

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
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**To Professionalise, or not to
Professionalise: The Occupation of
Business Analysts**

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ABSTRACT

As a relatively new occupation, Business Analysts are grappling with many aspects of their career as they come into their own. One such aspect is the heavily contested debate on professionalising the occupation and the implications of that for Business Analysts. The implications of professionalising vary, ranging from centralised control that requires Business Analysts to hold credentials before practicing, to creating market shelters that facilitate economic scarcity of the occupational skill sets. The difference between the perception of professionalism as an occupation and professionalism as an organisational management tool has an impact on understanding what drives Business Analysts' perceptions of the professionalisation of the occupation. This study presents an investigation into the perceptions of what constitutes a 'profession'; whether Business Analysts should become professional; the associated advantages and disadvantages to professionalising; and how Business Analysts should pursue professionalisation.

The study was qualitative and exploratory: 16 in-depth interviews were performed exploring the perceptions of Business Analysts and other stakeholders regarding professionalisation. Interviews were conducted with analysts who had recently graduated, certified as professional, intending to certify, not intending to certify and those with no formal occupational training. Interviews with Human Resource practitioners, both internal and external to organisations, as well experts in recruiting professionals were conducted. The data was analysed by performing content analysis on the interviews and identifying predominant themes and identifying the frequency of these themes.

Business Analysts clearly identified the desire to professionalise themselves by forming a collaborative community which is typical of modern liberal professions employing knowledge workers. The need for Business Analysts to professionalise was corroborated by human resource practitioners. The major driving forces for the desire to professionalise is improved quality of delivery to stakeholders and improved knowledge sharing within the professional community. Business Analysts identified the trust relationship between themselves and business stakeholders as paramount to supporting a professional model. A model identifying forces driving occupations to professionalise and opposing forces that resist the change was developed.

KEYWORDS

Business Analyst

Professionalising

Occupations

Professions

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted previously for any degree or examination at any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to perform this research.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Description of the problem and background

Confusion is inevitable with the plethora of definitions that exist to describe Business Analysts, and perceptions of what constitutes a profession. Practitioners, organisations, government agencies and educational bodies are all left unsure of how they relate to one another. In the modern world where occupations and professions co-exist within organisations it is inevitable that the lines between the two begin to blur. Compounding this blurred line is the advancement of the concept of professional behaviour, which is often driven within organisations as a performance management tool (Evetts, 2013), and which is a differentiating factor between an occupation as a profession, and organisational professionalism. These terms are often used interchangeably. To understand how Business Analysts conceptualise their own occupational activities and professional understanding, it is critical to review their own perceptions of their work.

A few organisational bodies exist proclaiming the authority of determining the professional status of Business Analysts. “The Certified Business Analysis Professional designation is a professional certification for individuals with extensive business analysis experience” (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016b). This is the call-to-arms of the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA), enticing members and prospective members to join, become certified and be called a profession. The IIBA has over 29 000 members of which 6 208 are certified as professional, which accounts for around 21% of members (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016a; International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016c). The IIBA is also the only professional body dedicated exclusively to the advancement of professional Business Analysis. The British Computer Society (BCS) offers a certification framework culminating in a Chartered Professional in Business Analysis (British Computer Society, 2016). The BCS is predominantly active in the United Kingdom and is a multi-disciplinary institution offering professional certification in a variety of occupations. The Project Management Institute (PMI) is a large international organisation that offers a certification in Professional in Business Analysis (Project Management Institute, 2016). This

organisation was founded predominantly to service the professional needs of Project Managers (a close working relation to Business Analysts in IT projects) and has only recently moved into the certification of Business Analysts. Given that these organisations all refer to their certifications with the ‘Professional’ moniker, it can be deduced that these organisations clearly view business analysis as a profession. The question then arises: should business analysis be a profession? Do Business Analysts want to be classed as a profession, and if so, why?

A profession (in the business sense of the word) is defined as “a calling requiring specialised knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation” and “the whole body of persons engaged in a calling” (Merriam-Webster, 2016a); extending this definition to a professional, is “characterised by or conforming to the technical or ethical standards of a profession” (Merriam-Webster, 2016b). From a layman’s perspective, in business, the two definitions come together as a profession being an occupation requiring specialised knowledge, extensive education, adhering to certain ethical and technical standards, with all practitioners of the occupation adhering to these standards. Stephen Ackroyd (2016) describes the difference between professionalism and professions as professionalism being an attitude which anyone can adopt, and professionals been a group of people belonging to a high-status occupation such as medicine, engineer and law.

Academically the definition of a profession is as diverse as the researchers defining it. According to Švarc (2016) and Evetts (2003; 2013) the sociological research on professions has existed for over a century, resulting in a large, complex literature base that is difficult to understand and loaded with contradictions, including the differences in approach between Anglo-American and continental European constructs. Broadly speaking, sociologists define professionalism as a special means of organising work and controlling workers in contrast to the structures and managerial controls of commercial organisations. This definition becomes complicated as more professionals are working in employing organisations and have their occupation controlled (at least in part) by employers (Evetts, 2013).

Business Analysts are practitioners of business analysis. “Business analysis is the practice of enabling change in an organisational context, by defining needs and recommending solutions that deliver value to stakeholders” (International Institute of

Business Analysis, 2016d). Other authors in the field, under the auspices of the British Computer Society, define business analysis as “... an internal consultancy role. It has the responsibility for investigating business situations, identifying and evaluating options for improving business systems, defining requirements and ensuring the effective use of information systems in meeting the needs of the business” (Paul et al., 2006). Further, Paul et al (2006) also go on to acknowledge that no single definition exists for the role which has been hotly debated over its approximately 20-year lifespan. The IIBA and BCS definitions differ most notably in their orientation. The IIBA is significantly broader in context while the BCS imply a significant portion of the internal consulting is Information System- and Information Technology-oriented. The Project Management Institute defines business analysis as “... the evaluation of an organisation’s needs – followed by the identification and management of requirements – to arrive at a solution” (Project Management Institute, 2016) from this definition it can be seen that the Project Management Institute definition is more closely aligned with the IIBA definition.

As can be seen from the multiple views on the fledgling occupation of Business Analysts (from within the occupation itself) and academic research on professions, research is required to bring together a view of the professional Business Analyst.

1.2 Research Scope

The research scope covers the occupation of Business Analysts. This includes professionally certified Business Analysts and those who have elected not to certify, HR practitioners, and experts in professionalisation.

1.3 Research Motivation

The professionalisation of occupations is well documented in academic literature (see authors such as Brock (2014; 2006), Evetts (2003; 2011; 2013), Švarc (2016) and Muzio (2013)). When used colloquially by participants in an occupation, however, it becomes difficult to determine if they view a profession in a normative manner (a community with a calling serving higher values and having evolved to serve a specific function), ideological (to be a professional in the archetype sense of a profession, whereby the profession exists to create a market shelter for the occupation and thus protecting it) or

a discourse (a combination of normative and ideological); these may manifest based on drivers from either within the occupation or external to the occupation. These drivers manifest themselves in either organisational professionalism or occupational professionalism. In this research, we will be looking at two levels, organisational professionalism which is on the meso (organisational level) and occupational professionalism on the micro (individual) level.

For modern organisations claiming to oversee the Business Analyst occupation, it can be seen they deem certain persons in the occupation as becoming professional once certain certification(s) have been attained. The question, however, remains: does the view of the professional by these “professional organisations” align with the view of professionalism held by practitioners of the occupation, and what elements of occupational professionalism do they aspire to?

These differences in definitions of a Business Analyst and differences in definitions of a profession make it difficult to determine when a group of persons practicing an occupation can be called professional. Individuals practicing an occupation may or may not aspire for themselves or for their occupation to become a profession, and depending on their understanding of what a profession is, the implications are thereof.

1.4 Research Problem

This study attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the factors driving the perception of Business Analysts as a profession. Given the debate around professionalisation and the emergence of Business Analysts the research aims to:

- Determine the predominant view of what a profession is by Business Analysts and those stakeholders actively engaged in the occupation of business analysis.
- Determine whether Business Analysts should be a profession based on the perceptions of those in the occupation of business analysis and by those stakeholders actively engaged in the occupation.
- Define the perceived advantages of Business Analysts becoming a profession, by both stakeholders in the occupation of business analysis and the Business Analysts themselves.

- Define the perceived disadvantages of Business Analysts becoming a profession, by both stakeholders in the occupation of business analysis and the Business Analysts themselves.

The literature review presented in Chapter 2 focuses on academic research relating to major sociological themes of professions, that drive their inception as well as their value in society. Literature around defining what business analysis is and what competencies are required is explored.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Professions are a much debated and well-documented topic, with significantly divergent views within the study of sociology. Broadly speaking, academic literature classified professions as having been viewed from a normative value system, ideological value system or a constructivist view (a combination of normative and ideological). These views can be applied to professionalism in both the occupational driven view and the organisational driven view. Organisational and occupational views differ in where professionalism is driven from organisations employing the occupation or from the occupation creating autonomy. Regional cultures play a role in shaping the constructs through which professions are defined, with differing approaches between Anglo-American cultures, continental European, South African and other regional cultures. Lastly, professionalism can be looked at from the lens of symbolic capital where it has purchasing power in societies derived from the status it creates.

In order to bring together the schools of thought around professionalism, a relatively new journal founded in 2014 called *Journal of Professions and Organization* (Oxford University Press) published an essay by its founders. The essay is an introduction to the journal and cites the reason for its creation. The authors (Brock et al., 2014) noted that there was a need to provide a platform for the discussion of professions outside of the context of sociology and not only in the context for their respective fields (such as accounting, medicine, law, etc.). Fincham (2006) puts forward that computer-skilled workers are part of a distinctive knowledge industry and share very few of the traits of established professions.

Business analysis is an occupation sitting predominantly in the Information Technology sector, and as an occupation it is relatively new, having only emerged over the last 20 years. Like all new occupations, Business Analysts are jostling for position within organisational and social contexts, including determining its status as a profession, struggling with occupational boundaries, relations with the various stakeholders that have a vested interest in the occupation, as well as its professional status.

2.2 Interpretations of Professions

Professions have evolved over time and by tracing this evolution we can see that the meaning of professions is not fixed, but rather the discourse has changed both in interpretation and in the function of professions (Khalili, Hall, & DeLuca, 2014). These changes mirror socio-historical contexts and show evolution from a positivist (or normative) perspective towards an ideological (or negative) view, and subsequently towards a constructivist (combination of normative and ideological views) view (Evetts, 2003; Evetts, 2011; Evetts, 2013; Khalili et al., 2014).

The handbook of Reihlen and Werr (2012) describe the evolution of the professional model as moving away from typical founding, which were common attributes of both the normative and ideological views (Evetts, 2011; Evetts, 2013), such as autonomy and control towards a new model they term the trans-professional model. In this trans-professional model, knowledge production is key and control decentralised. Some research on social identity theory and institutional theory was used to develop a process that can be used to construct the social boundaries of a profession, however it is noted that much research is still required to understand how the characteristics can be applied to the knowledge worker (Brock et al., 2014).

Evetts (2013) puts forward that first a shift from the attempt to define professionals towards understanding the appeal of professions is critical; this is enhanced by assessing two contrasting views of professionals in *normative value systems* and *ideology of occupational powers*. The ongoing dominance of the knowledge-worker and the often-colloquial way in which they refer to their occupations as professions, as well as the way knowledge-workers aspire to be referred to as professionals encourages us to assess the appeal of professionalisation (Evetts, 2013), and which brings us to professions as a discourse. We should return to older debates of the mid 90s as described by various authors which discuss how modern knowledge worker careers or occupations have not adopted traditional professionalisation strategies (Brock et al., 2014). Kipping (2011), describes modern professionalisation of knowledge workers as a blend of credentialism, self-regulation and recognition by large corporations. These insights are critical to understanding the factors that Business Analysts – as knowledge workers – use to identify themselves as professionals.

Three main attributes can be used to determine the distinctness of professionals' work from that of other occupations:

1. Non-routine tasks that require expertise based on abstract knowledge and on skills gained from practice.
2. Occupational monopoly with a jurisdiction or oversight along with individual autonomy with the occupation.
3. Legal and/or ethical responsibility for providing value in the service.

The ties between these three attributes is heavily debated, however there is much academic literature supporting the premise that all three must be present for an occupation to be deemed a profession (Adler, Kwon, & Heckscher, 2008).

2.2.1 Professions as normative value system

Schinkel, Noordegraaf (2011) and Evetts (2003) provide a consolidation of the views of various academics such as Carr-Saunders, Parsons and Burrage. These views are a culmination of almost a century of research in professions as a normative value system (also known as the optimistic view). The views are as diverse as Durkheim's work in 1882 that is credited by Evetts (2003) as assessing professions as a moral community for persons of the same occupation, and membership to professions is based on a higher calling ranging from altruism to freedom from governmental bureaucracies. These higher callings for professions are a moral fibre that stems from the ability of professions to place fairness, knowledge and altruism at the centre of society (Muzio et al., 2013). According to Evetts's (2003) summary of Parsons work in 1951, Parsons proposes that in modern capitalist economies the rational-legal social order and professions were all connected and balanced each other out in a fragile normative social order. This capital view-point is further explored by Schinkel and Noordegraaf (2011) in their exploration of symbolic capital of professions in modern societies.

Pfadenhauer (2006) echoes the view of Evetts (2003; 2013) of the normative value system in professions where the client-professional trust relationship is paramount to the success of the profession, this trust being built on the premise of advanced division of labour in modern economies, with professionals holding specialised labour skills. Professions presume to tell the rest of society what is good for them and how analysis should be performed within in their specific domains (Evetts, 2003; Pfadenhauer, 2006)

based on the advanced division of labour and associated specialisations. Professions are also closely linked to functionalism whereby professions grow and evolve to serve a specific function in society, slowly closing off the market to a degree to other participants (Evetts, 2013; Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011) without the same functional specialisation.

Several distinct characteristics are identified in defining this view. Characteristics such as a knowledge-based formalised training programmes as well as publicly spirited ethos. This ethos often relates to professions professing to a moral fibre that stems from their fairness, knowledge and altruism (Muzio et al., 2013).

More recent exploration of the normative value system view of professions has resulted in authors such as Hafferty and Castellani (2010) concluding that the professionalism of medicine in modern days is still built on a foundation of truism and can be seen as a normative value system, albeit not as robust as it once was.

2.2.2 Professions as ideological view

An opposing view to the normative or ideological view that was proposed by Johnson in 1972 and echoed by Larson in 1977 related to the proposal that professions were less normative in nature and instead followed an ideology (Evetts, 2003; Evetts, 2013), with this ideological view referred to as the pessimistic view. This opposing view began to evolve as issues with the way the normative view ignored topics of power and privilege and their role in the evolution of professions (Muzio et al., 2013). In the case of Larson's proposal, the concept of the professional project was espoused whereby a specialised group participating in an occupation attempted to capture a monopoly in market for services (division of labour) and resulting status and upward mobility in society. Other authors used the term market shelters as opposed to monopolies, acknowledging the incomplete nature of most such projects. Muzio et al. (2013) summarise Johnson's work as professions being less about the characteristics of an occupation, and rather as a means for controlling and organising, which gives the professional and professional body power.

The concept of the professional project is seen as a conscious systematic and political project with the intent of professions being able to leverage their superior technical, political and organisational resources in order to maintain control of occupational labour markets, effectively closing them off (Muzio et al., 2013).

The ability to not only close markets but also to capture states and negotiate regulative bargains was seen as part of powerful professions (Evetts, 2003). This is echoed by Pfadenhauer (2006) who paraphrases Hughes's work of 1958 in saying that modern professions require both a licence and a mandate. The professional is awarded a licence to operate (through proof of competence). The mandate implies the profession has the right to dictate how others must act for their own good, which relates to the normative notion of professionalism.

This view was most prominent in the Anglo-American approaches to defining professionalism and could be argued is due to the closer relationship to the concept of capital markets. Švarc (2016) says an exploration of modern professions is required to evaluate the protection of intellectuals and highly skilled professional workers from the uncertainty of modern labour.

2.2.3 Professions as discourse of occupational change and control

In post-modern economies, many professionals are employed in organisations and no longer in the private practice of Anglo-American professionals or the public sector of continental Europe professionalism (Švarc, 2016). The view of professionalism is a combination of the view of normative values and ideological control views, whereby practitioners aspire to the greater altruistic norms of the profession while simultaneously recognising the need to protect the profession. In this view the decentralised control of the occupation by governments (allowing the licence and mandate relationship to be endorsed) is provided for. This allows liberal governments to regulate markets without the need for oppressive central bureaucracy, as well as the need for social order in modern international markets where professions are able to provide a normative contribution (Evetts, 2003).

