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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL ORIENTATION AND INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Madlala-Routledge (2004:vi) posits that:

> As part of national foreign policy, the Department of Defence (DOD) has participated in various peace and humanitarian support missions in Africa and other parts of the world, and has made a significant contribution to the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). According to her, an average of three thousand South African troops has been deployed in these missions throughout Africa.

Furthermore, Nyanda (2004:vii) suggests that:

> The South African National Defence Force (SANDF), which is the military, is structured, equipped and prepared to defend South Africa against military violence. In an endeavour to promote peace within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Africa, the SANDF currently deploys the equivalent of three battalions in peace support operations in countries such as Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The researcher agrees with the abovementioned views, and is of the opinion that it is clear that SANDF members/employees are expected to be deployed in missions outside their country of origin, that is, outside South Africa, as part of their work obligations. This task is a challenge, as they have to work under stressful circumstances. Like any other organisation that employs human beings, members of the SANDF do not function in isolation, but in the context of other systems within their lives, of which the family is the most important. In addition, this implies that, in order for the troops to be able to carry out their work obligations in an effective and efficient manner, other systems within their lives need to be provided for.

Therefore, according to Motumi (2004:2):

> The Directorate Social Work's main purpose is to promote the resilience of the DOD by maintaining a balance between the demands of the military system and the needs of its members, so as to ensure the mission readiness of the organisation.

According to the researcher, it is therefore clear that a state of equilibrium needs to be maintained between the demands of the organisation and other systems within the members' lives, so as to enable them to carry out their responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner.

The researcher supports this argument, as the mandate for the Directorate Social Work is to put the necessary support programmes in place to ensure that members will be resilient enough to carry out their work obligations. Programmes of this nature include financial management, conflict management, resilience and debriefing upon return from external deployment.

McCubbin and McCubbin (1996:16) define resilience as:

> The positive behavioural patterns and functional competence that individuals, families, communities and organisations demonstrate under stressful or adverse circumstances, which determine their ability to recover by maintaining their integrity as a unit while ensuring, and where necessary restoring, the well-being of the individual, family, community or organisation.

In other words, the ability of the individual and the family to survive any traumatic situation while the spouse is away on external deployment is a critical prerequisite for combat readiness amongst SANDF members.

The researcher consulted colleagues within the SANDF with regard to the topic of this study, as well as the study itself. Cilliers, as quoted by Strydom (1998a:180), postulates that:

> In spite of the wealth of literature, which may exist in any discipline, it usually represents only a section of knowledge of people who are regularly involved in the specific field. Furthermore, since the field of

social work is already so broad, people automatically specialise. One finds an increasing number of persons who have trained in a specialised area, who have undertaken research or who have been active for many years in that specific area. It therefore is most valuable to prospective researchers to utilise these resources.

For this reason, the researcher consulted the following experts:

- Colonel E.S. Harrison, Senior Staff Officer within the Directorate Social Work. Once she had read the proposal of the researcher, she suggested that the researcher revisit the topic, as it did not make sense when stated as an evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of spousal support services to members of the SANDF during external deployment. She suggested that the researcher rephrase the title of the study. She also evaluated Chapter 6, which contained the conclusions and recommendations at the end of the study, and assessed the feasibility of the model that was designed by the researcher. She suggested the inclusion of more role players with regard to the provision of spousal support services and the link to existing structures such as the Military Community Development Committee (MCDC).

- Lieutenant Colonel M. de Klerk, Senior Staff Officer within the Directorate Social Work. She assisted the researcher in the formulation of the topic, viz. a model for spousal support services to SANDF members during external deployment within the South African National Defence Force.

- Lieutenant Colonel A.D. Van Breda, Research Manager, Military Psychological Institute, and social worker by profession. The researcher consulted him regarding the topic under study, especially in terms of whether or not a questionnaire would be a feasible data collection method amongst spouses of SANDF members who live in rural areas, and in connection with further literature concerning deployment and support services. He suggested the use of focus group interviews with spouses of SANDF members who live in rural areas. Furthermore, he provided the researcher with a large amount of material

(journals) on deployment, support and resilience, and he aligned himself with the topic as stated in the researcher's discussion with Lieutenant Colonel de Klerk.

- Lt Col P.H. Hartslief. She is presently employed as the Senior Staff Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation, at the Chief Directorate Transformation Management. However, she was previously employed as a specialist social work researcher at the Military Psychological Institute. She also did an excellent job as acting Staff Officer at Mobile Military Health Formation, which is responsible for deployments within the SANDF. She assisted the researcher at the end of the study with the assessment of the feasibility of the model in Chapter 7, and she also went through Chapter 6, which focuses on conclusions and recommendations. She suggested that the researcher should also recommend that social workers within the mission area should serve as a link between the member and the spouse by means of contacting the spouse, particularly at times when the member cannot access the spouse due to a situation beyond his/her control (for example, terrain).

- Major M. Small, a specialist social work researcher at the Military Psychological Institute, Social Work Research and Development, a part-time lecturer at the University of South Africa, and supervisor of social work students. She assisted the researcher with the formulation of the research topic viz. a model for military support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, and with comments on the flow of the researcher's thoughts in the proposal stage. She further assisted the researcher in the formulation of graphs and charts for the qualitative and quantitative data analyses.

Strydom (1998a:179) is of the opinion that "the prospective researcher can only hope to undertake meaningful research if he/she is fully up to date with existing knowledge on his/her prospective subject". Mouton (2001:87) asserts that:

> Literature review encapsulates much more than just reviewing the literature. Mouton uses the term "existing scholarship" to indicate the existing body of knowledge or range of research products produced

by other scholars, which is more than the mere literature that a researcher should be able to identify and explore in an attempt to conduct a comprehensive review of literature.

No scientific research on the topic of spousal support in the South African National Defence Force during external military deployment could be found, and even though some United States DOD literature on related, but not similar, research is available, it is rather limited. Available material focuses more on separation during wartime, such as the Persian Gulf War (Black, 1993:272-277), than during peace missions. Models of the impact of family centre programmes on service members are available, such as during Desert Shield/Storm (DSS), in which the link between the deployment programme and family adaptation was evaluated. According to Van Breda (1993-1996:1), "a fairly substantial pool of literature is available dealing with the field of family separations, primarily with reference to military families. Particularly in the United States of America, the family's experience of separations or deployments has received much attention".

Therefore, according to the researcher, research that was conducted on the issue of support to families during deployment within the SANDF focused on, for example, the resilience theory, a literature review with special chapters on deployment resilience in military families and resilience theory in social work (Van Breda, 2001:i-320), an article on support to families in Kwa-Zulu Natal (Mahlambi, 2003:1-9), and emotional cycles of deployment in the South African Navy family (Van Breda, 1993-1996:i-196). As a result of the fact that most of the sources used in these studies are not primarily South African, the researcher is of the opinion that South African literature on support to families is limited. The researcher was expected to make use of original sources, of which most were not necessarily South African. In addition, source references in some of the unpublished literature were lacking.

It was also difficult for the researcher to make use of some of the literature (both published and unpublished), due to the fact that it was not exactly what the

researcher wanted to include in her research paper, and because of the fact that most of the information dated back to between 1974 and 1990. Even the emotional cycle of deployment (Logan, 1987:43-47) that the researcher made extensive use of in her study, which has been referred to by Van Breda (1993-1996:i-196) in the emotional cycles of deployment in the South African Navy family, was written in 1987.

In his study on the emotional cycles of deployment, Van Breda (1993-1996:1) indicated that "despite the lack of literature that is directly relevant to South Africa, one article (Logan, 1987) has been widely used by both husbands and wives in assisting them to understand their experience of deployment". The researcher also made use of this (Logan, 1987:43-47) source, due to the fact that it was most relevant to the study. This status quo does not necessarily imply total absence of South African literature on the subject of spousal support to military families. Therefore, this topic cannot be regarded as the first of its kind. However, no scientific investigation into the assessment of the nature of social support services to the SANDF members and their spouses during external military deployment could be found.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that when the researcher made the decision to undertake her doctoral studies within the SANDF, she approached the Director of Social Work, General Motumi, with regard to the research topic that would ultimately be of benefit to the organisation. The researcher was requested to conduct an investigation into the efficiency and effectiveness of social support services that are rendered to SANDF members and their spouses during external military deployment. This emanated from complaints received by the Director of Social Work from some of the members of the SANDF who had been involved in external military deployment that no social support services were rendered to them and their spouses during external military deployment. In cases where services were rendered, the complaint was that they were insufficient. For this reason, the researcher made the decision to undertake this study.

The United States Department of Defence (US DOD) is implementing programmes such as pre-deployment (ongoing readiness), post-deployment (homecoming and reunion), family assistance centres, family support groups, children's readiness handbooks and operation READY videos, prepared mainly for the purpose of providing support to its members and their families during deployment. Even though the resilience programme is implemented within the SANDF, the researcher is of the opinion that these US DOD programmes can be fully adapted to fit in with the SANDF spousal support services' requirements during external military deployment, particularly if they respond to the needs of its members.

Comprehensive implementation of deployment resilience programmes for SANDF members and their spouses during external military deployment seemed to be the problem. The requirement for large-scale implementation of these programmes in the SANDF emanates from the need for implementation of such services, which was expressed by some of the SANDF members (who had been involved in external military deployment) and their spouses. No full-scale research in this regard has been conducted within South Africa.

The researcher further posits that there are various forms of deployment that can be distinguished within the SANDF, for example, internal deployment within the borders of the Republic of South Africa (RSA), deployment emanating from courses ranging from two weeks to a year, deployment to other provinces within the country, resulting in fragmented families, and deployment that is mission-specific, which ranges from one week to six months. However, for the purpose of this study, the focus will be limited to the design of a model for social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of the members within SADC and African Union (AU) countries. This process is ongoing, due to the political unrest situation prevalent within some of the SADC and AU countries, as well as the world at large. Instead, the need for this type of service will increase. It is therefore critical that social support services

to members' spouses be in place while the members are involved in external military deployment.

According to the researcher, the observed impact that external deployments have on military families, especially the impact that the concept of the SANDF's involvement in various peace and humanitarian support missions in Africa and other parts of the world has on the family, is a relatively new field of study within the SANDF. Therefore, according to the researcher, the design of a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment is critical in ensuring that members are mission-ready.

The researcher has therefore selected her topic of research in order to design a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during the external military deployment of the members, and also to sensitise the SANDF to the importance of a combat-ready force by ensuring that the spouses of deployed members are well taken care of while the members are carrying out the parliamentary strategic guidelines which entail involvement in peace missions in other countries, particularly African countries.

This chapter contains the following: a general introduction, problem formulation, purpose, goal and objectives of the study, research questions, a summary of the research methodology, the pilot study, ethical aspects, definition of key concepts, contents of the research report, and limitations of the study.

1.2   PROBLEM FORMULATION

Mark (1996:81) and Babbie and Mouton (2001:78) postulate that:

> Social work research begins with a research problem. Often, a research problem is stated in the form of a question. If there is theory or previous research that provides some explanation of the phenomenon under study, the researcher might state the purpose of the study in a form of one or more hypothesis.

According to Goddard and Melville (2001:16):

> Having performed the preliminary study and demarcated the problem, the researcher is now in a position to make a statement of the research problem (often referred to as the 'statement of the problem'). This statement will be the base on which the eventual report will stand, and needs to be clear and coherent.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:7) are in agreement with the abovementioned authors, and are of the opinion that "research begins with a problem: an unanswered question in the mind of the researcher". Leedy and Ormrod (2005:43) further state that "at the heart of every research project is the problem. It is paramount to the success of the research effort that the problem be seen with unwavering clarity, and be stated in precise and unmistakable terms".

The researcher affirms the above by indicating that research cannot take place without any cause for concern. Research emanates from the existence of a problem that compels the researcher to seek more information about the presenting problem, find possible solutions to the problem, and sensitize others, whether individuals or organisations, for example, regarding such a problem and further possible research on the same topic. Proper problem formulation is therefore critical when undertaking any research.

Upon debriefing some of the members who have been on external military deployment to countries such as Sudan and the DRC, social workers received feedback that members were not satisfied with the social support services that should have been rendered to their spouses while they were on external military deployment. There were also complaints that spousal support services were insufficient. These members included troops, spouses and the professionals such as nurses, social workers and psychologists who rendered support services during the period of deployment.

This further highlighted the importance of a scientific evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of military support services to spouses of SANDF members

while members were deployed abroad. It also became apparent that the development of a social support services model was needed in order to address this limitation.

As an employee of the South African National Defence Force, the researcher is involved in the monitoring and control of work performance among social workers. Through the staff visits that the researcher undertook to SANDF units within some of the provinces in South Africa, namely Limpopo, Free State and Gauteng, as well as 3 Military Hospital, the researcher observed a need for the designation and implementation of a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment. Information received from members in these areas can be generalised to other provinces, due to the fact that the Free State is an area where mobilisation and demobilisation of troops occur prior to and after external deployment.

According to the researcher, the importance of spousal resilience has been shown by the nature of problems that have been experienced by spouses at home while members were on external military deployment - for example, divorce, as well as marital and financial problems. However, this cannot be statistically proven due to the fact that social workers did not make a distinction between normal problems and those that are deployment-related in the Management Information System (MIS). However, a relationship does exist between these problems and external military deployment. In other words, problems experienced by spouses and members who have been involved in external military deployment, such as divorce, marital problems and financial problems, can be linked to external military deployment.

Spousal support services that are rendered within the SANDF during external deployment entail preparation for deployment, which includes programmes such as financial management, stress management, conflict management and health awareness programmes such as HIV and AIDS, support during deployment in

the form of telephone calls and crisis management where possible, and reintegration into the family in the form of debriefing and preparation for the unexpected. As a result of the lack of resources such as telephones and transport to carry out home visits, this service is not rendered within all the deploying units in the SANDF. This is evident from complaints received from members and spouses of deployed and deploying members from the organisation. Lack of resources to undertake home visits, distance between military bases and residential areas, and lack of access to telephones also pose limitations in terms of the provision of this service by social workers within the SANDF.

The researcher has identified the following as problem areas to be investigated by this study:

-   Lack of scientific investigation on the subject of social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

-   Lack of a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

-   Lack of formal evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of existing social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

-   Lack of resources (logistical and human) to provide efficient and effective social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

- Lack of intervention programmes by the SANDF in order to render social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

- Lack of buy-in by SANDF managers regarding the pressing need for the provision of efficient and effective social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

Despite the fact that a resilience programme is in place for use by social workers within the SANDF, the researcher is of the opinion that a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment is not in place. The researcher could not conclude that the resilience programme that is in place within the SANDF is a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. The fact that the efficiency and effectiveness of spousal support services during external military deployment within the SANDF have not been scientifically evaluated poses a problem in terms of the comprehensive promotion of a combat-ready force and healthy military families by the organisation, reflecting in particular upon the Social Work Directorate, as it forms part of its core business. Hence, the Director of Social Work requested the researcher to undertake this study.

1.3   PURPOSE, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to Fouché (2002a:107-108):

> The terms "goal," "purpose" and "aim" are often used interchangeably, that is, as synonyms for one another. Their meaning implies the broader, more abstract conception of "the end toward which effort or ambition is directed", while "objective" denotes the more concrete, measurable and more speedily attainable conception of such "end toward which effort or ambition is directed". The one (goal, purpose, or aim) is the "dream"; the other (objective) is the steps one has to take, one by one, realistically at grass-roots level, within a certain time–span, in order to attain the dream.

As described by Fouché (2002a:108), the terms "goal" and "objective" will be used in this study. According to the researcher, therefore, purpose implies the rationale behind undertaking a particular study.

Neuman (2000:21) postulates that:

> There are almost as many reasons to do research, as there are researchers. Yet, the purpose of social research may be organized into three groups based on what the researcher is trying to accomplish, explore a new topic, describe a social phenomenon, or explain why something occurs.

Furthermore, according to Neuman (2000:21), "studies may have multiple purposes (example, both to explore and describe), but one purpose is usually dominant".

Babbie and Mouton (2001:79) state that "social research serves many purposes". According to Babbie (2005:88):

> Three of the most common and useful purposes are exploration, description, and explanation. Furthermore, a large proportion of social research is conducted to explore a topic, or to provide a basic familiarity with that topic. This approach is typical when a researcher examines a new interest, or when the subject of study is relatively new.

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:42), "the purpose of exploratory research is to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person. The need for such a study could arise out of lack of basic information on a new area of interest". Durrheim (1999:39) is of the opinion that "exploratory studies are used to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research. They employ an open, flexible, and inductive approach to research, as they attempt to look for new insights into phenomena".

According to Mouton and Marais, as quoted by Brink (2001:11), "the purpose of exploratory research is to explore the dimensions of a phenomenon, the manner

in which it manifests, and the other factors with which it is related (it provides more insight about the nature of a phenomenon)".

Due to the fact that an evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of social support services to SANDF members' spouses while the member is on external military deployment is a new area of research, the purpose of this study was therefore exploratory in nature. In other words, the main objective of this study was exploration.

1.3.1 Goal

The goal of this study was to design a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members.

1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To undertake an in-depth literature review that would conceptualise social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members.

- To evaluate the implementation, efficiency and effectiveness of existing social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment.

- To inform the SANDF management about the results of the study in terms of the need for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during the members' external military deployment.

- To design a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses while members are on external military deployment as a prerequisite for combat readiness amongst SANDF members.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

De Vos (1998:115-16) postulates that "research always commences with one or more questions or hypotheses. Questions are posed about the nature of real situations, while hypotheses are statements about how things can be". Maxwell (1998:80) goes further to describe the research question as "what the researcher specifically wants to understand by doing the study. Research questions are more relevant if the researcher works qualitatively, and hypotheses when the researcher works quantitatively". According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:4), "research is guided by a specific research problem, question or hypothesis".

Winberg (1997:31) states that "all research, like any process of knowledge production, usually start with a question". In this study, therefore, the researcher began with a research question. Due to the fact that this study was aimed at understanding the nature of social support services to be rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members and the designation of a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members, the research problem will be stated in the form of a question, not a hypothesis, which is a tentative assertion regarding how things could be.

In this study, the researcher did not make assumptions about social support services to be rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members, but undertook an exploratory study, which was aimed at the designation of a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. Hence, the researcher made use of research questions instead of a hypothesis.

The following research questions were posed:

- What is the nature of social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment?

- What is the efficiency and effectiveness of social support services rendered to the spouses of the SANDF members during external military deployment? In other words, whether or not there are any social support services that are rendered to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment, what services are rendered if any, how they are rendered, whether or not these services are rendered as expected, and whether or not the desired outcome is achieved.

- What is the nature of the problems experienced by SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

- Is there a need for additional social support services to be rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

- Are there sufficient resources to render efficient and effective social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

- Is there a need for a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

- If necessary, what type of model should be implemented?

- Which discipline will be the main custodian of such a model?

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research approach that was used in this study is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In the case of the quantitative study, the population that the researcher was interested in was the 6,414 SANDF members who were married or in a permanent partnership, and had been involved in external military deployment. A sample of 350 research subjects took part in this study, and the sampling method that was used to select research subjects was purposive sampling. Self-constructed questionnaires were used as a quantitative data collection technique to elicit information from the SANDF members who have been involved in external deployment regarding the nature of social support services during their external military deployment. Social workers who were deployed with these members assisted with the administration of questionnaires.

In the case of the qualitative study, the population that the researcher was interested in was the 6,414 spouses of SANDF members who had been externally deployed. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to solicit information that aided in the design of a model for social support services to spouses of SANDF members while the latter are on external military deployment. A sample of 60 research subjects was involved in this study. The sampling method that was used in the selection of research subjects was the sequential sampling method. Interviews were conducted with spouses of members of the SANDF who had been involved in external military deployment. Social workers from each of the deploying units in eight provinces of South Africa conducted interviews with the spouses of SANDF members who had been involved in external military deployment, while the researcher conducted interviews in the ninth province, namely Gauteng.

The following ethical issues, inter alia, will be applicable to this study; protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, deception of respondents, release or publication of findings, debriefing of

respondents, cooperation with contributors, and actions and competence of the researcher.

1.6   PILOT STUDY

According to Royse (1995:172):

> It is important to conduct a pilot study, whether it is a qualitative or a quantitative study. In qualitative research, the pilot study is usually informal, and few respondents possessing the same characteristics as those of the main investigation can be involved in the study, merely to ascertain certain trends. The purpose is to determine whether the relevant data can be obtained from the respondents.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:155) define a pilot study as "a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling instruments, and analysis are adequate and appropriate".

Huysamen, as quoted by Strydom (1998a:179), is of the opinion that "the purpose of a pilot study is to investigate the feasibility of the planned project and to bring possible deficiencies in the measurement procedure to the fore". According to the researcher, a pilot study is therefore a preliminary, small-scale investigation whose purpose is to determine whether or not the data collection techniques used in this study, i.e. the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, had the desired effect. In other words, the purpose was to determine whether or not the required information was obtained from the research subjects.

1.6.1 Pilot testing

The pilot testing, in the form of semi-structured interviews, was conducted at one of the deploying units in Gauteng, within rural areas such as Hammanskraal and urban areas such as Thaba Tshwane, with two of the spouses of SANDF members who had been on external military deployment. These spouses were

not involved in the main study. Questionnaires were further pilot-tested at one of the deploying units in Gauteng, 21 South African Infantry Battalion (21 SAI Bn), with two of the SANDF members who had been on external military deployment. These SANDF members were not involved in the main study. The outcome of the pilot test was that the data collection techniques were adequate and did not require any form of refinement. As a result, the desired outcome was achieved. Therefore, there was no need for revision.

1.6.2 Feasibility of the Study

The research subjects were SANDF employees and were always available. Social workers who were employed within deployment units in South Africa, as well as those who were deployed in external deployment areas, were requested to participate in data collection. The study was conducted at minimal costs, which involved only photocopying and telephone calls. Social workers were already working in deployment units and deployment areas such as the DRC, Burundi and Sudan. Therefore, no further travelling costs were incurred. The researcher made use of sustainment flights that regularly travel to mission areas, in order to deliver and collect questionnaires, which were channelled through the military post office.

