to the different views of the various stakeholder groupings
- The deductive data analysis could have been too directive and not allowed enough expression for emerging themes that were not already defined in existing codes

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

It is important to mention that Validity and Reliability are originally concepts from positivist research and tend to refer and be applied to research instruments. Within the interprevist domain, where the researcher is recognised as a research tool, and the credibility of a qualitative research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher, the translation is not exact, with qualitative researchers sometimes preferring different terminology like Dependebility and Credibility in order to reflect interpretivist/qualitative conceptions (Golafshani, 2003).

Validity refers the extent to which a measurement or test accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Bhattacherjee, 2012). In qualitative research, validity concerns the degree to which a finding is judged to have been interpreted in a correct way. Although understanding is a more fundamental concept for qualitative research than accuracy, it remains an important aspect as it refers to integrity and credibility of the study.

3.9.1 Internal validity

Internal validity, also referred to in qualitative studies as Credibility, refers to the extent to which inferences and conclusions arrived at by the researcher are believable and unambiguous.

To enhance the internal validity of this study, interviews were transcribed verbatim for data recording. Using Atlas these verbatim transcripts were the units of analysis, for purposes of data analysis. This was so to ensure a factual account without distortions.

The second way in which internal validity was increased is triangulation. Defined by Creswell and Miller (2000) as “a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126), triangulation in this study was realised by obtaining views of multiple-stakeholders of the phenomenon being studied.

The efforts employed to obtain internal validity are all to allow an independent audit of data collection and analysis if needed.

3.9.2 External validity

External validity refers to the extent to which findings of one study can be generalised to the greater population. Qualitative researchers also refer to external validity as Transferability. Inherently, qualitative study does not aim for generalisation. This is because interpretive research attempts to interpret social reality through the subjective viewpoints of the embedded participants within the context where the reality is situated. This study is specific to the South African context, and using a sociological framework, underscores the importance of context in making interpretations. One does not expect that findings are generalizable to other contexts. In this regard, as advised by Bhattachejee (2012), this research report provides rich thorough descriptions of the context and phenomenon, so that another researcher can independently assess to what extent the reported findings are transferable to other settings.

Increased sampling validity was still achieved, however, through representative sampling that ensured data saturation.

3.9.3 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable. It is about the consistency of the measurement tool in yielding same results each time it is used to study the same phenomenon even by different researchers (Carlile & Christenses, 2004).

In this study reliability was enhanced by having a discussion guide to inform the semi-structured interviews. This means that even though, the questions were not exactly the same, the same topics and dimensions are covered.

Secondly, the wording in the questions was simplified so that the questions are not misinterpreted, making sure to clarify definitions of terms so to avoid ambiguity in questions and terms used.

Lastly, the study had customized discussion guides for each stakeholder group. By asking only those questions that respondents may know the answer to or issues that they care about, the reliability of the study is enhanced.

To ensure dependability, interpretive researchers must provide adequate details about their phenomenon of interest and the social context in which it is embedded so as to allow readers to independently authenticate their interpretive inferences (Bhattachejee, 2012).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In line with global ethical standards and requirements of the university, the following ethical guidelines were taken into consideration:

Consent is informed As a minimum, the information shared with participants must be sufficient for them to make a decision on whether they wish to participate in the study and their right to withdraw at any stage.

Anonymity and/or Confidentiality maintained This is so to honour every individual's right to their privacy and that of their views.

Maintenance of human dignity Participation in the research study may not undermine the dignity of individual participants

The individual and society to receive more benefit than harm Even if there is no direct benefit for the individual, research should be conducted for beneficence, rather than clandestine purposes.

According to Behi and Nolan (1995), these guidelines inform the international statement of the rights of research subjects.

In this study, all subjects were asked for consent in writing. Prior to collection of data, they were informed of the research aims and procedures. There was no deception about the intended use of the data.

All participants were assured that no individual would be identified in the published report. As some individuals were representing views of organisation, they elected to identify their organisations and thus at raw data level, anonymity was not guaranteed.

The Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand granted ethics clearance.

Every effort was made to avoid any form of plagiarism including use of anti-plagiarism software viz Turnitin and WriteCheck.

In summary, the study set out to establish the status of executive coaching in South Africa, in the context of professionalisation. A descriptive research approach was followed in that the study aimed to give a snapshot of a point in time, during the course of development of executive coaching. Purposive sampling was used to get the multiple stakeholders representation. Taking an interpretivist orientation, this study employed qualitative methods consisting primarily of semi-structured interviews (derived from

literature review) and to a lesser extent secondary data in the form of various policy documents. The collected data was analysed using content analysis.

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The findings from this study are presented within the context of the research question and the Sociological framework applied for analysis. The responses obtained from the interview transcripts were analysed using 101 codes falling into 20 categories. These codes were derived from the literature review and interview discussion guide. They were complemented by codes that emerged during the coding process. The broader themes applied pertain to the 5 stages of the Willensky model, as milestones in the professionalization process.

4.1 Differences between stakeholders

The sample represented various stakeholders of coaching identified using the Burrage model. In general, there was little difference in opinion between the various groups. For

that reason, the results are not separately reported. However, where there was disagreement on a particular issue, this will be highlighted and elaborated on in the discussion of results.

4.2 Stage 1: Has the occupation become full time?

This section deals with the first milestone of the Willensky model viz. the question of whether the function has or can be occupied full time. Full time in this instance is defined as a self -contained and possibly autonomous occupation rather than as a task or activity, forming part of another job, on a piece meal basis. It was found that whilst some coaches were practicing coaching on a full-time basis, some were also using coaching as part of their other occupations as illustrated in table 4. In addition, this was not a dichotomy and there was a range of other formations not limited to the Willensky theory. The most prominent of these other classifications for executive coaches in South Africa, the study found, is concurrent multiple fulltime, meaning more than one self-contained and possibly autonomous occupation. This scenario is best described by one of the participants as follows:

"So, Coaching then became a sort of product line or service line extension". (Transcript 19)

Other occupations that the coaches in the sample were found to be involved in include:

- Academia
- HR consulting
- Business consulting

"I teach at Wits, Stellenbosch Business school, the Integral Coaching Centre and seminars for the Sandton Coaching Centre since all their programmes started. I've built the Ethics Code for COMENSA and I Coach every day in my role inside Investec. I supervise Coachers both internally and externally. Finished my book recently. I don't coach externally only Internally. I'm the Head of HR & OD at Investec. We have a panel of Executive Coaches that we built, manage, match and evaluate regularly. I'm a Clinical

Psychologist as well as a Chartered Business Coach with the WABC (International Body – Worldwide). I was also part of the Standards & Criteria Task team where we built Standards of Practise for Business Coaching globally". (Transcript 5)

"I operate in three areas:
Executive Coaching, with a special focus on transition coaching
Still do Career Transition
Increasingly doing more Group Facilitation on either Management or Leadership development" (Transcript 19)

Table 4: Occupational Classification/Professional commitment

RESPONDENT	FULL TIME	PART TIME	ADHOC/PIECE MEAL
Coach 2			X
Coach 1		X	X
Coach 4	Yes		
Coach 3	Yes		
Karen		X	
Anna		X	
Motheo	X		
John		X	
Simon		X	
John	Yes		

The study also considered the question of a terminal occupation i.e. a lifetime career of an occupation as an indicator of being a profession. Results show that this is not the case as respondents all have previous occupations, pointing to the recency of coaching.

Table 5: Previous occupations of coaches

RESPONDENT	BACKGROUND
Coach 4	Pharmaceutical sales
Motheo	Engineer
Coach 3	Business operations
Simon	Geographist
Karen	Industrial Psychologist
Anna	Social worker
Coach 2	Clinical Psychologist and HR executive
John M	HR practitioner
Coach 1	Media executive

4.3 Stage 2: Is there an established training school with links to a university?

This second milestone deals with issues pertaining to coach education. The factors identified and presented here are not limited to those specified in the Willensky theory. These findings are expanded to include others relating to the broader issue of coach education, as identified to be an issue in various other writings.

Qualifications

In general, findings show that formalized coach education at universities is very new in SA. Only one of the participants had a formalized coaching qualification and he obtained it in the UK. Prior to this recent introduction of university courses, coach training has been offered at proprietary training schools. Differing from Willensky, the training courses at university were not established by previous proprietary. And to support Maritz (2013), they co-exist. One has not replaced the other.