There is also an argument is that a closed market or market shelter allows a profession to develop a niche, in the example of the Chicago Bar Association the emphasis on monopolistic control of the market dissipated once the niche was secured and economic interest were protected, resources were then free to peruse other market concerns and causes (Evetts, 2003).

Importantly the discourse view involves a re-evaluation of the importance of client-practitioner trust relationship (this trust includes risk analysis, discretion and expert

judgement). The re-introduction of quality of service and professional performance has been of value to both the customer and practitioner (Evetts, 2013). These constructs have proven useful for managers in organisations in promoting self-regulation and increasing power-distance. “Professional” workers will behave in such a way that would allow for increased quality of work, and by implication of the above constructs, improve trust and application of knowledge worker effort. The view of organisations as a discourse for occupational change and control is largely employed by managers of professionals (Evetts, 2013); this gives rise to organisational professionalism which differs from occupational professionalism. Table 1 indicates key differentiators between organisational and occupational professionalism.

Table 1. Professionalism in knowledge-based work. (Evetts 2013 p.788)

Organisational professionalism	Occupational professionalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourse of control used increasingly by managers in work organisations • Rational-legal work forms of authority • Standardised procedures • Hierarchical structures of authority and decision-making • Managerialism • Accountability and externalised forms of regulation, target-setting and performance review • Linked to Weberian models of organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourse constructed within professional groups • Collegial authority • Discretion and occupational control of the work • Practitioner trust by both clients and employers • Controls operationalised by practitioners • Professional ethics monitored by institutions and associations • Located in Durkheim’s model of occupations as moral communities

2.2.4 Organisational Professionalism

Organisational professionalism is less about an occupation becoming a profession, and more about organisations becoming professional in terms of their behaviour. Most particularly, the use of professionalism as a concept by management of organisations as a tool to reduce supervision, improve quality and accountability. It even extends further where organisations use professionalism as part of their marketing (Evetts, 2003; 2013) to both clients and prospective employees. This modern trend in organisations to become professional (i.e. display traits of a professional nature and embed professionalism amongst employees) relies on the discourse theory of professionalism. According to Evetts's (2003; 2013) summary of Brint's work of 1994, it effectively becomes a means of social control at macro, meso (organisational) and micro level in a variety of occupations. These occupations are often engaging in very different work, organisational, and employment situations from one another. This can be also seen in the way the concept of professionalism has entered the realm of management and into management training. Many aspects of occupational regulation (both internal and external to the organisation) are justified in terms of professionalism in the organisational context (Evetts, 2003).

Notably, this differs from the existing professional services organisations undergoing change as discussed by Brock (2006) and Švarc (2016); here, professional organisations, particularly of the professional services firms (the archetypes of professions such as legal and audit firms, and in some cases even healthcare providers), are faced with other professionalisation challenges.

2.2.5 Occupational Professionalism

In *occupational professionalism*, the discourse theory applies most predominantly within the professional group, meaning that members of the same occupation but within different organisations drive the professionalism of the occupation. This form of professionalism as an ideal type is heavily built on the trust-relationship (between the employer, practitioner and client). The expectation is that practitioners have relative autonomy and discretionary judgement to apply their skills. Usually this ideal type is characterised by lengthy education (usually tertiary), vocational training and a system of socialisation to entrench work ethic and collegiality with regards to other members of the

occupational profession. Occupational professions are usually regulated by a code of ethics which is monitored by professional institutes and associations (Evetts, 2003; 2013; Pfadenhauer, 2006; Švarc, 2016). In many instances the archetypes of professions fall into this category such as lawyers, auditors and certain healthcare providers.

2.2.6 Professions as Symbolic Capital

Schinkel & Noordegraaf (2011) propose that professions create a form of symbolic capital. Using a Bourdieusian lens, they view the rise of professionals as a means of gaining social status similar to perceived status of nobility and the bourgeoisie. The main idea here being that the nobility possessed inherited social capital, the bourgeoisie earned economic capital, and the professional class a means of symbolic capital based on cultural capital available. They then go on to discuss how professions are a form of scarce resource, and as such the symbolic capital they represent is a resource which can be traded for other types of capital in the social market place, such as status.

2.2.7 Professionals as a Collaborative Community

An alternative proposal to professions as put forward by Adler, Kwon and Hecksher (2008) is that of modern liberal professions needing a more modern model of operation, that being a collaborative community. The central argument is that the traditional hierarchy model with vertical authority is ineffectual at growing and responding to the rapid expansion of knowledge and knowledge workers. The market principle (popular with current knowledge workers) incentivises knowledge creation but dissemination is controlled by market principles. A community model is based on trust and encourages knowledge creation and dissemination on a reciprocal basis and is not exclusively limited to individual exchanges (also referred to as favours).

2.2.8 Corporate Professionalisation

Traditional professions have for some time found themselves being forced to deregulate and have been subjected to cost cutting. This has signalled to occupations at large that the traditional approach of professionalising is no longer relevant in modern economic logic. The formal knowledge credentials, previously the hallmark that justified economic shelters of archetype professions, have now started to suffer from de-professionalisation

(Kirkpatrick & Ackroyd, 2003; Muzio, Hodgson, Faulconbridge, Beaverstock & Hall, 2011). Modern knowledge-based occupations such as management consulting and project management have pursued professionalisation by using marketization strategies. Marketization strategies place emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship and active market engagement (Muzio et al., 2011). This active market engagement and building of presence is supported by the notion of professionalisation as a branding activity (Ashcraft, Muhr, Rennstam, & Sullivan, 2012). In this view the success of a profession is strongly linked to its ability to have a presence in the market place and contrast itself with other occupations and professions.

Project managers have successfully used marketization strategies to legitimise their role (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005) and have even expanded their domain boundaries to colonise other domains (Project Management Institute, 2016). In the case of management consultants, this includes the creation and continual sale of management fads to their clients (Muzio et al., 2011).

This market engagement by professions to organisations in which the professions practice has created new tactics, such as professions opening themselves up to corporate membership and taking corporate interests into account in the professionalisation project. A downplay of the professional body regulatory authority functions and an increase of commercial services offered by the professional bodies to organisations is observed (Muzio et al., 2011).

2.3 Regional Differentiation of Professionalism

Some literature exists around the regional differentiation of professional theory, most notably around the regional differentiation between Anglo-America and continental Europe.

2.3.1 *Anglo-America*

Anglo-American professional theory focuses primarily on self-employed practitioners and the freedom of these practitioners to control their work conditions. The Anglo-American analyses of professional models are generally more closely aligned with the ideological theories of professions (Evetts, 2011). Unusual emphasis has been placed on certain

occupations in Anglo-American social cultures and their prevalent professional models, namely medicine, law and accounting (Evetts, 2003). Authors such as Švarc (2016) refer to these so-called ideal professions as the archetype for professions.

2.3.2 Continental Europe

The view on continental professional theory is varied and in some cases contradictory. From a European sociology perspective, Sciulli (2005) claims that professions play no role whatsoever, though it is important to note that he does not claim that professions do not exist. Švarc almost implicitly counters this, by describing Jensen's work of 2012, a model of how continental European sociology defines professions in a far broader scope than Anglo-American models (which focus on private organisations and service providers); European models tend to see professionalism as primarily elite administrations by advantage of their academic superiority.

2.3.3 South Africa

South Africa provides an unusual lens through which to view professionalisation given the historically skewed nature in which labour markets operated due to the segregationist policies of apartheid. In 2012 Statistics South Africa reported that skilled occupations were 54.8% male and 62.6% white (Bonnin & Ruggunan, 2013), which is not reflective of the general populace. Bonnin & Ruggunan (2013) go on to describe the shortage of professional culture and professionalism in occupations in South Africa, including certification and oversight. This culture is viewed as critical in growing occupational professionalism, which is indicated as part of the National Development Plan (Bonnin & Ruggunan, 2013). Professionalisation is seen by the state as a means to further improve productivity and quality. The unusual use of status, as described by Evetts (2011), as part of the discourse of professions, is being used by lower skilled occupations in order to legitimise themselves and create authority (Bonnin & Ruggunan, 2013).

2.3.4 Rest of Africa and Asia

No substantive theories or academic research were identified indicating unique lenses to be used when viewing African or Asian professionalism. The little research identified related back to existing theories on Anglo-American and to a lesser degree continental

Europe.

2.4 Business Analysts

A large proportion of project and software development failures can be traced back to the initial requirements. Reworking requirement failures may account for up to 40% of a project cost; this can escalate up to 200 times as much if they are discovered during the maintenance phase of a project as opposed to the early stages of development. The elicitation, analysis, validation, specification, verification and management of these requirements are activities typical of the Business Analyst (Klendauer, Berkovich, Gelvin, Leimeister, & Krcmar, 2012).

According to Hass (2008) the skills of a Business Analyst are becoming increasingly valued competencies in the business domain, with Business Analysts starting to hold more leadership positions in projects. Business Analysis has become an increasingly more essential part of a project's success, regardless of whether technology is used (Hass, 2008). IT based occupations (including Business Analysis) are marked by their weak professionalism despite organisations such as the British Computer Society seeking professional identity. This was initially pursued through a chartered status for practitioners and members; however, this has recently been opened up by introducing membership grades that are easier to attain (Fincham, 2006). Looking at the introduction of the more recent four-tier certification structure of the International Institute of Business Analysis (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016b) it would seem they are following suit of the British Computer Society.

2.4.1 *The Occupation of the Business Analyst*

According to the Business Analysis Book of Knowledge (BA-BOK), "Business analysis is the practice of enabling change in an enterprise by defining needs and recommending solutions that deliver value to stakeholders. Business analysis enables an enterprise to articulate needs and the rationale for change, and to design and describe solutions that can deliver value" (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2015).

The International Institute of Business Analysis states that as it is the "...voice of the business analysis community, IIBA supports the recognition of the *profession* [emphasis

added], and works to maintain standards for the practice and certification” (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016c). The definition of Business Analysts by the IIBA is purposely vague and in essence covers any person who performs activities of business analysis; these activities are covered in the IIBA’s Business Analysis Body of Knowledge known as the BA-BOK which is the most widely accepted mature body of knowledge for Business Analysts (Mathiesen, Bandara, Delavari, Harmon, & Brennan, 2011).

The BA-BOK then goes on to say that “A business analyst is any person who performs business analysis tasks described in the BA-BOK Guide, no matter their job title or organisational role. Business analysts are responsible for discovering, synthesising, and analysing information from a variety of sources within an enterprise, including tools, processes, documentation, and stakeholders. The business analyst is responsible for eliciting the actual needs of stakeholders – which frequently involves investigating and clarifying their expressed desires – in order to determine underlying issues and causes” (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2015). Numerous authors, such as Klendauer (2012), Paul (2006) and Evans (2004) describe the various titles and job descriptions by which Business Analysts are referred, such as business analysts, system analysts, business systems analysts, data analysts and requirement engineers.

From the above it is possible to see that the definition of a Business Analyst in the eyes of the IIBA is broad and involves the application of a broad range of skills and activities in the business environment. Hass (2008) goes on to discuss the professionalising of business analysis as an occupation; in her book *Professionalizing Business Analysis*, she primarily focuses on the skills and competencies a Business Analyst should have and develop in order to be viewed as a professional, and as such is more inclined towards the view of organisational professionalism.

2.4.2 Business Analyst Competencies

Competencies are interrelated clusters of knowledge, skills and values required in order to perform an expected task or function in a role effectively (Slocum & Hellriegel, 2009; Ulrich, Allen, Brockbank, Younger & Nyman, 2009). Business analysis competencies have been attempted to be defined for some time.

Evans (2004) discusses the confusion that surrounds the title, role, knowledge and skills of Business Analysts, and proposes that a *Book of Knowledge* would assist in addressing

this confusion and provide normalisation to the role. From the research concluded, around 92% of respondents felt that a Book of Knowledge was critical for business analysis (Evans, 2004). These books of knowledge provide a guide to the competencies expected in business analysis. One such Book of Knowledge developed is the IIBA's BA-BOK. Fincham (2006) describes the theorising a body of abstract knowledge as part of the strategic action performed in order to drive the ideological paradigm of the professionalisation project.

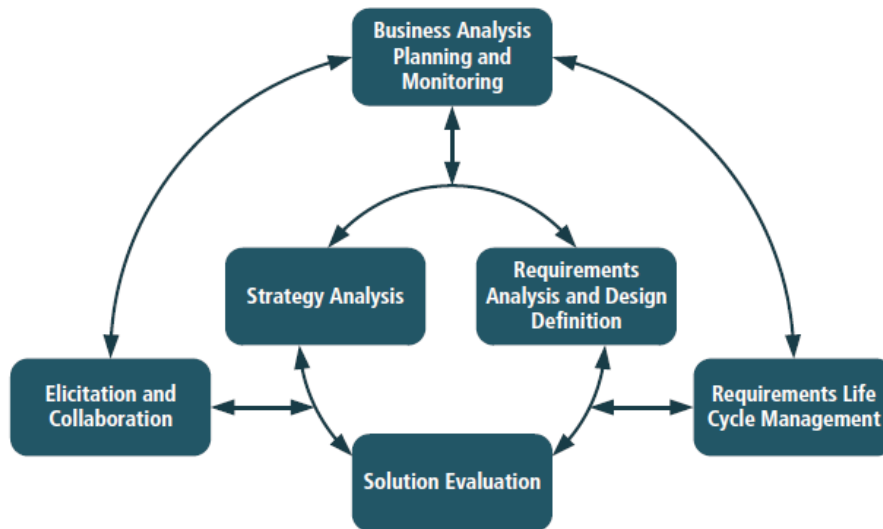
In the BA-BOK, Business Analyst competencies are categorised into groupings called Knowledge Areas or Domains indicating the broad areas of competency expected of the Business Analyst (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2015; Project Management Institute, 2016).

The BA-BOK has the following 6 Knowledge Areas (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2015):

1. Business Analysis Planning and Monitoring
2. Elicitation [of requirements] and Collaboration
3. Requirements Life Cycle Management
4. Strategy Analysis
5. Requirements Analysis and Design Definition
6. Solution Evaluation

Each Domain has a relationship with other domains and Business Analysts are expected to display competency in multiple domains.

Figure 1. Relationship between Knowledge Areas **Source: BA-BOK 2016**



Another such Book of Knowledge for business analysis is the Project Management Institute’s *Business Analysts Handbook*.

The Project Management Institute’s Domains (Project Management Institute, 2016) for Business Analysts are:

1. Needs Assessment
2. Planning
3. Analysis
4. Traceability and Monitoring
5. Evaluation

As can be seen from the Knowledge Areas (IIBA) and Domains (PMI) between the two certification bodies, there are elements that overlap and elements that differentiate between the definitions. They do, however, each indicate occupational boundaries in which there is an expectation of proficiency. The IIBA professional certification requires 7 500 hours of experience before professional certification can be attempted (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016b). The Project Management Institute requires 7 500 hours for practitioners without a Bachelor degree or 4 500 hours for practitioners with a Bachelor degree (Project Management Institute, 2016). The extensive use of academic or vocational training as part of the essentially knowledge-based category of service occupations is typical of professions (Švarc, 2016).

A study by Klendauer et al (2012) focused on identifying competencies that were required for requirements analysis (a key activity of Business Analysts). The study identified that 16 competencies clustered around 6 high-level competency factors were required by Business Analysts. Of the 16 competencies, five were identified as especially critical:

1. Consulting Others
2. Testing Assumptions and Investigating
3. Explaining Concepts and Opinions
4. Working Systematically
5. Driving Projects to Success

These competencies were then further clustered into 4 high-level competency factors identified from an extensive literature review. These 4 high-level competencies are:

1. Supporting and Cooperating
2. Analysing and Interpreting
3. Interacting and Presenting
4. Organising and Executing

The research also indicated that all 4 of the high-level competencies relate to the analyst/client relationship, which is a recurring theme in professionalism according to Evetts (2013).

2.4.3 Business Analyst Stakeholders

Both Mathiesen et al (2011) and Paul et al (2006) discuss the broad environment in which business analyst's work, notably the typical compositions of the various teams they often work. Business analysts have direct interactions with various stakeholders such as project managers, developers, testers and users. Klendauer et al (2012) discuss the Business Analyst's role in managing and interacting with critical project stakeholders in order to elicit requirements.