The Director of Social Work requested the researcher to conduct this study. Written permission was obtained from the Director of Social Work within the SANDF to conduct the study. The researcher was also subjected to the Defence Intelligence Department Committee for the purpose of confirming that confidential information about the organisation would not be compromised in any way by this study, and also to obtain further authorisation to continue with the investigation. The rationale for this procedure was to confirm that ethical guidelines would not be violated in this study.

1.7   ETHICAL ASPECTS

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101-102):

> Within certain disciplines, namely the social sciences, education, criminology, medicine, and similar areas of study; the use of human subjects in research is quite common. And whenever human beings are the focus of investigation, the researcher must look closely at the ethical implications of what we are proposing to do. Furthermore, most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues.

According to Strydom (1998b:24), different authors emphasise more or less the same aspects when describing the concept of ethics. Strydom defines ethics as:

> A set of moral principles, which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants, and students.

In the researcher's view, since the research subjects involved in this study are human beings, ethical issues are imperative. The following ethical issues, inter alia, were applicable to this study:

1.7.1 Protection from Harm

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101-102):

> Researchers should not expose research participants to undue physical or psychological harm. Participants should not risk losing life or limb, nor should they be subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment or loss of self-esteem. In cases where the nature of study involves creating any amount of psychological discomfort, participants should be informed beforehand and the necessary debriefing or counselling should follow immediately after their participation.

Babbie, as quoted by Strydom (2002:64), mentions that:

> The more concrete harm that respondents may experience is with regard to their family life, relationships, or employment situation. The

fact that negative behaviour of the past may be recalled to memory during the investigation could be the beginning of renewed personal harassment or embarrassment. For this reason, the researcher should have the firmest of scientific grounds if he/she extracts sensitive and personal information from research subjects.

The researcher did not foresee any form of physical or psychological harm being incurred by the research subjects. However, the study had the potential to make the subjects and their spouses relive bad experiences related to external deployment. This status was prevalent during the debriefing process and among those who had already had the experience of deployment. The researcher referred some of the research subjects to the social work officers, who were not involved in the research process, for debriefing. Research subjects were informed beforehand about the impact that the investigation might have. They were also given the opportunity to withdraw from the investigation if they so wished. The researcher therefore ensured that the research subjects were protected from any form of harm throughout the study.

1.7.2 Informed Consent

According to Christians (2000:138):

> Research subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and consequences of an experiment in which they participate. Proper respect for human freedom generally includes two necessary conditions. Subjects must agree voluntarily to participate, that is, without physical or psychological coercion. In addition, their agreement must be based on full and open information.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101-102) elaborate further by saying that:

> The participants should be told that, if they agree to participate, they would have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. A common practice is an informed consent form that describes the nature of the research project, as well as the nature of research subjects' participation in it.

In summary, according to the researcher, informed consent entails a written document that clearly discloses all information about the study, which serves as an agreement between the researcher and research subjects. In the case of this study, research subjects signed informed consent forms. These forms contained information about the content of the study, the purpose of the study and procedures to be followed, the rights of research subjects, such as confidentiality, the fact that research subjects were at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time if they so desired, and the contact numbers of the researcher. This would enable research subjects to contact the researcher in case of any questions or comments.

Furthermore, in the researcher's view, due to the nature of the organisation (that is, in terms of security and previous negative experiences that some of the members had had), some of the research subjects refused to complete the consent forms, even after an explanation was provided regarding the rationale behind these forms. Some signed the forms without identifying themselves. As a result, 255 consent forms were received. However, this will not have any legal implications for the study. In other words, it will not be possible for anyone to make claims against the researcher, because it is impossible to make a comparison or distinguish between who completed the questionnaire and informed consent forms and who did not.

1.7.3 Right to Privacy/Confidentiality/Anonymity

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101-102):

> Any research study should respect the participants' right to privacy. Under no circumstances should a research report, either oral or written, be presented in such a way that others become aware of how a particular participant has responded or behaved, unless the participant has specifically granted permission for such disclosure, in writing. In general, a researcher must keep the nature and quality of participants' performance strictly confidential.

Christians (2000:139) is of the opinion that:

> The codes of ethics insist on safeguards to protect peoples' identities and those of the research locations. Confidentiality must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure. All personal data ought to be secured or concealed and made public behind a shield of anonymity.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101-102) postulate that "under no circumstances may the identity of research subjects be revealed to anyone".

Therefore, the interview responses from research subjects were treated with anonymity and utmost confidentiality. SANDF social workers underwent training in confidentiality as one of the values in social work, and they therefore possessed the necessary knowledge and skills in dealing with confidential information. In this regard, SANDF social workers were competent and adequately skilled in dealing with data collection. This information was explained to the social workers who were involved in data collection, as well as to the research subjects, before the interview process began.

A covering letter with details regarding the interview process, which spelt out the confidentiality aspect to the research subjects, was also distributed. The researcher ensured that none of the research participants' identities were revealed in the research questionnaires or reflected in the research report. The research participants were ensured of their right not to participate in the study if they did not want to respond. Furthermore, the researcher personally undertook data collection within the Gauteng province.

1.7.4 Deception of Respondents

According to Neuman (2000:229), "deception occurs when the researcher intentionally misleads subjects by way of written or verbal instructions, the actions of other people, or certain aspects of the setting". According to Bailey (1994:463), "lying about the research purpose is common, especially in the case

of small qualitative projects. Deception is hardly needed in large quantitative surveys, however". Strydom (2002:67) is of the opinion that "no form of deception should be inflicted on respondents. If this happens inadvertently, it must be rectified immediately after or during the debriefing interview". The researcher therefore ensured that all the information concerning the study, its purpose and the research process was disclosed before the commencement of the study.

1.7.5 Release or Publication of Findings

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101-102):

> Researchers must report their findings in a complete and honest fashion, without misrepresenting what they have done or intentionally misleading others about the nature of their findings. Under no circumstances should a researcher fabricate data to support a particular conclusion, no matter how seemingly noble that conclusion may be.

According to Strydom (2002:72):

> An ethical obligation rests on the researcher to ensure that the investigation proceeds correctly at all times, and that no one is deceived by the findings. Furthermore, the information must be formulated and conveyed clearly and unambiguously to avoid or minimise misappropriation by subjects, the general public, or the colleagues.

The researcher ensured that the findings of this study were disseminated in a comprehensive and candid manner. Feedback was also provided to research subjects as a way of acknowledging their contributions, and in order to make this study worthwhile for them. Information was also made available to the reading public, such as the University of Pretoria and the SANDF, as the study concerned the implementation of a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment of members.

1.7.6 Debriefing of Respondents

According to Judd, Smith and Kidder (1991:517), "debriefing sessions during which subjects are given the opportunity, after the study, to work through their experience and its aftermath, is possibly one way in which the researcher can assist subjects to minimise harm". According to Babbie (2001:475), "problems generated by the research experience can be corrected through debriefing". Salkind (2000:38) is of the opinion that "the easiest way to debrief participants is to discuss their feelings with regard to the project immediately after the session or to send a newsletter telling them the basic intent or results of the study".

The researcher therefore requested social workers in the deployment units to debrief research subjects at the end of the research process. However, social workers who assisted with the investigation did not participate in the debriefing of research subjects. Social workers who took part in this study as researchers could not act as therapists. Therefore, social workers who were not researchers in the study were requested to debrief research subjects at the end of the study. The spouses of SANDF members were also debriefed by social workers who had not taken part in the study in all nine provinces of South Africa.

1.7.7 Cooperation with Contributors

According to Strydom (2002:71):

> When a researcher has to rely financially on a sponsor, both parties need to clarify ethical issues beforehand, for example, that the sponsor should not act prescriptively towards the researcher, that the identity of the sponsor will remain undisclosed, that the real findings will not remain undisclosed in order to concur with the expectations of the sponsor or that the real goal of the investigation will not be camouflaged. This author continues by saying that when colleagues are involved, formally or informally, a clear contract between the parties is preferable, because everyone then knows what everyone else's share comprises of. A formal contract avoids any misunderstanding.

In the case of this study, no financial sponsors were involved. However, the researcher ensured that the real findings of this study were disclosed. The researchers' colleagues assisted with the data collection and debriefing of research subjects. Therefore, their contributions had already been acknowledged by word of mouth. Nevertheless, they were also formally acknowledged in writing at the end of the study.

1.7.8 Action and Competence of the Researcher

According to Babbie (2001:475), "the entire research project must run its course in an ethically correct manner. An obligation rests on the researcher towards all colleagues in the scientific community to report correctly on the analysis of data and the results of the study". Strydom (2002:69) is of the view that "researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation. When sensitive investigations are involved, this requirement is even more important". In summary, it is critical that the researcher is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake research. The SANDF social workers underwent training in research, which enabled them to participate in this study. The researcher was also competent to conduct this research.

1.8   DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following provides definitions of concepts which are important in this study:

1.8.1 Model

According to De Vos et al. (1998:12), "a model is the content of the way in which the researcher or scientist views his/her material". According to Kerlinger (1986:167-168):

A model is an abstract outline specifying hypothesised relations in a

set of data. Doing research is in effect, setting up models of what 'reality' is supposed to be and then testing the models against empirical data. Furthermore, the model springs from a theory.

According to Silverman (2000:77):

> Models provide an overall framework for how we look at reality. In short, they tell us what reality is like and the basic elements it contains (ontology) and what is the nature and status of knowledge (epistemology). Furthermore, in social research, examples of such models are functionalism (which looks at the functions of social institutions), behaviourism (which defines all behaviour in terms of 'stimulus' and 'response', symbolic interactionism (which focuses on how we attach symbolic meanings to interpersonal relations) and ethnomethodology (which encourages us to look at people's everyday ways of producing orderly social interaction).

The researcher describes a model as a framework that guides the implementation of a particular intervention programme in order to address the particular problem at hand, such as social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during the external military deployment of members.

1.8.2 Spouses

According to Hawkins (1998:429), the term 'spouse' refers to "a person's husband or wife". The SANDF (2004: 8) defines a spouse as:

> A person who is married to a member and which marriage is recognised as a valid marriage in terms of the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No 120 of 1998); or the Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No 25 of 1961); or a life-partner, the partnership being either heterosexual or homosexual in a permanent life partnership, if such partnership is contained in a duly signed Notary Agreement prepared and executed by a Notary Public with a protocol number or registered in terms of any legislation regarding life-partnerships but does not include the spouse of a beneficiary, which beneficiary became the main beneficiary after the death of his or her former spouse.

The researcher based her study on the definition provided by the SANDF. The focus of the study was on husbands and wives of the members of the SANDF,

and those SANDF members who are in permanent life partnerships. In other words, those members who are bound together by marital ties, be it legally or customary, and those who are in permanent legalised partnerships, whether heterosexual or homosexual.

1.8.3 Support

According to Sims (2002:65):

> Family support involves a process of supporting and nurturing children, families and communities. Furthermore, family support is sometimes seen as 'treatment'; something that is offered to families to increase resilience and the likelihood of positive outcomes for children, families and communities.

According to Rapp (1998:137-138), supported living refers to "the collection of service approaches consistent with the choose-get-keep that are called supported employment, supported housing, supported education and supported recreation". Furthermore, according to this author, a central tenet of this approach is to "separate the setting of activity from the recipient of services. The supported living perspective separates setting from services and asserts that it is the professional's job to arrange the needed support to make the desired setting work".

Garbarino and Kostelny (1994:297) define family support as "a condition of life, a way of living and being". Cutrona (1996:3) is of the opinion that:

> All definitions of social support are based on the assumption that people must rely on one another to meet certain basic needs. For some theorists, social support is the fulfilment by others of basic ongoing requirements for well-being. For other theorists, social support is the fulfilment of more specific time-limited needs that arise as the result of adverse life events or circumstances.

In the researcher's view, support can be referred to as the application of key intervention measures in order to enhance coping skills among individuals, families and communities. Various forms of social support services to families

and members during external military deployment of members were addressed in this study.

1.8.4 Military Deployment

Knox and Price (1995:1) postulate that "deployment is separations in the family due to military operations, missions and exercises". Suttle (2003:2) postulates that "deployment and separation are facts of military life. Saying goodbye is difficult, no matter how long the separation lasts or how many times loved ones are apart, and the strain doesn't end when soldiers return home". Suttle (2003:3) continues to say that "deployment is difficult. It brings change, separation, and loneliness". According to Motumi (1999:6), "separation is a demand that affects most military members at one time or another and these separations can be necessitated by deployment, courses to present, or duties".

The researcher thus views military deployment as the absence of one of the family members from home as a result of work-related military demands such as involvement in peace missions. In the case of this study, the focus was on absence or separation from the family as a result of military deployment outside the country.

1.8.5 Resilience

According to Saleebey (1997:9), resilience refers to "a growing body of inquiry and practice that makes it clear that the rule, not the exception, in human affairs is that people do rebound from serious trouble, that individuals and communities do surmount and overcome serious and troubling adversity". Kaplan, Turner, Norman and Stillson (1996:158) define resilience as "the capacity to maintain competent functioning in the face of major life stressors". Vaillant, as quoted by Saleebey (1997:30), defines resilience as "the self-righting tendencies of the

person, both the capacity to bend without breaking, and the capacity, once bent, to spring back".

Therefore, resilience refers to the ability to revert to the state of normal initial functioning after having experienced a difficult situation. In the case of this study, the focus was on the ability of military spouses and members to cope under difficult circumstances during external deployment of members of the SANDF, and to return to their normal state of equilibrium.

1.8.6 Empowerment

According to the New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:21), empowerment refers to "a process whereby individuals or groups attain personal or collective power, which enables them to actively improve their living conditions". Forrest (1999:93) postulates that "empowerment occurs at the level of individuals whose recognition of their lack of access to resources prompts them to take action. Individual empowerment is thus associated with feelings of increased assertiveness and self-confidence".

The Department of Social Development (2004:21), on the other hand, defines empowerment as "the resourcefulness and sense of value of each family and its respective members that is promoted through self-determination by providing opportunities to use and strengthen their own support networks, and to act on own choices and sense of responsibility".

Therefore, empowerment refers to a process whereby individuals, groups and communities are enabled to realise and tap into their existing potential, and to take actions that will make it possible for them to improve their standard of living. In the case of this study, the empowerment of members of the SANDF and their spouses during external military deployment was explored.

1.9   CONTENTS OF RESEARCH REPORT

This study is divided into seven chapters as follows:

CHAPTER 1: General orientation and introduction to the study.

CHAPTER 2: In-depth literature review with regard to the concept of social support services to members during external deployment, including aspects such as deployment effects on spouses and members, the rationale behind spousal support services during external military deployment of members, and the nature of support services that can be rendered to spouses during the external military deployment of members.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 4: The empirical part of the study, which deals with the challenges involved in providing social support to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment of members, and an interpretation of the qualitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 5: Interpretation of the quantitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 6: Research findings of the study, as well as conclusions and recommendations regarding the proposed model to SANDF management.

CHAPTER 7: The proposed model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are limitations of this study:

- Limited information/literature is available in terms of the model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment of members, as well as within the African context and other, more developed countries. The focus is mainly on family support services during times of war. Older versions of publications were also used, as these were more relevant and applicable. The resilience programme that is rendered to members and spouses during deployment in the SANDF was used as a point of reference in this study. This status quo had a negative impact on the goal of this study. It would have enriched the model that was developed in this study.

- Difficulty in getting access to all the spouses of SANDF members involved in external military deployment, especially those within rural areas (areas which are underdeveloped and not within reach due to a lack of roads and transport). The researcher is of the opinion that more information could possibly have been obtained if more spouses from rural areas had been accessible.

- Inconsistencies were also found in response to some of the questions. More specifically, there were several filtering questions that had follow-up questions which were answered in an incoherent manner. For example, a research subject might respond with a **yes** to observation V18, which is a question relating to participation in the preparation for deployment programme, and respond with a **no services were rendered** before deployment in observations V31 to V39, which relate to rating of the nature of social support services that were rendered to him/her and his/her spouse before deployment. It would have made a substantial difference to this study if all the research subjects responded accordingly.

- Answers were not always appropriate. The reason for this could not be determined. However, it could have been as a result of deployment-related

frustrations, the length of the questionnaire, misunderstandings, completing the questionnaire without reasoning first, confusion about the process or not being in the mood to complete the questionnaire. Appropriate responses from all the research subjects could have enriched the quality of this study.

- Questions 15-17 on the rating of the nature of social support services that were rendered to members and their spouses before, during and after deployment, and Question 18 on the ability of the member to cope during deployment, were entirely omitted from the analysis due to the fact that they were not appropriately worded, and as such, difficult to interpret. However, responses to these questions by research subjects in the quantitative study could have enhanced the data.

- While the researcher was analysing some of the data that were obtained from the various social workers, she wished that she could have conducted the interviews herself. She felt like exploring the concerns of the spouses further, particularly in cases where some of the research subjects indicated that they had a bad experience of deployment during the absence of the member, but did not want to talk about it. The researcher would not have forced them to talk about it, but would have perhaps succeeded in getting them to do so. This is, however, not a guarantee that they would have opened up. Due to the fact that they were emotional about the issue of external military deployment, they were referred for counselling. This information could have added more value to the model for spousal support during the external military deployment of the member.

- Finally, due to the cost implications, it was not possible for the researcher to conduct interviews with the spouses of SANDF members in all the provinces of South Africa. Hence, the researcher requested social workers

within the deploying units outside Gauteng Province to assist with the interviews.

1.11 SUMMARY

It is expected that SANDF members will be deployed to various missions in Africa and other parts of the world as part of their military work obligations. This poses a serious challenge to their normal functioning, as they have to work under stressful circumstances and be separated from their families. The importance of spousal survival has been reflected by the nature of problems that have been experienced by spouses at home while members were on external deployment, for example, marital and financial problems. During debriefing, social workers in the SANDF received the feedback from members who had been on external military deployment to countries such as Sudan that they were not satisfied with the social support services which were rendered to their spouses while they were on external military deployment. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct this study, based on the observed impact that external military deployments have on military families, and in order to highlight the importance of a scientific evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of military support services which are rendered to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment. The development of a model for social support services to spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment is thus critical in ensuring that members are mission-ready.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were followed in this study, and the type of applied research used was intervention research, which resulted from the fact that the study was aimed at the design and development of a technological item that could be used as a model for social support services to spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment of members. It can thus be described as the design and development phase (D&D) within the domain of intervention research. Chapter 2 will focus on the nature of support services that

can be rendered to members' spouses during the external military deployment of members.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Nyanda (2004:vii), the Department of Defence (DOD) is responsible for the "defence and protection of the RSA against any military threat, thereby enhancing national, regional and global security. The capabilities required to execute its primary role allow it to render secondary services in support of and in co-operation with other state departments".

According to Hornig (1994:1):

> A vital part of maintaining combat readiness is maintaining individual readiness. The importance of family support and family preparedness to the overall goal of total readiness and ultimately to the outcome of a mission cannot be overemphasized. Furthermore, studies show that soldiers can cope with stress better if they know that their families are being cared for during their absence. This means that a system of family support and assistance must be in place prior to deployment. It means that the unit commander must make sure that each soldier, along with packing his or her individual weapon and equipment, has left behind a family well prepared for separation. Among the benefits to the unit of family support and assistance programs are that soldiers who are mentally and emotionally present during combat training, are able to concentrate fully on the mission and sustained manpower to accomplish the mission, with less likelihood of casualties and less chance that a soldier will have to leave the field to fill out a form or be sent back to post because a family task was neglected. Family readiness is everybody's business in that everyone benefits from the family being prepared. It follows that family support and family readiness should carry the full endorsement of the command, the soldier and the family.

McCubbin and McCubbin (1992:160) are of the opinion that support systems function in two primary ways:

> Firstly, they protect the family from the effects of the stressor. In other words according to the researcher, they enable the family to deal with whatever stressor that they might encounter in their daily functioning, particularly during the absence of the member. Secondly, support systems enable individuals and families to recover more quickly from stress, thereby promoting the resilience and adaptability of the family system. Therefore, when the necessary support systems are in place, it is easy for any family to revert back to their normal state without difficulty after an experience of a crisis.

According to Segal and Harris (1993:23), "there are many ways to define and measure readiness. In general, readiness is the ability of the Army to carry out its missions". Therefore, in the researcher's view, deployment and support are complementary terms. The one cannot exist without the other. Separation from the family poses its own challenges for both the spouse and the member. According to the researcher, in order for SANDF members to carry out their task efficiently and effectively, it is critical that they are mission ready. Mission readiness includes putting measures in place in order to ensure that families are well cared for during the absence of the member. Social support to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment is a critical determinant of mission readiness of members.

DeLong (2004:21) postulates that:

> Due to political and military conflicts, American military and civilian personnel are being deployed to near and remote parts of the world. When a person is deployed, he/she is not the only person who undergoes changes. Co-workers have to assume additional duties, children are challenged by new family roles, and spouses find their time and energy taxed and their responsibilities greatly magnified. Furthermore, just as returning military and civilian personnel should expect to encounter a changed workplace, they should anticipate changes in their families as well. A returning person might naturally expect that his/her spouse will have been exhausted by additional responsibilities, but the husband or wife who stayed home may have developed new interests and hobbies, new approaches to doing

things around the home, and new confidence. Rather than feeling more than ready to share household responsibilities again, the spouse may feel anxious about the deployed person attempting to "take over". The returning spouse may want to assume his/her old duties as a means of reconnecting with home life.

According to Van Breda (1993-1996:7), "any separation is difficult for a family to adapt to, but regular separations are surely the most difficult".

Segal and Harris (1993:35) are of the opinion that:
> The ability of the family to adapt to the military way of life is related to the degree that the military provides formal and informal support to the family (as well as to family adaptive resources such as flexibility and spouse education). The Army spouses' level of satisfaction with the military as a way of life is positively related to their perception of the service's support for families and help with family problems.