"*at that stage it was internal training, but they were at that stage I think a spin off from a UK coaching company so there was some know how that had been passed on from there and about 2 years after that I just said to myself I would like some more structured theoretical training*" (Transcript 4)

"*I took a course in Coaching (Results course)*" (Transcript 19)

"Now the ICF, Gauteng people typically come from Results Coaching it was started by a core group who initially did their training there" (Transcript 4)

"So I was the person who brought in Coaching, I first brought in the Certificate and then I brought in the Masters" (Transcript 2)

The following university courses have been established in the recent past:

Table 6: University offerings

UNIVERSITY	QUALIFICATION
Stellenbosch University	MPhil
Wits Business School	MMBEC
University of Johannesburg	Masters of Management
GIBS	The GIBS Professional Business Coaching Programme
University of Cape Town	Foundations of Executive Coaching
Henley Business School	Professional Certificate in Coaching

<u>Body of knowledge</u>

The feeling amongst many of the participants was that there is a lack of standardization in the knowledge base.

"The issue of standards, I think is around ethics first before we talk about competency. A lot of the industry and a lot of the other professions have created the standards from a knowledge and skills perspective. They would say this person has to be able to know 1, 2, 3 but that's pretty difficult in coaching because there are many paths and a coach that uses astrology is possibly completely different from a pastoral coach as opposed to an executive coach because the knowledge content becomes very difficult to standardise from that perspective" (Transcript 18)

"we want to partner with the knowledge generation body particularly when we talk of the generation of standards because the problem right now is with qualifications, coaching qualifications" (Transcript 18)

"there's more and more academic institutions are now offering and providing training that is accredited by the DHE because there is a standard of knowledge back into" (Transcript 9)

Curriculum/knowledge required

A comparison of the three degrees referred to above shows that there may be evidence of a steady development of standard terms of study emerging. All three degrees have courses/modules relating to:

1. Psychology/Coaching psychology/psychological acumen
2. Learning theory
3. Ethics
4. Research methodology
5. Coaching skills
6. Coaching models/methodology/frameworks
7. Organisational Development
8. Leadership development

The two most mentioned subjects of study seen as necessary for coach education were Psychology and Business.

Barriers to entry

Many agree there needs to be barriers to entry. Many spoke about minimum standards and mostly they centred around knowledge and specifically training. Many participants saw training as an effective barrier to entry as they expressed unhappiness with “a 2 day training course” or no training at all, where “anybody can call themselves a coach”. This was found to be of great concern as it created an opportunity for Charlatanism.

“currently within the COMENSA and also the Coaching sector there are cowboys, chancesters, fraudsters, professionals, crooks….. so, what is the quantum of that? I’d like to say it’s proudly small, they just walk around a lot more and do lots of things which are not necessarily helpful and give a bad name to the coaching sector” (Transcript 13)

Exclusion

The introduction of barriers to entry was not without reservation. Coaches seemed concerned with exclusion, particularly of those without credentials. “Restricted entry” and “Completion of course as a requirement for entry” were the relevant codes. The concern with coaches that are not credentialed is the fact that they would have learnt and gained mastery through experience in coaching.

“So I think the biggest risk with professionalization is the belief that credentialed coaches are good and non-credentialed coaches are bad. That’s the danger because I think there a lots of amazing coaches who started their coaching journey 20 years ago and didn’t formally become a coach through a coach training school, they are amazing at what they do, but if you say to them where’s your piece of paper that says you’re allowed to do this; they’ll say I don’t have a piece of paper. I’ve got 20 solid years of doing it. You know so that’s where the danger creeps in when people start to equate credentialed people’s great and non-credentialed people’s bad”. (Transcript 11)

Professional associations regard this aspect of exclusion as necessary and infact inherent in the process of professionalisation.

“The starting point is the definition of a profession is that you exclude the other”. (Transcript 13)

The professional associations also recognised value of coach education the importance of having that as a filter. As a result, the ICF has introduced Accreditation of institutions as actp. These include Henley and Gibs. A requirement for minimum education at an actp, for one to gain membership. This is one of the first signs of what Willensky refers to as restriction of entry.

Professional boundary

According to the sampling and stakeholder mapping process the following groupings represented neighbouring professions: Psychologists and Human Resources Development practitioners. It was also clear that from the identified neighbouring professions, the Psychology profession is one with whom the boundary is most contested as some psychologists reportedly perceive Coaches to be charlatans encroaching into the legally protected space of Psychologists.

Coaches, on the other hand, whilst they acknowledging the close proximity of Coaching to Psychology, were clear about the boundary, with many stating the difference between counselling/therapy and coaching.

"*Coaching is not psychology!... think every coaching book will have a chapter on what coaching is not and it's not therapy and not what a psychologist would be doing. It's a different approach. And I'm talking as a coach now who gets annoyed by a psychologist who calls it their area, you know. You'll hear that somebody's been in therapy for 15 years – well we coach for typically in Jhb for 6 months*" (Transcript 4)

"I think people who have counselling background need to make that conscious shift to a coaching approach as opposed to a counselling. More particularly in business or executive coaching where there's a defined outcome, there's an expectation". (Transcript 19)

There was significantly less of a boundary contest with HR development.

4.4 Stage 3: Has a professional association been formed?

This section deals with findings on various elements of professional membership. Although this is based primarily on the theoretical framework as presented by Willensky, this section will also include elements about professional associations that emerged from the data and other literature.

Organisation of membership bodies

There are numerous professional bodies for coaching in South Africa. The organisations represented in the study are:

ICF: an international professional body for coaches with Chapters in various countries. The first South African chapter was established in 2008.

COMENSA: a South African body for both coaches and mentors, established in 2004. Comensa is recognised by SAQA as a non-statutory professional body

ABCCCP: Established in 2010, this body started in South Africa but has membership across the African continent. It also includes management consultants

SIOPSA: the society for industrial and organisational psychologists of South Africa has a special group that is interested in advancement of coaching psychology. They represent psychologists that coach. SIOPSA has no recognition in law, but members of SIOPSA are regulated by HPCSA (a statutory professional body, established through an act of parliament).

Two other professional bodies were mentioned in the study, but were not in the sample:

WABC

IMCSA

The sample included 9 coaching practitioners (some interviewed in their capacity as individual coaches and others representing views of coaching associations). Their membership across the various bodies is spread as follows:

Table 7: Membership to professional associations

PARTICIPANT	ASSOCIATION
Motheo	ICF (Previously with COMENSA)
Simon	COMENSA
Karen	SIOPSA and COMENSA
John	ABCCP (Previously with COMENSA)
Anna	COMENSA
Coach 1	COMENSA AND ICF
Coach 2	WABC (Previously with COMENSA)
Coach 3	COMENSA
Coach 4	COMENSA

Most of the coaching participants were members of COMENSA. All of these respondents have been members of COMENSA at some point. Whilst, there is movement from one association to another, only one participant was a member of more than one.

Purpose of membership bodies

Even though the coaching practitioners welcomed the competition between professional associations as it served them (as customers), customer orientated purposes of professional associations ranked high.

The customers interviewed, on the other hand did not know much about the various membership bodies, how they differ and their offerings.

"I haven't found one and in general the good one belongs to all of them and I think it's about "you know this one specialises in that and that one specialises in this, so let me go there" and it's cool as the good ones are with all of them". (Transcript 3)

"And for me personally I don't think that either ICF or COMENSA are even the right regulatory body specifically for the SA market or the SA environment I still think that we need a body that will look after that" (Transcript 14)

*"Bottom-line is that the reason the coaching fraternity like COMENSA, ICF (that's why I am not involved with COMENSA) it seeks power, territory and control. They people that were first in are now producing hurdles for others to enter so that they can control the market for their own financial gain and for power "(*Transcript 5)

Accreditation of educational institutions is a possible function of coaching professional associations that many respondents mentioned.

"Where I think we should be accrediting and these associations could be useful in accrediting knowledge based things and these competency based things. Is through the learning authorities/organisations and teaching organisations that teach coaching". (Transcript 5)

"if COMENSA is not accredited by SAQA then they have no right to say we recognise that training institution and not the other training institution because SAQA gives them powers to say go and set standards, only one will meet those same standards, you can recognise". (Transcript 13)

"So the issue there is about managing and quality assuring the qualifications that essentially come through from a coaching perspective". (Transcript 18)

As a start, the ICF recognizes Henley and GIBS. In addition, accreditation of educational institutions is one of the functions that a SAQA recognised professional body may fulfil.

This is the closest evidence of the links between professional associations and universities as stated in phase 3 of Willensky's model.

Occupational strategy

The four professional bodies interviewed indicated being for the professionalisation of coaching in South Africa. It was clear, however that they had various understandings of how this should be, and thus had pursued different strategies, particularly with regards to regulation, which will be discussed in the next section. It is also clear that there is a mix of occupational strategies at play. A further analysis of stakeholder groupings shows that professional associations lean towards credentialism and some form of occupational closure, whilst individuals believe in marketization.

The following excerpts give an indication of their varying positions:

"Okay, COMENSA is very clear now and they are in agreement with the view that. So, COMENSA has embarked on professionalization especially in the last 2 to 3 years where the current President said "Let's professionalise". In the past you could just logon, register, pay your fees, and claim anything and then because you have a certificate you claim to be with COMENSA and then you could do all sorts of things. So now there is a rigorous process of weeding out that".