2.5 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory as proposed by Freeman in 1984 put forward that any individual or

group of individuals who can effect or are affected by an organisation's actions and objectives are known as stakeholders. This means that the range of stakeholders will differ from organisation to organisation. In order to determine a stakeholder, two principles must be applied. First, *principle of rights* has to be applied to determine if the organisation is obligated not to violate the rights of the proposed stakeholder. Second, *principle of effect* has to be applied to determine if the organisation's actions benefit or harm the proposed stakeholder (Crane & Matten, 2010). Professions, either in the classical archetype theory of occupational professionalism or in organisational professionalism, can be seen as organisations.

Given the broad competencies of business analysis, various stakeholders interact with the occupation. In the professionalising of Business Analysts many of these stakeholders may be affected, and this study will attempt to identify some of these stakeholders and their viewpoints.

2.6 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory proposes that individuals define their self-concept in relation to their membership in various social groups. This membership and the behaviour patterns of these groups influence an individual's perceptions and behaviours. As the membership of an in-group deepens, a member's behaviour depersonalises and takes on the traits of the group – particularly where the group is fairly homogenous. Managers and in-group leaders are able to focus an individual's attention on achieving specific behaviours (Nohria & Khurana, 2013). A key attribute of social identity theory is a group's desire to provide differentiation from other groups (Vignoles, Chryssochoou, & Breakwell, 2000). This relates to the sociological theories summarised by Muzio et al (2013) and Evetts (2003; 2011; 2013) that purports a profession as a distinct closed off group of persons working towards a common goal and identity.

2.7 Conclusion

Existing literature shows that there are three distinct paradigms through which we can view professionalism. First, there is the normative view; here professions are viewed almost as altruistic, seeking out the best result for all stakeholders and relying on a trust

relationship between practitioners and clients. Professions in the normative view evolve to serve a specific function in society. Second, there is the ideological view, which is somewhat more pessimistic. This view sees professionalism as self-serving and monopolistic in nature, almost rent-seeking. The proof of competence (such as an exam) that is required before one can practice the profession is seen as part of creating an occupational monopoly or market shelter. Finally, there is the view of professionalism as constructivist (also referred to as a discourse). This view brings together both the normative and ideological views of professionalism, with particular focus on the trust relationship and the ability to rely on expert judgement and discretion on the part of the practitioner to deliver superior quality of service. These three views can be seen as alternate drivers of professionalisation.

Professionalism can be seen to happen in two distinct areas, either occupational professionalism or organisational professionalism, both of which based on the aforementioned paradigms. Both have an effect on the macro (not discussed in this paper), meso (organisational) and micro (individual) level. Organisational professionalism is often used as a management tool and to drive certain behaviours and traits associated with occupational professionalism throughout an organisation. These behaviours and traits of organisational professionalism include aspects such as self-management, accountability and trust relationships with stakeholders. Occupational professionalism by contrast, is the drive for an occupation to define itself (often with altruistic or a higher vision), form a collegial body and create a market shelter for practitioners. Occupational professionalism requires the concept of a licence and mandate for participants in the occupation in order to exist as a profession.

A more contemporary view of professionalisation is that of corporates professionalising by their increased interaction with modern knowledge-based professions. These professions have pursued an approach of entrenching a profession in organisations by opening up the professional bodies to organisations and more actively engaging with them on a commercial basis as opposed to a regulatory framework.

Regionally, professionalism differs in English speaking (Anglo-American) cultures. Here professions are mainly driven by self-serving occupational groups (the ideological view) with medicine, law and accounting being the archetypes viewed as ideals, and even aspired towards as professions that have large sociological influence. This ties in closely

with the social capital aspect of professionalism. Continental Europe, by contrast, has a low to no sociological impact from professions. In continental Europe, the state is seen as the primary driver of professions, by creating administrative elites that are academically superior.

One of the benefits (and perhaps drivers) of professionalism is the elite position in society that can be obtained by being perceived as a professional. This social position or status is “purchased” using the symbolic capital that professionalism provides as a result of the economic scarcity created.

Business Analysts have a poorly defined occupational boundary based on knowledge areas or domains that have been created. This may relate to the relative newness of the occupation, which is said to be about 20 years old or kept intentionally vague so as to keep the definition broad and limit the effects of market shelters. The professional associations claiming to have jurisdiction over the occupation have created these knowledge areas, competencies and domains. The use of competencies as a measure in defining members of a profession indicates that a profession exhibits a specific cluster of knowledge and skills in order to complete a function effectively. The two most prolific professional associations (namely the IIBA and the PMI) have knowledge areas that are similar and overlap, however they also have distinct domains that differ, creating further market differentiation of the occupation. Both organisations have competency-based assessments on the knowledge and domain areas professed. The forming of these occupational boundaries by practitioners is typical of occupational professionalism, as is the vocational and academic training requirements for certification.

In the sociological paradigms of the normative, ideological and constructivist (discourse) views of professionalism, emphasis is placed on the ability to provide a quality service largely based on the trust relationship between the practitioner and the client. Given that professionalism occurs both in the occupational and organisational contexts, and that in an organisation many stakeholders occur, the trust relationship of a professional extends to all stakeholders with a vested interest in the professional occupation. An interest is vested when a stakeholder has either rights (such as the employer) in the occupation, or where the stakeholder is affected by the occupation (such as colleagues and clients).

Social identity theory describes how individuals accepted as part of an in-group depersonalise aspects of their behaviour in favour of the norms of the group. Given that

the entire premise of a profession is a group of persons with an occupational boundary, it can be surmised that aspects of the aspiration towards professionalisation can be related to the desire to belong to a homogenised group.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Purpose of the Research

This research seeks answers regarding the occupation of Business Analysts and the desire to term themselves professionals, as can be seen by the occupational bodies claiming business analysis as a profession. The questions are formulated from the concepts emerging from Chapter 2: Literature Review, together with the business problem discussed in Chapter 1. The questions were developed to understand what Business Analysts define as being 'professional'; the aspiration towards becoming professional and the reasoning behind it; what Business Analysts perceive as driving professionalisation; as well as other stakeholders' views of the aforementioned.

3.2 Research Questions

There are five research questions.

3.2.1 *Research question 1: Should the occupation of Business Analysts be a profession?*

The purpose of this question is to determine if Business Analysts believe that their occupation/career should become a profession. Here, an attempt is made to understand the paradigm driving professionalisation of the occupation more deeply (particularly the normative vs ideological view point, and viewpoints explored in questions 2 and 3).

3.2.2 *Research question 2: What are the perceived benefits of Business Analysts being a profession?*

The purpose of this question is to determine if Business Analysts perceive any benefit to professionalising their occupation and what these possible benefits may be for the profession. This question attempts to expand on question 1 by viewing the occupation through the various viewpoints.

3.2.3 *Research question 3: What are the perceived disadvantages of Business Analysts being a profession?*

The purpose of this question is to determine if Business Analysts perceive any disadvantage to professionalising their occupation and what these possible disadvantages may be for the profession. This questions attempt to expand on question 1 by viewing the occupation through various viewpoints.

3.2.4 *Research question 4: What should Business Analysts do to become a profession?*

The purpose of this question is to explore what factors of the current situation need to change in order for Business Analysts to become a profession. This question explores the various views of professionalism and how Business Analysts align with it. By elucidating the driving factors that Business Analysts see as the need to become a profession, this question will attempt to differentiate between an inside-out view (self-driven) or a top-down (authority driven) view (Evetts, 2003).

3.2.5 *Research question 5: Do different stakeholders have different perceptions of the professional Business Analyst?*

This question is intended to expand the understanding of the professionalising of Business Analysts beyond the view of only Business Analysts, by including other stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study. The literature review forms the basis of understanding different views of professionalism, understanding what a Business Analyst is, and stakeholder theory. The research questions attempt to place the Business Analyst occupation in relation to the sociological constructs of professionalism and stakeholder theory. The study is qualitative and exploratory in design, as little literature exists on the topic. The research method, design, sampling techniques and analysis methods support the qualitative approach.

4.2 Research Method and Design

The study is qualitative and exploratory in nature and deeply probes each one of the research questions. The study examines the factors driving Business Analysts to become a profession, as well as the perceived forces driving the possible move from occupation to profession. Previous research on the sociological factors of professionalisation was identified, however since no previous research was identified on the specific topic relating to the occupation of business analysis, an exploratory study is in order. Exploratory studies lend themselves to newly identified phenomena that are not yet well understood (Saunders & Lewis, 2012), as well as patterns and meanings (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

This research attempts to deeply explore the questions proposed in Chapter 3, namely, the Business Analysts' understanding of what a profession is, the rationale employed for calling themselves a profession and the factors driving the Professionalisation of occupation. Three distinct sample groups were interviewed, namely Business Analysts, HR practitioners interacting with or managing the role, and experts involved in professionalisation of other occupations. The research design consists of qualitative data collected for each research question.

Given the research questions proposed in Chapter 3, a qualitative research design was performed, as it allowed the researcher to explore more deeply the complexities of real-

life situations and understandings of Business Analysts and their perceptions. A comprehensive perspective is one of the key strengths qualitative field research is able to provide, particularly when attempting to understand attitudes and behaviours in their natural setting (as opposed to the somewhat artificial setting of experiments and surveys) (Babbie, 1998).

A semi-structured interview process was performed as there were a variety of topics to explore in detail using prompts, with each interview question pertaining to a specific research question. Semi-structured interviews are preferred where a list of topics/themes need to be explored in depth with probing questions that may vary in order or detail (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.3 Population

The population for the study consisted of three stakeholder groups, namely Business Analysts, HR practitioners (both internal and external) who regularly engage with Business Analysts, and experts in the field of professionalisation. These three groups are identified as possible target populations for the research

In order to complete the concept of triangulation (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005), a technique that is used to improve the validity of research by testing two or more measures for the same construct, interviews from multiple stakeholders in business analysis occurred, namely Business Analysts, HR practitioners and professionalisation experts.

The population of Business Analysts was further divided into sub-populations of:

- Student/Recently graduated Business Analysts
- Business Analysts with a “professional” certification
- Business Analysts in the process or intending to certify as professional
- Business Analysts not intending to certify as professional
- Business Analysts with no formal qualification/training in the occupation

The study focused primarily on Business Analysts as it was critical that the view of Business Analysts was obtained. The rationale of sub-dividing the population was

conceived to provide a better spread of responses and avoid sample bias.

A population of HR practitioners were assessed as part of the triangulation of stakeholders for their views. The population was sub-divided into the following sub-populations:

- HR practitioners internal to an organisation that employ Business Analysts
- HR practitioners external to organisations
- HR practitioners/recruiters with expertise in recruiting professionals

Sub-dividing the population allowed for exploring stakeholders of the occupation of Business Analysts, both internal and external to the organisation. The addition of experts in recruiting professionals was intended to understand the factors affecting occupations already professionalised.

A third population of experts in professionalisation was identified. However, attempts to set up interviews were unsuccessful.

4.4 Sample

Sampling was used for face-to-face in-depth interviews of the three population groups. This allowed the researcher to explore the research questions and ensure enough depth was obtained. The sampling technique consisted of a combination of three techniques

Quota sampling is “a type of non-probability sampling that ensures the sample selected represents certain characteristics in the population that the researcher has chosen” (Saunders & Lewis, 2012:137) (p. 137). This is required to ensure the population sample of Business Analysts interviewed covers the sub-populations proposed. It is proposed that purposive sampling is used since it is “a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher’s judgement is used to select the sample members based on a range of possible reasons and premises” (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) (p. 138). Snow-ball sampling is used when it is not easy to identify members of the proposed population and is used as “a type of non-probability sampling in which, after the first sample member, subsequent members are identified by earlier sample members” (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) (p. 139).

Ideally, an interviewee's characteristics differ and depend on the purpose of the study. The study described personal preferences for of phenomena of professionalisation, the following are critical aspects of interviewee characteristics. The personal preference of what is being researched, good communicative skills, an interest in participating in the research and openness to share (Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006).

Interviews were conducted with 10 Business Analysts, 2 from each sub-population, 6 HR practitioners, 2 from each of the sub-populations, and 2 interviews were conducted for the sample group of experts in professionalisation. Business Analysts were sourced from the financial markets sector as 63% of Business Analysts in South Africa are employed in the finance or information technology sectors (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2014).

4.5 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study is the perceptions of Business Analysts regarding their relationship with the concept of being professional by multiple participants, namely: Business Analysts, HR practitioners and experts in professionalisation. The unit consisted of perceptions of professionalisation, advantages and disadvantages of professionalisation and perceptions of the ways in which professionalisation should occur.

4.6 Data Collection Tool

The data collection tool used was an in-depth semi-structured interview. According to Welman et al (2005), this technique should be used when probing and understanding "why" themes. The semi-structured interview is based around an interview guide with themes covering the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

Three versions of the interview guide were used, the first focusing on the Business Analyst, the second on HR professionals, and the last on professionalisation field experts. Each interview schedule consisted of the same five core questions used to identify the perceptions of professionalisation and how these related to the paradigms and themes identified in Chapter 2. The interview schedule for HR practitioners

contained additional questions relating to difficulty in defining the role of Business Analysts and the perceived effects on the organisation should professionalisation occur. The interview schedule on experts in professionalisation focused on the journey of professionalisation more generally.

Two pilot interviews were performed to assess the efficacy and efficiency of the interview schedule. The pilot showed that the primary understanding of profession was limited to that of the organisational context, and enhancements and adjustments to the interview prompts were required to more effectively ensure subjects covered all three sociological paradigms (normative, ideological and constructivist/discourse). The changes were needed to ensure it was possible to identify what was the subject's preference in interpretation of what drives professionalisation. A second prompt was introduced to help facilitate interviewees articulate a differentiation between organisational professionalism and occupational professionalism. This was needed to help determine the preferred interpretation of professionalisation, how it related to business analysis, as well as ensuring there was distinction between the two and they were not used interchangeably throughout the rest of the interview.

4.7 Data Collection Methodology

The method used is an in-depth explorative interview that focused on gathering qualitative data from three distinct populations, namely Business Analysts, HR practitioners and experts in professionalisation, in order to cover the themes proposed by the research questions. The research questions focused primarily on the participant's perception of professionalisation of business analysis. According to Babbie (1998), one of the advantages of using interviews is the way an exploration can be performed broadly, and drilled down into detail to answer specific issues that arise.

During the interviews, questions were asked to determine the frame of reference participants used to determine their definition of a profession. This included understanding the sociological schools of thought around the drivers of professionalisation, understanding if the participant viewed a profession from an occupational or organisational view, and a prompt to determine the perception of professionalism and how it relates to status. Once the frame of reference was

determined, questions were asked to explore the participant's point of view on whether or not the occupation should be professionalised and how to go about professionalisation should it occur.

The in-depth face-to-face interviews each typically lasted about 45 minutes; the interviews were semi-structured, with each question having multiple prompts to explore the participants' responses and ensure all aspects of the theory base were covered.

4.8 Data Analysis

Qualitative data was collected during the in-depth semi structured interviews. The interviews were digitally recorded. According to Weiss (2004) interview data should be sorted and integrated as a first step in analysis. During the interview process, extensive notes were made highlighting key points and their relation to the theory base, as well as separating the interview material from possible units of data, "meaning units will be identified, these units are passages that deal with the same issues" (Weiss, 2004, p 49). Once the data was collected, the information was processed to align with the proposed research questions presented in Chapter 3, known as categorising data. Here, data was meaningfully grouped into categories and units of analysis attached to these categories (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This was particularly useful when looking for patterns of data such as common perceptions or beliefs (Babbie, 1998).

Content analysis was used by grouping the data per the research questions. The analysis was conducted by capturing the identified categories and themes in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in order to explore the frequency of identified categories and themes.

A comparative approach between the populations (and sub-populations) responses was employed to analyse the data and determine the perceptions of professionalisation of business analysis as an occupation.

4.9 Data Reliability and Validity

Data reliability relates to the consistency in the collection and analysis of the data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). By ensuring standardisation of the interview process and

interview guideline, the researcher intends to achieve greater data reliability in the collection and aggregation process.

Data validity is the extent to which methods employed measure the intended unit of analysis and that the findings are trustworthy (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Given the qualitative nature of the research, the researcher must be aware of introducing bias both in the interview process and the interpretation of the data.

4.10 Research Limitations

All research entered into has limits in its design, and the research methodology should comprise of compromises in order to holistically approach the research which should be understood and acknowledged (Welman et al., 2005).