In light of the abovementioned, the researcher is of the view that during external military deployments, SANDF members and their spouses encounter similar experiences to those indicated by the abovementioned authors. As a result of the fight for power and military conflicts, members of the SANDF are expected to be deployed to missions in Africa, such as the DRC and Sudan, for the purpose of bringing about stability in these countries. This implies separation from families, which has its own challenges and stressors. Members of the SANDF are not immune to deployment-related stressors. In other words, they face great challenges and changes that they have to overcome. However, in order for them to successfully overcome these problems, they need to be resilient. Therefore, it is clear that mission readiness is critical to the attainment of organisational objectives. Resilience is a determinant of mission readiness. In order for SANDF members to be seen as resilient and mission ready, all facets of their lives should be in a state of balance. They do not exist in isolation, but as part of a system made up of elements such as the family, spouse, church, the SANDF and the society in which they live. Therefore, intervention measures should be put in place to enhance their ability to carry out peacekeeping missions outside the country.

The focus of this study is on the effects of deployment on members and their spouses and the nature of support systems that should be in place in order to ensure that members are mission ready, for the purpose of designing a model for social support services to spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment.

2.2 DEPLOYMENT EFFECTS ON SPOUSES AND MEMBERS

According to Boss, McCubbin and Lesteram (in Van Breda, 1993-1996:7), "from a systems perspective, the routine absence of the corporate executive husband/father/wife/mother is a stressful event for the family, since his/her exits and returns require constant change in the family system's boundaries and role assignments".

Many authors (Paap, 1991:39-40; Wood, Scarville and Gravino, 1995:217-218; Suttle, 2003:2-4) have documented stressors related to deployment. According to these authors, deployment and separation form an essential part of the military way of life. As much as saying goodbye is challenging, so is returning home. Family resilience determines the extent to which they are able to deal with deployment-related challenges and stressors. Depending on the extent and nature of their resilience, some families are better able to cope with deployment than others. As a result, deployment brings about change, separation and loneliness.

Porter (1995:24) is of the opinion that "a good family strives to be good for two main reasons, it contributes to creating good social citizens and it develops special relationships that are unique to families, which are important for individual development and for well-being". Furthermore, according to Porter (1995:190), "in order to have good societies, we need to develop good families as the base unit of society".

In addition, according to Hornig (1994:113; see also Moritz, 1991:109):

> Separation of family members due to deployments and extended unaccompanied tours is stressful. Individual family members are subjected to different worries, fears and anxieties before, during and after these separations. The soldier and his/her family (children as well as spouse) need to be aware of the problems which are likely to arise as a result of separation, therefore the necessary preparation is vital to enable them to cope.

Logan (1987:43-46) postulates that:

> A deployment can be an emotional experience for those left behind. But understanding the different stages of emotion and that those feelings are perfectly normal can make it a lot easier for everyone. In the study of the Navy wives, the Emotional Cycle of Deployment (ECOD) model describes the changes in Navy wives' behaviour and emotions during deployments of three months or more. Although it was initially developed for wives, the model has been useful in working with husbands and children as well. Getting ready for a deployment starts long before the husbands actually walk out of the door. For a period of time, the women tend to ignore the deployment, fantasizing that somehow it will not happen: "surely the ship will sink or he'll get orders to shore duty." Eventually, something happens to trigger recognition of the reality of departure, perhaps a flip of the calendar so that "The Date" is visible. At this point, the ECOD begins. The different stages that families undergo during deployment have been indicated as follows by Logan (1987:43-46):
> - Stage One: Anticipation of loss.
> - Stage Two: Detachment and withdrawal.
> - Stage Three: Emotional disorganisation.
> - Stage Four: Recovery and stabilisation.
> - Stage Five: Anticipation of homecoming.
> - Stage Six: Renegotiation of marriage contract.
> - Stage Seven: Reintegration and stabilisation.

The following is thus an elaboration of the abovementioned ECOD model, as described by Logan (1987:43-46):

2.2.1 Stage One: Anticipation of Loss

According to Logan (1987:44):

> This stage occurs four to six weeks before deployment. During this time it is hard for a woman to accept the fact that her husband is

going to leave her. She may find herself crying unexpectedly when she hears certain songs, TV shows and such other "silly things" that would not normally affect her. These incidents allow her to release some of her pent-up emotions. There is a lot of tension during this period as both husband and wife try to cram in a multitude of projects and activities such as the fixing of cars, bikes, repairing roofs, installing deadbolts, cleaning garages, visiting family and inviting neighbours and friends over to the house. In addition, the wife will have some unexpressed anger and the couple may bicker even though they usually do not. This can be upsetting if it is viewed out of context. Although unenjoyable, these arguments can be functional, they provide one way for the couple to put some emotional distance between themselves in their preparation for living apart. It is hard for a wife to feel warm and loving toward her husband when she is mad at him and as one woman said, "It's easier to let him go". Other frequent symptoms of this stage include restlessness (productive), depression and irritability. While women feel angry or resentful ("He's really going to leave me alone with all this"), men tend to feel guilty ("There is no way I can get everything done that I should before I leave").

Spellman, DeLeo and Nelson (1991:2) are of the view that "the process of family support has three distinct phases namely, pre-deployment, deployment and post deployment/reunion. Pre-deployment goes through the stages of anticipatory loss and detachment/withdrawal". Adams (2003:ii) suggests that:

> Whilst they are focusing on preparing for their next mission or contingency, we have to bear in mind that if they have not spent quality time with their family members, they are not truly prepared. They need memories to sustain them during their absences as well as experiences to look forward to or repeating upon their return. If we leave them totally unprepared, administratively or emotionally, they cannot fully focus on the mission during deployment.

In his study on naval families, Van Breda (1997b:157) found that:

> The pre-separation phase (stages 1-2) seems characterised by conflict, anxiety and sadness. In addition, many subjects seem to withdraw, particularly just prior to the actual separation. Apprehension or fear of the separation as well as optimism or bravery about the separation is also apparent, particularly in the few weeks prior to separation. It would appear that detachment by means of passive emotional withdrawal, conflict or task orientedness is functional in this phase.

The researcher aligns herself with the abovementioned authors, and is of the opinion that both the member and the spouse experience certain feelings and emotions prior to deployment. The spouse may experience emotions such as anger and disbelief because the member is leaving them behind, while the member may experience emotions such as anxiety, which emanates from the worry or concern as to whether or not the spouse will be able to cope during his/her absence, particularly when it is the first deployment. It is however vital for the spouse and the member to acknowledge that these feelings are normal, but that they have to be dealt with accordingly. Knowing that there is someone to turn to during the absence of the member makes a difference to the family's coping abilities during the absence of the member. Preparation before deployment is also very important. Sufficient time for preparation before deployment makes a difference in the coping abilities of the spouse during the absence of the member. Support in terms of acknowledging and dealing with deployment-related challenges and frustrations is thus critical.

2.2.2 Stage Two: Detachment and Withdrawal

Logan (1987:44) is of the opinion that:

> This is the most difficult stage. It occurs sometime in the final days before departure. Such statements as, "I know I should be enjoying these last few days together but all I want to do is cry" indicate a sense of despair and hopelessness. The marriage is out of the couple's control. Although they push ahead trying to complete the list that never gets shorter, the wife often feels a lack of energy and is fatigued. Making decisions becomes increasingly difficult. During this time, the wife may experience some ambivalence about sexual relations. The brain says, "We've got to have sex, this is it for six months" while the heart may rebel, "But I don't want to be that close." Intercourse represents the ultimate intimacy in a marriage, yet it is hard to be intimate when husband and wife are separating from each other emotionally. This can be especially difficult if it is seen as rejection rather than as a reaction to trying circumstances. The couple may find that they stop sharing their thoughts and feelings with each other. Furthermore, this stage is most evident when departure is delayed for some reason. When asked if they enjoyed the extra time together wives invariably respond, "It was

awful!" The detachment and withdrawal stage is an uncomfortable time. Though both spouses are physically in the same house, emotionally they have separated. Wives think, "If you have to go, go" and husbands think, "Let's go on with it!"

The researcher affirms the abovementioned, and is of the opinion that deployment negatively affects the stability of sexual relations in marriages. Both the member and the spouse experience difficulties in continuing with their normal sexual relations, as a result of fear of the unknown. They experience emotional turmoil that emanates from being uncertain about how they are going to cope during the time of separation. Instead of enjoying their last moments together, they focus on these uncertainties. As a result, they end up withdrawing. Again, postponement of the deployment period does not make things better, with the end result being detachment and withdrawal. Therefore, the importance of preparation for deployment, particularly with regard to the marital relationship, cannot be overemphasised.

2.2.3 Stage Three: Emotional Disorganisation

According to Logan (1987:44-45):

> No matter how prepared Navy wives think they are, the actual deployment still comes as a shock. An initial sense of relief that the pain of saying goodbye is over may be followed by guilt. The worry, "If I really love him, why am I relieved that he's gone?" They may feel numb, aimless and without purpose. Old routines have been disrupted and new ones not yet established. Many women are depressed and withdraw from friends and neighbours, especially if the neighbours' husbands are home. They often feel overwhelmed as they face the total responsibility for family affairs. Many women have difficulty sleeping, suddenly aware that they are the "security officer" whilst others sleep excessively. A wife may feel some anger at her husband because he did not, for an example, provide for her physical security by installing deadbolts. Furthermore, wives often report feeling restless (though not productive), confused, disorganized, indecisive and irritable. The unspoken question is, "What am I going to do with this 'hole' in my life?" Whereas wives experience a sense of being overwhelmed, husbands report feeling "lonely and frustrated." Unfortunately, a few women get stuck at this

stage, either unable or unwilling to move on emotionally and they
will both have and cause problems throughout the cruise.

Bell, Stevens and Segal (1996:21) are also of the opinion that "families are
always affected by deployments, both the soldiers and their spouses worry about
each other and experience loneliness".

In his qualitative study on naval families, Van Breda (1997b:157) found that:

> The separation phase itself (stages 3-5) is characterised by longing
> and loneliness, two closely related variables, which indicate the
> importance of the family relationships. Men express marked concern
> about the family's coping over the bulk of the separation. A task or
> work orientation serves as a strong protective mechanism during
> this time. As the separation progresses from the initial stages into
> the middle of separation, loneliness appears to give way to a sense
> of adjustment or having come to terms with the separation, which
> seems to indicate the growth and tenacity of Naval couples.
> However, by the middle of the separation subjects are feeling
> restless and bored and frustrated by the separation. As the
> separation draws to an end, couples feel excited and experience
> strong desires to be reunited, but also feel anxious and nervous
> about the pending homecoming.

The researcher agrees with the abovementioned, and believes that both the
member and the spouse experience emotions ranging from anxiety, which
emanates from fear of the unknown, and loneliness, to happiness, which
emanates from the prospect of making money as a result of deployment. The
spouse also feels overwhelmed by the responsibility of having to take full control
of family affairs during the absence of the member. These responsibilities are
normally shared between the member and the spouse, and include taking care of
the children and seeing to their discipline. Having no-one to talk to enhances the
experience of loneliness for both parties, particularly over the weekend. On the
other hand, the researcher is of the opinion that if the marriage was in trouble
before the deployment of the member, there would be no feelings attached to the
separation - it would probably be a case of taking a break from one another.

2.2.4 Stage Four: Recovery and Stabilisation

Logan (1987:45) postulates that:

> At some point, wives may realize, "Hey, I'm doing OK!" They have established new family patterns and settled into a routine. They have begun to feel more comfortable with the reorganization of roles and responsibilities. Broken arms have been tended, mowers fixed, cars tuned up and washing machines bought. Each successful experience adds to their self-confidence. The wives have cultivated new sources of support through friends, church, work, wives' groups, etc. They have often given up real cooking for "cruise food", they may even run up higher long-distance phone bills and make contact with old friends. Furthermore according to (Logan, 1987:45), Dr Alice Snyder of the Family Services Center, Norfolk, calls the women "single wives" as they experience both worlds. Being alone brings freedom as well as responsibility. They often unconsciously find themselves referring to, "My house, my car and my kids." As a group, they are more mature and they are more outwardly independent. This stage is one of the benefits of being a Navy wife, each woman has the opportunity to initiate new activities, accept more responsibilities and stretch herself and her abilities, and still feel the security of being married. Nevertheless, all the responsibility can be stressful and wives may find that they are sick more frequently. Many women continue to feel mildly depressed and anxious. Isolation from both their husbands and their own families can leave them feeling vulnerable. There is not much contact with men, by choice or design and women may begin to feel asexual. Most women have a new sense of independence and freedom and take pride in their ability to cope alone.

Spellman et al. (1991:2) state that "during the deployment phases both the soldier and family members go through three distinct mood swings. These are emotional disorganization, recovery/ stabilization and anticipation of homecoming". In his study on naval families, Van Breda (1993-1996:55) found that:

> The deployment phase itself is characterized by longing and loneliness, two closely related variables, which indicate the importance of the relationship to each other. A task or work orientation serves as a strong protective mechanism during this time. As the deployment progresses from the initial stages into the middle of deployment, loneliness appears to give way to a sense of adjustment or having come to terms with the deployments, which

seems to indicate the growth and tenacity of Naval families. However, by the middle of the deployment subjects are feeling restless, bored and frustrated by the separation. As the deployment draws to an end, couples feel excited, experience strong desires to be reunited and feel anxious and nervous about homecoming.

In light of the abovementioned, the researcher is of the opinion that the spouse cannot remain in a state of withdrawal and frustration throughout the deployment period of the member. At some stage in the process, they seek ways of doing things in the home in order to bring about stability within the family. Support systems are also utilised in dealing with whatever crisis they might encounter during the absence of the member.

2.2.5 Stage Five: Anticipation of Homecoming

According to Logan (1987:45-46):

> Approximately four to six weeks before the ship is due back, wives often find themselves saying, "Oh my gosh, he's coming home and I'm not ready!" That long list of "things to do while he's gone" is still unfinished. The pace picks up. There is a feeling of joy and excitement in anticipation of living together again. Feelings of apprehension surface as well, although they are usually left unexpressed. This is the time to re-evaluate the marriage. That "hole" that existed when their husband left was filled with tennis classes, church, a job, new friends, school and now they instinctively know that they must "clean the house" in their lives in order to make room for men. Most experience an unconscious process of evaluating, I want him back, but what am I going to have to give up?" Therefore, they may feel nervous, tense and apprehensive. The wives are concerned about the effect the husband's return will have on their lives and their children's: "Will he understand and accept the changes that have occurred in us? Will he approve of the decisions I made? Will he adjust to the fact that I can't go back to being dependent?" The husbands are anxious too, wondering, "How have we changed? How will I be accepted? Will the kids know me? Does my family still need me?" Most women bury these concerns in busywork. Once more, there is a sense of restlessness (but productive) and confusion. Decisions become harder to make and may be postponed until homecoming. Women become irritable again and may experience changes in appetite. At some point, a psychological decision is made. For most women, it is "Do I want

him back? You bet! I can't wait to see him".

Suttle (2003:3) is also of the opinion that:

> When the anticipated reunion date finally arrives, many people find themselves overwhelmed with a rush of emotions, namely relief, hope, anxiety and even resentment. Some fear that they have permanently lost a deep connection with their loved ones or that their loved ones have lost intimate desire. Others may fear that they have changed so much during the separation that they no longer have anything in common with loved ones.

The researcher agrees with the abovementioned and holds the view that the anticipation of homecoming is not as easy as it sounds. In general, one would expect that there would be excitement associated with the anticipation of the member's homecoming, since he/she has been away for a period of six months. However, this is not necessarily the case. The pattern of adjustment that was established by the spouse will have to be redefined in order to accommodate the member. For example, the spouse who has been managing the finances of the home without consulting anybody will have to adjust to a different type of management system upon the arrival of the member. It might even imply not handling the finances of the home at all, because "Mr T. Manuel", the Minister of Finance at Home, is back. Cooking, which normally took place whenever the spouse wished, will also have to change. Some members prefer home-cooked meals all the time. Obviously, this indicates some form of adjustment on the part of the spouse, which implies that the spouse will definitely experience certain emotions. On the other hand, the member also goes through similar emotions, such as concern as to whether or not he will still be recognized as the head of the family and be treated as such. Therefore, preparation for homecoming is imperative.

2.2.6 Stage Six: Renegotiation of the Marriage Contract

Logan (1987:46) suggests that:

> This stage, is one in which the husband and wife are together

physically but not necessarily emotionally. They will have to have some time together and share experiences and feelings before they feel like a couple again. They both need to be aware of the necessity to refocus on the marriage. For instance: After one of the wives' husband had been home for a few days, she became aggravated with him when he would telephone his shipboard roommate every time something of importance came up within the family, finally declaring, "I'm your wife. Talk to me!" During this stage, the task is to stop being "single" spouses and start being married again. Most women sense a loss of freedom and independence while a minority is content to become dependent once more. Routines established during the cruise are disrupted: "I have to cook a real dinner every night!" These cause the wives to feel disorganized and out of control. Although most couples never write it down, there is a "contract" in every marriage, a set of assumptions and expectations on which they base their actions. During this stage, the couple has to make major adjustments in roles and responsibilities, before that can happen; they must undertake an extensive renegotiation of that unwritten contract. The marriage cannot and will not be exactly the same as before the cruise: both spouses have had varied experiences and have grown in different ways, and these changes must be accommodated. Too much togetherness initially can cause friction after so many months of living apart. More than one wife has had to cope with the fleeing shock of wondering, "Who's that man in my bedroom!" Some resent their husbands "making decisions that should be mine". Still others question, "My husband wants me to give up all my activities while he's home. Should I?" On the other hand, the husband may wonder, "Why do I feel like a stranger in my own home?" All of these concerns and pressures require that husband and wife communicate with each other. Assumptions will not work. Some find that "talking as we go along" works best, while others keep silent until "We had our first good fight, cleared the air and everything is OK now". Sexual relations, ardently desired before the return, may initially seem frightening. Couples need sufficient time together to become reacquainted before they can expect true intimacy. This stage can be difficult as well as joyful. But it does provide an opportunity offered to few civilian couples, the chance to evaluate what changes have occurred within themselves, to determine what direction they want their growth to take and to meld all this into a renewed and refreshed relationship (Logan, 1987:46).

In his study on naval families, Van Breda (1997b:157-158) found that:

Happiness and contentment are the hallmarks of the post-separation phase (stages 6 and 7), with a growing sense of having adjusted to

a normal family life. The anxiety experienced immediately after reunion gives way to a sense of calm. However, conflict plays a role immediately after the reunion, and is perhaps a result of the difficulty experienced in resuming family roles and rules. In addition, apprehension about the next separation emerges within a week of the homecoming - a manifestation of the rapid deployments experienced by local sailors.

According to Suttle (2003:3), "soldiers and family members must recognise that reunion is a process that occurs over time. Adjustment depends on the length of separation, the ability to communicate and the willingness to accept change". Spellman et al. (1991:2) are of the opinion that "during the post-deployment/reunion phases the soldier and family members experience two emotional cycles. These are the renegotiation of a contract with significant others and reintegration/stabilization". According to the researcher, it is critical that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that the couple receives the necessary support to enable them to deal with their reunion. Both of them have undergone some form of transformation as individuals during the separation, and if they are not assisted in this process, their relationship might end up in divorce. Therefore, in order to ensure the maintenance of marital relationships, comprehensive support measures should be put in place to enable the couple to deal with these deployment-related challenges.

2.2.7 Stage Seven: Reintegration and Stabilisation

According to Logan (1987:46):

> Sometime within the four to six weeks after homecoming, wives notice that they have stopped referring to "my car, my house, my bedroom" instead they use "our" or "we". New routines have been established for the family and the wives feel relaxed and comfortable with their husbands. There is a sense of being a couple and a family. They are back on the same track emotionally and can enjoy the warmth and closeness of being married.

Spellman et al. (1991:2) are of the opinion that "during the post-deployment/reunion phase, the soldier and family members experience the

emotional cycle of reintegration/stabilization". In the researcher's view, based on the abovementioned, it is only during this stage that everything is back to the normal state of functioning. Both the member and the spouse have now found each other and are once again a family.

Furthermore, in the researcher's view, the abovementioned clearly shows that deployment is not an easy process. It is complex due to the nature of problems that are associated with it. Spouses remaining at home during the absence of members experience psychosocial problems emanating from deployment. Homecoming also has its own challenges. It is thus vital for the spouse and the member to have a thorough understanding of typical problems and emotions that are related to deployment. Intervention measures should be introduced to ensure that issues are addressed well in advance, in order to prevent divorces and raising children in broken families. Obviously, one cannot expect these families to be problem-free. However, a lot of problems encountered by spouses during the absence of members and during reintegration into the home can be prevented if the necessary support measures are in place.

In addition, it is obvious that deployments have an influence on the functioning of the family, be it positive or negative. Despite the fact that the abovementioned model was based on a study that was conducted among navy families, deployment effects on spouses are common to all, irrespective of whether they are in the Navy or not. They all experience the same problems and emotions. The researcher aligns herself with the abovementioned emotional cycle of deployment, in that understanding the process of adjustment will probably alleviate many of the problems that spouses encounter as a result of external military deployment. Therefore, the SANDF has a critical role to play in terms of ensuring that the necessary intervention measures are in place and enforced before, during and after the deployment of the member. Evaluation of support services rendered to the member and the spouse during external military

deployment is of great importance, due to the fact that it has an impact on the mission readiness and effective mission accomplishment of members.

Furthermore, while acknowledging the fact that deployment is part of the military way of life, it is imperative that the organisation provides the necessary resources to ensure that spouses are supported during the absence of members. The SANDF has a clear role to play in terms of making a contribution towards building families and societies. The promotion of peace should not only focus on international communities, but also on those families who remain behind during the external deployment of members. Hence, there is a need for the design of a model for spousal support services in the SANDF during external deployment of members. As a result, the aim of this study was to investigate the need for a model for spousal support during external military deployment of the member within the SANDF.

It is thus essential for one to have a clear understanding of the rationale behind spousal support during the absence of the member. The following section presents a discussion on the importance of spousal support during the external military deployment of the member.

2.3 RATIONALE BEHIND SPOUSAL SUPPORT DURING THE EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT OF THE MEMBER

According to Segal and Harris (1993:2), "the demands of the military life style such as frequent relocation and separation, coupled with the size of the military community, has created the need to provide formal support services to fulfil various functions".