"I do think that the ICF strives for professionalising coaching and that's their whole mandate and I do think that on the whole that is what they are achieving". (Transcript 13)

"When people say that Coaching is not a profession I think about it and say okay somebody is in denial but it's okay. And I know the politics of it. The politics of it is professionalization and the politics of the name. It's an issue of protectionism. If you want to be all "khumbaya" and let's include then you won't be able to professionalise in its own meaning and professionalise mean you are limited to a group of people". (Transcript 18)

Membership practices

Historically, (with the exception of SIOPSA), all the professional associations in the sample have had an inclusive approach which means that anybody can be a member.

This debate as quoted has more recently resurfaced in the context of professionalization. Some understand exclusion as part and parcel of professionalization.

Whilst it is still true that anybody can be a member for most of these organisations, there has been a further distinction of memberships as a result of credentialing. This is more recent for COMENSA and ABCCCP than ICF. This has seen requirements like education, proficiency in specified competencies and experience introduced. This has led to an introduction of professional designations that also denote levels.

Professional associations are also engaged in discussions on requirements for membership and entry into the profession. With the advent of the SAQA recognition, COMENSA, for example, has had to review requirements of membership of the different categories and have a requirement of an underlying NGQ qualification for each level. This excludes a number of people from being credentialed at a certain level, if at all.

The theory shows this to be a time of conflict within the profession between the experienced old guard without qualifications/credentials and the new people. Although there were two mentions of ABCCCP being a disgruntled breakaway from COMENSA, at the time of discussions about credentialing and a further debate on inclusion vs exclusion, this is not enough to state that this is conflict resulting from factions resisting credentialing, as is stated in the Willensky model, as both ABCCCP and COMENSA support credentialing and have initiated such processes for their members.

A further report that ABCCCP objected to COMENSA application to SAQA as reported in one of the interviews was disputed by the participant from SAQA.

“we put in the in the application in January 2014 to become a professional body with SAQA and then the ABCCCP ……. they objected to it, so that… I mean, we need to counter act the objection. They are basing it on the fact that you don’t want to populate and have conflicting bodies and you only need one body for a professional field and they will be the body but the argument is that they are the body for Consultants and Coaches so this was just for Coaches and there was so much work that had been done that they could see the rigor and the credibility of what had gone into COMENSA because when we developed

the accreditation process we compared all the professional bodies and the competency frameworks around the world so we had all of them and could see what they were." (Transcript 2)

"We haven't received an objection yet from anyone as at last week Friday". (Transcript 8)

4.5 Stage 4: Is there political agitation to win support and protection of the law?

This section deals with data pertaining to regulation of the profession.

Protection of designation

Findings show that within SAQA there is a structure and process established for professions who only wish to pursue protected designations. Statutory professions and their protection of jurisdiction of work was carried out through act of parliament. This distinction is similar to one originally made by Willensky. For purposes of coaching, three professional bodies initially showed interest and to date two are recognised.

"for the coaching there's COMENSA, there's ABCCCP. I forgot now there's another one who's not really into coaching but more into management consulting and things like that but they have an element of Coaching in there. We've arranged for a meeting with all three (3) of them about earlier this year" (Transcript 8)

The following coaching designations are thus recognised and protected in South Africa:

Table 8: Coaching Credentials and designations registered with SAQA

DESIGNATION	**ABBV**	**ORGANISATION**
Comensa Credentialised Practitioner	CCP	Coaching and Mentors of SA
Comensa Master Practitioner	CMP	Coaching and Mentors of SA

Comensa Senior Practitioner	CSP	Coaching and Mentors of SA
Certified Master Coach	MC	Institute of Management Consultants and Master Coaches of South Africa

These designations can only be used if awarded by the relevant professional bodies in accordance with their requirements.

Protection of jurisdiction of work

It was also established that the IGCCP, representing Psychologists that Coach is working on having the HPCSA (a statutory body) add a registration category to the existing Psychology registrations that are recognised. It is not clear how they will coexist with coaches that are not Psychologists, as the proposed scope of profession is not yet available. However, the summary of their proposal is as follows:

Table 9: Proposed designations and underlying qualifications framework by IGCP

CURRENT CATEGORIES	FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES	NQF LEVEL
Psychologists (Clinical, counselling etc)	Coaching Psychologist	NQF level 8/9 Masters qualification CP 12months internship/supervised practice National Board exam

Psychometrist	Coaching Councillor	NQF level 7: Honors degree/4year qualification in CP National board exam 6 months practicum under supervision
Councillor	Coaching Technician	NQF level 6 Degree/Higher Diploma in CP National Board exam 3 months practicum under supervision
Psycho technician	Coaching Entry Level	NQF Level 5 National Diploma/National certificate in CP National Board exam 3 months practicum under supervision

Despite the seemingly advanced stages of this professional project, the respondent from the HPCSA did not seem aware of it. At the time of interviews, there were only two additional registration categories being considered by HPCSA viz. Forensic Psychology and Neuro Psychology. The SIGCP SIOPSA initiative was dismissed as being “confused”.

It was also reported that members of the Psychology board (a board within the HPCSA) differed on Coaching in general. Many believed that it does not belong to the Psychology stable and should rather be affiliated with the Board of People Practices. Others were of a view that coaches should be brought closer and regulated rather than be unregulated and

impose danger to the public. There were also those who did not believe in the existence of

coaching as a stand-alone practice and just saw it as encroachment of the Psychology space by people who do not qualify.

It was emphasised that the issue of the professionalization and regulation of coaching has not been tabled formally for discussion and the HPCSA does not have a formal position at this stage.

Zero regulation

The ICF has not applied for recognition by SAQA. Thus their designations are not protected in South Africa, even with this statement:

"*I do think that the ICF strives for professionalising coaching and that's their whole mandate*"

The ABCCCP has also not applied for recognition by SAQA, even though they had initially shown interest. Their view is one that favours self-regulation for now but not opposed to state regulation, should the need arise.

"…it doesn't have to be statutory, there just has to be rules and regulations in place. The statutory process happens in the longer term when you starting to feel that people are not taking you seriously then you get the power of government and enforce people to do it, and I kind of believe with support we'll get there as well"

Market regulation

The principles of competition as regulation apply for some to not only professional bodies, but also individual coaches. This became apparent when expressing reasons for not regulating.

"*And it's the same for a Coach, this is a business and a market place. It's called a free market, it's not China. Bottom-line is that the reason the coaching fraternity like COMENSA, ICF (that's why I am not involved with COMENSA) it seeks power, territory*

and control. They people that were first in are now producing hurdles for others to enter so that they can control the market for their own financial gain and for power"

Coaches reported that their clients are not concerned about credentials, designations, regulations or affiliations as yet.

"It goes on reputation rather than a certification"

"My clients are not interested and never ask me. They don't care, they go on output, reputation and the fact that I have an honour"

"I think the biggest, probably the biggest regulator for coaching is going to be people's reputations"

"No client (like the one we're talking about now) has ever asked about whether I am a credentialed by a particular organisation that doesn't interest them… they don't care about your qualifications. They will evaluate from session to session whether its valuable to them"

Yet it may seem that this is beginning to change. Some coaches report to have knowledge of two organisations (Absa and Nedbank) that require ICF accreditation.

"I don't know when that will be but from what I've understood I think Nedbank insist on ICF credentialed coaches on their panel" (Transcript 11)

*"I see a demand in people becoming really smart in asking members, asking practitioners, asking who's registering and who's protecting me as a buyer, who do I complain to; which talks already to the protection piece" (*Transcript 18)

*"So the question about credentialing its typically something that the HR Directors would ask and I'm increasingly seeing this in fact some companies are very pre-scriptive. For example ABSA in a recent call for coaches said they will only accept coaches that are credentialed by the ICF" (*Transcript 4)

This shows an increasing awareness and interest in the issue of professionalisation by buyers.

None of the clients interviewed had affiliation as a strict requirement. The observation was that they were being cautious and taking a wait and see approach. Some admitted to not knowing enough about the different associations.

Reluctance towards state involvement

There was a clear reluctance towards state involvement from participants across all stakeholder groupings and they gave various reasons. Most of the reasons had to do with their perception or experience with bureaucratic processes. Others based their views on professions that are currently state regulated.