The following limitations applied to this study:

- Qualitative research focused on exploration is holistic (collects a wide array of data) and should be followed up with more detailed research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).
- Since researchers are directly involved and in control of the interview they may inadvertently display bias, both in collection and in analysis of the data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Welman et al., 2005).
- Geographically this research was limited to Gauteng, South Africa.
- This research was mostly limited to financial services sector.
- Data analysis is based on the researcher's interpretations and understandings.

4.11 Conclusion

The research design and methodology was intended to meet the objectives in Chapter 1 and the research questions identified in Chapter 3. The research serves to supplement sociological literature on the professionalisation of occupations by assessing the extent to which Business Analysts view themselves as a professional as well as current information technology literature on the occupation of business analysis.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study in a manner consistent with the questions proposed in Chapter 3. The research sample consisted of eighteen subjects, from the populations of Business Analysts, Human Resource and specialists in professionalisation, and a minimum of two subjects per sub-population were interviewed. The list below provides the interviewees' names, as well as the company each interviewee represents, and the designation of all the participants for sample groups.

Table 2. Interviewee List

#	Name	Respondent Company and Designation	Research Sample
Business Analysts			
1	Jennifer Hunter	Financial Advisory, Business Analyst	Business Analyst Graduate
2	Sajiv Bhika	FNB Premium Central Finance, Junior Business Analyst	Business Analyst Graduate
3	Giovanni Focaccacio	Telkom, Business Analyst	Certified Business Analyst
4	Ross Jennings	Standard Bank, Product Owner	Certified Business Analyst
5	Sanny Yingwani	FNB Private Bank Lending, Business Analyst	Business Analyst Certification in progress
6	Stacey Moller	Financial Advisory, Business Analyst	Business Analyst Certification in progress
7	Franco Brazzoli	FNB Premium IT, Business Analyst	Business Analyst No intention to certify
8	Nxilati Serelati	FNB Private Bank Lending, Business Analyst	Business Analyst No intention to certify
9	Jacqueline Wetselaar	FNB Premium IT, Business Analyst	Business Analyst No formal qualification in BA
10	Mathew Devonport	Ashburton Investments, Business Analyst	Business Analyst No formal qualification in BA
Human Resource & Recruiters			
11	Aletta Mahoa	FNB Central HR, Business Partner	HR Practitioner Internal to Organisation

12	Julie Viera	FNB Premium IT, Business Partner	HR Practitioner Internal to Organisation
13	Nicole Long	Be Different Recruitment, Managing Director	Recruiter External to Organisation
14	Devin Methvern	Aperture Consulting, Recruiter	Recruiter External to Organisation
15	Robyn Perks	Expand Africa, Founder	Executive Recruiter
16	Mia Nel	ADvTech, Recruiter	Executive Recruiter

5.2 Analysis of In-depth Interview Data

The data was collected from 16 interviews conducted across 3 sample groups. The data was analysed using the techniques of content analysis and frequency counts. A typical in-depth interview lasted around 45 minutes per interview and was based on the interview schedule and prompts as presented in Appendix II, III and IV. The interview was followed by approximately one hour of content analysis by reviewing the recordings and the notes captured throughout by the researcher.

Content analysis was performed by creating a template in Microsoft Excel. Each concept identified in the interviews was captured in relation to the research questions identified. Separate content analysis was performed for each of the three populations identified. For each concept identified, the number of mentions by each interviewee was captured as a frequency analysis. The frequency analysis was then rank-ordered from most mentioned to least mentioned. The results of the three sample groups were compared and analysed and the three concepts with the highest frequency were captured. A count of the number of interviewees per construct was also performed. The number of mentions in the frequency analysis may be higher than the number of interviewees as some constructs were mentioned more than once by an interviewee.

In each of the following sections, the aggregated research findings are presented. The results are discussed within the constructs of the five identified research questions from Chapter 3 and are correlated with the interview questions presented in the schedules per population. The top 3 concepts with the highest frequency for each of the sample groups are presented for each research question. Exhaustive data sheets with all questions containing all concepts are presented in Appendix V.

The data sheets in Appendix V indicate the data coded directly from the interviews. Subsequently two passes were made through the coded data, collapsing them into the themes represented in the results.

The results are presented as follows per sample group:

Business Analysts

- **Research Question 1 → Interview Question 1, 2**
These questions deal with whether the occupation of Business Analysts should be considered a profession.
- **Research Question 2 → Interview Question 3**
This question relates to the perceived benefits of Business Analysts being a profession.
- **Research Question 3 → Interview Question 4**
This question deals with the perceived disadvantages of Business Analysts being a profession.
- **Research Question 4 → Interview Question 5**
This question deals with what Business Analysts should do to become a profession.
- **Research Question 5 → Interview Question 6**
This question deals with different stakeholders having different perceptions of the professional Business Analyst.

Human Resources

- **Research Question 1 → Interview Question 1, 2**
These questions deal with whether the occupation of Business Analysts should be considered a profession.
- **Research Question 2 → Interview Question 3**
This question deals with the perceived benefits of Business Analysts being a profession.
- **Research Question 3 → Interview Question 4**
This question deals with the perceived disadvantages of Business Analysts being a profession.
- **Research Question 4 → Interview Question 5**

This question deals with what Business Analysts should do to become a profession.

- **Research Question 5 → Interview Question 6, 7**

These questions deal with different stakeholders having different perceptions of the professional Business Analyst.

5.3 Results for Research Question 1: Should the Occupation of Business Analysts be a Profession?

Research question 1 deals with the whether or not Business Analysts should be a profession. The understanding of what a profession is was determined by the interview question where interviewees were asked to define a profession. The next interview question was used to determine the interviewee's stance on whether Business Analysts should become a profession based on the definition of profession provided in question 1.

5.3.1 Understanding of Professions

Table 3 indicates the aggregate results across all the three sample groups on interview question one, the understanding of what a profession is. Construct frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the participant count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the construct frequency may be higher than the participant count.

Table 3. What do you understand a profession to be?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Standardised Skills & Knowledge	42	14
2	Formalisation of Occupation	34	14
3	Proof of Proficiency & Competency	25	13
3	Trust between Stakeholders	25	14
3	Community of Practice	25	12
4	Values & Ethics	24	12

5	Formal Qualification	22	14
6	Quality of Service	14	9
7	Barrier to Entry	13	11
8	Status & Power	11	9
9	Body of Knowledge	9	8
10	Apprentice/Practical	8	5
10	Market Scarcity	8	4
10	Career Progression	8	8
10	Higher Calling	8	5
11	Status Decreasing	7	7
11	Specialisation of Labour	7	6
11	Domain Knowledge	7	4
12	EQ (Emotional Intelligence)	6	3
13	Reputation of Individual	4	4
14	Formal Training Declining	2	1
15	Authority over Discipline	1	1
15	Globalisation	1	1
15	Earnings Improve	1	1

One Business Analyst noted that defining a profession was difficult in today's modern knowledge worker era; the interviewee stated, "How would you define a profession for today's knowledge workers... I guess that they must have specialised skills". Another interviewee noted that "ideally professions are people sharing knowledge and skills, building a body of knowledge". An HR professional expressed that the only way to be professional is to have certification, that "there must be an exam or something that proves you have the skills of the profession".

Table 4 indicates the top 3 construct frequencies for each of the samples. Business Analysts rank the standardisation of skill sets and knowledge as number 1, followed by the formalisation of the occupation, and a trust relationship between the occupation (the professional) and stakeholders, which is the ability to trust the professional to do the job correctly, came in at position 3. Human Resource practitioners noted that the formalisation of the occupation (which relates to having well defined boundaries and role expectations and abilities) comes out most highly ranked, followed by the standardisation of skills and knowledge. For Human Resource practitioners, the third ranked position is proof of competency, which relates to the profession expecting all practitioners to have proven a minimum level of competency before they are allowed to call themselves a practitioner, for example a bar exam for lawyers and certification exam for accountants.

Table 4. What do you understand as a profession? Ranked by sample group

Rank	Business Analyst	Human Resource
1	Standardised Skills & Knowledge	Formalisation of Occupation
2	Formalisation of Occupation	Standardised Skills & Knowledge
3	Trust between Stakeholders	Proof of Proficiency & Competency

5.3.2 *Should Business Analysts Professionalise?*

This interview question deals with whether business analysts should become a profession. The results in Table 5 indicate the aggregate results across all 3 sample groups. Construct frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the participant count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the construct frequency may be higher than the participant count.

Table 5. Should Business Analysts Professionalise?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Common Knowledge (BOK), Skills, Competency and Training	21	9
2	Yes - Professionalise	15	15
3	Create Occupational Boundary & Recognition	13	8
4	Assurance of Work Quality	8	6
4	Create Career Path	8	5
5	Creates Market Scarcity	6	5
5	Excludes Good Business Analysts	6	5
6	No - Do Not Professionalise	4	4
7	Increase in Remuneration	3	3
7	Protection of Practitioners	3	3
8	Create Central Control for Occupation	2	2
8	Create a Community of Mentorship	2	1
9	Creates Market Differentiation	1	1
9	Limit to Career Progression	1	1
9	Keep Intellectual Property in Organisations	1	1
9	Academic Training more important than Profession	1	1

9	Excessive Training Companies Claim to create BA's	1	1
9	Occupation too Broad to become a Profession	1	1

One business analyst noted, “...no, they shouldn’t professionalise, because then I’ll have to professionalise too, but yes, they should to become even more awesome”, whilst another said “Being a professional shows commitment and passion to the calling”. Human resource professionals commented that “Yes! They should be professional; it would bring a whole new dynamic to recruiting, though”, and “without a doubt yes, it will help reduce confusion in the role”.

Table 6 indicates the top 3 construct frequency for each of the sample groups for the question. For both Business Analysts and Human Resource practitioners a Common Knowledge (BOK), Skills, Competency and Training ranks as the number one reason to professionalise and were extensively spoken about. The desire to professionalise was ranked at 3 for Business Analysts and 2 for human resource professionals. Business Analysts ranked the creation of the occupational boundary and formal recognition of the occupation as number 2. Human Resource practitioners ranked the creation of a determinable career path as number 3.

Table 6: Should Business Analysts Professionalise? Ranked by Sample Group

Rank	Business Analyst	Human Resource
1	Common Knowledge (BOK), Skills, Competency and Training	Common Knowledge (BOK), Skills, Competency and Training
2	Create Occupational Boundary & Recognition	Yes - Professionalise
3	Yes - Professionalise	Create Career Path

5.4 Results for Research Question 2: What are the Perceived Benefits of Business Analysts being a Profession?

5.4.1 Benefits of Professionalisation

The interview question deals with perceived benefits of business analysts becoming a profession. The results in Table 7 indicate the aggregate results across all 3 sample groups. Construct frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the participant count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the construct frequency may be higher than the participant count.

Table 7. What are the Benefits of Professionalisation?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Assurance of Work Standard	21	14
2	Knowledge Sharing Collegial Community	8	5
3	Improved work Standards	7	4
4	Standardised and Improved Remuneration	6	5
5	Creates Occupational Reputation	5	5
6	Standardised Professional Levels	4	4
7	Market Differentiation from Non-professionals	3	3
7	Increased Status	3	3
7	Central Point of Occupational Authority	3	3
8	Acceptance of Occupational Boundary	2	2
8	Continual Learning Required	2	2
8	Role Stability	2	1
9	Improved Work Opportunities	1	1
9	Professional Support	1	1
9	Tertiary Education become available	1	1

One Business Analyst commented that "...perhaps we'll be able to get paid what we're

worth to business” and another said, “finally we won’t be confused with project managers, I don’t want to be a project manager”. An HR professional commented that “professionalising means we will have much clearer recruiting boundaries”, whilst another noted that “a big advantage will be the almost guarantee of a certain standard of competence”.

Table 8 indicates the top 3 construct frequency for each of the sample groups for the interview question. Both Business Analysts and human resource practitioners rank the assurance of work being completed at a certain minimum work standard as the number 1 benefit of professionalisation. Standardised and improved remuneration for practitioners are ranked number 3 by both Business Analysts and human resource practitioners. For Business Analysts, a collegial community that shares knowledge comes ranked at number 2. Human resource practitioners see an improvement on the current standard of work as ranked number 2.

Table 8. What are the Benefits of Professionalisation? Ranked by sample group

Rank	Business Analyst	Human Resource
1	Assurance of Work Standard	Assurance of Work Standard
2	Knowledge Sharing Collegial Community	Improved Work Standards
3	Standardised and Improved Remuneration	Standardised and Improved Remuneration

5.5 Results for Research Question 3: What are the Perceived Disadvantages of Business Analysts being a Profession?

5.5.1 *Disadvantages of Professionalisation*

Here the interview question deals with perceived disadvantages of Business Analysts becoming a profession. The results in Table 9 indicate the aggregate results across all the three sample groups. Construct frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the participant count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the construct frequency may be higher than the

participant count.

Table 9. What are the Disadvantages of Professionalising Business Analysts?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Good BA's be Excluded	8	6
2	Possible Excessive Market Scarcity	7	5
3	Occupation less Responsive to Market Needs	6	5
3	Career becomes Restrictive	6	5
4	Standardisation Reduces Value Add	2	2
4	Reduces Occupational Scope	2	2
4	Remuneration Ceilings	2	2
4	Diverse Thinking Reduced	2	2
5	Forces too much Standardisation, not Market Needs	1	1
5	Reduced Expert Judgement as Occupation Narrows	1	1
5	Standardisation may Reduce Risk Mitigation for Orgs	1	1
5	Increased Dependency on Specialist by Orgs	1	1
5	Makes Occupation Excessively Expensive	1	1
5	Practitioners Vulnerable to Market Whims	1	1
5	Shortcut to Competency if Standard Low	1	1
5	Becoming BA becomes Expensive	1	1

A business analyst said "... I can't really think of any, except maybe good BA's who don't want to professionalise will leave". A Human Resource practitioner commented that "... this will seriously change the dynamic of the value chain; organisations will need to adapt to Business Analysts differently" and another remarked "... business analysts might become even more scarce to source".

Table 10 indicates the top 3 construct frequency for each of the sample groups. Business Analysts believe an occupation will become less responsive to market needs if it becomes professional and formalised as their number 1 ranked concern, which is shared as the number 3 concern by Human Resource practitioners. This is followed by ranking

2 for Business Analysts which is a concern that the career becomes more restrictive and less broad. Possible excessive market scarcity of business analysts is a concern in third place which is shared in second place by human resource practitioners.

Table 10. What are the Disadvantages of Professionalising Business Analysts? Ranked by sample group

Rank	Business Analyst	Human Resource
1	Occupation Less Responsive to Market Needs	Good BA's be Excluded
2	Career becomes Restrictive	Possible Excessive Market Scarcity
3	Possible Excessive Market Scarcity	Occupation Less Responsive to Market Needs

5.6 Results for Research Question 4: What should Business Analysts do to become a Profession?

5.6.1 How should Business Analysts Professionalise?

This interview question deals with how Business Analysts should professionalise themselves. The results in Table 11 indicate the aggregate results across all the three sample groups. Total Frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the Total Count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the Total Frequency may be higher than the count.

Table 11. How should Business Analysts Professionalise?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Create Awareness of Occupation	16	10
2	Ensure Body of Knowledge is Standardised	15	9
3	Formalise and Improve Qualifications	12	10
4	Create Vision of Career Path	8	6
5	Improve Relationship with Universities	7	7
6	Create better Community for Knowledge Transfer	5	4
7	Graded/levels of Membership	4	4

7	Standardised Proof of Competency	4	4
7	Must be driven by a Professional Body	4	4
7	Practical/Articles	4	3
7	Standardise Role	4	3
8	Government Regulation and Support	3	3
8	Adhere to International Norms	3	2
8	Mentorship Systems	3	3
9	Build Business Relationship	2	2
9	Align to International Norms	2	2
10	Increase Members Rapidly	1	1
10	Don't be Overly Dependent on Qualifications	1	1
10	Existing Membership Should Drive Professionalisation	1	1
10	Grad Programme Buy-in	1	1

A young business analyst commented, that “business analysis needs to be a brand” and another that “we need to market, market and market ourselves, when we’re finished marketing ourselves, we need to market ourselves some more”. An HR expert in professional recruiting commented that “you need to figure out how to get the buy-in of the millennials”, and another HR practitioner voiced that “without supporting academia this will stumble along”.

Table 12 indicates the top 3 construct frequency for each of the sample. It is interesting to note that for both Business Analysts and HR practitioners the top 3 constructs are the same, creating an awareness of the occupation, followed by ensuring that the body of knowledge is standardised and largely formalised and improved qualifications.