Cutrona (1996:59-60) is of the opinion that:

> The quality and probability of survival of marital relationships can be significantly affected by the frequency and sensitive supportive acts

exchanged by husbands and wives. Support within the marital relationship can promote a positive emotional tone and prevent the acceleration of negative interactions that cause relationship deterioration. Support also can foster intimacy and closeness that hold couples together through difficult times.

Cutrona (1996:60) gives an indication of mechanisms through which social support may contribute to the quality and survival of marital relationships:

- During times of severe stress, support from the spouse can prevent emotional withdrawal and isolation that can damage the relationship.
- During times of stress, support from the spouse can prevent the onset of clinically significant depression and the aversive behaviours associated with depression that are damaging to relationships (for example, self-pity, irritability, loss of sex drive).
- Self-disclosure and emotional intimacy are facilitated by supportive communications.
- Intimate interactions promote a sense of bonding and trust that can ease couples through potentially difficult circumstances.

According to Roberts (2005:38-39):

Deployments have become a way of life for approximately 8,500 Airmen of Offutt's wing, the largest in Air Combat Command and second largest in the US Air Force. In this study, the Colonel indicated that the base doesn't take for granted the effect the deployments have on those left behind. As a result, many new programs evolved to handle family issues and problems that have remained much the same since the 1950's when the wing flew RB-50's for strategic Air Command. They include, dealing with financial problems, depression, house repairs, cars breaking down and behaviour problems with children at school, as according to Billie Gaines, the director of the Offutt Family Support Center. Furthermore, according to Roberts (2005:39), in a study on the deployed way of life, Mrs Gaines indicated that if they are left alone with no one to turn to, it is easy for spouses to develop a "my spouse is gone, nobody cares about me" attitude. However, they do not want that. Spouses don't have to feel like the lone soldier. Before deploying, Airmen and spouses should attend a family support center pre-deployment briefing to increase awareness of issues, like powers of attorney and finances. It can also reinforce that the center is a point of contact for free phone cards, child care and car inspections, video phone access and details on volunteering

and employment. In addition, Airmen are expeditionary and deployable anytime, anywhere. Across the Air Force, Airmen must leave families behind when they deploy, most recently to fight the global war on terrorism. Many base support agencies – family support centers, services, squadrons and chaplains, community and private base organizations have programs to help families left behind.

Therefore, according to Hornig (1994:1-2; see also Pehrson, 1993:441-442):

A vital part of maintaining combat readiness is maintaining individual readiness. The importance of family support and family preparedness to the overall goal of total readiness and ultimately, to the outcome of a mission cannot be overemphasized. Furthermore, studies also show that soldiers can cope with stress better if they know that their families are being cared for during their absence. This means that a system of family support and assistance must be in place prior to deployment. It means that the unit commander must make sure that each soldier, along with packing his or her individual equipment, has left behind a family well prepared for separation. In addition, among the benefits to the unit of family support and assistance programs are these:
- Soldiers who are mentally and emotionally present during combat and training, are able to concentrate fully on the mission, and
- Sustained manpower (employees) to accomplish the mission, with less likelihood of casualties and less chance that a soldier will have to leave the field to fill out a form or be sent back to post because a family task was neglected.

Hornig (1994:2) continues by stating that:

Family readiness also means that a soldier can leave for deployment with the peace of mind that comes from knowing that he or she has done everything possible to provide for family needs during separation. It is the same peace of mind soldiers experience when they are certain that their duffel bags contain everything needed on deployment. This means less stress for both soldiers and family members and a better chance that the soldier will return from deployment in good health. Finally, the level of family readiness at deployment has a direct effect on the quality of family life during the homecoming period. Fitting back into the family after an extended deployment has its own stress factors. Coming back to a family that is angry, or one that has suffered unnecessary hardship during separation, will create even more family problems. The chance of coming home to a loving family is increased if the family has been

fully prepared prior to deployment. It is difficult to imagine a spouse looking forward to the homecoming of a soldier who has either deliberately confiscated his/her ID card (an illegal act) or who had forgotten to renew the ID or to provide for financial needs. In addition, family readiness means that family members will suffer less stress due to deployment. They will be better prepared to cope with whatever stress does result from the soldier's absence. Life is likely to be less stressful if the spouse has all the information needed to take care of emergencies. Family members will feel loved and cared for if they know that the soldier has done everything he/she could to ensure their welfare. This helps ensure the soldier's coming home to a warm welcome.

Hornig (1994:2-3) is of the opinion that:

> When family readiness is treated as a family affair and all family members are included in the process, it can also promote togetherness. If the family has worked together to maintain family readiness as an ongoing activity, they will have time when deployment is announced to psychologically prepare each other and their children for separation. There will be time to talk about feelings, alleviate fears and plan activities that will help maintain the soldier's presence in the family and help the spouse use the separation time constructively. Therefore, family readiness is everybody's business. Everyone benefits from the family being prepared. It follows that family support and family readiness should carry the full endorsement of the command, the soldier and the family.

Finally, "deployments have been found to be less stressful when one has a positive attitude towards them" (Eastman, Archer & Ball, 1990:114). Van Breda (1997:20) holds the view that:

> The management of deployments by the military organisation can precipitate negativity among family members. In the South African Navy, during the mid 1990's, a lot of external factors were found to impede the maintenance of positive attitudes. These factors include unpredictable and erratic deployments (which correlated with high deployment stress), lack of personnel which results in extended sea duty and slow promotions, frequent night duties which disrupt family life, frequent and brief deployments which increase the frequency of family adjustments and lack of material and interpersonal rewards for going to sea. As a result thereof, the subjective impression of Naval social workers is that these factors prompt perpetually negative perceptions of deployment, which result in poor deployment coping.

According to Segal and Harris (1993:24; see also Segal and Bourg, 1999:636-637), studies have also shown that:

> Qualitative research also shows that spouses' attitudes and abilities are affected by the climate in the unit. The way supervisors treat soldiers affects the way the unit behave toward their families, what soldiers tell their spouses about their lives at work affects the spouses' attitude toward the unit and the Army. Families are also affected by unit leaders' attitudes and behaviour specifically regarding family issues and activities.

The literature further stipulates that social support services enhance the resilience of families during separation and deployment (see Amen, Merves, Jellen & Lee, 1988:445; Koshes & Rothberg, 1994:456; Adler, Bartone & Vaitkus, 1995:18).

In the researcher's view, based on the abovementioned, it is important to note that support to the spouse during the external deployment of the member plays a significant role in ensuring that members are mentally fit and ready for deployment, and also in ensuring that the mission is successfully accomplished. It is thus the responsibility of the member and the organisation to ensure that the family is well prepared for overcoming and dealing with whatever challenges or crises they may encounter during the absence of the member. Thus, support to families during the external deployment of members is one aspect that cannot be avoided. Intervention measures or resources should be put in place in order to ensure that spouses have the necessary survival kit at their disposal for use in times of need. The next section discusses the nature of support services that can be rendered to spouses during the external deployment of members.

2.4 THE NATURE OF SUPPORT SERVICES THAT CAN BE RENDERED TO SPOUSES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT OF MEMBERS

According to Kaslow (1993:30-31):

The dramatic increase in the number of married enlisted personnel since the advent of the all-volunteer force has been responsible for the growth in support services in the armed forces. Facilities such as commissaries and exchanges, medical services for dependants, family housing, child development centers, family service centers, after-school and youth programs are now found on almost all bases and posts. Mothers in uniform, who make up less than 5% of the total active force, have greatly benefited from these facilities. It is difficult to assess the degree to which mothers, as compared to fathers, are responsible for the growth of these services, few would argue that female parents almost always shoulder more of the day-to-day responsibility for a family's well being than do male parents. The recognition that childcare is an appropriate and necessary function for the military to provide resulted from changes in the demographics of the male military population, but it has also benefited women. Twenty-five years ago, few had both children and a spouse who worked. Childcare was the responsibility of the non-working mother. At that time, male single parents were not prevalent enough to be counted.

Therefore, as a result of the increase in the number of married personnel and women in the SANDF, it is vital that support services are put in place during the external deployment of the member. The researcher aligns herself with Kaslow, and is of the opinion that the dire need for support services during the external deployment of the member within the SANDF emanates from the fact that the demographics of a previously male-dominated organisation are transforming. Presently, more and more women are gainfully employed in the SANDF in various capacities. In addition, most of the women shoulder the responsibility of running the family, hence the need to investigate a model for spousal support during the absence of the member.

Segal and Harris (1993:45) postulate that:

Today, large arrays of support, both "formal" and "informal" are available for soldiers and their families. Formal support systems include concrete services such as schools, leadership systems, utility services, fire and police protection, community mental health and other community services. Informal support systems on the other hand refer to personal relationships such as family members, friends, neighbours, co-workers and voluntary associations such as civic clubs or churches. These informal support groups are essential

for good family functioning. When individual, family and community needs are met, the community can be considered as strong. In a strong community, leaders are perceived to allow community participation in the leaders' decision-making process. Military family support systems play a major role in the life of the soldier and the family.

2.4.1 Components of Family Support

Sims (2002:90) suggests that:

> Family support operates in different ways in different communities. Some communities offer a range of services from the one agency; in others different agencies offer different programs. Often programs overlap in the services they offer, the outcomes they are attempting to achieve or the processes they use to achieve these outcomes.

According to Van Breda (2001:239), "evaluations of the deployment resilience seminar, developed by Van Breda found deterioration in satisfaction with family support following participation in the seminar". Therefore, in the researcher's view, assessment and evaluation of social support services rendered to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment serves as a critical mission success factor.

2.4.1.1 Family Preparation

Hornig (1994:27) is the opinion that:

> Many deployments are announced in advance. This knowledge can and sometimes leads to complacency. It leaves the soldier with a false sense of security, the feeling that there is always time to take care of family needs before he/she deploys. The high percentage of announced deployments may tend to blind soldiers, families and the chain of command to the real needs for an ongoing effective family support system, one that provides for the needs of the family while the soldier is away but also emphasizes the need for total family readiness. But the possibility remains that the phone could ring in the middle of the night with orders for the soldier to take off to an undisclosed destination for an unknown length of time, or the soldier could wake up to a situation that leaves no time to prepare.

According to Adams (2003:ii):

> While they are focusing on preparing for their next mission or contingency, they have to keep in mind that if they have not spent quality time with their family members, they are not truly prepared. They need memories to sustain them during their absences as well as experiences to look forward to repeating upon their return. If they leave them unprepared, administratively or emotionally, they cannot fully focus on the mission during deployment. In addition, it is a good idea to get to know the people who are responsible for the program in their local organisation. Furthermore, the primary responsibility for family preparation and support is like charity begins at home. Everyone has to play their part in ensuring that their family is ready, willing and able to support them during the mission.

Hornig (1994:149) suggests that:

> Prior to leaving, there is an immediate need for the family to plan finances. A question about how much money is available and how much should be left for the family should be addressed. As a minimum, family members must be left with enough money to cover monthly expenses. The best way to ensure family financial security is through the monthly allotment. Soldiers should be encouraged to set up an allotment in the spouse's name not only to cover basic needs (rent, utilities, food, clothing and transportation) but also for some pleasures such as entertainment. The need to make proper adjustment to the family's requirements and income should be emphasized. So too should the need to reach an understanding with creditors or combine and refinance debts. Therefore, family financial security during the absence of the member is vital.

According to Bell (1991:2-3):

> The Operation Desert Shield/Storm (ODS/S) researchers also documented financial difficulties. Most families reported that ODS/S strained their budgets but most could pay their bills. Late pay and loss of civilian income was a problem for the reserve families. Among the active force, loss of spouse jobs (due to economic conditions regarding Army posts) proved more of a problem than the loss of pay from soldiers' second jobs. Furthermore, pre-deployment briefings were well attended and helpful but some groups were less likely to attend for example, off-post spouses, parents, girlfriends and ex-spouses. There was also some criticism that the briefings produced an overload of information and confusion among spouses relating to Army entitlements.

Roberts (1991:49) states that:

> Many wives are unfamiliar with the family finances. If this is usually the husband's responsibility, role adjustments should begin well before deployment, so that the wife can become accustomed to the leave and earnings statement, automatic deposits, savings accounts, check-writing and monthly bills. It might be helpful to draft a new budget for the duration of the deployment, to take into account varying needs. The wife should be aware of what bills are due, when they must be paid and to whom.

The researcher supports the abovementioned views, in that family support is critical to ensuring successful mission accomplishment. Obviously, there are certain deployment-related challenges that one cannot control, such as death and illness. However, deployment readiness plays a critical role in ensuring effective task accomplishment and that family matters are well taken care of. In addition, a lot of family-related problems/issues could be alleviated if preparation for deployment occurred on an ongoing basis, and not at a time when soldiers are about to mobilise for deployment. They should be ready for deployment at any point in time. Finally, a multidisciplinary approach should be followed in addressing this issue.

2.4.1.2 Spousal Support Group programme

According to the 101 Airborne Division and 1st Battalion 327 Infantry (n.d.:4):

> The concept family support groups (more commonly referred to as FSGs) are relatively new to United States (US) Army. They are direct offshoots from the Grenada (Operation Urgent Fury), Panama (Operation Just Cause) and Southwest Asia (Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm) experiences. Commanders of deploying units discovered that while their units were highly trained to fight, little if anything was done to train and prepare unit families to cope better with stresses and unique problems that often arise during extended and unexpected deployments of their spouses. Some type of organization was needed within units to address this serious shortcoming in peacetime, so that in a time of crisis, families would be better able to stand on their own feet; the concept of the Family Support Group (FSGs) was born. Furthermore, (n.d.:4), FSGs are managed differently in every unit. How they are managed depends

upon many factors such as the personality of the leaders, the number of family's involved and available resources. The core of FSGs is the company, for this is where the rubber meets the road. The company commander's spouse typically leads many company FSGs. The battalion commander's spouse serves as an advisor. All FSGs throughout the Army share the same purpose being, to support army families. The purpose of FSGs is to ease the strain and possible traumatic stress associated with military separation for both the family and the soldier. The main objective of FSGs is to enable a unit's family members to establish and operate a system through which they can effectively gather information, solve problems and maintain a system of mutual support. The author further stipulates that for the family member, a unit's FSG is an effective way of gaining information and support during deployment. Through successful FSG efforts, many spouses have developed a more positive attitude toward themselves, the deployment and the Army.

Furthermore, various authors (Hornig, 1994:28-29; see also Bell et al*.,* 1996:4) suggest that:

For the soldier, it is reassuring to know that family members will receive reliable and friendly support when the soldier is called away. This can lead to a consistent level of performance in the unit, increase the effectiveness of training and ensure a psychological readiness to fight. For the Army, a successful unit FSG program, combined with effective community resources, will make spouses, especially younger ones feel that they are truly a part of the Army family. That, coupled with a training program that challenges the soldier, makes an unbeatable combination that will assure success in the all-important mission of retaining high-quality service members. Therefore, the goals of FSG program include:

- Becoming an essential part of a military unit's family support system through activities such as a unit activity day, unit family briefings and family meals in the dining facility,
- Reducing social isolation among family members, especially in the junior enlisted members.
- Enabling the members to provide each other with close, personal, mutual support,
- Assisting members to gather important information and access to resources more efficiently and effectively,
- Facilitating and establishing a real sense of community among soldiers and their family members, and;

- Enhancing the military member's feelings of belonging, control, self-reliance and self-esteem.

Kaslow (1993:168) postulates that:

The US DOD Marine Corps Family Service Centres (FSCs) were established in 1980 as a result of the White Paper on Marine Families issued by the commandant of the Marine Corps with a strong focus upon supporting the commander in meeting the needs of the Marine members and their families. The primary mechanism for providing this support is that of positioning the FSC as the base focal point of family issues. Several of the specific services offered by the FSC assist with this positioning. The first one is information referral and follow up, while the second is counselling assistance. Both of these are direct services and put the FSC in the position of being one of the first places marine and their family members turn to for help. All counselling services seek to follow a non-medical model, which is provided by qualified and credentialed staff members. Other services offered by the Marine Corps FSCs are almost identical to those offered by the Navy FSCs. They are as follows:
- Financial counselling,
- Family separation and deployment support,
- Spouse and child abuse services through the family advocacy program,
- Employment resource center, and
- Special needs families.

In addition, according to Kaslow (1993:169-171):

The dual-focus mission of Air Force FSCs is to help the service understand and respond to the needs of Air Force families while helping them to understand the needs of the organisation and to adjust to the life-style required by the organisation. As a result, four functional areas were identified to serve as a structure to fulfil the dual focus mission namely:
- Information, referral and follow-up counselling to help family members access existing resources on base and in the civilian community,
- Leadership consultation to provide assistance to unit commanders and supervisors in their task of responding to family issues in the most positive way,
- Policy, planning and coordination to help commanders develop family supportive policies and practices, and to facilitate the coordination of programs and services which seek to enhance family well-being, and

- Direct services to provide family life education and skill development in the support of family adaptation to the military life style.

The direct service area within Air Force FSCs is comparable to that in all other military family centers, with the exception of child and spouse abuse services through the family advocacy program which is primarily operated by those in this career field. In general, key issues that are relevant to all FSCs in the military are as follows:

- Credentialing of counsellors. All of the service branches except the Air Force provide ongoing counselling services in their centers. These services require that staff members who are providing counselling must be properly trained and appropriately certified or licensed. Air Force centers on the other hand do not provide ongoing counselling services of any type and therefore do not require any form of counselling training or certification for staff members,

In the researcher's view, within the SANDF, all the multi-professional team members possess the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are registered with the various appropriate professional bodies/associations. For example, social workers in the SANDF are registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP).

- Confidentiality. There is no form of privileged information between counsellors or other staff members and any person using services in any of the family centers,

Therefore, all professionals within the SANDF are bound by an ethical code that prescribes that the confidentiality of the client/patient should be upheld at all times.

- Liability risks for FSC staff members. The federal government insures staff members, who are part of the civil service as long as they are operating within the normal scope of their job requirements

The SANDF does not carry the responsibility of insuring professional members against any suit. It is their responsibility to ensure that they are insured, and it is not enforced upon professional members.

- Prevention versus intervention. Most programs and services

offered by the military family centers are preventative in nature. That is certainly the intent of most of these efforts. Those programs that are primarily interventive are family advocacy and individual, marital and family counselling. The family advocacy programs are both interventive and preventive since they are geared towards education and prevention.

The abovementioned is thus indicative of the fact that support programmes for families and the military are inseparable. The one cannot be fully functional without the other. In addition, these programmes vary depending on the expressed needs of the families within each unit. In order for the organisation to successfully achieve its objectives, particularly during the external deployment of members, intervention measures should be put in place to ensure that the family is well taken care of during the absence of the member. Those services should be promotive in nature. In other words, treatment should be focused on ensuring that problems are curbed long before they can occur. As a result, this approach will contribute to the mission readiness of the member. Productivity will also be enhanced due to the fact that there will be no family-related stressors that negatively impact on service delivery. A resilience programme for deployed members and their families is in place within the SANDF, and it is inclusive of life skills programmes such as financial management, stress management, conflict management, marriage enrichment and reintegration into the family. However, evaluation of such a programme has not been undertaken. Therefore, it is critical that a model for spousal support during the external military deployment of the member is responsive to the needs of members and their spouses.

2.4.1.3 Social Support System

According to Cutrona (1996:9):

> The term social support is sometimes applied to constructs that should properly be termed social integration or social networks. Social integration (also termed social involvement) reflects the presence or absence of key social ties, most often marriage and membership in groups such as churches, clubs and other voluntary organisations. Social integration is an important construct because

the absence of such ties (social isolation) is a serious health risk factor. The social network approach involves more detailed quantitative assessments of the individual's social ties. A person's social network includes the people with whom he or she interacts on regular basis (for example, friends, neighbours, co-workers, family members).

Other research (Pehrson, 1993:442; see also Wood et al., 1995:219) indicates that "when all the subjects' responses to the types of social supports were analysed, they listed family as the most used social support, followed by friends, no-one, outside (non-military) sources and religious sources".

Zinn and Eitzen (1993:215-216) are of the view that:

> Juggling work and family produces considerable stress and strain. Individuals with multiple roles of worker, spouse and parent must manage the competing demands of each role. They must reduce overload and interference in order to fulfil the requirements of both work and family roles and to construct workable patterns of relationships and activities. Furthermore, two problems stand out for parents who are paid workers namely: Firstly arranging childcare and secondly accomplishing household tasks and other family work. Since no institutionalized support exists for families, both of these problems require innovative family strategies that are often based on informal coping techniques.

In addition, according to McEnroe (1991:51), "strategies can be devised to obtain support from outside the family, for example, hiring help, developing supportive relationships with friends and establishing more favourable work arrangements".

Moreover, Cutrona (1996:9) is of the opinion that:

> Researchers who emphasize the stress – buffering functions of social support differ in the extent to which they focus on support provided before the onset of life crises (throughout the history of the relationship) versus supportive acts performed after a stressful event has occurred.

Other scholars (Kaslow, 1993:128; see also Wood et al., 1995:218) suggest that:

> For the wife living with the circumstances of marriage to a special warfare operator, there are numerous pluses and minuses. The pride gleaned in knowing the husband is not only involved in

important missions but also is extremely dedicated gives a sense of being special in an ordinary world. The knowledge that when the operator is allegedly working he is engaged in important government service provides some relief from suspicious thoughts. The hours of separation, loneliness, feelings of jealousy, anger relating to missed family outings and celebrations or commitments, broken-down cars, blown fuses he is not there to fix and a host of other major and minor disasters are among the bad points. Not having someone to turn to, to satisfy urges or special needs, watching CNN and wondering/waiting, fearing the knock on the door that brings news of a fatality or a serious problem, rearing children alone, children's behavioural and emotional difficulties, attending Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings alone, missing proms, financial difficulties, problems accessing military services graduations and many other such occasions marked by the operator's absence sometimes make the spouse want to "throw in the towel" and end the marriage.