"I don't think I'm a big fan at this point of state-regulation, I think that would just become burdensome and bureaucratic and slow and as a country I don't think we're brilliant at imposing state-regulation in a way that's lean and mean and you know the public sector just does it in a way that's heavy and clumsy and the private sector does it in a way that's lean and mean because it's commercially oriented. It's not for the good of society it's like "how do we do it in a way that's commercially viable". You know…. I could be talking out of turn and say but look at how the state have regulated the medical profession; you know they do stop a whole bunch of 'wanna be' medical practitioners from that saying that they can heal you when they've got zero basis for their claim" (Transcript 11)

"It's a huge challenge to live in a regulated environment. Do you want to have that? Does the Coaching practise, do you want to invite regulation by government and my whole background says to me that's to be avoided stay as far as possible" (Transcript 4)

4.6 Stage 5: Are there rules embodied in a formal Code of Ethics?

This section contains findings on ethics and specifically the hallmarks as per the Willensky model viz. a Code of Ethics that embodies rules to eliminate the unqualified and unscrupulous, rules to reduce internal competition, and rules to protect the customer and promote service ideals.

All the associations included in the study had a Code of Ethics published on their website. Some were more explicit than others. The ABCCCP, for example was brief, focusing

mainly on the four values that guide ethical conduct for their members, rather than providing an accompanying set of rules.

The rules were found to deal more with the “unscrupulous” than with the unqualified, to reference the Willensky theory. Common themes in the various codes were

- Accurate representation of one’s capability and/or level of competence and operating within that
- Conflict of interest and potential conflict of interest
- Confidentiality
- Continuous Professional Development

Several participants in the study mentioned the issue of misrepresentation of one’s competence as a commonly encountered risk. This also included appropriateness of interventions. Many mentioned that an awareness of one’s limitations and referral to a relevantly skilled professional was the appropriate conduct.

“So my background is in the business side and I believe I deliver an excellent response to what the clients require in the coaching area that suits their needs in the business world. But if there’s something that really borders on the psychological I will refer. So for example if a client (take the extremist) starts contemplating suicide, I know that with my background I’m not equipped to deal with that (that’s not for a coach). So ideally I will involve a colleague who is a psychologist or any other psychologist that’s their realm but there are many life issues that are not necessarily in the psychology realm” (Transcript 4)

“Now the “Scope of the Profession” is a document that you can download from the website and that scope is basically describing to other entities/industries/businesses what the boundaries for psychology are. What must you be to be able to work within the boundaries which are the scope of the profession? Now within the scope of the profession there’s a scope of practise. Now the scope of practise is for different registration categories so each category of psychology (clinical, educational, industrial, etc) has their own scope of practise that determines what type of work can you do in that scope.” (Transcript 9)

“Eg. I heard of a Coach busy speaking to people about masturbation and bringing it into the coaching space. It’s her personal belief system and she’s not registered with any professional body and advertising and writing papers about this and this is not a coaching conversation.” (Transcript 2)

In the protection of the customers and promote service ideals, the Code of Ethics was also seen to provide a course of tangible recourse.

"What companies and people in the public need is a body that they can complain to around Ethical behaviour. They need ethical resource for ethical breaches, so as association they need to focus on what is ethical practise. And I should then say that I am a member of this association so I uphold the following ethics so if I fail from an ethical point of view in my delivery of services to you - you can have recourse for the membership of this association" (Transcript 5)

"*people still don't know that they can complain. But the first thing is to say to people if this person messes up, you can complain".* (Transcript 18)

However, none of the customers interviewed had pursued this route and did not necessarily seem to know.

It was found that some Codes of Conduct are more explicit than others in describing the processes pertaining to ethics transgressions. ICF is explicit about possible elimination as a result of breach and other lighter sanctions.

"I further agree that my accountability to the ICF for any breach may include sanctions, such as loss of my ICF Membership and/or my ICF Credentials"

The Comensa Code of Ethics placed emphasis on a constructive resolution of issues. There was no mention of possible consequences.

ABCCCP Code of Ethics is not explicit, however, they do have a Yellow list, which constitutes being banned for a period of time.

"*We have what we call the yellow list (so instead of going red and green and purple like other people blacklist we have a yellow list) so we provoke the yellow list that says that if someone is on the yellow list it means that they have broken the law or done some other unethical act at some point in what was given the lifespan of how long they could be on the list, I think 5years. But because it is self-regulated it won't have as much teeth as if it was statutory*." (Transcript 18)

Ethics in general was one of the most stated reasons given for support of professionalisation or regulation alongside what people observed as charlatanism in the industry. Ethics is also addressed in many of the coach training courses, including the university Masters degrees that have been developed.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This section provides an interpretation and discussion of the findings in the previous chapter. As the study was conceptualised and reported in the context of the two perspectives and frameworks applied (Willensky temporal model and Burrage stakeholder model), the discussion follows largely the same logic, with due consideration given to related topics that emerged during the research and literature review that may fall outside these two frameworks.

5.2 Profile of respondents

Individuals identified as stakeholders of coaching (either in their individual capacity or ex-officio) were invited to participate in the research. In total 15 interviews were conducted and stakeholders represented were grouped as follows: individual coach practitioners, coaching professional associations, academics, associations of neighbouring professions and regulators.

Although individuals were identified and identified to participate in a specific capacity, many actually fulfilled different roles and offered their opinions from various perspectives, either in the current role or drew from previous experience. The obvious overlap is with professional associations, individual coaches and academics, reflecting a spirit of activism that perhaps is indicative of the infancy of the industry.

All the participants had post matric education. Only one participant was academically educated in coaching, holding a Masters degree from a university that is not South African. Other participants held varying qualifications, even those from within the same stakeholder group. The varied qualifications and work experiences of the sample even for those that are coaching practitioners reflects and/or is the result of absence of the collective professional identity one tends to find in other professions confirms previous studies' findings. Even though there is a certain degree of fragmentation, it is not yet clear if the emerging formations have necessarily been based on similarity of background. Literature

reveals that usually over time this fragmentation reduces and one has only one industry body (Neal and Morgan, 2010).

The following sections discuss the findings of each of the 5 Willensky 5 milestones as presented in Chapter 4.

5.2 Has Coaching become full time?

The findings of full time coaches are significant from an evolutionary perspective. As Willensky (1964) pointed out, the work in itself does not have to be new, but rather the organisational developments around it lead to transformation into a full-time occupation. This means the work would have been previously done is some capacity on an ad-hoc or piece meal basis. An example in this case is Hamlin, Andrea & Beattie's 2009 finding that coaching has historically been carried out by Human Resources Development practitioners as part of their function. To this end one of the customers interviewed provides a coaching service from within a corporate organisation, amongst other HR duties. Applying the Willensky model to similar situations, Neal & Morgan (2010) show how German occupations evolved into professions through specialisation. Fidings show a mix of a few individuals doing it as part of another role, but more doing it as in a way that shows it can be fullt time. Thus coaching has become both part time and full time. Whether or not this is a state of transition and evolution, time will tell.

During the course of this study, it became necessary to distinguish between a full-time occupation and a sole occupation as taken by individual coaches. This is ascribed to a general trend in the global economy. According to Kerka (2003) having multiple careers is a growing trend in the 21st century. Concurrent multiple occupations as many of the respondents have, can all be "full-time". Binstead and Grant (2008) refer rather to full time self-employment as applicable to many coaches. This is what this study found. Consequently, many coaches offered coaching as part of a portfolio of professional services. Similarly to the finding by Binstead and Grant (2008), "most participants also supplied other related services" pg.47. In this regard, coaching was one of "full time" occupations that one person could hold in that it was self contained and did not form part of any other task. This conceptualization of work is not uniqie to executive coaching but applies to how work is done in this era of concurrent multiple careers, challenging the traditional notions of full-time and part-time as a dichotomy, for example.

The diverse backgrounds of coaches as reflected in table 5, are similar to those in New Zealand and Australia (Bono, et al 2009 Brooks et al 2007 and Grant & Zackon 2004). This affirms Willensky's statement that "At this early stage, the practitioners come, of necessity from other occupations". These early days of an occupation mean that there is no standardised knowledge base yet and thus no established barriers to entry. In the context of evolution to a profession, this is a very early stage in the process. Moreover, as terminal (life time) occupation is regarded as one of indicators of a true profession, the theory anticipates, the establishment of formal longer term studies that force earlier commitment (Willensky, 1964). The challenge that coaching already presents is that even with the recent introduction of graduate studies, there has been an almost inherent requirement of life experience, thus making it further difficult to standardise the occupational experiences of executive coaches and build a uniform professional identity.

5.3 Is there an established training school with links to a university?

Universities have played a fundamental role in the formation of traditional professions and the finding that there has not been a strong link with universities (whether via training schools or associations) explains in part, why as in with the rest of the world, practice has outmatched research and theory development. Willensky (1964) describes a situation where the issue of training that subsequently is put into contact with a university happens soon after the viability of the occupation being full time is established. The result of this was immediate barriers to entry, longer training and commitment. This has not been so in the case of the South African Executive coaching market and is the reason why after so many years of practice, there are discussions about barriers of entry and in complaining about absence of standards participants typically refer to "two day courses" or "weekend courses", which essentially is a criticism on the quality of coach education that has become available. An understanding of the sample's educational profiles gave further insight into the matter of executive coach education and training in South Africa and other related matters.