Table 12. How should Business Analysts Professionalise? Ranked by sample group

Rank	Business Analyst	Human Resource
1	Create Awareness of Occupation	Create Awareness of Occupation
2	Ensure Body of Knowledge is Standardised	Ensure Body of Knowledge is Standardised
3	Formalise and Improve Qualifications	Formalise and Improve Qualifications

5.7 Results for Research Question 5: Do Different Stakeholders have Different Perceptions of the Professional Business Analyst?

5.7.1 Stakeholders of Business Analysts

This question deals with how Business Analysts should professionalise themselves. The results in Table 13 indicate the aggregate results across all the three sample groups. Total Frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the Total Count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the Total Frequency may be higher than the count.

Table 13. Who are Stakeholders of Business Analysts as an Occupation?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Project Managers	11	10
2	Developers	9	9
3	Project Sponsor	8	8
4	Testers	7	7
4	HR	7	6
5	End Users	6	6
5	BA Manager	6	5
5	Recruiting needs Changes	6	6
5	Role Confusion	6	3
6	Business in General	5	4
7	Improved Deliverables (Quality of Service)	4	2
8	Scrum Masters	3	3
8	System Analysts	3	3
8	IIBA (International Institute of Business Analysis)	3	3
8	BA's	3	3
8	Training Needs	3	2
9	Project Portfolio Managers	2	2
9	IT Architects	2	2

9	CIO	2	2
9	Education Sector	2	2
9	Professionalisation changes the Value Chain	2	2
9	New Boundaries Change Role	2	2
10	Clients	1	1
10	Finance	1	1
10	Recruiters	1	1
10	Improved Assurance of Resource Quality	1	1
10	Increased Cost to Business Stakeholders	1	1
10	HR Awareness Low	1	1
10	Drive other IT Careers to become Professional	1	1
10	Competition between BA's and PM's	1	1

A senior business analyst commented that "... if only the CEO knew what value we truly added we'd be taken more seriously", and another said that "as the bridge between IT and the rest of business, I'd say business is our biggest stakeholder", while a third analyst voiced that "HR will have to change how they view and recruit us". An HR professional who specialises in recruiting Business Analysts said "as business analyst professionalise and start adding value to business strategy, the CIO will become intensely interested in who they are".

Table 14 indicates the top 3 construct frequency for each of the sample groups. Business Analysts see the project sponsor as their most critical stakeholder in their occupation, followed by developers and then project managers. Human resource practitioners identified role confusion as the most pressing issue in stakeholder management. Project managers and then Business Analyst managers were identified as the most important stakeholders.

Table 14. Who are Stakeholders of Business Analysts as an Occupation? Ranked by sample group

Rank	Business Analyst	Human Resource
1	Project Sponsor	Role Confusion
2	Developers	Project Managers
3	Project Managers	BA Manager

5.7.2 Human Resource Practitioners' Challenges in Business Analysts

The last interview question for Human Resource professionals dealt with the confusion human resource practitioners have around business analysts. The results in Table 15 indicate the aggregate results across all the HR professionals sample group. Total Frequency indicates the number of times the construct was mentioned and the Total Count indicates the number of interviewees that mentioned the construct, thus the Total Frequency may be higher than the count.

Table 15. What are Challenges in Business Analysts for Human Resource Practitioners?

Rank	Construct	Construct Frequency	Participant Count
1	Poor Occupation Definition or Role Confusion	15	6
2	Tend to be Recruited on Domain Knowledge, not Skills	4	3
3	Seen as a Limited Career	3	3
4	More important than Project Managers	1	1
4	Scare Skills	1	1
4	Poor Awareness of BA Skills Sets	1	1
4	BA's Differ between Organisations	1	1
4	Inconsistent Qualifications	1	1
4	Viewed as Inferior to Developers	1	1
4	Intelligence more Critical in Recruiting BA	1	1

The mostly high ranked issue for human resource practitioners when dealing with Business Analysts is the amount of role confusion, then followed by a tendency for Business Analysts to be recruited based on domain knowledge and not on business analysis knowledge. In third place, HR practitioners feel that business analysts are more critical to an organisation than project managers.

“Business Analysts are not the catch-all administrators of a project despite what project managers think they are” is what one HR practitioner lamented, while another commented that “business needs to focus more on the intelligence of Business Analysts and less on domain knowledge”.

5.8 Conclusion

The results from the interview questions show support for the academic literature on the sociology of professions, and further the research questions have provided useful insight into the professionalisation of Business Analysts. In Chapter 6, the results of the interview questions are comprehensively discussed.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings are comprehensively discussed and related back to the literature review contained in Chapter 2. This chapter provides insights into the data collected through the in-depth interview questions around which the study was designed. Data was attained for the 5 research questions and were gathered through a process of 16 semi-structured in-depth interviews across 3 sample groups, namely Business Analysts, HR practitioners and experts in professionalisation. The data coding and analysis allowed the data to be aggregated and for refinement. This helped in providing insights into whether Business Analysts should professionalise.

Whilst in sociological studies the concept of professionalisation is well documented in current literature, the results discussed in this chapter contribute to a better understanding of how professionalisation relates to Business Analysts. The relevance of the results and the existing literature in context with this study are discussed in the section 6.2.

6.2 Discussion of Results for Research Question 1: Should the Occupation of Business Analysts be a Profession?

Research question 1 sought to identify whether Business Analysts and various other stakeholders believed that Business Analysts should professionalise their occupation. The results from the in-depth interviews, data coding and analysis phases of the research study produced the following results:

6.2.1 *Analysis of research question 1*

The data from the interviews emphasised what the understanding of a profession is and within that context whether Business Analysts should professionalise. Table 3 displays the combined sample groups' understanding of what a profession is. Based on the aggregated counts across 16 interviews, the number one ranked concern, with 42

frequency counts, was that professions provide “Standardised Skills & Knowledge”; therefore, this appears to be the most prevalent construct supporting the understanding what a profession is. This is supported by Muzio et al. (2013), whose research indicated that a key aspect of professionalisation is a formalised knowledge base. This is in turn supportive of both the profession as a normative view and professions as a discourse view. This is further supported by the formalised body of knowledge used by Business Analysts known as the Business Analysis Book of Knowledge or BA-BOK (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2015). According to Evans (2004), 92% of Business Analysts felt that a standardised body of knowledge was critical for the occupation. The creation of standardised knowledge should be seen as part of the project of professionalisation (Fincham, 2006).

The 2nd most highly ranked item with a frequency count of 34 is the “Formalisation of Occupation”. This construct relates to the concept of a professional proposed by Larson in 1977 as discussed by Evetts (2003; 2013) and Muzio et al (2013), whereby a conscious effort is taken on by the practitioners of an occupation to create an occupational boundary and market shelter for its practitioners. This is supportive of the view of occupations an ideology or occupation as a discourse.

As can be seen in Table 4, for Business Analysts “trust between stakeholders ” was ranked in 3rd position, supported by both Evetts (2003; 2013) and Pfadenhauer (2006) who discuss the need for a trust relationship with stakeholders as paramount to the success of a profession. The literature indicates that the construct of trust extends to the ability of a stakeholder to trust the ability of a professional to be able to provide a minimum standard of expertise, be able to provide expert judgement, and work autonomously. Again, this is supportive of both the view of occupations as a normative and ideological point of view.

Table 4 indicates, for HR practitioners, that a “proof of proficiency and competency” was ranked in 3rd place. This is discussed by Pfadenhauer (2006) as part of the ideological and discourse view of professionalisation as a means for occupations to formalise themselves. This also relates to occupational professionalism (Evetts, 2003), indicating that the occupation is attempting to professionalise itself as opposed to organisations professionalising the occupation. This construct links to the “Standardised Skills and Knowledge” construct as the basis for the assessment of proficiency.

In joint ranking of 3rd position with a frequency count of 25 is “Community of Practice”. According to Evetts (2003), professions form a community for the occupation practitioners, and Muzio et al (2013) notes that knowledge sharing is critical in the community. Communities of practice are an essential part of modern liberal professions of knowledge workers (Adler et al., 2008).

Table 5 shows the combined responses from the sample groups to the question “Should business analysts professionalise?”. Across the 16 interviews the 1st ranked item with a frequency of 21 as a benefit of professionalisation of Business Analysts is a “Common Knowledge (BOK), Skills, Competency and Training”. Looking at Table 6 this is ranked as 1st for both business analysts and HR practitioners. This is supported by Muzio et al. (2013), whose research indicated that a key aspect of professionalisation is a formalised knowledge base, as well as Evans (2004) who noted that 92% of Business Analyst practitioners felt a formalised body of knowledge was critical.

Table 5 and Table 6 also clearly indicate that there is an overwhelming consensus – of 15 out of 16 interviewees – who believe that Business Analysts should professionalise. Interestingly, this ranks higher for human resource practitioners in 2nd place, compared to 3rd place for Business Analysts. Knowledge workers aspire to professionalise, according to Evetts (2013), which supports this finding.

With a frequency of 13 in 3rd place is the need to “Create Occupational Boundary & Recognition). This is echoed by the literature of Evetts (2003; 2013) and Muzio et al (2013), who discuss the need for occupations to create a market shelter and an occupational boundary.

From Table 6, HR practitioners note that the importance of developing a career path is important and ranked at 3rd position and 4th position for combined sample groups. No specific literature was identified to support this finding.

6.2.2 Findings of research question 1

Research question 1 shows that there is a definite desire for Business Analysts to professionalise themselves. The construct that most underpins the understanding of what a profession is for business analysts, is that professions provide standardised skills and knowledge as well as an intense trust relationship between practitioners and

stakeholders. This trust relationship relates to the ability to provide high quality services. Coupled with relationship is a desire to formalise the profession, which involves a conscious coordinated effort to formalise the occupational boundaries and create recognition of the profession. These factors support the notion of Business Analysts attempting to professionalise themselves in the sociological construct of a discourse.

Given that there are three formal bodies representing Business Analysts as an occupation (the International Institute of Business Analysis, Project Management Institute and the British Computer Society), attempting to create the profession supports the notion that a formalised “professional project” is attempting to co-ordinate the professionalisation.

The findings in this research question add to the body of literature by providing conclusive evidence that the modern discourse view of professions as described in sociology aligns with the view Business Analysts have of themselves and with the view human resource practitioners have of Business Analysts. There is also resounding evidence showing that both Business Analysts and human resource practitioners believe that the occupation of Business Analysts should professionalise, adding new findings to a previously un-researched area.

6.3 Discussion of Results for Research Question 2: What are the Perceived Benefits of Business Analysts being a Profession?

Research question 2 sought to identify the perceived benefits of professionalising Business Analysts. The results from the in-depth interviews, data coding and analysis phases of the research study produced the following results:

6.3.1 Analysis of research question 2

The data from the interviews as presented in Table 7 show the perceived benefits of professionalisation for Business Analysts. The first ranked construct, with a frequency of 21, mentions an “assurance of work standard” which is directly related to the literature discussion of trust by both Evetts (2003; 2013) and Pfadenhauer (2006). Trust relates to

the ability of a stakeholder to trust the practitioner to be able to deliver a certain minimum level of work and is referred to as Quality of Service which relates to the ability to trust a practitioner to use expert judgement and autonomy to deliver (Evetts, 2013). This construct also relates to Pfadenhauer's (2006) discussion on the proof of proficiency where professionals are expected to be able to perform at a minimum standard and practitioners are only admitted to the profession once they have proved their ability to perform at a certain minimum standard.

With a frequency of less than half of the first ranked construct, the second ranked construct of "Knowledge Sharing and Collegial Community" had a frequency count of 8 across all sample groups, but was not in the top 3 ranked constructs for human resource practitioners. This construct relates to the identified definition of a profession in research question 1 of a community. Liberal professions of modern knowledge workers identify collaborative communities as an integral part of the definition of a profession (Adler et al., 2008). Standardised knowledge and the ability to share knowledge is an important part of the desire to professionalise (Muzio et al., 2013). Social identity theory (Nohria & Khurana, 2013) shows us that there is a desire to create groups of persons based on commonality. The belonging to a community is also related to social identity theory where behaviours of the in-group begin to homogenise (Nohria & Khurana, 2013), this further provides standardisation as described in research question 1.

The third ranked construct with a frequency count of 7 across all sample groups and second ranked for human resource practitioners is "Improved Work Standards". This construct relates to improved standards and quality of work deliverables. Whilst a drive to improve quality of work was not identified in the literature as a specific construct, it does relate to the "Assurance of Work Standard" identified as the highest rank construct. This construct did not feature in the top 3 constructs of Business Analysts.

In an overall fourth ranking in Table 7, but combined third ranking from Table 8 for Business Analysts and human resource practitioners, "Standardised and Improved Remuneration" is identified. From an ideological point of view the improvement of remuneration would be related to the conscious effort of the profession to create a monopoly or market shelter as discussed by Evetts (2003; 2013) and by Muzio et al (2013) This would create a market scarcity and result in improved remuneration. Schinkel & Noordegraaf (2011) discuss the importance of viewing professions as a form of

symbolic capital in order to gain prestige in a culture or society, as there is an increase in social capital there is a need to increase the economic capital to maintain the position in society the profession has created.

6.3.2 Findings of research question 2

The perceived benefits of professionalising Business Analysts appear to have a strong tendency towards ensuring that BAs are able to deliver a standardised service to stakeholders. Assurance relates to the ability of stakeholders to trust Business Analysts meet a certain standard and deliver on the quality of service. This quality of service encompasses autonomy in the work space, the ability to deliver on expert judgement and the ability to use discretion in the work place with regards to performing work related activities.

A high emphasis is placed on knowledge sharing and belonging to a community. A community creates an in-group, which creates a homogenised behaviour over time, this standardised behaviour becomes beneficial in professionalisation as it supports standardised knowledge, minimum level of competency and training of professionals. The desire to belong to a common community will result in standardisation of the behaviours of the group, which means the forming of communities within the Business Analyst professionals' group will cause standardisation of behaviours and support the premise of an assured work standard.

An unexpected finding is the human resource practitioners' view that professionalisation will provide Business Analysts with the ability to further improve their work standards. This implies that there is a perception that the current standard needs to be raised further in order to provide an acceptable standard; this relates back to the assurance of a work standard which Business Analysts feel needs to be raised. Business Analysts do not, however, identify overly much with the need to improve their work standards.

Given the huge differential between assurance of work standard frequency count and the other constructs of knowledge sharing and collegial community, as well as improved work standards, indicates that a standardised quality of output and work is the most critical aspect of professionalisation for Business Analysts, as identified by human resource practitioners and Business Analysts.

The standardisation and improvement of remuneration was noted by both Business Analysts and HR practitioners. This indicates that there is variation enough in the pay for Business Analysts so as to warrant a relatively high emphasis on it, implying that inequality of pay is of concern to not only Business Analysts, but also human resource practitioners. As a result of the improved social standings created by professionalisation there is a need for increased economic compensation for the symbolic capital created by the profession.

The research adds new knowledge to the research of professionalisation by showing that Business Analysts place particularly high emphasis on providing work output that can meet the expected standards of stakeholders as their primary driver. This adds to the literature in that Business Analysts show typical behaviours of a professional, which had not previously been documented for Business Analysts. Further knowledge added to academic literature is the desire of Business Analysts to share knowledge and have a collegial community – typical of knowledge workers, this provides additional evidence of Business Analysts as modern knowledge workers not previously documented.

6.4 Discussion of Results for Research Question 3: What are the Perceived Disadvantages of Business Analysts being a Profession?

Research question 3 sought to identify the perceived disadvantages of professionalising Business Analysts. The results from the in-depth interviews, data coding and analysis phases of the research study produced the following results:

6.4.1 Analysis of research question 3

The combined sample group identified the 1st ranked construct in Table 9 as “Good Business Analysts will be Excluded” with a frequency count of 8. The creation of a market monopoly or market shelter as a result of professionalisation as contemplated by Evetts (2003; 2013) and by Muzio et al (2013), would result in certain practitioners of an occupation being excluded from being deemed a professional if they did not acquire the mandate to practice. One of the means of creating a market shelter is to create a proof of competency as discussed by Pfadenhauer (2006), which requires practitioners of a

profession to meet certain standards before being awarded the title of professional, which could result in certain practitioners of business analysis unable to call themselves a professional if they do not meet all the requirements of the proof of competence. This construct, while ranked 1st overall, was not in the top 3 constructs indicated by Business Analysts and was elevated to that position by the emphasis placed on it by human resource practitioners.