Furthermore, according to Kaslow (1993:128):

Interestingly enough, there is an internal strength that keeps the spouse and the family going. There are external aids, ombudsmen, wives groups, informal team gatherings, neighbours, extended family and friends who offer excellent support. Professional counselling with the base chaplain and referral to family services, local mental health units and self-help groups can also be utilized. The main resource is within the couple. Communication between the husband and wife is essential. Times and events may limit what can be shared, but talking about concerns, feelings, desires and personal issues will sustain family survival and success. To enable the family to keep functioning well, both partners need to commit to each other and establish a common goal of staying together regardless of external influences and pressures.

Bell (1991:1) holds the view that "family crises are events that place demands upon the family's total coping abilities. Manifestations of family strain include lowered family integrity, increased stress symptoms and reduced sense of well-being or health among family members".

Finally, according to Bell et al. (1996:1):

Deployment of a unit or an entire post produces additional strains for the families involved. The families may need additional psychological or material resources because the soldier is absent for

example, childcare, money, companionship, information about the Army or the mission the troops are being asked to fulfill. These family needs may be met through military actions and agencies or through the third family support system namely, the families' own interpersonal resources for example friends and relatives

The researcher aligns herself with the abovementioned authors, in that deployments have a positive and negative effect on marital relationships. Indeed, it seems as though the negative surpasses the positive. It is positive in the sense of financial incentives associated with deployment and making a significant contribution towards the attainment of organisational objectives with regard to participation in peace missions. However, having to survive in the absence of the member is a daunting task, particularly when there are no support systems available.

The researcher acknowledges the fact that spouses encounter many problems and challenges during the absence of members, such as illness and hospitalisation, death and dying, and celebration of special events in his/her absence, such as giving birth, birthdays and car breakdowns. Having to take full responsibility for running the home single-handedly is not an easy task, particularly when those tasks are normally shared between husband and wife. The lack of support systems will make it difficult for the spouse to survive deployment-related challenges in the absence of the member. However, various support systems such as family and friends are often available for use by spouses.

2.4.1.4 Communication

Some literature (Hornig, 1994:99; see also Harryman, 2006:89) suggests that:

> Communication during separation plays a critical role in maintaining an emotional presence of the soldier not physically present. It is very important for the family members to share their thoughts and feelings with the soldier. Helpful ways to sustain the relationship and prepare for a happy homecoming includes commercial phone calls

that can be an expensive way for a family to communicate. The cost of collect calls can be a burden on a spouse's already tight budget. An alternative to commercial telephone call is the Military Affiliated Radio Systems (MARS) network. Many military installations have MARS stations, which can be accessed by soldiers and families by contacting the nearest one. This system is an economical way to handle non-emergency calls. Letters are least expensive and most satisfactory lifelines.

The researcher agrees with the abovementioned, and is of the opinion that communication is critical to the maintenance and enhancement of marital relationships. Even though the SANDF does not have the MARS communication system in place, an alternative could be the use of the radio system that is utilised by the SANDF within mission areas and SANDF units. This system could be equated with the MARS. At present, this system is not open for use by deployed members – however, it could be of value to members and spouses who have access to the units. In this way, communication frustrations and challenges that are experienced by members and spouses could be averted. Although they are time consuming, another option would be that of communicating by means of letters. As a result, family relationships would be promoted.

Martin, Vaitkus, Johnson and Mikolajek (1992:3) state that:

> The flow of information between partners has been identified as the major concern of family members during the deployment of US soldiers to Europe and South-West Asia in 1991. The major family consequences of separations and deployments identified prior to ODS/S research are spouse loneliness, increased childcare responsibilities and added expenses. Spouses must also adjust to their lack of control over deployment events and their inability to communicate with the deployed soldier.

In addition, "deployments that are rapid, dangerous, unplanned and that eliminate rapid reliable communication with the soldier, have worse consequences for families than more routine deployments" (Bell, 1991:1; see also Krueger, 2001:15).

The view of Suttle (2003:8; see also Kipp, 1991:59) is that:

> Communication during separation plays a critical role in maintaining an emotional bond between partners. Open two-way communication lines will encourage soldiers and families to start sharing their expectations, concerns and fears about reunion. By communicating these things early, partners can acquire the information and skills needed to cross barriers and minimize problems during reunion.

ODS/S research (Bell, 1991:2) has confirmed that:

> Lack of control and communications are indeed important stressors. Research showed that spouses were concerned about soldiers' living conditions and safety. Spouses were also frustrated by the lack of knowledge concerning the length of operation and confused rumours, Army information that often appeared to be out-of-date and the inaccurate coverage of the war, by the news media. Spouses attempted to communicate with the deployed soldier via various electronic media (for example faxes) but found that they were neither fast nor reliable. Electronic messages were rapidly relayed to South West Asia, but once in theatre, became part of the overtaxed mail system. The most reliable and immediate communication media was the Army telephone system, however, it was only available to a few individuals. The commercial telephone system served more people but was costly and not always available.

Therefore, communication plays a critical role in maintaining relationships. It is one means by which contact can be maintained with the member while he/she is on deployment. The organisation has a responsibility to ensure that contact between the spouse and the member is maintained at all times during deployment. Therefore, measures should be put in place to ensure that family relationships are preserved. Functional communication systems such as the radio system should thus be available.

2.4.1.5 Children and separation

Some authors (Hornig; 1994:103; see also Kelly, 1994:171) suggest that:

> There is a notion that children are relatively unaffected by their father's absence but studies show that this is not true. Children probably experience the same psychological pattern as their mothers due to their own feelings of loss and their awareness,

conscious or unconscious, of the mother's emotional situation. They are generally upset when she is and calm when she is. Children often test Mom to find out if she will bend more when Dad's gone especially when he leaves and again upon his return. Additionally, some women compensate for their husband's absence by becoming permissive or overly protective with their children. Rules change. Some decisions are harder to make alone, so the mother may not be able to make clear-cut decisions. The children are being subjected to a different environment. They become caught between two worlds, judging their behaviour according to whether or not their father is home. Therefore, helping a child cope with emotions of separation requires that the family be open to the honest expression of feelings.

Studies have determined that financial readiness (for example having emergency funds available) reduces deployment-related stressors (See Martin et al., 1993:25; Segal & Harris, 1993:85). In the researcher's view, financial preparedness plays a critical role in alleviating most of the problems related to children during times of separation. Lack of sufficient financial resources to sustain both the spouse and the children is of critical importance to family resilience during the absence of the member. Children also experience emotions as a result of external military deployment. Having the necessary resources at hand, financial ones in particular, makes dealing with deployment-related stressors easier, particularly with regard to problems associated with children, such as maintenance.

2.4.1.6 Professional therapy

Kaslow (1993:128-29) is of the opinion that:

> Individual, marital and family therapy help reduce barriers to communication and provide a non-threatening forum in which to express concerns that normally end in conflict. A therapist with knowledge of their special concerns and the intense, mission driven, military context or ecosystem in which they live, may be accepted as a caregiver. The therapist must realize the inner commitment to self-sufficiency and the profound concern over disclosing personal information. The most successful therapist is the team member such as the psychologist, assigned to the team fulltime. The spouse may

at first resist talking to the psychologist due to the assumed close relationship established in the team with the husband, however in time, trust can be established and maintained. Furthermore, carefully selected self-help books and literature can offer useful suggestions on overcoming problems. Courses in stress management, family finances, child development, parenting, home appliance repair, and car maintenance are available through local schools and colleges. These might be useful adjuncts to therapy for one or both spouses. Finally, trust, faith and confidence in each other and in oneself will go far in eliminating fears and doubts. Maintaining a strong belief in personal capabilities to perform a task, under reasonable expectations and with a realistic outlook is difficult. Remember these two people met, selected one another, fell in love and married. Most often they complement one another. It can generally be asserted that the special warrior wife is competent and resourceful and in every way a fine match for her operator spouse.

According to Spellman et al. (1991:7), "with regard to treatment, counselling hours were extended to monitor and make available time for struggling families. Counselling issues included marital, parent and child rearing conflicts, questions of fidelity and anxiety over reunion".

Based on the abovementioned, the researcher holds the view that professional therapy is a prerequisite for any deployment. One cannot do without it, particularly with the negative impact that deployment has on the member's relationship with his/her spouse. Within the SANDF, a multi-professional team approach is followed in addressing this issue, in particular, social work officers, psychologists where feasible, and chaplains, who all possess the necessary knowledge and skills to render such a service, both internally and externally. However, this service is not an ideal one, in that not all members and their spouses have access to it. Hence, this research is aimed at determining the needs of spouses and members during the external military deployment of members, assessing social support services that are rendered to spouses during the external military deployment of members and the designation of a model for support services during the external military deployment of members.

2.4.1.7 Family-Supportive Employer Responses

Zinn and Eitzen (1993:217-18) postulate that:

> The complex struggle that many women and men face in trying to combine work and family raises important issues for employers and public policymakers. Workplaces have been slow to respond to the needs of their employees who are parents. The traditional organization of work, an inflexible eight-hour workday makes it difficult for parents to cope with family problems or the conflicting schedules of family members.

Figley (in Kaslow, 1993:176) is of the opinion that:

> Since early 1991 their family center staff had consulted with many individuals and institutions. These included other family-centered institutions, military service assistance programs, national mental health associations and other professional organisations. Most of them wanted to help military families. It was obvious that no plan of action existed on either a national or regional level. Few communities in the USA reacted to this emergency in a unified manner. As a result, agencies were grouping for direction in coordinating their efforts with others in their area. A critical need for national policies that focus on helping military families, especially in times of war was identified. There is a need for an emergency plan to identify and attend to the needs of our military families, especially our children, during periods of crisis.

The researcher agrees with the abovementioned and is of the opinion that an approach similar to that of family-centred institutions in the USA, as referred to by Kaslow above, could be followed within the SANDF. In fact, a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach within a one-stop service centre for use by spouses of deployed members could be the answer to most of the challenges faced by spouses during external military deployment of members. The importance of organisational involvement in ensuring that the necessary support measures are in place and enforced during the absence of the member cannot be overemphasised.

According to Segal and Harris (1993:1):

> The Army way of life has led to special concerns about soldiers'

families and to policy actions to assure a decent quality of life. These concerns and ameliorative actions arise from the Army's moral and social responsibilities, they also contribute to mission readiness and personnel retention.

Therefore, in the researcher's view, it is critical that a model for spousal support is developed, in order to ensure that families are given the necessary support during the absence of members, particularly with regard to external deployment. A civil military alliance that will network with regard to the provision of support services to families during the absence of members will bring about stability in the home, and serve as a resource in times of crisis.

2.4.1.8 Homecoming

According to Kaslow (1993:180-181):

> Most people assume that the homecoming is a time of pure joy and satisfaction. Yet for many families, this period is extremely stressful. They and the returning trooper not only share the relief of the separation finally ending, but they soon face a large number of challenges which intrude on the joy of reunion. These challenges are associated with the strains of reviewing what has happened to them during the separation and attempting to reorganize their lives as quickly as possible. There is often conflict over what is to be reorganized, by whom and in what way. It is often a period, which holds considerable ambivalence, the mixture of great relief and exhilaration. Among the many challenges faced by reunited veteran families during this period have been the following:
> - Family conflict over what was done at home, how and by whom,
> - Evaluation of the frequency and quality of letters, calls and other communications from the trooper during her/his absence,
> - Family rearrangement (reorganisation of family roles, routine and rules due to the trooper's absence),
> - Shifts in the friendship support network (for example, the trooper may discourage continuing contact with the family system), and
> - Marital conflict over potential or real extramarital affairs and conflict over each person's homecoming fantasies (competition among the trooper and family members about activities to do when, where and with whom).

Wood et al. (1995:226) propose that:

> By the second month, some wives were realizing that life with the husbands was "really boring". Early evenings at home in front of the TV and the now-minimal conversation had become monotonous. Even sex became predictable and dull. In some marriages, resentment by the men was expressed through jealousy and accusations about separation. For a few, quarrels led to a talk of separation or divorce and several wives mentioned that they had urged their husbands, unsuccessfully, to go for counselling.

Furthermore, according to Kaslow (1993:180-181):

> The deployment period has its own stresses. Tension emerges approximately two weeks before and two weeks after return. Various kinds of expectations are set. The soldier may feel confident that everything and everyone will be just as they were when he/she left and the soldier will be welcomed with open arms immediately into old places and roles. On the other hand, he or she may fear that everything will be changed; the family will take him/her back. Roles may have been taken over by other family members and he/she is no longer needed and jealousy regarding potential or real extramarital affairs. The spouse on the other hand may fear that the soldier will not like the new competence gained during the separation or that newfound freedom and confidence will be taken away when old roles are resumed. Conflicting emotional reactions surface namely, anger, resentment of intrusion, fear of loss of freedom, self-esteem, love or acceptance and blaming the spouse for whatever went wrong or for changes that have taken place. The children may fear that the soldier will return and express anger for a long list of misdeeds that the other parent has saved up for him or her. All those "wait till Dad gets home" situations will now become a reality. It is critical that feelings and expectations associated with homecoming are discussed during the briefing. Effective family communication during deployment may help reduce the re-entry stress. Thus, the homecoming for both the troops and families may be more stressful than the departure.

According to Suttle (2003:8):

> During separation, most couples face the question, "How can two people work together toward achieving intimacy when one of them is absent from the relationship for extended periods?" Military couples often find that reunion may bring out feelings of awkwardness and that their personal relationships are strained. Through an understanding of the effects of separation, you can better cope with stress that accompanies reunion.

In the researcher's view, based on the abovementioned, the homecoming is just as challenging as the separation itself. While the spouse may have found it difficult to adjust during the absence of the member, it will also be difficult to get used to the fact that he/she is now back home. Coping mechanisms that the spouse developed in an attempt to cope and deal with the absence of the member have to be abandoned, and new ways of dealing with his/her presence have to be learned. It may also imply reverting back to the old ways of doing things in the family, which requires understanding and cooperation by both parties. Obviously, problems will be encountered in the process of acclimatising to the status quo. Therefore, a spousal support programme is a necessity for spouses, even upon reunion, that is, during the post-deployment period. Through the spousal support programme, the needs of the spouses will be met even after deployment. This will also enhance the sense of security in both the spouse and the member, due to the fact that a support system will be available to offer assistance during times of crisis and beyond. In this way, mission success will be guaranteed, and military families will be kept intact.

2.5 SUMMARY

Recent literature on the subject of spousal support during external deployment has been limited. Older versions of books, journals and articles were used in this study, as they were found to be appropriate. Deployment forms an integral part of military life and has its own challenges, which have an impact on the combat readiness of members and mission accomplishment. In order for combat readiness to be achieved and the mission to be accomplished, it is critical that all facets of the members' lives are addressed, especially the family. Therefore, the organisation has a critical role to play in terms of ensuring that comprehensive needs-based intervention measures are put in place and enforced for the purpose of spousal support during the external deployment of the member. However, it is vital that preparation for deployment occurs before the member is deployed, and that spousal support is offered during and after deployment as

well. This will enable the member to successfully accomplish the mission, and the spouse to be able to cope during the absence of the member. In this way, families will be kept intact.

This research is thus aimed at making a significant contribution towards a model for spousal support within the SANDF during the external deployment of the member. The focus of the following chapter is on the research methodology used in this study, which incorporates both qualitative and quantitative studies.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:12), research methodology is "the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project; to some extent, this approach dictates the particular tools the researcher selects". Babbie and Mouton (2006:75) continue by stating that research methodology "focuses on the individual (not linear) steps in the research process and the most "objective" (unbiased) procedures to be explored". Therefore, in the researcher's view, research methodology refers to procedures or a step-by-step process that is followed when conducting research.

This chapter aims at providing a detailed description of the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies used in the research approach, as well as the research design and methodology, type of research, universe, population, sample and sampling method that apply to this study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to De Vos (2002a:366), "the concept triangulation is sometimes used to designate a conscious combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology". Mouton and Marais (in De Vos, 2002a:365) are of the opinion that "the term triangulation, originally coined by Denzin (1978), referred mainly to the use of multiple methods of data collection with a view to increasing the reliability of observation, and not specifically to the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches". According to the researcher, the research approach that was used in this study is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. As indicated by Mouton and Marais (in De Vos, 2002a:365) above,

the purpose behind the use of a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches is to increase the reliability of the study.

- **Quantitative approach**

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:156) define quantitative research as "research conducted using a range of methods, which makes use of measurement to record and investigate aspects of social reality". Mark (1996:210-211) defines a quantitative approach as:

> The study of phenomena using numerical means. In these approaches, there is an emphasis on counting, describing, and using standard statistics, such as means and standard deviations. Furthermore, when we want to verify whether a cause produces an effect, we are likely to use quantitative methods.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:94), quantitative research is generally used to "answer questions about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena. This approach is sometimes called the traditional, experimental, or positivist approach". In the researcher's view, therefore, quantitative research is a research approach that makes use of numbers and figures.

- **Qualitative approach**

Mark (1996:210-211) defines qualitative research as:

> The study of phenomena using general description to describe or explain. Furthermore, qualitative researchers tend to use narrative descriptions of persons, events and relationships. Their findings may be presented in the form of categories or general statements about the complex nature of persons, groups, or events.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) suggest that qualitative research is:

> A situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a

series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.

McRoy, as quoted by Fouché and Delport (2002:79), refers to qualitative research as:

> A research that elicits participant accounts of meaning, experience or perceptions. It also produces descriptive data in the participant's own written or spoken words. It thus involves identifying the participant's beliefs and values that underlie a phenomenon. The qualitative researcher is therefore concerned with understanding rather than explanation; naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement; and the subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider as opposed to the outsider perspective that is predominant in the quantitative paradigm. As such, a qualitative study is concerned with non-statistical methods and small samples often purposively selected.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:156) define qualitative research as "research conducted, using a range of methods, which uses qualifying words and descriptions to record and investigate aspects of social reality". In general, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:94), qualitative research is used to "answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view. The qualitative approach is also referred to as the interpretative, constructivist, or anti-positivist approach".

In light of the abovementioned, the researcher defines qualitative research as research that seeks to elicit the meaning that people attach to a specific phenomenon, such as spousal support during the external military deployment of the member. It tries to identify problems experienced by the research subjects insofar as the phenomenon is concerned. Furthermore, qualitative research makes use of statements and categories from the research subjects' point of reference.

Therefore, due to the nature of the research problem being studied here, the research approach that was used in this study is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In other words, as described by De Vos (2002a:367), the researcher made use of Creswell's mixed methodology design, which uses the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The use of a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches ensures that the study is conclusive and comprehensive.

3.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH

According to Brink (2001:9), "research is categorized according to different points of view. The most basic classification found in most textbooks is between applied and basic or pure research". Wilson (in Brink, 2001:9) points out that "these two distinctions are made according to the major aim of the research". Neuman (2003:21) explains this further by stating that "those who seek an understanding of the fundamental nature of social reality are engaged in basic research. Applied researchers by contrast, primarily want to apply and tailor knowledge to address a specific practical issue".

Chambers (2000:852) defines applied research as "an inquiry that is intentionally developed within a context of decision-making and that is directed toward the interests of one or more clients". According to Moore (2000:ix), "applied research is usually characterized by its concern with problems and their solutions". De Vos, Schurink and Strydom (1998:8) postulate that "applied research addresses immediate problems facing the professional in practice. The goal of applied research most often is the scientific planning of induced change in a troublesome situation". Due to the fact that this research was aimed at solving problems of a practical nature, the type of research that was conducted in this study was applied research.

According to Fouché (2002a:112), "an example of applied research in the social sciences is intervention research, as conceptualised by Rothman and Thomas (1994), the two pioneers in the field of developmental research". De Vos (2005:394) further suggests that Rothman and Thomas (1994) described the three main types of intervention research as "knowledge development (KD), knowledge utilisation (KU) and design and development (D&D)". According to Fouché and De Vos (2005:109), "developmental research denotes the development of a technology, or rather technological item essential for a profession such as medicine, nursing, psychology or social work."

Kumar (2005:277) is of the view that:

> The development of an intervention usually starts with an assessment of the needs of a community, or of a group or people living in a geographical area. Based upon the needs, the aims and objectives for a program are developed to meet these needs, which in turn become the basis of developing a conceptual intervention program.

In the case of this study, the type of applied research used is intervention research. The researcher chose intervention research because this study was aimed at the design and development of a technological item that could be used as a model for social support services to spouses of SANDF members while the members were on external military deployment. It can be referred to as developmental research within the domain of intervention research (De Vos, 2002:396).

According to De Vos (2005:394), D & D is a phase model consisting of six phases. As the researcher only focused on three of the six phases of the design and development model described by Rothman and Thomas (1994), the last three phases, namely early development and pilot testing, evaluation and advanced development, and dissemination, will not be discussed here. As a result of the varied responses obtained from the research subjects with regard to the content of the model, and Thomas's view (1989), as stated in De Vos

(2005:401), that early development is "the process by which an innovative intervention is implemented and used on a trial basis", the researcher felt that the early development and pilot testing of this model should be treated as another area of research.