Qualifications

The finding that the profile of coaching practitioners in the sample was mixed in terms of their educational background is supported by other studies that profiled coaches in South Africa and elsewhere (Steenkamp, 2012 Maritz, 2013; Bono et al, 2009). Using the Willensky interpretation, this profile of respondents' credentials shows coaching is still at very early stages of professional development seeing as only one respondent holds a coaching specific higher degree (obtained from another country). In South Africa, the establishment of training schools, the standardisation of study terms and establishment of higher degrees at university did not happen as soon after the occupation became full time as Willensky's theory suggests. This is not unique to South Africa and seems to have happened globally, resulting in coaching receiving more attention from the practitioner community than academia (Bono et al, 2009) and a practice that is without research and sound theoretical foundations (Feldman & Lankau, 2005).

Body of knowledge

To that end, coach education has predominantly been in practice, skill and technique rather than theoretical grounding. The findings of this study show a change that supports the Willensky theory in that recently, higher degrees have been introduced and ties established with universities through other non-degree programmes. That three of these are at Masters level with a research component lays an important foundation for the development of a body of knowledge- a key basis for a profession. In addition, traditionally, universities have played a strategic role linking knowledge to practice, thereby, creating a rationale for exclusive occupational jurisdiction. The historical absence of universities as role players in this case explains in part, why there have been no barriers to entry.

Curriculum

The absence of standards and the prevalence of "2 day courses" is what most participants complained about and hoped professionalization would resolve. Findings of similar curriculum in the different universities shows a steady development of standard terms of study emerging. This can be ascribed to global trends in coach education- 2 of the universities that offer coaching degrees are accredited by Graduate School Alliance for Education in Coaching.

In addition, the ICF accreditation of coach training globally, together with their competences, has contributed to a development towards standard terms of study too. The challenge in South Africa may be that there could be another wave of fragmentation as both ABCCCP and COMENSA are pursuing accreditation of training and/or training providers. This could threaten the notion of standard terms of study.

Barriers to entry

Education and training is a known way to put up barriers to entry to a profession. As a result, the participants' concerns about the absence of barriers to entry were specific to depth of knowledge and skill and role preparation. In this regard, they mentioned that anybody can be a coach as it is not a legally protected designation. They also mentioned concern with some coach training being brief and thus insufficient. The challenge that this poses is the extent of the establishment of coaching as an industry without barriers of entry. As outlined in Willensky (1964), following the establishment of formal qualifications, entry is usually restricted and the unqualified eliminated. Whilst credentialing is still voluntary for coaching in South Africa i.e. anyone can still practice as a coach, the requirement of minimum training hours from an accredited institution by ICF and the requirement for all COMENSA members to start afresh with their registration, may be an indication of both restricted entry and elimination of unqualified.

Exclusion

The aspect of professionalization that drew the most criticism and discomfort was exclusion or perceived exclusion. Some respondents saw this as inherent in the process of professionalization and setting standards. Many others held a strong reservation and were of the opinion that professionalization can and must proceed in a way that does not exclude others.

According to Willensky (1964), this stage is often a source of an old age internal conflict between the "old-guard" who learnt the hard way and the "up-starts" who took the course.

The concern was particularly around the introduction of credentialing and the exclusion of those who have been in the market and relied on experience rather than qualifications.

As is evident in the literature review, sociological literature is abound with views on professionalization as an elitist and exclusionist ideology. Indeed, it is an emotive issue in South Africa when one considers the divisiveness of institutions and the contribution of professionalization and credentialism. In addition, this exclusion has historically been along racial lines. This makes the role of SAQA challenging as on one hand they promote professionalization for all its virtues and on the other hand aim to redress.

The view from the customer seems split here. Customers that participated in the survey wanted to be assisted by professional associations in their selection. Coaches, said their customers had not enquired about their credentials. However, they were aware that customers had increasingly started requiring credentialing. Nedbank was mentioned more than once as an example. One could speculate that this is because these coaches already had an established client base and track record.

What is of significance is that a number of respondents are of the opinion that the market will lead and choose the path. If the market is increasingly placing reliance on membership to Comensa or ICF, therefore, that is how the minimum educational requirements will eventually be enforced.

Professional boundary

Exclusive jurisdiction depends on the body of knowledge and its uniqueness. Many of the coaches acknowledge the multi-disciplinary nature of coaching. Coaching is still seen as closest to Psychology and that is the reason why it is that boundary that is contested. As was found in the literature there are those that believe Coaching is an extension of Psychology. In this study, recognised Coaching as being a stand alone discipline that is unique. However, they acknowledged the importance of some knowledge of Psychology for one to be an effective coach. They also acknowledged the close proximity of the two disciplines, hence the danger of over-stepping of boundaries is so present. They also acknowledged the prevalent overlapping competence. As Willensky pointed out, If the technical base of an occupation consists of a vocabulary that sounds familiar to another

then the occupation will have difficulty claiming a monopoly of skill or even a roughly exclusive jurisdiction. That is the challenge faced by the Coaching Professional project.

Professional identity

The varied credentials and experiences of the sample points to a non-standardised way of role preparation. This contributes to the eclectic nature in which coaching is practiced and also to the weak collective professional identity. The further consequence of the absence of the link between the professional association and standardised education is absence of a shared professional identity. This has contributed to the fragmentation referred to in the literature as Higher education in particular, is a first step where the individual starts the process of professional socialisation (Page, 2005; Hass & Schaffir, 1982).

AFFILIATION WITH PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

As mentioned in the previous section, the establishment of training schools at universities is a recent development and unlike in many of Willenky's studies, it did not precede and lead to the formation of professional associations. The ICF accreditation of the GIBS and Henley coaching courses is a classic illustration of this stage of the Willensky model. One can anticipate that these will evolve into higher degrees.

The SA context though, has placed NQF alignment as a requirement for recognition of professional bodies who will issue designations. This highlights this link at a national level and affirms both Willensky, the dramatulurgy and Evans findings.

In addition to that, the way the professionalization is advancing, there is no strong link created with universities to make it as the place that develops this barrier of entry historically seen as significant, thus far. This would be a link between the university and a professional association. However, the new requirements that set a minimal education standard achieves a part of this barrier to entry. That also include the ICF accreditation of educational providers. That none of the SA recognised bodies accredit courses and the

courses at university are accredited by GSAEC points to a possibility of a global standard and is an interesting phenomenon as it extends the notion of standardisation of knowledge.

There are other coach education interventions that coaches have relied on to upskill and prepare themselves for the role, as many of the respondents will have pursued. Again, in their tendency to be skill and practice focussed, this has contributed to practice being ahead of theoretical development. This is possibly not inappropriate, even though it is a deviation from how traditional professions have developed. Reed (1996) offered an alternative in describing modern professions as relying less on formal theoretical credentialism and showing more of an appreciation of competency and practice based accreditation. Thus the other non- degree courses as available in universities like UCT, Henley and GIBS could perhaps be more in keeping with practitioner education of the modern profession.

5.4 Is there a professional association formed?

Organisation of membership bodies

The finding of multiple associations and multiple memberships to coaching associations is similar to other parts of the world (Lane, 2010) wherein it has been identified as a challenge and risk to the success of the professional project. Even with this risk, as widely cited in the coaching literature, it is not uncommon to have multiple professional associations. Other new professions emerging and on a path to professionalization also have multiple occupational associations viz. Public Relations in Malaysia and Project Management in Italy (Sabini, 2014). It also confirms Neal and Morgan's (2010) findings that at early stages of professional development, there were commonly, several competing professional associations. According to these researchers though, in due course, only one emerged as the leading association for the occupation in question.

This coherence is seen as particularly useful in engaging with the state and gaining a regulatory bargain. Reasons cited for one association prevailing is that this is one that

would be recognised by the state (Neal and Morgan, 2010). The SAQA's willingness to recognise more than one professional body for coaching (and other non-statutory professions) is unique.

Another regard in which the South African market is different is the extent to which coaches welcome and embrace the various professional associations, advocating for a competitive spirit. This is a departure from literature citing fragmentation as a risk. This is helpful to SAQA as the regulator because according to Dunmore and Falk (2001), competition between professional associations provides another layer of regulation. Even with these benefits, the challenge still remains for buyers of coaching- that they don't know how to choose. In this regard, competition amongst associations may not necessarily be helpful.

Purpose of membership bodies

One of the findings from this section of study was that coaches welcome the competition between coaching associations. Reasons given were mostly about competition as means to ensure that they give the best service possible to them, coaches, a particular constituency, or market of the professional associations. It was at first surprising as it in in contrast to the literature that emphasized how a fragmented market weakened a professional project.