The 2nd ranked construct from Table 9 of “Excessive Market Scarcity” with a frequency count of 7 relates to a concern that the monopoly or market shelters, as discussed by Evetts (2003; 2013) and by Muzio et al (2013), would create an excessive shortfall in the availability of resources. This shortfall would be further exacerbated in South Africa as discussed by Bonnin and Roggunan (2013) where a general skills shortage is already identified and needs to be addressed through measures such as the national development plan. This construct is closely related to the construct of good occupational practitioners being excluded from the profession, resulting in reduced capacity for the profession to supply resources into the market.

The joint 3rd ranked item from Table 9 with a frequency count of 6 for all sample groups is a concern that professionalisation would result in the “Occupation becoming Less Responsive to Market Needs”. The concern raised in this construct related to Business Analysts indicate that there is a fear that due to changes in technology and the nature of projects, should the occupation formalise the profession would be unable to respond quickly enough. This also related closely to the need for the body of knowledge to remain up to date and relevant given that the occupation is relatively young and still evolving. This construct was not identified in the literature as a result of professionalisation.

The construct of “Career Becomes Restrictive”, which came in as joint 3rd place, from Table 9, indicates a concern that should the occupation professionalise, it could become overly restrictive. This restriction would hinder career growth and evolution and cause Business Analysts to be overly locked in to their occupation, and unable to change careers easily. This construct is tightly linked with the construct of “Less Responsive to Market Needs”, which also related to a restrictiveness. Here, however, the restriction related to the practitioner and not to the professions’ position in the market. This concern was not identified in the literature.

6.4.2 Findings of research question 3

It is interesting to note that overall the frequency count and total number of constructs of disadvantages in Table 9 is lower than that of advantages in Table 7. This is supportive of research question 1, where there was a clear indication for a preference to professionalise Business Analysts in Table 5. The highest rank disadvantage had a frequency count of 8 whereas the highest ranked advantage had a frequency count of 21 – a difference of a little over 2.5 times lower.

HR practitioners appear to be most concerned that should Business Analysts professionalise, there will be a loss of well performing Business Analysts to the profession. Given the exclusive nature of professions this possible disadvantage appears to be well supported in literature, although the mechanism for creating the licence to practice and barrier to entry to the profession would probably have a negating effect on the impact of this possible disadvantage.

Related to the reduction of the number of good Business Analysts available in the market should the occupation professionalise, is the concern that the exclusionary nature of professions will cause the market to have excessive market scarcity. The more burdensome the barrier to entry and the smaller the professional body, the higher the scarcity the market will suffer from. This is identified as a key issue by both Business Analysts and HR practitioners in the industry.

A rigid profession has the perceived risk of becoming less responsive to market needs. Business Analysts felt that a profession should be able to respond to the needs of stakeholders and provide services required. Considering that one of the primary desires identified in research question 2 is the assurance of work standard, the concern that the profession would not be supportive of delivering the work that stakeholders expected is supported in this construct.

The same rigidity identified in not providing expected market needs resulted in the occupation identifying a second concern that would mean the profession becomes overly restrictive. This restrictiveness would result in practitioners not being able to enjoy a wide variety of projects or occupational activities. In research question 1 there was an identification made that one of the perceived advantages of professionalisation is a well-defined career path. These two constructs are related in that a defined career path would

result in less occupational freedom as practitioners stick to prescribed paths.

The identification of two constructs in the interview process that were not identified in any of the major literature adds significant value to the body of literature. The identification of the concern that professionalisation of business analysis may result in it no longer being responsive to market needs adds to the body of knowledge relating to both Business Analysts and broader occupational professionalisation. The second construct identified of professionalisation resulting in an occupation becoming too restrictive and not allowing practitioners the freedom to perform within the occupation as they deem necessary, was also not identified in any of the major literature. This adds value to literature concerned with professionalisation as well as academic literature relating to business analysis, neither of which have been identified before as a concern.

6.5 Discussion of Results for Research Question 4: What should Business Analysts do to become a Profession?

Research question 4 sought to identify the factors that should be taken into account should Business Analysts become a profession. The results from the in-depth interviews, data coding and analysis phases of the research study produced the following results:

6.5.1 Analysis of research question 4

The results indicated in Table 11 show the highest ranked construct around what Business Analysts should do to professionalise is to “Create Awareness of the Occupation”, with a frequency count of 16. This construct was identified by both Business Analysts and human resource practitioners as the occupation needing to create a better market awareness of itself, related to both awareness amongst other stakeholders as well as amongst practitioners. There is overwhelming support of this construct within the literature relating to professionalisation of modern knowledge worker occupations. The importance of occupational awareness in the market is important for the project of professionalisation (Muzio et al., 2011). This is further extended by the body of literature, which also notes the importance of the professionalisation project as a branding activity (Ashcraft et al., 2012). Occupations such as Project Management, which are already engaged in the professionalisation of the occupation, have extensively engaged in

marketization strategies to legitimise the occupation as a profession (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005).

The construct “Ensure Body of Knowledge is Standardised” has a frequency count of 15 and is ranked 2nd place in Table 11. This construct identifies that both Business Analysts and human resource practitioners believe that one of the key steps in the journey to professionalisation is the standardisation of knowledge. Standardisation of knowledge is one of the cornerstones of professionalisation as identified in the literature. This construct relates back to research question 1 where the construct was listed as the number one ranked item as to the identification of a profession. This is supported by Muzio et al. (2013), whose research indicated that a key aspect of professionalisation is a formalised knowledge base, this is supportive of both the profession as a normative view and professions as a discourse view. This is further supported by the formalised body of knowledge used by Business Analysts known as the *Business Analysis Book of Knowledge* known as BA-BOK (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2015). According to Evans (2004), 92% of Business Analysts felt that a standardised body of knowledge was critical for the occupation. The creation of standardised knowledge should be seen as part of the project of professionalisation (Fincham, 2006).

The 3rd ranked item with a frequency count of 12 is that Business Analysts need to “Formalise and Improve Qualifications”. In order to professionalise themselves, Business Analysts identify the need to create a formalised qualification and maintain them at a standard, improving on existing qualifications. One of the key aspects of professionalism is the profession exercising a degree of control over the quality and content of education provided, particularly at a tertiary level (Evetts, 2003; Evetts, 2013; Pfadenhauer, 2006; Švarc, 2016). The need to formalise qualifications was identified in research question 1 as part of the exploration of whether or not Business Analysts should professionalise. This also relates back to the proof of proficiency as discussed by Pfadenhauer (2006) and is further entrenched by exams such as Certified Business Analysis Professional by the International Institute of Business Analysts (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2016b) and the Project Management Institute’s certification (Project Management Institute, 2016).

6.5.2 Findings of research question 4

The research clearly indicates that there is a perception amongst all stakeholders that the occupation needs to create significant awareness of the occupation. Given that Business Analysts and project managers work so closely together it is interesting to note that Business Analysts rank creating occupational awareness as their number one priority in professionalising the occupation, according to the literature this is very similar in approach to what the occupation of project managers employed to drive the professionalisation project.

The desire to create a standardised body of knowledge is typical of a profession and as can be seen from the literature it is one of the hallmarks of a profession. Given that numerous professional bodies exist and at least one of them (the IIAB) has an extensive body of knowledge in the form of the BA-BOK, it is interesting to note that the desire to create a standardised body of knowledge is still present. This could indicate that Business Analysts are unaware of the body of knowledge or that they are not satisfied with the current extent of the body of knowledge. Given the highest ranked item was the need to market the occupation more extensively, it could be that there is an unawareness of the body of knowledge availability, both by Business Analysts themselves as well as broader stakeholders, as this activity was also identified by human resource practitioners.

Formalising and improving qualifications follows on from the standardised body of knowledge. A formalised qualification would need to encompass the domains of knowledge expected in the body of knowledge. The concept of formalisation also relates to qualifications that are readily available in the formal education sector and recognised by broader education communities, and recognised by the business sector. An interesting aspect that comes to the fore is that not only must education be formalised but also improved, which implies dissatisfaction in the current qualifications available in the market for Business Analysts.

It is interesting to note that there is no differentiation in priorities between Business Analysts and human resource practitioners as can be seen in Table 12. This provides additional support on the priority of the activities.

The research clearly adds to the body of literature by identifying for the first time the

activities expected by Business Analysts in order to professionalise. The literature has indicated some of the activities as they relate to project managers, however this is the first time a comparative analysis has been made with Business Analysts. The primary activity identified is that Business Analysts need to start creating an improved awareness of their occupation, and engage in branding the occupation as a profession. The research also enhanced current literature by identifying that current perceptions of education levels on offer are inadequate and that Business Analysts need to improve on the quality and availability of tertiary education.

6.6 Discussion of Results for Research Question 5: Do Different Stakeholders have Different Perceptions of the Professional Business Analyst?

Research question 5 sought to identify different stakeholder perceptions of the professional Business Analyst, as well as HR challenges within the occupation of business analysis. The results from in-depth interviews, data coding and analysis phases of the research study produced the following results:

6.6.1 Analysis of research question 5

Table 13 identifies the stakeholders purported to have an interest in the professionalisation of Business Analysts. The 1st ranked item with a frequency count of 11 are “Project Managers”. This is supported by the literature that discusses the broad environment in which Business Analysts work, including the nature of projects and typical types of industries. The literature goes on to name typical roles that work closely with Business Analysts and that includes project managers (Klendauer et al., 2012; Mathiesen et al., 2011). Stakeholder theory indicates that one of the ways of identifying a stakeholder is to determine if there is a benefit or harm as a result of the actions (Crane & Matten, 2010). For example, would a project manager benefit or be harmed by the professionalisation of Business Analysts? Project managers were ranked 3rd in importance by Business Analysts and 2nd by human resource practitioners.

The 2nd highest ranked stakeholder affected by the professionalisation of Business Analysts across all sample groups with a frequency count of 9 from Table 13 are

“Developers”. This is supported by the literature in which Klendauer et al. (2012) identify developers as a stakeholder directly involved in the activities of Business Analysts. Further to this in the project environment as discussed by Mathiesen et al. (2011) and Paul (2006), developers are shown to have an extensive relationship with Business Analysts. Developers did not rank in the top 3 critical stakeholders of Business Analysts by HR practitioners.

The 3rd ranked item from Table 13 is the stakeholder of “Project Sponsor”, with a frequency count of 8. Interestingly, this stakeholder is not directly mentioned in literature, however given that Klendauer et al. (2012) indicate that Business Analysts’ roles require managing and interacting with critical project stakeholders this is not unexpected., Literature by Mathiesen et al. (2011) and Paul (2006) also identify the broad nature of the teams Business Analysts are exposed to in their occupational duties. Business Analysts identified project sponsors as the most important stakeholder in in their profession while human resource practitioners did not identify sponsors in the top 3 stakeholders.

Human resource practitioners identified role confusion as the 1st ranked issue they have to deal with in their interactions with Business Analysts. Whilst in the literature there was no specific mention of human resource practitioners struggling with role confusion when related to Business Analysts, there is however literature such as that offered by Klendauer (2012), Paul (2006) and Evans (2004), which discusses the numerous titles as well as various responsibilities and activities that Business Analysts are expected to perform. This is further supported by the literature of Klendauer et al. (2012) and Mathiesen et al. (2011), who identify the complex nature of the projects and variety of activities Business Analysts typically are expected to perform.

HR practitioners identified an additional critical stakeholder in Table 15 with a frequency count of 3, that being the “Business Analyst Manager”. This stakeholder is identified as someone whose primary responsibility is to manage Business Analysts in an organisation. This stakeholder is not identified in literature, but given the concept of principle of effect in stakeholder theory (Crane & Matten, 2010) it stands to reason that should Business Analysts professionalise, there will be an effect on their management. This stands to reason, as according to Evetts (2011; 2013) and Muizo et al. (2011), professionals expect great autonomy in decision making and ability to use expert

judgement in the course of their work.

6.6.2 Findings of research question 5

The stakeholders identified in the research closely relate to the typical members of a project team with which Business Analysts work. The literature shows that Business Analysts typically work with project sponsors, project managers and developers. These are typically the members of information technology related projects. From stakeholder theory, the principle effect is clearly affected here where in a project team any changes to the Business Analyst will influence other members of the team. Given that Business Analysts indicated that they would professionalise using the same approach as project managers, this shows an even closer relationship between the two occupations.

Role confusion comes to the fore clearly as an issue both in the literature and supported by the research where human resource practitioners indicated the difficulty they have in performing their functions in relation to Business Analysts. It can be surmised that given that the occupation has not yet professionalised and as indicated in the literature is a relatively young occupation that is still evolving, that this change and evolution would cause role confusion.

It is interesting to note that human resource practitioners identified a stakeholder that fell outside of the typical information technology team Business Analysts work in. These Business Analyst managers are typically persons that have an organisational responsibility to manage the quality and output of Business Analysts. Given that this role is tightly linked to Business Analysts it is reasonable to see that the principle of effect would apply here and the professionalisation of business analysis would necessitate a change in how they are managed. Professionalisation, per the literature, has marked desirability for work autonomy and discretion in judgement which would affect the way in which BAs are managed.

This research adds significant value to existing literature on the relationship between Business Analysts and other stakeholders, by providing a rank order of stakeholder importance from the perspective of Business Analysts, in addition it provides for the first time from the perspective of human resource practitioners a view of the stakeholders of business analysts, including identifying a new stakeholder not previously identified in literature.

6.7 Conclusion

The research data overwhelmingly shows that Business Analysts believe the occupation should be professionalised, and that this should be done to improve and standardise the knowledge base of Business Analysts as well as provide better role definition. The theme of education and qualification appeared both as a reason to professionalise and as a means of professionalisation.

The research objectives, as posed by the five research questions in Chapter 3, have therefore been met and contribute to the current literature on professionalisation and business analysis.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter the question of whether Business Analysts should professionalise is discussed based on the findings illustrated in Chapter 5 and in Chapter 6. Recommendations for Business Analysts and Human Resource practitioners are presented based on the findings. Lastly, future research recommendations are discussed.

7.2 Research Limitations

As discussed previously in Chapter 4, all research entered into has limits in its design, and the research methodology should comprise of compromises in order to holistically approach the research which should be understood and acknowledged (Welman et al., 2005)

The following limitations applied to this study:

- Qualitative research focused on exploration is holistic (collect a wide array of data) and should be followed up with more detailed research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).
- Since researchers are directly involved and in control of the interview they may inadvertently display bias, both in collection and in analysis of the data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Welman et al., 2005).
- Geographically this research was limited to Gauteng, South Africa.
- This research was mostly limited to Financial Services Sector.
- The data analysis is based on the researcher's interpretations and understandings.

7.3 Synthesis of Research Data

The research findings presented in Chapter 6 are supportive of the existing literature on professionalisation. However, this research contributes more specifically in validating the literature against the occupation of business analysis, which has not been done previously.

The first contribution of the research is that it has been determined that business analysis is not yet a profession, as identified by Business Analysts themselves, and Human Resource practitioners. The three main attributes used to determine a profession as distinct from other occupations are:

1. Non-routine tasks that require expertise based on abstract knowledge and on skills gained from practice.
2. Occupational monopoly with a jurisdiction or oversight along with individual autonomy within the occupation.
3. Legal and/or ethical responsibility for providing value in the service.

The ties between these three attributes is heavily debated, however there is much academic literature supporting the premise that all three must be present for an occupation to be deemed a profession (Adler, Kwon, & Heckscher, 2008).

Business analysis as a knowledge-worker occupation fulfils the requirements set out in point 1 above. Occupational monopoly with a jurisdiction as indicated in point 2 has not yet been achieved by Business Analysts; this is shown in the data as one of the points Business Analysts still aspire to achieve; there is also no body with a jurisdiction over the occupation yet, only organisational bodies supporting communities of practice exist at this point. Finally, there is no legal and/or ethical responsibility for Business Analysts to provide a service that adds value other than the expectations of an employer.