The six phases of the D&D model, according to Rothman and Thomas (1994:28), consist of the following:

Figure 1: Phases of the D&D model according to Rothman and Thomas (1994)

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Problem analysis and project planning   │  I
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │ 1
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│    Information gathering and synthesis    │  II
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │ 2
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                  Design                   │  III
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │ 3
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│    Early development and pilot testing    │  IV
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │ 4
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│    Evaluation and advanced development     │  V
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │ 5
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│               Dissemination               │  VI
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
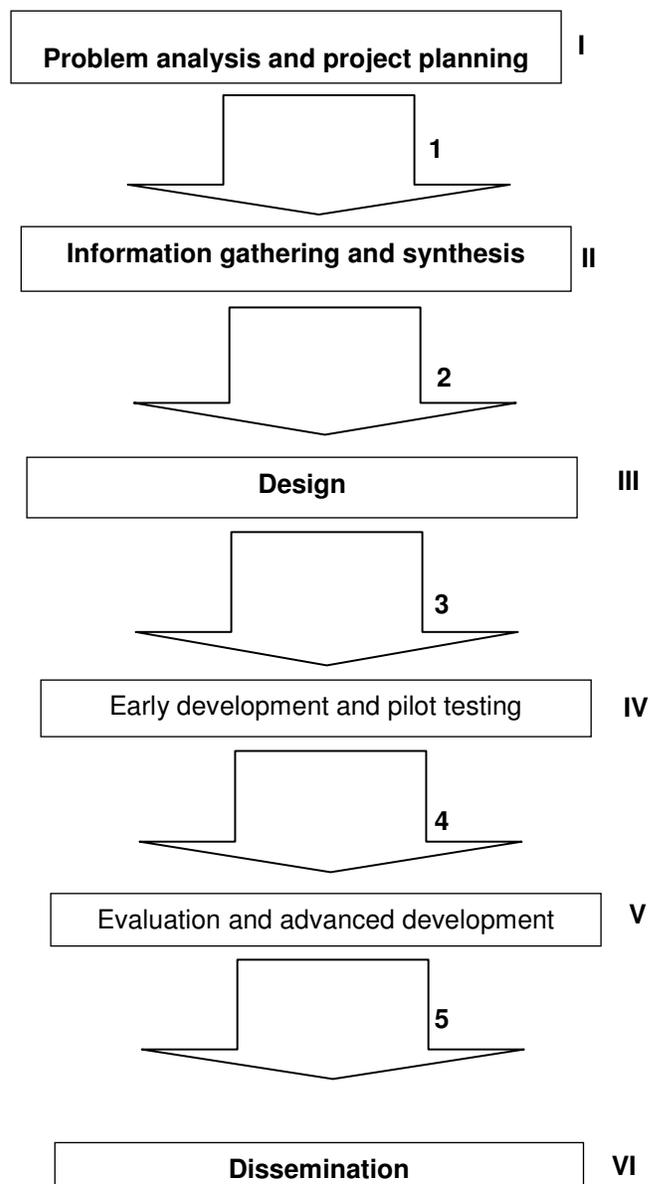
3.3.1 Problem analysis and project planning

In this study, this phase entailed the analysis of the problem, which was social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment, as well as identification and involvement of the affected population. This phase thus involved SANDF members' spouses, an analysis of their concerns and issues, the setting of goals and objectives, and obtaining permission to conduct such a study. Permission was thus obtained from the Director Social Work and the Department of Defence Intelligence before commencing with the study.

3.3.2 Information gathering and synthesis

In the case of this study, the researcher conducted an in-depth literature review in order to determine whether or not similar research on the topic of a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment had been conducted. The researcher was able to make use of this literature as an orientation to conducting the research. Furthermore, the researcher determined whether or not this information could be applied within the SANDF context. Literature on social support services to members during deployment, however, was very limited.

In addition, the researcher designed an observational system consisting of interviews and questionnaires, which were completed by a sample of spouses of SANDF members, as well as members who had been involved in external military deployment. Information gathered from these interviews and questionnaires was used for purposes of identifying issues that would serve as a guide in the formulation of a model for spousal support services to SANDF members during external military deployment, which was the end product of this study. The deployment resilience programme that is in place within the SANDF, and the literature review conducted in Chapter 2, were used as the basis for

formulating the questionnaire and interview schedule used in this study. The Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria assisted the researcher in the formulation of the questionnaire and with data coding and analysis.

3.3.3 Design

In this study, this phase entailed the development of a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. Information obtained from the preceding phases (that is, problem analysis and information gathering and synthesis) was used as a guide in the formulation of this model, which is presented in Chapter 7 of this study. In other words, this information formed the basis for the development of the model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment.

3.4   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A research design is a "plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct research" (Thyer as quoted by Fouché & De Vos, 1998:123; Mouton, 2001:55). Furthermore, Huysamen, as quoted by Fouché and De Vos (1998:123-124), refines this definition by specifying that "this plan, or blueprint offer the framework in accordance with which data are to be collected to investigate the research hypothesis or question in the most economical manner".

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:22) define a research design as "a flexible set of guidelines that connect theoretical paradigms first to strategies of inquiry, and second to methods of collecting empirical material". According to the researcher, a research design is therefore a sequential process in accordance with which the research will be conducted, in order to contribute towards the attainment of the desired objective. Thus, in this study, the research design that was used for both qualitative and quantitative studies was a survey.

Neuman (2003:35) indicates that a "survey technique can be used in descriptive or explanatory research". Babbie and Mouton (2006:232) add "exploratory research to that". This, in the researcher's view, indicates the use of a survey in both quantitative and qualitative studies.

McLaughlin (2007:35) states that "both questionnaires and face-to-face interviewing can be used which then means that questionnaires can be completed independently by the respondents, whereas the interviewer needs to be present during the interview". Babbie and Mouton (2006:249) postulate that "due to the relatively low level of literacy of the South African population, face-to-face interviews are the most common method to collect survey data in natural surveys in South Africa".

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:183) are of the opinion that:

> Survey research involves acquiring information about one or more groups of people, perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes, or previous experiences, by asking them questions and tabulating their answers. The ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population.

According to Neuman (2003:35), the researcher then "summarizes answers to questions in percentages, tables or graphs. Surveys give the researcher a picture of what many people think or report doing". According to the researcher, a survey was found to be the most suitable research design within the quantitative and qualitative context. Through a survey, information was elicited from SANDF members regarding their perceptions and opinions in relation to social support services rendered to their spouses during their external military deployment. This study was thus aimed at gaining knowledge and a better understanding of the meaning that spouses of SANDF members attach to social support services, which were said to be lacking within the organisation.

3.4.1 Data Collection

According to Brink (2001:109), "survey studies are concerned with gathering information from a sample of the population. The emphasis in the collection of data in survey studies is on structured indirect observation, questionnaires and interviews". In the researcher's view, data collection entails a process of acquiring information from the research subjects in this study. Therefore, the data collection techniques that were used in this study were questionnaires within the quantitative context, and interviews within the qualitative context. The literature review conducted in Chapter 2, the SANDF resilience programme and typical problems that were reported by SANDF members and spouses who had been involved in external military deployment were used as a basis for the formulation of the questionnaire and interview schedule that were used in this study. The Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria assisted the researcher in the formulation of the questionnaire.

- **Quantitative data collection technique**

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:156) define a questionnaire as "an instrument of data collection consisting of a standardized series of questions relating to the research topic to be answered in writing by participants". Neuman (2003:268) emphasises the fact that a good questionnaire forms an "integrated whole where the researcher weaves questions together so that they flow smoothly". According to Delport (2005:166), the basic objective of a questionnaire is "to obtain facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are informed on the particular issue". During the construction of the questionnaire, the researcher implemented the ten suggestions made by Neuman (2003:269-272) in order to avoid possible errors during question writing. In this way, the researcher tried to implement her "skills, practice, patience and creativity", as suggested by Neuman (2003:269).

In the case of the quantitative study, a self-constructed questionnaire was used. A covering letter consisting of clear instructions for the completion of the questionnaire, the purpose of the research and the ethical aspects of confidentiality/anonymity, was compiled and attached as an introduction to the questionnaire. The literature review conducted in Chapter 2, as well as the resilience programme, were used as the basis for the formulation of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of a list of questions relating to the topic of spousal support to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, which the research subjects responded to in writing.

Questions were phrased in such a manner that only one response was required per question. Both open- and close-ended questions were included (Babbie and Mouton, 2006:233) in this questionnaire, in order to obtain information that was used in the development of a model for social support services to spouses of SANDF members during the external military deployment of members. In other words, open-ended (unstructured) questions, which allowed the research subjects to answer questions in their own words, and close-ended (structured) questions, which provided the research subjects with a list of responses to chose from (for example, before/during/after deployment or yes/no/mostly), were used in this study. However, some of the questions (other than the ones requesting biographical information and the yes/no responses) made provision for any other response (for example, 'others – please specify') to the ones stipulated in the questionnaire. This enabled the research subjects to provide additional information that would be of importance to the study where applicable. Spaced apart boxes, in which the research subjects completed their responses, were created for each question. The questions concluded with a statement in which the researcher thanked the research subjects for participating in this study.

Social work officers who were deployed with the members were requested to assist with the completion of the questionnaires. The researcher communicated with those social workers who assisted in this regard. Guidelines regarding the

research process were provided to them. The researcher conducted negotiations with the Medical Task Group Commanders within the mission areas for social work officers to administer the questionnaires to the members. The social work officers, on the other hand, negotiated with the section heads for questionnaires to be administered to the members in the mission areas. The questionnaires were distributed to the research subjects during the communication period at the mission areas for completion and return to the social work officers. The social work officers also visited the different satellites within the mission areas and distributed the questionnaires to those members who were married or involved in permanent partnerships of a minimum period of one year.

In order to enhance the validity of the measuring instrument, these questionnaires were completed a month or two before the end of the deployment period. A box was used by the research subjects to submit the completed questionnaires, which were in turn posted in sealed boxes that were classified as confidential to the researcher via the sustainment flights that regularly travel between the home unit and the mission areas.

Questionnaires were equally distributed within the three mission areas where the members were deployed. One hundred and seventeen questionnaires were distributed in the DRC and Burundi, and 116 questionnaires in Sudan. In total, 261 questionnaires were completed by SANDF members who were involved in external military deployment during the period between June and November 2007, and who were married or had been involved in permanent partnerships of a minimum period of one year. Initially, the plan was for the questionnaires to be completed by 350 members. However, only 261 questionnaires were returned. As a result of the fact that a response rate of 75% was received, these data can be regarded as being representative of the sample, as McLaughlin (2007:35) states that "33% is seen as an adequate response rate"

- **Qualitative data collection technique**

Holstein and Gubrium (1995:76) postulate that "a questionnaire written to guide interviews is called an interview schedule or guide. This provides the researcher with a set of predetermined questions that might be used as an appropriate instrument to engage the participant and designate the narrative terrain". According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000:633), "we live in an interview society, in a society whose members seem to believe that interviews generate useful information about lived experience and meanings". These authors continue by stating that "an interview is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening". Neuman (2000:274) defines "survey research as a specialized kind of interviewing. The goal is to obtain accurate information from another person". According to Goddard and Melville (2001:49), "an interview involves a one-on-one verbal interaction between the researcher and the respondent". Kvale, as quoted by Sewell (2001:1), defines qualitative interviews as "attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations".

Smith, Harrè and Langenhoven (1995:9-26) are of the opinion that:

> In general, researchers use semi-structured interviews to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts, of a particular topic. The researcher is able to follow up particularly interesting avenues that emerge in the interview, and the participant is able to give a fuller picture. Furthermore, with semi-structured interviews, the researcher will have a set of predetermined questions on an interview schedule, but the interview will be guided by the schedule rather than dictated by it.

Grbich (1999:93-94) holds the view that "guided interviews comprise a set of broad-ranging questions derived from theory, previous research, and intuition (notion that the interviewer has in mind from his/her own experience and that require exploration)". In the researcher's view, an interview can be described as a

communication process between the researcher and the research subjects, in order to obtain a better understanding of a particular situation or problem.

The researcher designed a semi-structured interview schedule that was used to solicit information regarding the social support services that were rendered to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment of members, and to solicit practical solutions to these problems. The rationale behind conducting interviews with these spouses was that they were in a better position to provide a more complete picture of social support services that could be rendered to them during the external military deployment of members of the SANDF. Information gathered was used in the design of a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members while they are on external military deployment.

This schedule was mainly in the form of open-ended questions that served as a guide in the interview process, and these questions enabled the research subjects to freely state their views in their own words. Close-ended questions, which were formulated at the beginning of the interview schedule, were mainly based on the biographical information of the research subjects. This enabled the researcher to obtain information on the research subjects who took part in the study, and helped to ensure that they were the relevant population for this study.

Social work officers from each of the deploying units in eight of the nine provinces of South Africa conducted interviews with the spouses of SANDF members who had been involved in external military deployment. The researcher conducted interviews in the ninth province, namely Gauteng. The researcher ensured that those social work officers were completely familiar with the purpose and content of the research before conducting the interviews, as she provided those social workers who assisted with the study with guidelines for the interviewing process. Most of the research subjects were interviewed by the social workers, who wrote down their responses. Sixty research subjects (with a

minimum of 6 spouses per province) took part in this study, and the response rate was 100% in the case of the qualitative study.

Due to the fact that the social workers possessed the necessary knowledge and skills for interviewing and had some background knowledge in research, they could be regarded as being competent to conduct research. Some of those social workers who assisted with the interviews were in possession of MA degrees, which included research as part of their studies. The researcher is also competent to conduct research. Based on this, the researcher regards the data collected to be valid and reliable.

3.5. UNIVERSE, POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

3.5.1 Universe

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:85), "the entire set of objects or group of people, which is the object of research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics is called the population or the universe". In the researcher's view, Bless and Higson-Smith use the terms 'population' and 'universe' interchangeably. Neuman (2000:521), on the other hand, refers to a universe as "the broad class of units that are covered in a hypothesis. Furthermore according to this author, universe refers to all the units to which the findings of a specific study might be generalized".

In summary, the universe can be described as the entire population with which the research is concerned. It should be noted that the SANDF has 76,000 members. Out of these 76,000 members, 13,333 were externally deployable. Therefore, these 13,333 SANDF members were the universe in the quantitative study. In other words, they were medically fit to be deployed outside the borders

of South Africa. In addition, these SANDF members' spouses were involved in the qualitative study.

3.5.2 Population

According to Mark (1996:105), a population is "the collection of all individuals, families, groups, or organizations, communities and events that will participate in the study". McBurney, as quoted by Strydom and Venter (2002:199), refers to the population as "the sampling frame; the totality of persons; events; organisation units; case records or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned". According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:85), a population is "the set of elements that the research focuses on and to which the obtained results should be generalized".

Of the 13,333 members, 11,253 were males and 2,080 were females. Of the 13,333 members, 6,414 were married. Therefore, 6,414 members of the SANDF were the population in the case of the quantitative study. These statistics were obtained from the Health Informatics Department within the SANDF on 02 October 2006, and they gave an indication of the total number of SANDF members who were externally deployable and married. Information regarding those members who were involved in permanent partnerships of at least a year was not available on the SANDF system.

At this time, no statistics could be found regarding the number of spouses in the SANDF. However, based on the fact that 6,414 SANDF members were married and had been involved in external military deployment, the researcher could deduce that the population of the spouses was 6,414. Therefore, the population of the spouses that the researcher was interested in was the 6,414 spouses whose partners had been involved in external military deployment.

3.5.3 Sample and boundary of the sample

Brink (2001:133) defines a sample as "part or fraction of a whole, or a subset of a larger set, selected by the researcher to participate in a research project. A sample consists of a selected group of the elements or units from a defined population". Leedy and Ormrod (2005:199) refer to "a subset of a population as a sample". According to Neuman (2000:518), a sample is "a smaller set of cases a researcher selects from the larger pool, and generalizes to the population". In summary, according to the researcher, a sample can therefore be described as a component of the overall population under study.

- **Quantitative sample**

According to Stoker (1985) (in Strydom and Venter, 2002:200-201), "the size of a sample needs to be 450 of a population of 10,000 (4.5%) to be representative". For this study, the researcher selected 5.5% of the population to form a sample of 350 respondents to represent the population.

In the case of the quantitative study, a sample of 350 research subjects was selected to take part in this study. As indicated by Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:93):

> The larger the population, the smaller the percentage of that population the sample needs to be. If the population itself is relatively small, the sample should comprise a reasonably large percentage of the population. Larger samples enable researchers to draw more accurate predictions than in smaller samples, although this is more costly.

In the researcher's view, the decision to make use of a sample of 350 research subjects was based on the fact that a larger sample would make the study more representative, and would give a more comprehensive and holistic picture of the subject being researched. In other words, a sample of 350 was found to be feasible in the case of this study. Due to the fact that the SANDF is a

predominantly male organisation, the researcher decided to select a sample of 294 males and 56 females, which totals 350. It should also be noted that the researcher conducted her study within the mission areas, and not within the units at home, due to the fact that members within mission areas are from the various units in South Africa. It was thus possible to reach them in the various mission areas.

The SANDF members who were married or involved in a permanent partnership of at least a year, and had been involved in external military deployment between June and November 2007, were selected to take part in this study. The rationale behind the use of members who had been on external military deployment is that with the deployment exposure and experience they had, they were in a better position to share first-hand information regarding their deployment encounters. It should be noted that a large number of SANDF members (+-3000, 00) deployed in the mission areas and those members who were deployed during the period June to November 2007 consisted of representatives from all the provinces in South Africa. Therefore, they can be regarded as being representative of the larger population.

- **Qualitative sample**

Sarantakos (2000:154) postulates that:

> Sampling is also utilised in qualitative research and is less strictly applied than in the case of quantitative research. Furthermore, sampling in qualitative research is relatively limited, is based on saturation, is not representative, involves low cost, is not time consuming, and its size is not statistically determined. It can therefore be inferred that in qualitative investigations, non-probability sampling is used almost without exception.

Due to the fact that it was not possible for the researcher to conduct an investigation with the population of 6,414 spouses of SANDF members who had been involved in external military deployment, a sample of 60 (minimum of 6 per

province) research subjects was involved in this study. The decision to select a sample of 6 research subjects per province was based on the notion that by the time the researcher interviewed the 4th and 5th research subjects, there would already be consistency in the nature of responses received. In other words, information obtained from the 4th and 5th research subjects already gave an indication of saturation.

A selection of a minimum of 6 research subjects per province was based on the notion that 6 spouses are sufficient to inform this research. The researcher selected 3 spouses of SANDF members from rural areas and 3 from urban areas in each province. However, what posed a challenge was that rural areas are developing and can be classified as either semi-rural or semi-urban. Therefore, in some cases, spouses from semi-rural and semi-urban areas were interviewed. This, however, did not pose a limitation in the study, due to the fact that the desired responses were still elicited. Both the spouses from rural and urban areas experienced similar problems and challenges because of external military deployment. Due to the fact that a minimum of 6 spouses were interviewed per province, the response rate was 100%.

The boundary of the sample was the partners of SANDF members involved in external military deployment during the period June to November 2007 and those involved in a marital relationship or permanent partnership of a minimum period of a year. Due to the fact that the South African Constitution and the SANDF recognise involvement in a permanent partnership of at least a year as a form of marriage, the researcher included this population in her study, in order to be politically correct and align her study with the definition of a spouse that is recognised by the SANDF.

3.5.4 Sampling Method

- **Quantitative sampling method**

Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:100) distinguish between probability or random sampling and non-probability sampling. Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prozesky (2006:166) indicate that many situations in social research call for non-probability sampling when probability sampling would not be appropriate, even if it were possible. Babbie et al. (2006:166) further distinguish between four types of non-probability sampling, namely reliance on available subjects, purposive or judgemental sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling.

The type of sampling method that was used in selecting respondents from SANDF members who had been involved in external military deployment was purposive sampling. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:90), this sampling method is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample.

Silverman (2000:104) is of the opinion that "in purposive sampling, a particular case is chosen because it illustrates some feature or process that is of interest for a particular study". Neuman (2000:517) refers to purposive sampling as "a type of non-random sampling in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of highly specific and difficult-to-reach population". Singleton, Straits, Straits and Mc Allister, as quoted by Strydom and Venter (2002:207), refer to purposive sampling as "the type of sample that is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population".

The selection of respondents was entirely based on the judgement of the social work officers in the DRC, Burundi and Sudan during deployment in the specific period of June to November 2007. The first 117 members who conformed to the boundary of the sample were selected in DRC and Burundi, and 116 members in

Sudan. In other words, members who conformed to the norm volunteered to participate in the study and were presented to the social workers within the mission areas until the desired number was attained. Bless et al. (2006:106) indicate that the purposive sampling technique can have some value, especially if used by experts who know the population under study, as was the case in this study.

- **Qualitative sampling method**

Flick (1998:41) states that in qualitative sampling, it is the respondents' "relevance to the research topic rather than their representativeness which determines the way in which the people to be studied are selected". For this reason, according to Neuman (2003:211), qualitative researchers "tend to collect a non-probability sampling". In the qualitative study, a sample of 60 research subjects was involved in this study. The sampling method that was used in the selection of research subjects was the sequential sampling method. Neuman (2003:215) points out that sequential sampling "is similar to purposive sampling with one difference; where the researcher tries to find as many cases as possible, taking into consideration, time, costs and energy, the sequential sampling process entails to gather cases until the amount of new information or diversity of cases is filled" According to Neuman (2000:200), the principle is to "gather data until saturation point is reached. This requires the researcher to continuously evaluate all the collected data in order to know when saturation point has been reached".

A smaller sample of 60 spouses (minimum of 6 per province) from each of the nine provinces within South Africa was selected as a sample. The sample of 6 research subjects was selected from a database of social work officers within the deploying units in the 9 provinces of South Africa. Three of them were from rural areas and 3 were from urban areas in each province. The selection process was such that these research subjects were contacted personally and telephonically

in order to determine if they were interested in taking part in the study. Although it was not easy to locate some of the research subjects, the social work officers persisted until the desired number of 6 was obtained.

The sample was small due to the fact that during the study, data were collected until a saturation point was reached, and no new information was gathered, hence the researcher's reference to the utilisation of the sequential sampling method in the case of this study. In other words, the research subjects expressed similar challenges and frustrations.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995:111), "data analysis is a messy, ambiguous, time consuming, creative and fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not tidy". Krueger and Casey (2000:127) are of the opinion that "analysis begins by going back to the purpose of study. A key principle is that the depth and intensity of analysis are determined by the purpose of the study". Furthermore, Krueger and Casey (2000:132) mention "the long-table approach (where all data are coded and sorted on a long table) and the computer as strategies for analysis".

- **Quantitative data analysis**

According to De Vos, Fouché and Venter (2002:223), "data analysis in the quantitative paradigm entails that the analyst breaks down data into constituent parts to obtain answers to research questions and to test research hypothesis. The analysis of research data, however, does not in itself provide answers to research questions. Interpretation of the data is necessary". Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:143) suggest that "a statistical analysis is performed in order to infer some properties of the population from the sample results".