The effect may not have been as beneficial to customers of coaching as they seemed confused by the existence of various bodies. One buyer of coaching thought Comensa is also American and another one has never thought to escalate ethical transgressions with professional associations that coaches belong to. The challenge is for the associations to educate about the functions of the associations and grow the profession before promoting the individual organisations.

Occupational Strategy

The changing membership requirements for membership are indicative of an occupation in transition and another manifestation of what Willensky (1964) referred to as the soul searching that happens at this stage. The sequence of events (professional associations preceding academic coach training) also explains why academic coach qualifications were

not a prerequisite for membership into the associations, in sharp contrast to the historical and traditional practice of professional association being formed by a cohort of people who have completed academic training. However, now that there are minimum training requirements for membership in some associations, this is in line with Willensky's gradual restriction of entry to "those willing to go through prescribed training".pg 23.

Change of name of occupation or title was also found to be a feature of this stage of professional development and the findings of this research support that as evident in the introduction of new designations. This introduction of professional coaching designations however, has not been accompanied by a pecking order and a delegation of tasks that are not core, essential and professional to the less trained and further down in the hierarchy, none of the designations and credentialing framework showed this segregation of tasks. The proposal by the psychologists that coach, however, carries the possibility of this, as the implications of having coaching psychology as a registration category would mean there are some tasks in coaching practice that only those qualified as psychologists could carry out.

External Conflict

The two neighbouring professions researched showed different orientations. The contesting of boundaries with Psychology is as a result of the similar technical base of knowledge and vocabulary between Coaching and Psychology, as explained by Willensky (1964). In sharp contrast, the results pertaining to the Human Resources profession, whilst confirming Hamil's view that coaching may be an extension of HR Development, showed a different attitude towards co-existing. This finding highlights one of distinction made between traditional and modern professions. According to Reed, the high levels of differentiation amongst modern occupations make traditional professionalization not suitable as a strategy. As a result, SABPP embrace the professionalization of specialist groupings like SARA (South African Rewards Association) and in this regard are supportive of professionalization of coaching, even as they see them as specialist groupings within the wider group of people practices or Human Resources profession.

5.5 Is there political agitation to win support and protection of the law?

The political agitation for protection by law is the fourth milestone in the Willensky evolution of professions model. Other literature, expanding on this dynamic, refer to the “regulatory bargain” as essential to the definition of a profession. This section goes hand in hand with the previous one as a regulatory bargain is an essential element of an occupational strategy and positioning.

The recognition by SAQA of two different associations for coaching is similar to Sabini’s 2014 finding on project management in Italy. These may signal an important change in how professions have become conceptualised in modern day economies, following a criticism of the ideology of professions as market shelters for the elite.

Self- regulation/Acquired regulation

The most institutionalised type of regulation is as granted to IMCSA and COMENSA. From a traditional and dichotomous view of professional regulation, this would constitute self-regulation, as it is not statutory regulation but driven more by the professional association. However, the recognition of professional bodies through SAQA and the subsequent oversight limits the extent to which these professions can be regarded as entirely self-regulated. For this reason, this scenario is best described as Acquired regulation, as first described by Evetts (2002). This allows for regulation and monitoring of non-statutory professions without an oppressive bureaucracy. This concept has also been observed in Italy where the state allows for some regulation of professions that are not regulated by a specific law via an act of parliament. This regulatory mechanism allows for the state to exert greater influence over professions in order to achieve social change (Suddaby & Viale, 2011). In that regard, the SAQA policy is explicit in its objectives that include redress, transformation and lifting of standards.

Protection of designation

This scenario affords legal protection of designations, which means that only the recognised professional bodies may award the particular designations and nobody else outside this fray may or award them. It also dictates that it is linked to an underlying NQF qualification and to this effect both SAIMC and COMENSA have stipulated requirements and qualifications. These requirements viz. membership to a professional body and credentials are, however not effective as barriers of entry or occupational closure strategy. Whilst membership to and credentialing by either of the two recognised bodies gives access to the specific exclusive designations, it does not give exclusive right to the practice of coaching. As a result, many coaches are not affiliated with and regulated by SAIMC or COMENSA. This kind of protection is indicative and/or applicable where an area of competence that is not clearly exclusive. This has already been established in the literature review, where it was found that coaching does not have an exclusive and defined body of knowledge.

The protection and recognition of professional designations may address the concerns many have expressed in both coaching and in the literature review. “Anybody can call themselves a coach” is a phrase used often to demonstrate the challenges of having so generic a title. The new designations are aimed at distinguishing those coaches whose credentials meet the requirements of the recognised professional bodies.

This does not allow for exclusivity (regarded by some, as a powerful mark of professionalization) because of the voluntary nature of it. The voluntary nature of this is that the bargain is only for members of that association. People who are not members of any of the recognised professional bodies may still practice, but may not use the now protected designations as titles.

As it is early days, the effect of the new designations has not been established. There is no evidence to suggest that the various stakeholders (practitioners and customers alike) are versed on these new professional designations. Willensky (1964) found that many such attempts were unsuccessful and that is why morticians remained morticians. What may exacerbate the situation is the number of professional designations there are that are recognised for coaching (a total of 4 to date) as according to SAQA regulations, no two professional bodies may register the same designation. The risk is that clients and the

general public at large may not know or remember and instead revert to the generic term of Coach and the value of a distinguished designation would be lost. In addition, unlike statutory professions, where there is a legislated scope of profession, there is no demarcation of duties and responsibilities amongst the different levels of coaching.
Not only would a buyer need to understand the distinction amongst titles of one association, they will also need to know how these differ from another. Jarvis in Maritz (2013) identified this as a big complaint from customers abroad.

The requirement for professional designations to be aligned with the National Qualifications authority, be part of a progression pathway and include an underlying initial qualification facilitates the creation of barriers to entry that did not previously exist in coaching and will form a basis of exclusion. Whilst some of the participants (notably, those speaking on behalf of the associations) understood exclusion as an inherent part of professionalization, the majority of individual practitioners wanted to raise standards and quality without leaving out experienced coaches that are not credentialed. There are numerous reasons for the ambivalence towards the concept of exclusion, not least of which is the South African historical context where credentials have been used to justify racial exclusion. In this regard, SAQA's oversight role in ensuring that there are no unfair exclusionary measures is a balancing act. On one hand, it is recognising autonomy and role of professional bodies as gate-keepers, necessary to define a profession, raising standards and quality of delivery of services within our economy. On the other hand the oversight responds to concerns around unfair discrimination, unfair advantage and membership based on arbitrary grounds, thereby ensuring the objective of redress, as stipulated in the SAQA policy and inherent in the socio economic philosophy of the day. Such initiatives include Recognition of Prior Learning. In short, this approach allows for exclusion, on the basis of fair and transparent grounds. Including hours of coaching experience and recognition of prior learning are two of the initiatives that allow for a recreation or permeability of social and economic boundaries (Sudaby & Viale, 2011).
Including hours of coaching (experience) is also a move away from traditional classic professions. This is line with Paton et al (2013) findings that there are newer alternative closure regimes where alternative credentials emphasising competences, transferable

skills and industry knowledge and experience are preferred to/over the traditional national exam testing knowledge of a defined standard body of knowledge.

Market regulation

The recognition of multiple professional bodies also demonstrates the liberal principles and a competitive culture to promote competition in professional markets. Given that there is no statute that prescribes the use of credentialed coaches as there is none that prohibits people not credentialed from practicing coaching, coaching as an industry becomes subject to market forces. This is demonstrated by the fact that none of the coaches interviewed for this study have been asked for affiliation by their customers. In addition, many of them believe the market (via buyers of coaching) will be the ultimate regulator.

It would seem that this industry has been left to forces of the market to a certain extent and these practitioners believe that this should continue. This would be in line with what Reed (1996) and Fincham (2006) observed of modern professions. According to these researchers, new occupations employ the strategy of marketization, which essentially places market appeal at the centre. These market based strategies include an entrepreneurial responsiveness and exploitation of market needs, flexibility, customer orientation and competitiveness. In this scenario, clients, rather than state or professional associations are the more dominant players.

On the other hand a new reality is emerging and coaches are aware of some organisations that have introduced affiliation to and/or accreditation by a professional body as a requirement. This recent development could be as a result of professional bodies marketing the benefits of professional membership and accreditation to corporations that use the services of their members. Paton et al. (2013) predicted that this will lead to professional membership and qualifications being embedded in corporate tendering processes, as it seems may have started to happen. Essentially this would constitute another market form of regulation and occupational closure. The key here is reliance on the success of marketing ability in a competitive environment rather than prescriptive regulation.

So, even though it may not be prescribed to be a member or accredited to practice as a coach, the protected designation could somewhat lead to protection of work and exclusion of those not associated, in practice.