The second contribution of the research, which has not been determined before, goes on to find that Business Analysts and Human Resource practitioners both believe that Business Analysts should professionalise the occupation. This professionalisation is based on the premise that a profession is understood to standardise skills and knowledge, create an occupational definition with boundaries of practice, that practitioners of the profession must display a level of competency which is proven and,

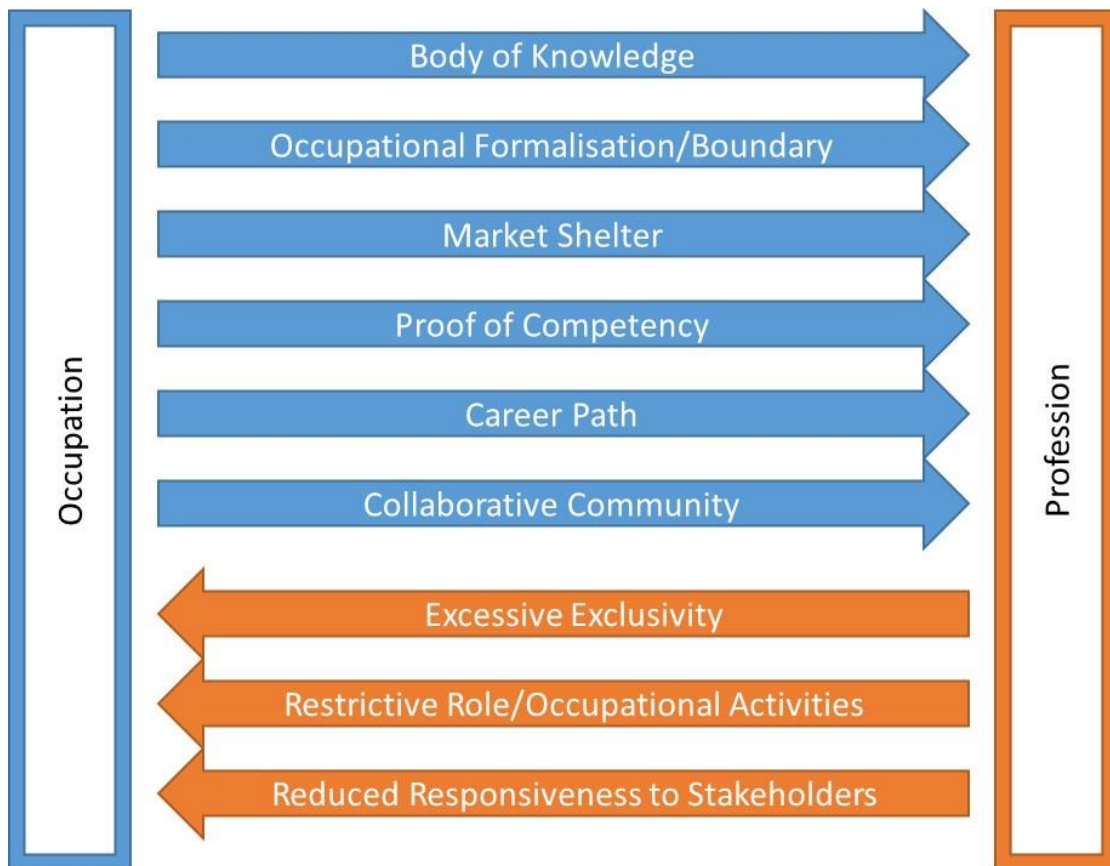
lastly, that the relationship between the professional and the stakeholder is based on trust and delivery of quality of service. Since these items are supported in the literature as part of the definition of a profession, it shows that Business Analysts wanting to professionalise do so within the context of the broadly supported academic view of a profession.

The third contribution is that Business Analysts believe that a collaborative community is key to becoming a profession, aligning well with the proposal by Adler, Kwon and Hecksher (2008) that modern liberal professions are a collaborative community. Business Analysts rate the creation of a community very highly as one of the reasons for the professionalising of the occupation. This adds to the body of literature by confirming that Business Analysts that are wanting to professionalise their occupation do so with a more modern liberal view than the traditional archetype view espoused in Anglo-American contexts.

The fourth contribution is that the constructivist view of professionalisation is confirmed as being the one most closely aligned with how Business Analysts view themselves. This supports contemporary literature on professions. The constructivist view is that of professions intentionally creating a market shelter for themselves to protect the profession, whilst at the same time the cohesive force that brings the occupational practitioners together in the first place is an altruistic view that the profession should aspire to improve the value provided to stakeholders and foster a relationship of trust and adding value.

The fifth contribution is a model of opposing forces showing the factors driving professionalisation of Business Analysts and the forces resisting the professionalisation of Business Analysts. From the research 6 key factors driving the desire to professionalise were identified; other factors are present but these factors scored the highest in importance. Three major factors were identified as opposing professionalisation, and again, although other factors were identified these factors scored the highest in importance. The driving forces were consolidated into a model represented in Figure 2 indicating driving and opposing forces.

Figure 2. Forces Driving and Forces Opposing Professionalisation



The first driving force of *Body of Knowledge*, refers to occupations creating a defined set of knowledge that practitioners are expected to have competency in, and can demonstrate proficiency in. The more formalised and defined the body of knowledge is, the closer to a profession the occupation becomes.

The next driving force of *Occupational Formalisation/Boundary* refers to the occupation creating a more formalised and clearer boundary around the role. Practitioners have clear activities that fall within the boundary of the occupation and are expected to be competent within the boundary. Organisations align their structure to accommodate organisational boundaries and employees work mostly within these boundaries.

The force of *Market Shelter* is the desire by practitioners of an occupation to provide protection to practitioners by creating a partial or total market monopoly for the occupation. This creates market scarcity of resources which improves remuneration and improves job security. For users of the profession this assists in delivering improved

quality of service as practitioners are expected to deliver or face been removed from the market shelter.

As occupations desire *Proof of Competency* to limit members of the occupation from practicing unless they display competency within the occupational boundary, the occupation moves further towards professionalisation. Proof of Competency is also used as a tool for creating the market shelter.

The force of practitioners in an occupation desiring a defined *Career Path* shares the characteristics of many professions which map out a standard career path with levels and roles for practitioners. It is also a critical force in that it facilitates the points at which levels of competency can be assessed against the body of knowledge that has been defined by the occupation.

In modern liberal professions, the desire to create a *Collaborative Community* is one of the hallmarks of professionalisation. The driving force to create a collaborative community results in the practitioners of an occupation moving towards professionalisation as they move towards a common goal of knowledge sharing, and support the formation of an in-group.

Forces opposing professionalisation such as *Excessive Exclusivity* are at play when practitioners of an occupation resist professionalisation due to concerns that the professional project may result in damage to the occupation or career by creating excessive market scarcity, or where good practitioners may be excluded because they may not meet the required proof of competency.

Another force opposing professionalisation are the *Restrictive Role/Occupational Activities* which occur when occupational practitioners perceive that the process of professionalisation will cause excessive restriction in the role and reduced occupational activities. Practitioners may feel the role becomes too narrow and specialised.

The last opposing force to professionalisation is that of *Reduced Responsiveness to Stakeholders*. This force occurs when practitioners are concerned that professionalisation and the ensuing occupational boundaries will result in the occupation no longer delivering the same level of value in the services offered that were previously obtained.

7.4 Recommendations for Business Analysts

The findings of the research questions show that Business Analysts should continue the project of professionalisation of the occupation. One of the key aspects that should be undertaken in the professionalising project is marketing and market awareness of the occupation. This means creating an awareness of the occupation amongst practitioners, within organisations using Business Analysts, and in broader communities that have stakeholder relationships with Business Analysts. This is supported by literature that frames professions as a branding activity and the importance of ensuring that professions brand themselves and are marketed.

As part of a branding activity, it is important for the profession and professional bodies to create a market legitimacy for the profession. Organisational bodies need to create market legitimacy whereby they are acknowledged as the authoritative expert on Business Analysts. Part of this legitimacy can be enhanced by the support of qualifications and tertiary education, the hallmarks of established professions.

Formalising education and training in the profession was identified as a key aspect of formalising the profession. Given the importance placed on standardised knowledge by Business Analysts and on the identified need to have a proof of competence there should be engagement with the education sector to begin the process of creating educational interventions to support the profession. This may include interventions such as qualifications and curriculum development.

Part of the formalisation of education and training includes the need to ensure the body of knowledge utilised by Business Analysts is standardised. This was identified both in the academic literature as well as these research findings as a critical aspect of professionalisation. This formalisation and standardisation of the body of knowledge will provide the basis of curriculum development to be used in education, and would also assist in the creation of clear occupational boundaries identified as a key aspect of Business Analysts professionalising.

Critical to the body of knowledge is the need for Business Analysts to ensure they have a robust culture of knowledge sharing, identified in the literature as critical aspect of a collaborative community which forms the basis for modern liberal professions. Business

Analysts identified knowledge sharing and community as a critical aspect of the professionalisation they want to achieve. Keen knowledge sharing and collaborative communities will enhance the effectiveness of practitioners in the profession thus further enhancing the legitimacy of the profession as authorities over the knowledge domain.

In the creation of clear occupational boundaries to define the profession as well as to create legitimacy of the profession, Business Analysts need to ensure they engage with the market in creating their occupational boundaries. This research shows that there is much ambiguity around role definition, and this ambiguity needs to be addressed with the market to ensure market expectations of the profession are also met.

Given that professionalisation creates a market monopoly or market shelter for practitioners of the profession, by creating both an occupational boundary and creating a barrier to entry to the profession, there is a risk the profession may create excessive market scarcity. Excessive market scarcity runs the risk of undermining the profession by potentially creating a “black” market of practitioners that work in the occupation, but do so without taking part in the formal profession. This would undermine the legitimacy of the profession and reduce the ability of the profession to be viewed as the authoritative body on the domain knowledge.

If market scarcity is created by excessively difficult barriers to entry into the profession, there is a risk that highly competent Analysts may choose not to take part in the formalised profession. These individuals may choose to either not practice at all or partake in the profession on the “black” market. Both scenarios run the risk of undermining the legitimacy of the profession by reducing the number of practitioners capable of adding value.

7.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The following areas are recommended for future research:

1. Research such as Evetts (2013) indicated the importance of the practitioner/client relationship in professionalism. This research indicated that the all four of the high-level constructs identified across the research questions relate to the

practitioner/client relationship, particularly trust relationships. Further research quantifying this relationship is recommended.

2. The Project Management Institute (PMI) and International Institute for Business Analysis (IIBA) both identify sets of competencies expected of a professional Business Analyst. Further academic research into testing the assertion of these as competency areas for Business Analysts would be recommended.
3. Further research to supplement these findings would be to identify the factors driving professionalisation.
4. Research replicating this study in other contexts, such as outside Gauteng or in clearly divergent industries such as logistics or telecoms, would provide evidence of whether this study and its' research findings are applicable elsewhere.
5. Empirical validation of this research would be valuable in identifying the relationships of these constructs to each other as well as the degree to which these constructs drive professionalisation in business analysis.
6. Further research into which variables identified in social identity theory are most applicable in driving the creation of a professional in-group of Business Analysts would be useful in supporting the understanding of the factors driving professionalisation.

7.6 Conclusion

This study has added depth to the sociological study of professions by empirically testing the definitions of a profession put forward against the occupation of Business Analysts. Further, this study added to literature on Business Analysts by being the first study to determine if BAs have a desire to professionalise, and what aspects need to be addressed for Business Analysts to perceive themselves as professional. This study adds conclusive evidence to the literature that Business Analysts view themselves as a modern liberal profession that is defined as a collaborative community.

The study concludes that Business Analysts have not yet formed a profession, and in addition the study provides Business Analysts with areas that need to be addressed for professionalisation to occur. This study adds to both the literature on professions and Business Analysts by confirming that BAs believe they should professionalise.

Professionalisation of Business Analysts will provide a variety of benefits to both the practitioners and business. Most notably, these benefits include improved quality of service to stakeholders and improved autonomy of work, which leads to greater accountability. A collaborative community with an emphasis on knowledge sharing results in better quality of service for stakeholders. For Business Analysts, the improved market shelters facilitate job security and improved training standards and occupational boundaries remove role ambiguity and facilitate career progression.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Consent Statement for all interviews

Dear Participant

I am conducting research on the Professionalisation of Business Analysts, and am trying to find out more about perceptions around Professionalisation. Our interview is expected to last about an hour, and will help us understand how Business Analysts professionalise. **Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.** Of course, all data will be kept confidential. If you have any concerns, please contact either my supervisor or myself. Our details are provided below.

Researcher: *Wesley Moffett*

Email: wesley.moffett81@gmail.com

Phone: 073 133 2623

Supervisor: *Professor Margie Sutherland*

Email: sutherlandm@gibs.co.za

Phone: +27 11 771 4000

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

We sincerely appreciate your help.

Yours truly,

Wesley Moffett

Appendix II: Interview Guideline: Business Analysts

Introduction and Background Information

- Welcome
- Discuss confidentiality
- Title of research
- Explain the structure of the interview

Objective

The purpose of the research project is to explore the view of Business Analysts towards the Professionalisation of their occupation and to determine what the understood implications of this Professionalisation could be.

Research Questions:

Question 1: What do you understand as a profession?

Introductory questions used to understand which paradigm the individual approaches a profession from (normative, ideological, discourse)

Interview Probes:

P1: Normative

- Moral community: aspiring to higher values/calling/altruism
- client/stakeholders trust
- Professions evolve to serve a specific function in society

P2: Ideological

- “monopoly” aka economic protection
- “proof of competence”

P3: Discourse

- Trust, Risk analysis, discretion, expert judgement = Quality of service

P4: Occupation as a profession vs organisational professionalism

- Why should orgs expect an occupation to behave as a profession

- Why would an occupation want to be professional, what does this mean independent of the organisation it functions in?

P5: Professions and Status

Question 2: Should Business Analysts become a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why should they?

P2: Why Shouldn't they?

Question 3: What would the benefits be of Business Analysts being a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why do you see these as advantages?

Question 4: What would the disadvantages be of Business Analysts being a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why do you see these as disadvantages?

Question 5: What should Business Analysts do to become a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Who should drive this?

P2: How should it be driven?

P3: What would the process be to become professional, both locally and internationally?

P4: What would need to change about the current approach or understanding of profession?

Question 6: What are the stakeholder perceptions of the professional Business Analyst?

Interview Prompts:

P1: Who do you see as the stakeholders in the profession?

P2: Why do you see them as stakeholders?

P3: Who should be stakeholders in the profession but currently aren't?

P4: Why should they be stakeholders?

Closing

- Reflect on the general perceptions of Professionalisation the participant has spoken about and their feelings on how it relates to Business analysts
- Ask for final comments

Thank participant.

Appendix III: Interview Guideline: HR Practitioners

Introduction and Background Information

- Welcome
- Discuss confidentiality
- Title of research
- Explain the structure of the interview

Objective

The purpose of the research project is to explore the view of HR Practitioners towards the Professionalisation of the Business Analyst occupation and to determine what the understood implications of this Professionalisation could be.

Research Questions:

Question 1: What do you understand as a profession?

Introductory questions used to understand which paradigm the individual approaches a profession from (normative, ideological, discourse)

Interview Probes:

P1: Normative

- Moral community: aspiring to higher values/calling/altruism
- client/stakeholders trust
- Professions evolve to serve a specific function in society

P2: Ideological

- “monopoly” aka economic protection
- “proof of competence”

P3: Discourse

- Trust, Risk analysis, discretion, expert judgement = Quality of service

P4: Occupation as a profession vs organisational professionalism

- Why should orgs expect an occupation to behave as a profession

- Why would an occupation want to be professional, what does this mean independent of the organisation it functions in?

P5: Professions and Status

Question 2: Should Business Analysts be a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why should they?

P2: Why shouldn't they?

Question 3: What would the benefits be of Business Analysts being a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why do you see these as advantages?

Question 4: What would the disadvantages be of Business Analysts being a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why do you see these as disadvantages?

Question 5: What should Business Analysts do to become a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Who should drive this?

P2: How should it be driven?

P3: What would the process be to become professional, both locally and internationally?

P4: What would need to change about the current approach or understanding of profession?

Question 6: What are the HR perceptions of the professional Business Analyst?

Interview Prompts:

P1: Who do you see as the stakeholders in the profession?

P2: Why do you see them as stakeholders?

P3: Who should be stakeholders in the profession but currently aren't?

P4: Why should they be stakeholders?

Question 7: Typically, what confusion do you find around the term “Business Analyst”?

Interview Prompts:

P1: Is there consistent understanding of the occupation Business Analyst?

P2: Are Organisational and Business Analyst understandings of the role typically aligned. Why, or Why not?

Closing

- Reflect on the general perceptions of Professionalisation the participant has spoken about and their feelings on how it relates to Business analysts
- Ask for final comments

Thank participant.

Appendix IV: Interview Guideline: Professional Experts

Introduction and Background Information

- Welcome
- Discuss confidentiality
- Title of research
- Explain the structure of the interview

Objective

The purpose of the research project is to explore the view of Experts in Professionalisation towards the Professionalisation of the Business Analyst occupation and to determine what the understood implications of this Professionalisation could be.

Background

Discuss the role and occupation of Business Analysts in line with the competencies in the literature review.