Therefore, as indicated by the abovementioned authors, in the case of this quantitative study, data obtained from questionnaires that were completed by the research subjects were firstly coded and broken down into constituent parts in order to obtain answers to research questions, then analysed in order to infer some properties of the population from the sample results, and interpreted by the researcher in the light of her own views and the literature, as indicated in Chapter 2. The Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria assisted the researcher with data coding and analysis due to the comprehensive work involved in classifying and analysing data. Data in this study are presented by means of tables, graphs and charts.

- **Qualitative data analysis**

According to De Vos (2002b:339), "qualitative data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data". Marshall and Rossman (1995:111) posit that qualitative data analysis is "a search for general statements about relationships among categories of data and it builds grounded theory". Morgan and Krueger (1998:3-17) (see also Krueger and Casey, 2000:128,130) postulate that:

> The critical ingredients of qualitative analysis are that analysis must be systematic, sequential, verifiable and continuous, it requires time, it is jeopardised by delay, it seeks to enlighten, it should entertain alternative explanations, it is improved by feedback, and it is a process of comparison.

Morgan and Krueger (1998:31) are of the opinion that "in analysing, the researcher should consider the words, the context, the internal consistency and frequency of comments, what was not said, as well as finding the "big idea"". According to Creswell (1998:142-145):

> The process of qualitative data analysis and interpretation is best represented in a spiral image, a data analysis spiral. The researcher engages in the process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach. One enters with data made up of text or images (for example, photographs and videotapes) and exits with

an account or a narrative. In between, the researcher touches on several facets of analysis and circles around and around. Data management, the first loop in the spiral begins the process. At an early stage in the analysis process, researchers organize their data into folders, index cards or computer files. Besides organizing files, researchers convert their files to appropriate text units (for example, a word, a sentence and entire story) for analysis either by hand or by computer. Materials must be easily located in large databases of text or images. Following the organization and conversion of data, researchers continue analysis by getting a sense of the whole database, a process which consists of moving from reading and memoing loop into the spiral to the describing, classifying and interpreting loop. In this loop, category formation represents the heart of qualitative data analysis. Here, researchers describe in detail, develop themes or dimensions through some classification system, and provide an interpretation in light of their own views or views of perspectives in the literature.

In the case of the qualitative study, data were collected and hand-recorded by the researcher and social workers (other researchers) within the deploying units in the country according to the interview schedule. Based on the documented information obtained from the study, the researcher undertook data analysis, a process that was done by hand. With this, the researcher obtained an overview of the content of the interviews. This enabled the researcher to make sense of what the real concerns, needs, challenges and frustrations of spouses of SANDF members were.

In the process, the researcher did a lot of reading and memoing, and this was not a straightforward linear process. To make sense of data that were presented, the researcher had to move back and forth. Hence, Creswell made reference to the spiral loop. In between, the researcher described, classified and interpreted information obtained from the research subjects.

According to Creswell (1998:144-145):

> Classifying pertains to taking the text or qualitative information apart, looking for categories, themes or dimensions of information. Themes can further be classified into sub-themes to represent segments of data. Following interpretation, the researchers present the data, a

final phase of the spiral. In summary, this data analysis spiral can be presented as follows:

- Data collection and data recording.
- Data managing.
- Reading and memoing.
- Describing, classifying, interpreting.
- 2Representing, visualising.

Based on related information that emerged from the study, which was classified by the researcher, themes and sub-themes were identified, and the researcher interpreted the information in terms of her own views and those presented in the literature, as indicated in Chapter 2. Classifying data into themes and sub-themes made it possible for segments of data to be presented in a systematic manner. Therefore, in the case of this study, data were presented by means of 4 themes and sub-themes where applicable.

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis were undertaken in this study. In the case of qualitative research, data were presented in the form of themes and sub-themes, as indicated by Creswell, as well as in tabular or figure form. In the case of quantitative research, data were presented in the form of tables, graphs and charts.

3.7   SUMMARY

This chapter served as background information to the study on spousal support in the SANDF during external military deployment. Qualitative and quantitative research methodologies with regard to the research approach, research design, type of research, universe, population, sample and sampling method were discussed in detail. The focus of Chapter 4 will be on the empirical study, which deals with the challenges of social support to spouses of SANDF members during the external military deployment of members, and on the interpretation of the qualitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: QUALITATIVE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the qualitative study, 60 research subjects (spouses of members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF)) were interviewed in the nine provinces of South Africa during the period June to November 2007. Data in this study were analysed by means of themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews that were conducted with research subjects.

4.2 SECTION A

Section A of the qualitative study focused on the biographical information of research subjects. The following section provides a discussion in this regard.

4.2.1 Biographical information

The biographical information of a sample of 60 research subjects who were interviewed in the nine provinces of South Africa is presented as follows:

4.2.1.1 Age of respondents

Table 1: Age of respondents

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
20 – 30	12	20%
31 – 40	36	60%
41 – 50	10	17%
51+	2	3%
TOTAL	**60**	**100%**

Table 1 above gives an indication of the age of the spouses of members of the SANDF who had been involved in external military deployment. Twelve (20%) of the research subjects were in the age group 20 to 30, 10 (17%) were in the age group 41 to 50, 2 (3%) were in the age group 51-60, and a large percentage of the research subjects (36 (60%)) were in the age group 31 to 40. The abovementioned data show that the average age of the spouses of SANDF members is 36.

The researcher is in support of the literature (Bell et al., 1991:12) and is of the opinion that more and more soldiers are getting married at a young age. This has been indicated by the average age of SANDF members' spouses. The implication thereof is that the spouses of SANDF members are relatively young and are involved in marital relationships that need some form of support in order to survive.

4.2.1.2 Gender of respondents

Figure 2: Gender of respondents
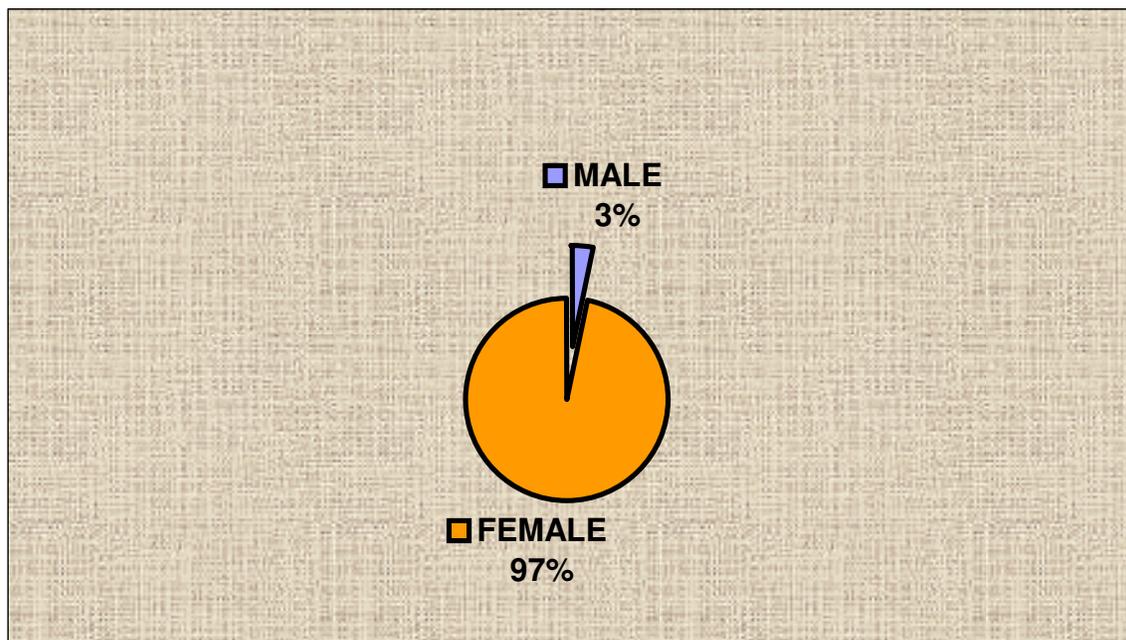
Figure 2 above gives an indication of the gender of the research subjects who were involved in this study. Two (3%) were males and a large percentage (58 (97%)) were females. This emanates from the fact that the SANDF is historically a male-dominated organisation. Those who are remaining at home are females. This situation is, however, gradually changing. More and more women are taking up a career in the SANDF. The researcher further aligns herself with Kaslow (1993:30-31), and is of the opinion that the increase in the number of married personnel has prompted the need for support services in the SANDF during the external military deployment of members. According to the researcher, this situation could be attributed to the annulment of military conscription, which previously compelled young men to enlist in the then South African Defence Force (SADF). At as young as 18 years of age, these men joined the SADF in order to serve their period of conscription, and most of them ended up establishing a career in the military. This requirement was, however, subsequently annulled, and anyone can presently enlist in the SANDF at any age of their own free will.

4.2.1.3 Years of experience in the marital relationship

Table 2: Years of experience in the marital relationship

Period	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1 – 10 years	27	45%
11 – 20 years	30	50%
21 – 30 years	3	5%
TOTAL	**60**	**100%**

Table 2 above gives an indication of the years of experience that the research subjects had in the marital relationship. Twenty seven (45%) of the research subjects had an average of between 1 and 10 years' experience in the marriage, 30 (50%) had an average of between 11 and 20 years' experience, and 3 (5%) had an average of between 21 and 30 years' marital experience. The

abovementioned data shows that the majority of the members of the SANDF had more than 11 years' experience in the marriage. In the researcher's view, one would assume that since the majority of research subjects had more than 11 years' experience in the marriage, they would be stable and therefore able to cope under any circumstances. However, this is not the case where external military deployment is concerned. Therefore, according to the researcher, separation from the family as a result of deployment of members negatively impacts on the development and maintenance of healthy military families. The stability that has been prevalent within the marital relationship is threatened and negatively affected by external military deployment. The need for spousal support services during external military deployment, which was expressed by spouses and SANDF members, attests to this.

4.2.1.4 Rank of the member

Table 3: Rank of the member

Rank	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Major – Colonel	5	8%
Lieutenant – Captain	4	7%
Warrant Officer	4	7%
Staff Sergeant – Sergeant	23	38%
Private - Corporal	24	40%
TOTAL	**60**	**100%**

Table 3 above gives an indication of the rank of SANDF members. Five (8%) of the members fell within the rank group Major to Colonel, 4 (7%) were within the rank group Lieutenant to Captain, 4 (7%) were within the rank group Warrant Officer, 23 (38%) were within the rank group Staff Sergeant to Sergeant, and 24 (40%) were within the rank group Private to Corporal. In the researcher's view, the highest rank grouping within the SANDF is that of Generals. Due to the fact that SANDF generals do not get externally deployed, the researcher did not

include this rank group in her study. A limited number of Colonels are externally deployed as National Contingent Commanders. In other words, each mission area is allocated a Colonel who acts as the South African Commander for that mission. For command and control purposes, only one Colonel is deployed at a time within a mission area. Therefore, according to the researcher, the rank group Private to Sergeant falls within the lowest strata of the SANDF rank groupings. The researcher separated the Warrant Officers' rank from the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) ranks, due to the fact that it is a rank that is commissioned by the Chief of the SANDF. The Minister of Defence, on the other hand, commissions officers' ranks. The abovementioned data clearly shows that a large percentage (78%) of the members who are deployed fall within the rank group of Private to Staff Sergeant, which is the rank group of Non-Commissioned Officers. The rationale for this state of affairs could be due to the financial incentive that is associated with deployments, because their salary packages are not attractive or adequate to meet their needs, as indicated by most of the spouses. Therefore, deployments become the only way of making money, irrespective of whether or not the family is negatively affected. Although the rationale behind deployment is to engage in peace missions in Africa and the world at large, from experience, money has been found to be the reason for the need to be involved in deployment, particularly amongst the NCO rank group within the SANDF.

4.2.1.5 Spouses' employment status

Thirty (50%) of the spouses were employed, while 30 (50%) were unemployed. In the researcher's view, both employed and unemployed spouses require support during external military deployment. However, the need is even greater for those spouses who are unemployed. In addition, the fact that unemployed spouses depend solely on members for support and survival implies that the need for organisational support is even greater. As a result, this data shows that the organisation has an important role to play in terms of ensuring that sufficient

support measures are put in place during the absence of the member, particularly for those spouses who are unemployed.

4.2.1.6 Residential area

Figure 3: Residential area
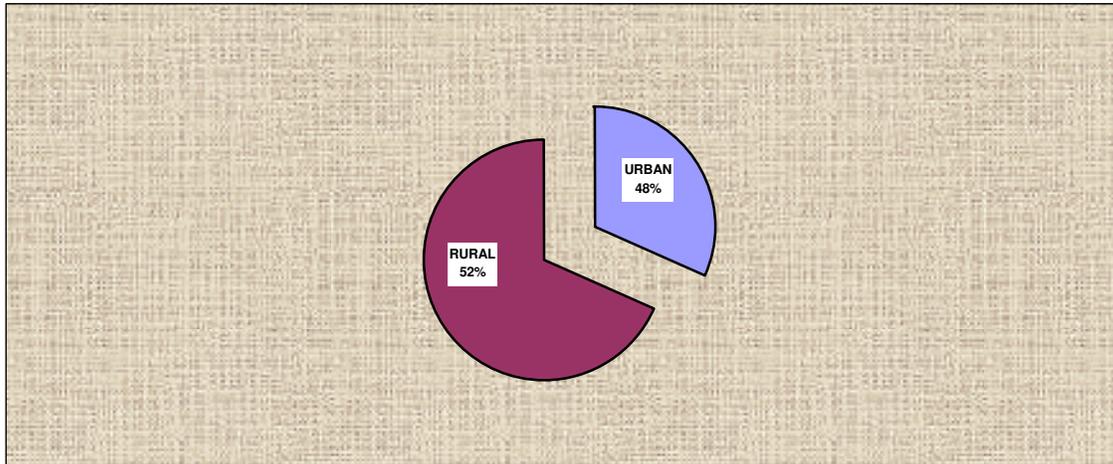
Figure 3 above gives an indication of the residential area of research subjects. Twenty nine (52%) were from rural areas, while 29 (48%) were from urban areas. This data shows that the organisation has a responsibility to ensure that spouses from both urban and rural areas are supported during the external deployment of members, bearing in mind that access to resources in rural areas is not the same as in urban areas. However, no link could be identified between employment and residential area. There is often a notion that there is a correlation between unemployment and rural areas. This, however, is not the case in this study. Unemployed spouses who reside in urban areas were also identified in this study. No difference could be determined between problems experienced by spouses who reside in rural and urban areas during external military deployment of members.

4.2.1.7 Deployment frequency in the past twelve months

Table 4: Deployment frequency in the past twelve months

Deployment frequency in the past twelve months	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1 – 2 times	59	98%
3 – 4 times	1	2%
TOTAL	**60**	**100%**

Table 4 above gives an indication of the frequency of deployment of members in the past twelve months. Fifty nine (98%) of the members had been deployed one to two times, whereas 1 (2%) of the members was deployed three to four times. The extracts below confirm these responses:

- "My husband stayed home for two weeks after a six-month deployment in the year 2007. Thereafter, he went back for another deployment that was ending in December 2007. It was the most frustrating period in my life particularly with three children that are still young and without any form of support from the organisation".
- "My husband deployed twice in the past twelve months".
- "My husband deployed once in the past twelve months".

This data shows that a large percentage of SANDF members were externally deployed externally once or twice, while a smaller percentage was deployed three or four times. Furthermore, according to the researcher, literature (Paap, 1991:39-40; Wood et al., 1995:217-218; Suttle, 2003:2-4) indicates that deployment is a task that the organisation cannot avoid. It poses a challenge for the member and the spouse, irrespective of the duration. As a result, family separation occurs during deployment. In addition, members and families react differently to deployment. Some are able to adapt to new circumstances, while other families struggle. The fact that a large percentage of members have been

deployed at least once or twice in the past twelve months further highlights the importance of institution and evaluation of spousal support programmes within the SANDF.

4.2.1.8 Country of deployment

Twenty seven (45%) of the members were deployed to Burundi, 25 (42%) were deployed to the Democratic Republic of Congo, 6 (10%) were deployed to Sudan and 2 (3%) were deployed to the Comores. In comparison with Burundi and the DRC, the rate of deployment to Sudan was relatively lower, as the commitment to deploy to this country only occurred recently. In addition, deployment to this country may take up to ten months, due to the issue of landing rights. This data further confirms that SANDF members have been involved in external military deployment.

4.3 SECTION B

Section B involved responses from the research subjects, which can be analysed as follows.

According to De Vos (2002b:339), "qualitative data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data". The data analysis process that will be followed in this study can be summarised as follows:

- Data collection and data recording.
- Data managing.
- Reading and memoing.
- Describing, classifying, interpreting.
- Representing, visualising (Creswell, 1998:142-145).

Data in this study were analysed in terms of themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews that were conducted with the research subjects, according to Creswell's model of data analysis. Section B of the interview

schedule involved eliciting responses from spouses regarding the issue of external military deployment of members. Creswell's model of data analysis was used in this study, and data are presented in the form of themes and sub-themes.

Table 5 below gives an indication of the different themes and sub-themes that were identified in this study.

4.3.1 Themes and sub-themes

Table 5: Themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Issues associated with external deployment.	1. Transport problems. 2. Financial problems. 3. Marital problems. 4. Poor/lack of communication facilities. 5. Death, illness in the family and admission to hospital. 6. Maintenance. 7. Problems with children. 8. Interference by in-laws. 9. Loneliness and emotional problems.
2. Attitude towards deployment.	
3. Organisational deployment support.	1. Lack of support/assistance.
4. Need for spousal support services.	1. Before deployment. 2. During deployment. 3. Post deployment.

The following is an analysis of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study:

4.3.1.1 Theme 1: Issues associated with external deployment

In the researcher's view, this study confirmed that irrespective of the area of residence, all spouses encountered some issues that posed a challenge to them during the external deployment of members in one way or another. The comments below give an indication of the responses:

- "A lot of things go wrong whenever my husband deploys".
- "Virtually everything goes wrong in the home during the absence of my husband".
- "His attitude changed, he was very moody and became short tempered".
- "He was always so calm until the deployment".

The researcher supports the literature (see Moritz, 1991:109; Hornig, 1994:113) and is of the opinion that deployment is very stressful for those who have been left behind, as well as for the member himself/herself. The member and the spouse experience emotional and practical problems as a result of deployment. As confirmed in this study, the attitude of the member changes, and the stable situation that has been prevalent within the family changes. Therefore, both the member and the spouse need to be cognisant of deployment-related problems and challenges, and be able to deal with them. The necessary preparation is vital in this regard. Furthermore, in order for the member to perform his/her task effectively during external military deployment he/she needs to be combat ready. Combat readiness implies the institution of necessary support measures for both the member and the family while the member is on external military deployment.

Challenging issues/problems common to all research subjects, irrespective of whether they reside in a rural or urban area, have been identified as follows:

4.3.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Transport problems

Transport problems were one of the issues or challenges encountered by most of the spouses. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "My car broke down".

- "Transportation of children to school was also a problem as we shared this responsibility".

- "During the deployment of my husband I experienced problems with the 1 Military Hospital bus driver who left me in Pretoria. I felt that this was done on purpose because my husband is away. It has never happened before".

- "Transporting children to and from school has been his task, which included driving the school bus. This implies that when he is gone, I have to travel a further distance, which takes about 1 hour in order to get children to school and to be back in time for work in the morning. This trip has to be repeated again in the afternoon. This was emotionally draining. Furthermore, if I am a few minutes late for the school bus, the new driver quarrels with me but if he is the one that is late, it is not considered to be a problem. By the time I get to bed it is already late and I have to wake up early to ensure that the children are on time for the school bus".

- "Transport to go shopping for groceries and account payments is one of the challenges I encountered, since the shopping complex is a distance from my home. As a result of his absence, it has not been possible for us to buy fresh bread and milk on daily basis. This is a task that he normally performed. There are no shops nearby; therefore, I only have the opportunity to purchase these items once a week. I am scared to go shopping alone because criminals at the shopping complex stole my money from me. I anxiously await my husband's return from deployment".

- "It is strenuous to drive to and fro from school".

- "Fairing children to school was difficult".

- "Transporting the children to school was a problem and it meant joining a lift club to get the children to school. This meant more expenses".

In view of the abovementioned, it is evident that SANDF members' spouses experienced transport-related problems during external military deployment of members. Literature (Kaslow, 1993:128; Wood et al., 1995:218) indicates logistical problems such as transport as being one of the problems encountered by spouses during deployment. The existence of this problem suggests that the necessary support measures in this regard are not in place. The organisation has a role to play in terms of fostering the necessary support with regard to transport during the absence of the member.

4.3.1.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Financial problems

This study confirmed that SANDF spouses encountered financial difficulties during the absence of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "Transferring money from the savings account to a cheque account was a problem".
- "Sometimes we do not have enough money for extra expenditures. Children want to go for educational tours and there is no money".
- "My husband did not leave enough money. I borrowed from my friends and he did not like it".
- "Having to take responsibility for household accounts was difficult. I always received warning letters for electricity bills because I always forgot about it. I was involved in accident because I was rushing during lunchtime to pay my accounts".
- "With the first deployment, I was not employed and the machine swallowed the bank card and the bank could not assist me particularly that large sum of money was being deposited into the account. My husband ended up being withdrawn from deployment in order to sort out this problem".
- "I had to assist a colleague of my husband with sending money to his wife who was at home and not working as she did not have any contact with her

husband. She had no knowledge relating to how the SANDF operates. What made it difficult for me was that her husband would sometimes send R200 for her and conveying this message to her was difficult. I had to ask my husband to negotiate for more money for this poor wife who was in Bloemfontein. Nowadays R200 is the same as sending nothing".

- "I experienced problems with money at the bank. One month I could not withdraw money from the bank as my husband did not have enough money in the bank therefore the stop order did not go through".

- "I did not have an identity document and my husbands money was deposited into my in-laws account. They managed the finances of my home which caused a lot of problems for me because the in-laws wanted me to do things their way".