The competition would not only be between unafilliated coaches and those who are members of a professional body, but also between different professional associations. The two examples cited by respondents refer specifically to ICF accreditation. With the advent of COMENSA and SAIMC recognition, one can expect some competition. Contrary to the sentiment expressed in the literature, coaches in this study welcomed the multiplicity of professional bodies for the benefit of competition. It remains to be seen whether this competition between professional bodies will be a sufficient substitute for government regulation as suggested by Dunmore and Falk (2001).

Self Regulation /Internationalization

The voluntary credentialing and competitive market has made it viable for ICF to be a popular professional association, even though they have neither protected designation nor protected jurisdiction of work in South Africa. The competitive advantage that the ICF leverages is the International standards, qualifications and codes of practice. The currency of this is demonstrated by the fact that one of the participants likened ICF membership and accreditation to an international passport, implying it is superior. The ICF's approach to regulation is a combination of self-regulation and internationalisation, as they are independent with an approach that transcends the boundaries of the nation state.

Given that the examples of corporate clients having accreditation as a requirement both specify ICF, one could say their marketing strategy as described by Paton et al (2013) is working. The implications for this, from a regulatory perspective are that the state may wish to reconsider their position as the recognition of non-statutory professional bodies within the SAQA framework allows for oversight and alignment with certain imperatives as stipulated by state policy. Key amongst these imperatives is transformation and redress. The ICF strategy thus challenges the imperative of ensuring that "perceptions of exclusionary practices be addressed up front and that professions do not apply unjust policies and practices in regard to who gains access to a profession".

Are there rules embodies in a code of Ethics?

For many people, ethical conduct and enforcement thereof informs or even summarises the business case for professionalisation of executive coaching.

Given the multiple membership bodies, it follows that there are a few codes of ethics, embodying rules for members to abide by. Willensky was explicit that these rules would be about eliminating the unqualified and those with unscrupulous behavior. The results show features of both these to some extent in the codes of conduct as they are but also in what participants (some of whom have not seen these codes) are concerned about.

The prominence of concerns around the risk of representation of one's ability and skill (charlatanism), whether practitioners are sufficiently skilled (2 day course) and respect of professional boundary as found in this research are symptomatic of both unqualified and unscrupulous behavior referred to by Willensky (1964). In addition, to the issue of whether one possesses the skill or not, the findings show a challenge around whether one is legally allowed to "perform" the intervention and if the intervention is appropriate for coaching. This is a possible challenge that may be faced by psychologists who coach and may inappropriately use therapeutic methods in a coaching context.

Even though participants recognise coaching as a multi-disciplinary field, the neighbouring field mentioned the most is the context of the danger of crossing boundaries is Psychology. This is due to the proximity of the two fields in theory and practice. It is also because of the practice of Psychology is protected in law.

The restriction of entry can be seen as another form of elimination of the unqualified. With the requirement of minimum education for ICF and COMENSA for example, one can anticipate a re-registration process similar to the one described in Transcript 13 that will exclude people without the minimum education stipulated.

In so far as protection of the customer is concerned, many participants agreed that a code of conduct serves as mechanism for recourse should the practitioner transgress. This should give buyers and users of coaching some assurance and puts the professional association concerned in a position of authority. The real challenge in the South African

market right now is that many of the buyers are yet to know about this. As shown in the results, the attitude of customers was to observe what could be unethical behavior and possibly never use that coach again. This demonstrates the Market Led regulation that some referred to during interviews.

"I think the biggest, probably the biggest regulator for coaching is going to be people's reputations. So I if someone goes and delivers crap work, it does tarnish the name of coaching as a whole but companies are being quite clever and saying I won deal with that person ever again. Put them on the list they're no longer welcome here and those people talk to their compatriots elsewhere. So I think if you lack integrity and if you promise X and you under deliver, my sense is the industry will self-regulate and sooner or later you'll find yourself being ignored. Much like any other service provider; if you're crap all the time eventually (it catches up with you) the market takes you out." (Transcript 11)

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CONCLUSIONS

This research aimed to gain in-depth understanding of the project of professionalization of executive coaching in the South African context. It is the first study to provide a comprehensive sociological account of the professionalization of executive coaching and also include a multiple stakeholder perspective. Using primarily the Willensky model of professional development, the study seeked to provide empirical evidence on how this professional project is progressing. The study also gives views from the various stakeholders on the various issues pertaining to professionalization.

This section provides key findings from the research, a summarized answer to the research question of the status of professionalisation of Executive Coaching in South Africa today. Indeed, there is sufficient data to prove the existence of the process of professionalization. There have been significant developments in the recent past and more initiatives underway. Whilst there is evidence of all the relevant elements, this professional

project has deviated from the sequential path as described by Willensky (1964). One can summarise the findings of the assessment against the Willensky model as follows:

Even though many of the coaches have other occupations alongside coaching or offer other services, there are coaches who are full time. Secondly, coaching is not just done as piece meal part of something else, even for the coaches that have other offerings. Thus one can say coaching has become a full time occupation both in theory and in practice.
There are now numerous university degrees in the coaching field. There are even more non-academic coaching courses available in South Africa. The introduction of university degrees in coaching has not served as a barrier to entry as credentialing is voluntary. The study found no evidence to suggest that any of the university offerings were initiated by any professional body. Infact, whilst some courses are ICF accredited, the link between universities and professional bodies, seems to be weak. This is contrary to what Willensky (1964) found.

There are no less than six professional bodies that represent coaches in South Africa and four are represented in the study. Only two of these bodies are recognised by SAQA and thus able to secure and offer protected professional designations. SIOPSA is the only organisation with implied minimum education requirements. That is because it is an organisation that represents Psychologists who coach and there is prescribed training for Psychologists in South Africa.

The various professional bodies are pursuing different strategies to professionalization, and specifically the approach to a regulatory bargain. The study found three different strategies at play, with regards to regulation. Comensa and IMCSA are recognised by SAQA in what one can regard as acquired regulation- primarily self-regulation with state oversight. The SIOPSA is pursuing statutory regulation under the health professional council of South Africa. The aim is to have Coaching Psychology regulated through the Psychology act that already exists. ICF working more towards global standards, transcending national jurisdictions is displaying Internationalisation as a regulatory approach.

Finally, all the professional bodies have a code of ethics that provides for expulsion of coaches found to have behaved unethically. The environment of voluntary credentialing results in limitations in the extent to which this is enforceable and effective, in a way that is the case with traditional professions and described by Willensky (1964). Expulsion from a professional body does not bar one from working as a coach as only professional designations are protected.

Therefore, the results show that professionalization of coaching has not developed in a linear fashion and in many instances the Willensky requirements have only been partially met. It is also important to note that as this project is still underway, with some of the significant developments unfolding during the course of this research, the outcomes of the research provide a snap shot of the status quo on a timeline.

This deviation may be another example of the development of new expert professions as has been studied more recently (Fincham, Reed, Muzio et al.). Whilst the assessment of the South African coaching industry against these newer conceptualisations of professions was not in the scope of this study, a superficial glance suggests that this professional project has a mixture of the hall marks of both traditional professions and new expert professions.

In common with traditional professions

Academics invested in building a defined body of knowledge that is distinct, empirical and shared. Yet professional associations in their accreditation focus on competencies, which is typical of newer professions. Like GSAEC. The power strategies at play are credentialism through the establishment of competency assessments and also monopolisation as demonstrated by siopsa. Whilst some respondents seemed to lean more towards a preference for marketization.

Further, they expose the limitations of the Willensky road map and constraints in its applicability, as imposed by the fact that it is a model developed in a particular social and historical context.

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This section provides key findings from the research, a summarized answer to the research question of the status of professionalisation of Executive Coaching in South Africa today. Indeed, there is sufficient data to prove the existence of the process of professionalization. There have been significant developments in the recent past and more initiatives underway. Whilst there is evidence of all the relevant elements, this professional project has deviated from the sequential path as described by Willensky (1964). One can summarise the findings of the assessment against the Willensky model as follows:

Even though many of the coaches have other occupations alongside coaching or offer other services, there are coaches who are full time. Secondly, coaching is not just done as piece meal part of something else, even for the coaches that have other offerings. Thus one can say coaching has become a full time occupation both in theory and in practice.

There are now numerous university degrees in the coaching field. There are even more non-academic coaching courses available in South Africa. The introduction of university degrees in coaching has not served as a barrier to entry as credentialing is voluntary. The study found no evidence to suggest that any of the university offerings were initiated by any professional body. Infact, whilst some courses are ICF accredited, the link between universities and professional bodies, seems to be weak. This is contrary to what Willensky (1964) found.

There are no less than six professional bodies that represent coaches in South Africa and four are represented in the study. Only two of these bodies are recognised by SAQA and thus able to secure and offer protected professional designations. SIOPSA is the only organisation with implied minimum education requirements. That is because it is an organisation that represents Psychologists who coach and there is prescribed training for Psychologists in South Africa.