Research Questions:

Question 1: What do you understand as a profession?

Introductory questions used to understand which paradigm the individual approaches a profession from (normative, ideological, discourse)

Interview Probes:

P1: Normative

- Moral community: aspiring to higher values/calling/altruism
- client/stakeholders trust
- Professions evolve to serve a specific function in society

P2: Ideological

- “monopoly” aka economic protection
- “proof of competence”

P3: Discourse

- Trust, Risk analysis, discretion, expert judgement = Quality of service

P4: Occupation as a profession vs organisational professionalism

- Why should orgs expect an occupation to behave as a profession
- Why would an occupation want to be professional, what does this mean independent of the organisation it functions in?

P5: Professions and Status

Question 2: Should occupations become professional?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why should they?

P2: Why Shouldn't they?

Question 3: What would the benefits to becoming a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why do you see these as advantages?

Question 4: What would the disadvantages be of becoming a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Why do you see these as disadvantages?

Question 5: What should be done to become a profession?

Interview Probes:

P1: Who should drive this?

P2: How should it be driven?

P3: What would the process be to become professional, both locally and internationally?

P4: What would need to change about the current approach or understanding of profession?

Question 6: What would you think are the typical stakeholders that would be involved in Professionalisation?

Interview Prompts:

P1: Who do you see as the stakeholders in the profession?

P2: Why do you see them as stakeholders?

P3: Who should be stakeholders in the profession but currently are not?

P4: Why should they be stakeholders?

Closing

- Reflect on the general perceptions of Professionalisation the participant has spoken about and their feelings on how it relates to occupations
- Ask for final comments

Thank participant.

Appendix V: Research Data

The following tables reflect the raw data constructed from the interviews, no passes have been performed to collapse related constructs into each other

7.6.1 Interview Question 1: What do you understand as a profession

Construct	Business Analyst											Human Resource								Expert Professionalisation				Total		
	S1	S2	S14	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Frequency	Count	S3	S11	S12	S13	S15	S16	Frequency	Count	S17	S18	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count
Formal Qualification	2	1	1		2	1	2	1	1	1	12	9	2		1	1	2	2	8	4			0	0	20	13
Formal Training declining											0	0	2						2	0			0	0	2	0
Proof of Proficiency & Competency		3		3	1	1	3	1	1	1	14	8		1	5	2	2	1	11	5			0	0	25	13
Trust	1	3	1	4	1	2	1		2	3	18	9	2	1		1	2	1	7	4			0	0	25	13
Expert Judgement	1	1			1					1	4	4	1			1	1	1	4	3			0	0	8	7
Barrier to entry	1	1	2		1	1	1		1	1	9	8			1	1	2		4	3			0	0	13	11
Formalisation of Occupation	2	1	2	3	1	1			2		12	7		2	2	1	1	1	7	5			0	0	19	12
Reputation	1	1									2	2	1				1		2	1			0	0	4	3
Ethics	1	1			2						4	3							0	0			0	0	4	3
Status & Power			1	1	1	2				2	7	5		1	1	1	1		4	4			0	0	11	9
Status decreasing	1	1			1				1		4	4			1		1	1	3	3			0	0	7	7
Standardised Skills & Knowledge		6	7	3	2	3	4	1	3	2	31	9	4	2	3	1		1	11	4			0	0	42	13

Body of Knowledge		1	1	1	1	1	1	1			7	7				2			2	1			0	0	9	8
Apprentice/Practical		1				2			2		5	3			2		1		3	2			0	0	8	5
Authority		1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Market Scarcity		3	1					1			5	3				3		3	1			0	0	8	4	
Accountability		1			2						3	2							0	0			0	0	3	2
Values & Ethics	1	2	1	1					1	1	7	6		1	1	2	1	1	6	5			0	0	13	11
Regulation		1									1	1		1					1	1			0	0	2	2
Decision Making				1					1		2	2							0	0			0	0	2	2
Risk Analysis		1		1					1		3	3	1						1	0			0	0	4	3
Protection		1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Career Progression			1	1			1	1		1	5	5	1		1		1		3	2			0	0	8	7
Specialisation				1	1	1			1		4	4	2		1				3	1			0	0	7	5
Globalisation											0	0	1						1	0			0	0	1	0
Policies				1							1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Community of Practice	1	1	2	3	1	3		3		2	16	8		3	4	1	1		9	4			0	0	25	12
Higher Calling				2	1	1					4	3			3			1	4	2			0	0	8	5
Code of Conduct				1		1			2		4	3		2		1	3	2	8	4			0	0	12	7
Central Control						1		1		1	3	3		1					1	1			0	0	4	4
Domain Knowledge			2			1					3	2					3	1	4	2			0	0	7	4
EQ			1								1	1					4	1	5	2			0	0	6	3
Earnings								1			1	1					1		1	1			0	0	2	2

7.6.2 Interview Question 2: Should business analysis become a profession

Construct	Business Analyst												Human Resource								Expert Professionalisation				Total		
	S1	S2	S4	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Frequency	Count	S3	S11	S12	S13	S15	S16	Frequency	Count	S17	S18	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count	
Yes - Professionalise	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	9	9	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	6			0	0	15	15	
No - Don't Professionalise			1						1		2	2		1			1		2	2			0	0	4	4	
Consequences for Bad Work	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1	
Proof of Skill	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1	
Market Differentiation	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1	
Assurance of Work Quality	1		1			1					3	3				1	1	1	3	3			0	0	6	6	
Create Market Scarcity	1	1								1	3	3		2		1			3	2			0	0	6	5	
Increase in Cost (Salary)	1								1		2	2						1	1	1	1			0	0	3	3
Create levels	1										1	1					1		1	1			0	0	2	2	
Create career path	1										1	1					1	1	2	2			0	0	3	3	
Limit to career											0	0					1		1	1			0	0	1	1	

progression																										
Excludes good BA's	1	1								2	2				1			1	1			0	0	3	3	
Create Occupational Boundary		1	1		1		1			2	6	5			1			1	1			0	0	7	6	
Academic Exclusion		1					1				2	2				1			1	1			0	0	3	3
Create Competency base										0	0	1			1				2	2			0	0	2	2
Create a voice for profession										0	0	1							1	1			0	0	1	1
Common Behaviour				1						1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
Common Knowledge (BOK)				2	1			1		1	5	4							0	0			0	0	5	4
Reduce need for Domain Knowledge				1						1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
Improved Skills				1		1			1	1	4	4			2				2	1			0	0	6	5
Improved Training					1	1					2	2			1		1		2	2			0	0	4	4
Improved Formalisations of occupation							1				1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1

Creates Best Practices					2					2	1							0	0				0	0		2	1	
Creates customer value					1	1				2	2			1		1			2	2				0	0		4	4
Create occupational recognition							1			1	1								0	0				0	0		1	1
Keep Intellectual Property in Organizations								1		1	1								0	0				0	0		1	1
Create Central Control										0	0		1			1			2	2				0	0		2	2
improves occupational growth										0	0		1	1					2	2				0	0		2	2
Protection of practitioners										0	0			1		1			2	2				0	0		2	2
Academic more important than profession			1							1	1								0	0				0	0		1	1
Excessive trainings claim to make BA's			1							1	1								0	0				0	0		1	1
Too broad an										0	0				1				1	1				0	0		1	1

occupation																													
Community											0	0							1	1	1				0	0		1	1
Mentorship											0	0							1	1	1				0	0		1	1

7.6.3 Interview Question 3: What are the advantages of business analysis professionalising

Construct	Business Analyst												Human Resource								Expert Professionalisation				Total		
	S1	S2	S4	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Frequency	Count	S3	S1	S1	S1	S1	S1	Frequency	Count	S1	S1	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count	
Assurance of Work standard	1	1		1		1		1	1		6	6		1	1	1		2	5	4				0	0	11	10
Market differentiation from non-professionals	1										1	1						1	1	1				0	0	2	2
Collegial community		1		2	1	1					5	4							0	0				0	0	5	4
Acceptance of occupational boundary		1									1	1							0	0				0	0	1	1
Knowledge Sharing		1									1	1				1			1	1				0	0	2	2
Increased status		1									1	1	1					1	1	2				0	0	2	3

Consequences for poor performance		1								1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
creates occupational reputation							1			1	1	1	1					1	2			0	0	2	3
Have a body of knowledge to rely on				1						1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Improved work opportunities				1						1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Increased scarcity value				1						1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
central point of control					1			1		2	2				1			1	1			0	0	3	3
Improved job standardisation			1		1				2	4	3			1	1			2	2			0	0	6	5
Professional Support					1					1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Improved Work standards					1			2		3	2				1			1	1			0	0	4	3
Standardised remuneration					1			1		2	2		1			2		3	2			0	0	5	4

Improved remuneration						1				1	1		1				1	1				0	0	2	2	
Standardised professional levels					1					1	1							0	0				0	0	1	1
Continual learning required					1			1		2	2							0	0				0	0	2	2
improved career path								1		1	1							0	0				0	0	1	1
role stability								2		2	1							0	0				0	0	2	1
Career Path								1		1	1					2		2	1				0	0	3	2
standardised skills										0	0			1	1	1		3	3				0	0	3	3
Tertiary education become available										0	0			1				1	1				0	0	1	1
Trust in occupation										0	0			1				1	1				0	0	1	1
Improved Authority			1							1	1							0	0				0	0	1	1
Improved accountability			1							1	1							0	0				0	0	1	1
Improved deliverables			1							1	1							0	0				0	0	1	1
standardised										0	0				1			1	1				0	0	1	1

7.6.4 Interview Question 4: What are the disadvantages of business analysis professionalising

Construct	BA											HR						EP				Total				
	S1	S2	S14	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Frequency	Count	S3	S11	S12	S13	S15	S16	Frequency	Count	S17	S18	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count
possible excessive market scarcity	1			1	1						3	3			2		1		3	2			0	0	6	5
Good BA's be excluded	1					1	1				3	3			2		2		4	2			0	0	7	5
Occupation less responsive to market needs		2			1		1			1	5	4						1	1	1			0	0	6	5
forces too much standardisation, not market needs		1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
reduced expert judgment as occupation narrow		1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
Standardisation reduces value add		1				1					2	2							0	0			0	0	2	2
standardisation may reduce risk		1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1

shortcut to competency if standard low												0	0					1					1	1				0	0			1	1	
becoming BA becomes expensive												0	0						1					1	1				0	0			1	1

7.6.5 Interview Question 5: What should be done to professionalise business analysis

Construct	Business Analyst												Human Resource								Expert Professionalisation				Total	
	S1	S2	S14	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Frequency	Count	S3	S11	S12	S13	S15	S16	Frequency	Count	S17	S18	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count
create awareness of occupation	1			2	3	1	1	1		1	10	7		1	3		1		5	3			0	0	15	10
formalise qualifications	1		1			1	1		1	1	6	6		1	1			1	3	3			0	0	9	9
increase members rapidly	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
ensure standard of practice available	1						1				2	2							0	0			0	0	2	2
ensure body of knowledge is standardised	1	1	1							1	4	4					1	1	2	2			0	0	6	6

don't be overly dependent on qualifications	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
improve marketing	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
create vision of career path		1			1	1					3	3		1	1				2	2			0	0	5	5
long term occupation vision		1			1						2	2			1				1	1			0	0	3	3
create better community for knowledge transfer		1				1					2	2			1				1	1			0	0	3	3
graded/levels of membership		1						1			2	2		1		1			2	2			0	0	4	4
government regulation and support		1		1							2	2					1		1	1			0	0	3	3
standardise outputs		1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1
standardised proof of competency						1					1	1	1		1				2	2			0	0	3	3
impose standard knowledge									1		1	1	1		1				2	2			0	0	3	3
impose standard processes									1		1	1	1						1	1			0	0	2	2

must be driven by a professional body				1					1	1		3	3					1	1	1				0	0		4	4			
improve relationship with universities				1	1	1			1			4	4		1	1		1			3	3			0	0		7	7		
adhere to international norms				2								2	1		1						1	1			0	0		3	2		
Improve education					1							1	1		1						1	1			0	0		2	2		
mentorship systems					1				1			2	2		1						1	1			0	0		3	3		
Existing membership should drive professionalisation					1							1	1											0	0			0	0	1	1
Practical's/Articles						1			1			2	2					2	2	1				0	0		4	3			
Build business relationship									1			1	1					1	1	1				0	0		2	2			
Body of knowledge									1			1	1			1				1	1			0	0		2	2			
Align to international norms												0	0		1			1			2	2			0	0		2	2		
Grad program buy in												0	0		1					1	1			0	0		1	1			
target specific definition												0	0		1					1	1			0	0		1	1			

standardise role			1									1	1			1		1			2	2			0	0	3	3	
community												0	0				1		1			2	2			0	0	2	2

7.6.6 Interview Question 6: Who are the major stakeholders in business analysis as a profession

Construct	Business Analyst												Human Resource								Experts Professionalisation				Total	
	S1	S2	S14	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Frequency	Count	S3	S1	S12	S13	S15	S16	Frequency	Count	S17	S18	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count
Project Portfolio Managers											0	0		1		1			2	2			0	0	2	2
Project Sponsor	1	1		1	1	1			1	1	7	7					1		1	1			0	0	8	8
IT Architects			1								1	1				1			1	1			0	0	2	2
Developers	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	8	8					1		1	1			0	0	9	9
Testers	1	1	1	1	1					1	6	6					1		1	1			0	0	7	7
Project Managers	1	1	2	1	1	1			1	1	9	8				1	1		2	2			0	0	11	10
Scrum Masters	1			1							2	2					1		1	1			0	0	3	3
End Users	1	1		1	1	1					5	5					1		1	1			0	0	6	6
System Analysts					1		1				2	2					1		1	1			0	0	3	3
BA Manager						1			1	1	3	3			2	1			3	2			0	0	6	5
Improved quality output	1										1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1

improved assurance of resource quality	1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1	
increased cost to business stakeholders	1									1	1							0	0			0	0	1	1	
Education sector		1					1			2	2							1	1	1			0	0	3	3
improved qualifications		1								1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
more specialised courses		1								1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
Risk Mitigates for clients		1								1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
professionalisation changes the value chain		1						1		2	2								0	0			0	0	2	2
improved accountability		1								1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
Clients benefit from expert judgement		1								1	1								0	0			0	0	1	1
IIBA							1		1	2	2	1							1	1			0	0	3	3
HR				1	1	1			1	4	4		1		1				2	2			0	0	6	6
recruiting need changes				1	1	1		1	1	5	5		1						1	1			0	0	6	6

Training needs				1							1	1							0	0				0	0			1	1	
Clients				1							1	1								0	0				0	0			1	1
BA's				1			1				2	2				1				1	1				0	0			3	3
interview process					1						1	1								0	0				0	0			1	1
New boundaries change role						1					1	1								0	0				0	0			1	1
Finance						1					1	1								0	0				0	0			1	1
Mentors								1			1	1								0	0				0	0			1	1
broader Business								1			1	1					1			1	1				0	0			2	2
Designers of business									1		1	1								0	0				0	0			1	1
HR awareness low											0	0		1						1	1				0	0			1	1
drive other IT careers to become professional											0	0		1						1	1				0	0			1	1
competition between BA's and PM's											0	0		1						1	1				0	0			1	1
role confusion											0	0		2	2					4	2				0	0			4	2
Recruiters											0	0			1					1	1				0	0			1	1
sometimes viewed inferior to developers											0	0			1					1	1				0	0			1	1

BA careers are viewed as limited											0	0					1						1	1					0	0			1	1	
Status will change culture			1									1	1											0	0					0	0			1	1
CIO												0	0					1						1	1					0	0			1	1
Business in general												0	0					1						1	1					0	0			1	1

7.6.7 Interview Question 7: What are the typical issues surrounding business analysis (Human Resource practitioners)

Construct	Human Resource						Total	
	S3	S11	S12	S13	S15	S16	Frequency	Count
Poor occupation definition	1	1	1	2		2	7	5
similar to data analyst	1		1				2	2
more important than project managers	1						1	1
Scare Skills	1						1	1
poor awareness of BA skills sets		1					1	1
BA's and PM's often confused		2					2	1
Tend to be recruited on domain knowledge not skills		1		1		2	4	3
BA's differ between organisations			1				1	1

similar to Project manager			1				1	1
similar to system analyst			1		1		2	2
inconsistent qualifications				1			1	1
viewed as inferior to developers				1			1	1
seen as a limited career		1		1	1		3	3
Intelligence more critical in recruiting BA					1		1	1
similar to enterprise architects					1		1	1