The various professional bodies are pursuing different strategies to professionalization, and specifically the approach to a regulatory bargain. The study found three different strategies at play, with regards to regulation. Comensa and IMCSA are recognised by SAQA in what one can regard as acquired regulation- primarily self-regulation with state oversight. The SIOPSA is pursuing statutory regulation under the health professional council of South Africa. The aim is to have Coaching Psychology regulated through the Psychology act that already exists. ICF working more towards global standards, transcending national jurisdictions is displaying Internationalisation as a regulatory approach.

Finally, all the professional bodies have a code of ethics that provides for expulsion of coaches found to have behaved unethically. The environment of voluntary credentialing results in limitations in the extent to which this is enforceable and effective, in a way that is the case with traditional professions and described by Willensky (1964). Expulsion from a professional body does not bar one from working as a coach as only professional designations are protected.

Therefore, the results show that professionalization of coaching has not developed in a linear fashion and in many instances the Willensky requirements have only been partially met. It is also important to note that as this project is still underway, with some of the significant developments unfolding during the course of this research, the outcomes of the research provide a snap shot of the status quo on a timeline.

This deviation may be another example of the development of new expert professions as has been studied more recently (Fincham, Reed, Muzio et al.). Whilst the assessment of the South African coaching industry against these newer conceptualisations of professions was not in the scope of this study, a superficial glance suggests that this professional project has a mixture of the hall marks of both traditional professions and new expert professions.

In common with traditional professions

Academics invested in building a defined body of knowledge that is distinct, empirical and shared. Yet professional associations in their accreditation focus on competencies, which is typical of newer professions. Like GSAEC. The power strategies at play are credentialism through the establishment of competency assessments and also monopolisation as demonstrated by siopsa. Whilst some respondents seemed to lean more towards a preference for marketization.

Further, they expose the limitations of the Willensky road map and constraints in its applicability, as imposed by the fact that it is a model developed in a particular social and historical context.

Firstly, indeed, there is a professionalisation of coaching process underway and this conclusion is arrived at on the basis of both archival data and interviews that pointed to indicators like establishment of professional bodies, the growing number of university courses, Masters degrees and research programmes that are focused on coaching; credentialing and certification processes, evidence of standardization of terms of study at universities etc.

Secondly, the development of executive coaching in South Africa has not followed the sequential process as described by Willensky. This professional project may be better studied using traits models as elements of every step were found present but not necessarily fully developed and not in a sequence. This confirms that modern day occupations like Executive Coaching cannot be studied and fully understood in terms of characteristics of early 20th century.

Thirdly, the different associations have employed different strategies for their professionalisation projects. Whilst Comensa and ICF may be similar from a credentialing point of view, their regulatory positioning is different, resulting in Comensa recognition by SAQA the regulator. Similarly, ABCCCP vision is a continental one. Lastly, SIOPSA's strategy is one that relies on statutory closure, establishing Coaching Psychology as a legally protected jurisdiction.

Fourthly there is a combination of traditional and modern strategies at play in the professional project of coaching in South Africa. The study found elements of continuity with traditional forms of professionalisation, as well as newer ones. Evidence supporting the traditional path includes the pursuit of development of an official body of knowledge and formal qualifications. On the other hand, the wide spread view amongst the majority of stakeholders is that the market should determine the fate of Coaching as a profession. This belief in Marketization as a strategy is more in line with modern professions.

Lastly, there is generally ambivalence about Professionalisation of Executive Coaching, particularly from within the coaching community. On one hand professionalisation is seen as means of safeguard from charlatanism, which is seen as a challenge across all stakeholders. Even from those who are not generally in support of professionalisation, there is concern over absence of barriers to entry, lack of minimum standards and what some individuals may do to bring the occupation into disrepute. Many of these concerns are seen to emanate from poor quality training (if any) and poor ethics with no accountability leading to possible harm to the public. Of equal concern, is the exclusion of experienced coaches with a good track record because they have not been credentialed or have university qualifications. A part of this fear originates from the South African history of racial exclusion in professional and wider economic participation.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

This section provides recommendations for the various stakeholders of Executive Coaching in South Africa. In general, the recommendations call for greater collaboration amongst and between stakeholders

ACADEMICS

Seeing as the three Masters degrees (Wits Business School, University of Johannesburg and University of Stellenbosch) have similar curriculum, with two of them aligned with GSAEC, this can lay a foundation for the definition and articulation of core knowledge. It is recommended that the discussion on coach education is inclusive and extends outside the academic offering to map out the various solutions and where they fit in or what need they address. It is clear that there is a need for both a theoretical foundation and practical, even specialist expertise. As with many established professions, a qualification that covers core generic knowledge can be supplemented with specialist training. This model will serve coaching well, given the fragmented and multi-disciplinary nature of the practice and knowledge.

It is evident from the findings that professionalization in South Africa places reliance on the National Qualifications Framework, linking professions with learning achievements and therefore emphasising the central role of this group of stakeholders. The recommendation here is that the stakeholders make use of the NQF to facilitate the definition of standards, using a common language. This will ensure an understanding of what aspirant coaches can expect from a course and what buyers of coaching services can expect from different credentials.

Lastly, providers of coach education should work with professional associations and users of coaching services to ensure alignment between teaching and industry. The “production of producers” must be aligned with consumption.

PROFESSIONAL BODIES

The central role played by professional bodies is almost at the expense of exclusion of other stakeholders, particularly the customers. These bodies can take some findings from this research and use to engage customers to ensure that they are aligned. This is particularly valuable, in light of the popular opinion that it is the market that will ultimately regulate the coaching industry. This means that the professional bodies need to be less internally focused.

Growing the profession and growing the body of knowledge go hand in hand. In addition, they set the foundation for setting of minimum standards and barriers to entry. For this reason, associations need to have even closer and more formalized relationships with institutions of learning. It is for this reason that accreditation of courses featured prominently in the findings.

In addition to focusing on buyers of coaching, professional associations need to pay attention to customers of the association viz coaches. As central players and representatives of the occupation in a collective sense, they play a key role in establishing a community and professional identity. In this regard, the issue of exclusion as a by-product of professionalisation needs to be addressed and the ambivalence resolved.

As it is evident that there is more than one professionalisation initiative underway, with different credentialing systems, designations, ethical codes and other offerings, it becomes the job of every association to market themselves to the client public and be competitive. This will also better enable customers in their processes of selecting coaches.

REGULATOR

Given the prominence of ICF amongst coaches and some of the buyers of coaching, SAQA needs to consider if this serves its objectives and the overall alignment with SA political

economy. Currently SAQA has no jurisdiction over ICF or any body that is not registered with them or NQF aligned. However, they may prove to play a significant role in terms of other broader SAQA objectives like redress, quality assurance etc.

COACHES

The findings of this study may have significant implications for individual coaches, though probably not in the immediate future. As all associations have a credentialing system in place or are working on one, coaches will have to review their credentials and market strategy. Whilst individual clients may rely on relationships and track record, it is likely that a corporate purchase of coaching services will include aspects of professionalisation as criteria.

BUYERS OF COACHING

As previous research shows, there is a market for executive coaching services in South Africa and these services are used for various reasons including transformation. This demonstrates that organisations see value in executive coaching. The key recommendation for them out of this study is to invest effort in understanding the landscape viz. the different professional bodies and what their offerings are. Secondly, it is recommended that they participate in research and other initiatives that assist in raising the agenda of customer needs, moving it closer to the centre of discussions.

NEIGHBORING PROFESSIONS

A key issue that will need to be clarified is the offering of Coaching Psychology. This is particularly important as Psychologists that coach look to have this as a registration category with the Health Professionals Council of South Africa. This position and consequently the proposed scope of practice needs to be clear within the Psychology community and then within the Coaching community as issues of jurisdiction will surely arise.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research aimed to reveal the status of executive coaching in South Africa, using a sociological framework. It focused particularly on the road to professionalisation in the traditional sense, relying on and benchmarking with how traditional professions have become established. Based on the outcomes, the following recommendations for further study have been identified:

Given how the findings of the study have shown deviation from the Willensky model of how professions develop, particularly the linear and sequential aspect, it is recommended that the development of Executive Coaching be studied using a different model. A further recommendation in this regard is a comparative study with those professions referred to as expert occupations (Muzio et all 2011) like Project management and Management Consultancy.

On the technical side of design of study this study can be repeated, with a bigger sample in order to balance and better represent views from different stakeholders. A specific challenge of this research was the range in power and influence of stakeholders. In addition, some of the participants actually belonged to more than one grouping of stakeholders. The design thus, should include or take into account a method of stakeholder mapping. Explanatory mixed method is recommended.

Thirdly, a study that is focused solely on customer needs is recommended. It is the view of the researcher that as a stakeholder group, they hold significant power and their views are not sufficiently represented.

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