The literature (Martin et al., 1993:25; Segal and Harris, 1993:85; Roberts, 1991:49; Van Breda, 2001:241) suggests and confirms that financial problems are one of the problems that spouses face during deployment. This study confirmed that SANDF members' spouses experienced similar finance-related problems during the external military deployment of members. As indicated in the literature (Roberts, 1991:49; Hornig, 1994:149), and in the researcher's view, most of the spouses are not skilled in managing the finances of the home. The SANDF member normally carries out this task without consulting the spouse. SANDF members' spouses experienced financial difficulties as a result of deployment and due to the fact that they found themselves faced with the management of the finances of the home for the first time upon deployment of members. This is why they experienced typical finance-related problems such as the transferring of money from one account to another, because there was no money in the account. Some of the spouses struggled on their own without sufficient finances to manage their homes, particularly those who were unemployed. For example, one of the research subjects indicated that "I did not seek help because I did not want him to be sent back home to resolve this matter". Again, as indicated above, one of the spouses said that "My husband

became angry because I borrowed money from friends in order for take care of family affairs". Therefore, appropriate intervention measures such as financial management programmes should be implemented by the organisation in order to prevent the occurrence of such problems. Spouses of SANDF members who are working in deployment units should be exposed to the financial management programme long before deployment. Managing finances within the home should not be the sole responsibility of the member. As indicated in the literature (Hornig, 1994:149), the importance of preparation for management of family finances before deployment cannot be overemphasised. Family financial security during the absence of the member is essential.

4.3.1.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Marital problems

This study confirmed that spouses experienced some form of marital problems or conflict during and after the external deployment of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses.

- "My husband was involved in an extramarital affair".
- "Special days were celebrated in his absence".
- "I experienced personal problems which I do not wish to share".
- "Taking over the role of my husband was a problem for me".
- "I wanted my husband to come back because I suspected that he is in love with one of the members in the deployment area because he did not phone frequently".
- "My husband became angry with me because I borrowed money from friends in order for take care of family affairs".
- "I had an emotional breakdown. Unit members used the work telephone to contact my husband and spread rumours, which caused problems between us".
- "My husband's attitude changed, he was very moody and became short tempered. He was always so calm until the deployment".

The literature (Logan, 1987:45-46; Cutrona, 1996:59-60) suggests that deployment-related challenges and frustrations have a negative impact on the stability of the marriage. Both the member and the spouse experienced deployment-related problems such as extramarital affairs and emotional problems that had a negative impact on the relationship. This was confirmed by the responses of some of the research subjects. As stated by one of the spouses, "My husband was often temperamental and unpredictable, an attitude that surfaced only after deployment". As a result of deployment, a lot of emotions ensue, as indicated by Logan and Cutrona.

Furthermore, the members and spouses are married but single as a result of deployment. In addition, stress emanating from rumours being spread regarding extramarital affairs by both parties was one of the issues that impacted negatively on marital relationships. On the other hand, one of the spouses confirmed that "My husband definitely had extra marital affairs whilst on external deployment. However, things got better with the intervention of the social work officer". If one analyses this data, it implies that health-related challenges such as HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STD), as well as children born out of wedlock, might result. It is also indicative of a breach of trust by some of the members, thereby contributing to marital problems upon the return of members. In addition, one of the spouses said that "I am unhappy that condoms are distributed to members before they go on deployment". In the researcher's view, this implies that the members are at liberty to engage in sexual relationships while on deployment. Some of them returned home HIV positive, and the spouses who were faithful throughout the deployment period became victims. One of the spouses said that "the fact that HIV test results are kept confidential after testing upon return from the mission area is one of the things that infuriate me. Children are also denied an opportunity to have a family with at least one of their parents alive, due to the fact that both parents will die as a result of HIV/AIDS. One could have been saved if the results were revealed to both parties". Therefore, the

organisation has a responsibility to ensure that families are kept intact by means of the introduction of appropriate intervention support measures.

As far as the issue of condom distribution is concerned, not much can be done about this, because while it creates the impression that members are at liberty to engage in sexual relationships, it has also protected many others from being infected with deadly diseases such as HIV. Finally, the abovementioned confirmed that absence of the members from home negatively impacts the stability of marital relationships. The situation is even worsened in cases where there is no trust between the husband and wife.

In the researcher's view, marital problems have also increased due to the extension of the deployment period. Obviously, there is no way in which the organisation can do away with deployment. In order to prevent problems from occurring, the organisation has to ensure that appropriate intervention measures are in place throughout the deployment period, particularly within deploying units. Therefore, the organisation has a critical role to play in terms of building families while meeting the organisational objective of participating in peace missions. Homecoming also has its challenges as a result of established patterns of survival by the spouse and children. In most cases, efforts at normalising the situation end up in conflict.

4.3.1.1.4 Sub-theme 4: Poor/lack of communication facilities

This study confirmed that poor or lack of communication is one of the issues that spouses struggled with during the external deployment of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "Communication with my husband at the deployment area was frustrating and difficult. At times you need someone to talk to especially over the weekend".

- "Some decisions need a joint venture and the inability to communicate hampers that".
- "Sometimes I can't phone my husband".
- "I could not contact my spouse".
- "I had problems with telephoning my husband".
- "I did not know when my husband would return".
- "It cost me a lot of money to telephone my husband".
- "Many things go wrong whenever my husband deploys. Firstly, he is the type of a person that needs to be communicated with on regular basis, whilst on external deployment. He wants to be consulted regarding decisions made at home even when he is away. This meant making private calls at work to a cell phone, which is expensive. I ended up owing R3000 for the work telephone calls and if you do not phone him it becomes a big issue. It is costly for me and making use of public phones is even more costly".
- "I could not make contact with my spouse and I therefore had to face an illness on my own".

The abovementioned responses indicate that poor/lack of communication with members during deployment is a cause for concern for spouses The literature (see Bell, 1991:1-2; Krueger, 2001:15) also confirmed that spouses of deployed members documented communication problems. A lot of problems ensue as a result of communication problems, something which the responses from spouses confirmed. According to most of the spouses, the telephone bill increased tremendously as a result of telephone calls that they had to make, particularly at work. The inability to make these calls at times caused a great deal of conflict, because members could not understand why they were not contacted. Most of the spouses also indicated that it cost them about R200 a time to communicate with members who were outside the country. This situation was even worse for unemployed spouses, and getting to a telephone facility proved to be difficult.

Furthermore, according to most of the spouses, being uninformed about developments within the deployment area while watching terrifying news on television relating to the situation in the area was the worst nightmare that they could have experienced. The question as to whether or not the member was still alive was imminent. Therefore, communication problems experienced by spouses indicate the need for a well-funded, accessible communication facility for all the spouses during external deployment of members.

According to the researcher, and as confirmed by the literature (Kipp, 1991:59; Suttle, 2003:8), communication plays an important role in maintaining the emotional bond between a couple. Communication enables the member to be kept up to date with developments at home. Although the member is away from home, communication enables him/her to have a say in the running of the family affairs, and to acknowledge important events that take place at home during his/her absence. In addition, the spouse will then also not be lonely. As indicated in the OSD/S research (Bell, 1991:2), a dependable and accessible telecommunication system should be made available to both the member and the spouse.

4.3.1.1.5 Sub-theme 5: Death, illness in the family and admission to hospital

This study found that death, illness in the family and admission to hospital was one of the issues that some of the spouses were faced with during the absence of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "There was a death in the family".
- "My child and I were ill".
- "My father-in-law was critically ill and we could not inform my husband as he was deployed. We were worried that he might be negatively affected by this situation. Keeping it from him was very difficult. Even the children were warned not to say anything to him. He however, had this feeling that

something was wrong but I had to keep it from him and reassured him that everything was alright when in actual fact it wasn't".

- "My father-in-law passed away during his absence and performing burial rights in his absence was very difficult".
- "My grandmother passed away during his absence".
- "I had problems with the medical referrals of the children".
- "Children became ill and were admitted to hospital. I became ill and went on sick leave but had to stay strong for the sake of my children. I was also admitted to hospital with kidney stones".
- "The children became ill and taking full responsibility for the home was a problem for me".
- "I could not contact my spouse and had to face an illness on my own".
- "I was very sick and was not able to take care of my children".
- "I had a serious crisis with a child who was critically ill to the extent of admission to hospital".

In terms of this study, the literature (Bell, 1991:1; Logan, 1987:45) suggests that family crises negatively affect family stability. A lot of other problems such as health-related problems ensue as a result of these events. The coping abilities of the spouse at home are thus tested. In the researcher's view, despite the fact that this issue cannot be controlled, measures should be put in place in order to ensure that spouses are able to deal with such crises during the absence of members. The coping abilities of the spouse should thus be enhanced.

4.3.1.1.6 Sub-theme 6: Maintenance in the home

This study confirmed that SANDF spouses encountered domestic problems during the absence of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "Burst and leaking pipes".

- "As a result of my background, I was able to attend to problems such as fixing electrical problems in the house because my father was an electrician and as such I learned a lot from him. But it was still frustrating for me".
- "Things inside and outside the house broke".
- "The problems that I experienced was when the car broke down, tasks that needed to be done around the house for example repairing plugs, electricity equipment etcetera".
- "Replacing light bulbs".
- "Repairing plugs".

Based on the number of responses from the research subjects who took part in this qualitative study, and as indicated in the abovementioned responses related to maintenance in the home, only a few 5% (3) of the research subjects had the background of being self-reliant and independent, and were thus able to address these issues themselves whenever they arose. The literature (Cutrona, 1996:59-60) indicates that spouses encountered maintenance-related problems during the absence of members. Logistical support is thus a critical need during the absence of the member. Programmes that enable the spouse to deal with typical maintenance problems during the absence of the member should thus be implemented.

4.3.1.1.7 Sub-theme 7: Problems with children

As indicated in this study, the average age of the research subjects was 36. This implies that some of the members left behind children as young as one year old, and right up to adolescents. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "I had child behavioural problems (child entering adolescent stage)".
- "I had child care problems".
- "Child discipline was a problem".

- "The children asked about their father".

- "Bedwetting and wetting of pants at school. The fact that this occurred at school made things worse for the child because other children teased him about it".

- "Constant crying particularly with the youngest child and continual request for the father and no matter how much I tried to explain, there was lack of understanding of the meaning of deployment".

- "Children missed him a lot and contacting him was also expensive".

- "He left for deployment immediately after I gave birth and I took the responsibility of raising the child alone".

- "Having to tell a child that this is your father, particularly with the initial deployments was difficult".

- "The children continually asked for their father and were not on the level of understanding".

- "I had problems with the upbringing of children".

- "I gave birth in his absence".

- "My children became ill and were admitted to hospital during his absence".

- "Attending to extra-mural activities, homework, cooking for the children and putting them to bed and ready for school the next day was difficult".

The abovementioned comments confirmed that spouses encountered problems with children as a result of the external deployment of members. It has been indicated in the literature (Hornig, 1994:103; Kelly, 1994:171) that children, irrespective of their age, are negatively affected by deployment. They experience emotions similar to those of their mothers. Some end up with behavioural problems as a result. Therefore, the importance of helping children to cope with the emotions associated with external deployment cannot be overemphasised. Measures should thus be put in place to ensure that spouses and children are well supported and have the ability to deal with typical deployment-related problems during the absence of members.

4.3.1.1.8 Sub-theme 8: Interference by in-laws

While the use of support systems is positive on the one hand, it can be negative on the other hand, as has been identified in this study. One of the problems experienced by spouses was that of interference by their in-laws in the family affairs during the absence of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "In-laws interfered with the family process, as they wanted to take charge of family affairs during the absence of my husband".
- "I had conflict with my in-laws".
- "I was unhappy about the fact that my in-laws visited me at any time without informing me and they were coming all the way from Pietersburg. I did not have a problem with them visiting but the fact that they just arrived unannounced implies that they did not trust me".
- "I was blamed by the extended family for all the hiccups".
- "The in-laws wanted me to do things their own way".

In the researcher's view, if one analyses this data, it is evident that some in-laws contribute towards increasing the existing stress of families during the absence of members. While in-laws can be a source of support for some spouses, they can also be a source of stress for others. As indicated in this study, these are some of the issues that need to be looked at in preparation for deployment of members. Measures should be put in place to ensure that spouses are relieved of stress resulting from the external deployment of members.

4.3.1.1.9 Sub-theme 9: Loneliness and emotional problems

Taking full responsibility for family affairs is a difficult task that SANDF spouses are faced with during external military deployment of members. Most of the spouses indicated that they experienced loneliness and emotional difficulties

during the absence of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "I longed for my husband".
- "Emotionally, it is draining. Taking over his responsibilities in his absence is difficult".
- "I do not have time for myself".
- "Emotionally, I found it difficult to cope especially due to the frequent postponement of the return date".
- "During the absence of my husband I felt lonely and all the family responsibilities were vested upon me".
- "I experienced personal stress".
- "No problems except for my neighbours who tend to think that being a woman and alone with six children, I could not cope on my own".
- "I felt lonely".
- "I had no support in terms of emotional and physical needs".
- "I thought about him because he is far away, for a long time".
- "I ended up drinking alcohol just to deal with the frustration of having to manage things by myself but I didn't drink in front of the children. I would go to a friend's house and drink over there. It was really frustrating".

In the researcher's view, the abovementioned confirmed that spouses experienced loneliness and emotional problems during the external military deployment of members. One of the spouses resorted to the use of alcohol in order to deal with the situation. Alcohol was therefore used as a stress reliever in order to deal with the loneliness and emotional frustration of having to take full responsibility for the smooth running of family affairs in the absence of the member. The literature (Logan, 1987:43-46; Van Breda, 1993-1996:35) shows that spouses experience emotional problems as a result of deployment. As a result, the stability that has existed within the family is negatively affected. The importance of being aware of emotions associated with deployment cannot be

overemphasised. Being able to deal with such emotions is thus essential. Therefore, measures should be put in place to ensure that spouses are supported and able to deal with the absence of members.

4.3.1.2 Theme 2: Attitude towards deployment

It should be noted here that external deployment forms an integral part of the military way of life. This is information that is known to spouses, yet most of them do not grasp the actual meaning thereof or the impact on family life in general. In the case of this study, 40 (67%) of the research subjects indicated that they hated deployment, while 20 (33%) of them indicated that they liked deployment. The comments below give an indication of the positive responses:

- "I was able to renovate my house".
- "I was able to purchase new clothes for my children and a car as a result of external deployments, something that we would not have afforded if it wasn't for external deployments".
- "I am in favour. Positive".
- "It is fine. Our husbands get some more money".
- "I think it is a good thing because it exposes people to different situations".
- "They are long and I think they have been happening for a long time now, but the advantage is monetary if it is used well".
- "Good, since it provides an extra income since my husband is not earning a lot of money".
- "I have no reservations about external deployments as I have the support from my children and family members".

Those who were not in favour of external deployment cited various reasons for their negative attitude. The comments below give an indication of the negative responses:

- "Deployment brings about changes to the family structure which was stable".
- "I gave birth during the absence of the member".
- "It separates families".
- "Families cannot cope during the external deployment of the member, families suffer and in particular, the children miss their father".
- "It destroys family stability and the period of deployment should be shortened from six months to three months".
- "I once told my husband that I would divorce him if he deploys but we are still together".
- "Deployment has too many negative consequences; it is scary because it exposes the members to dangerous situations as we see on TV".
- "I was scared that my husband might develop illnesses from another country and bring them home".
- "If I had an option I would not agree to the deployment of my husband".
- "Deployment is very long. I missed my husband".
- "The children suffered emotionally and I had to rely on my parents-in-law to support and encourage our children".
- "Negative. There were too many negative consequences (military)".
- "Separation is not good for the family".
- "I hate them. It destabilises the existing family structure and relationships. It would probably make a difference if there were some form of support provided by the Department of Defence".

In the researcher's view, the abovementioned data are indicative of the fact that most of the spouses do not generally accept the concept of external deployment. Some accept it only when things are fine, but once they experience difficulties, they are no longer in favour of it. The abovementioned responses from research subjects attest to this. On the other hand, the financial incentive that is associated with deployment seems to be the greatest motivator for members and

spouses agreeing to external deployment, with the hope that it will bring about changes in their financial situation.

Some studies (Eastman et al., 1990:114; Van Breda, 1997a:20) suggest that deployment-related frustrations and challenges determine the nature of the attitude that spouses have towards deployment. As indicated by the research subjects in this study, if the experience of deployment was positive, the attitude would also be positive. However, if the experience was negative, then the attitude would also be negative. Furthermore, according to the researcher, it is apparent that spouses of SANDF members are not resilient enough to be able to deal with the challenges associated with external deployment during the absence of members. The fact that most of the research subjects had a negative attitude towards deployment implies that spouses encountered difficulties during the absence of members.

In addition, research (see Segal and Harris, 1993:24; Segal and Bourg, 1999:636-637) has also shown that spouses' attitudes towards deployment are affected by the nature of support services provided by the organisation. Intervention measures that are enforced by the organisation in support of spouses during the absence of members play a vital role in the attitude of the spouse towards deployment. Therefore, it is critical that measures are put in place to support spouses during the absence of members.

4.3.1.3 Theme 3: Organisational deployment support

In the researcher's view, spousal resilience is critical to ensuring that members are mission ready. In the case of this study, 25 (42%) of the research subjects indicated that they never received any form of support from the organisation during the external deployment of members, while 35 (58%) of the respondents indicated that they did receive some form of support from the organisation.

In general, the form of support received by most of the research subjects ranged from a one-day resilience programme presented by social work officers and chaplains, telephone calls from social work officers and the unit, a financial management programme, home visits by social work officers, crisis management, letters from the unit, prayer meetings and transport for doctor's appointments. Those research subjects who received some form of support from the organisation indicated that to a certain extent, knowing that there was someone who cared about them made a considerable difference to these lonely and emotionally difficult times.

Those research subjects who did not receive any support from the organisation used various approaches to deal with their problems, such as consulting friends, colleagues, in-laws and family members. In cases where research subjects were aware of the services provided by social workers, they made use of these services. One of the spouses indicated that "I kept quiet about problems until my husband came back to resolve them because I did not want to ruin his name by seeking assistance". Another respondent stated that "I was scared that he would be sent home if I reported the matter. As a result, I persevered even though it was difficult".

The literature (Segal and Harris, 1993:31-35; Figley, in Kaslow, 1993:176) shows that families' ability to adapt to and cope with deployment during the absence of members largely depends on the extent of support services, formal and informal, provided by the organisation. In the case of the SANDF, the need to provide support services to SANDF members during deployment led to the formulation of a Draft Resilience Policy. The implementation of this policy will ensure that spouses are supported during the absence of members. In this way, combat readiness of members will be enforced, and productivity will be enhanced.

In general, all the research subjects stressed the importance of ensuring that support services are rendered to spouses during the absence of members. The

general feeling was expressed by 57 (95%) of the research subjects that a uniform/standard format of deployment support should be rendered to spouses during the external deployment of members, while 3 (5%) were not in favour of this. No particular reason was given for not being in favour of a uniform/standard format of deployment support to spouses during the external deployment of the members. However, when the researcher analysed their responses in the interviews, it was interesting to note that all of them expressed their views regarding the type of support services that they would need from the organisation during the external deployment of members. 57 (95%) of the spouses were of the opinion that units need to be informed about the kind of support services that spouses need. The rationale behind this response is that it will be helpful and ensure that a uniform service is rendered to all. Finally, despite the fact that 21 (35%) of the research subjects were of the opinion that provision of support services needs to be rendered by social work officers, and 9 (15%) believed that they should be rendered by the units, most of the respondents 25 (42%) were of the opinion that a multidisciplinary team has a critical responsibility to address this issue. Therefore, the organisation should be held responsible for rendering comprehensive support services to spouses during the external deployment of members.

4.3.1.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Lack of support/assistance

In this study, most of the research subjects indicated that they encountered problems with having no-one to turn to in times of crisis during the absence of members. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "I did not have anybody to stay with me because we don't have any family in this province (Western Cape) and we have no children. While I was at work, gangsters robbed me and stole my house keys. So, they had access to my house while I was staying alone".

- "I had no knowledge of services that could be rendered by the SANDF during the external deployment of my husband".

If one analyses this data, it appears that no services were rendered to most of the research subjects before, during and after the deployment of members. The literature specifies that social support protects the family and the deploying member from deployment-related stressors (see Amen et al., 1988:445; Koshes & Rothberg, 1994:456; Adler et al., 1995:18). The research subjects had to look for ways of handling these problems without any form of assistance from the organisation. This situation is indicative of the fact that the organisation has a responsibility to ensure that support measures such as a spousal support group are put in place in order to support spouses during the external deployment of members.

4.3.1.4 Theme 4: Need for spousal support services

The researcher is of the opinion that external military deployment is a responsibility that the SANDF cannot avoid. With the average age of the SANDF members' spouses being 36, as reflected in this study, most of them have children who are in their teenage years, as well as infants. They are in relationships that need some form of support. On its own, deployment presents many challenges. The literature (Zinn and Eitzen, 1993:217-18; Figley, in Kaslow, 1993:176) stresses the importance of an organisational response to the needs of spouses during the deployment of members. The resilience of both the member and the spouse is given attention. Due to the fact that separation is an inherent part of deployment, it is critical that the felt needs of both members and spouses are addressed during the external deployment of members. The following section provides an indication of the needs of spouses of SANDF members who have been involved in external deployment.

4.3.1.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Before deployment

The deployment support needs that were common to all the research subjects before the deployment of members were identified in this study. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "Provision of sufficient time for emotional preparation of the family for deployment".
- "Transport arrangements for both the children and the spouse".
- "Preparation of children particularly with regard to communication".
- "Assistance with emotional adjustment".
- "Fostering the understanding of what deployment is".

- "Provision of a map on the mission area (that is provision of information on deployment and its dynamics), particularly when one deployment is followed by another one".
- "Marital counselling and enrichment particularly with regard to role clarification, communication, extramarital relations and financial management".
- "The establishment of a unit deployment support committee that will focus on deployment related issues of the spouses".
- "Provision of a pamphlet with all the relevant information and telephone numbers of who to contact in case of emergencies".
- "A social work officer should be present during all the phases of deployment".

Therefore, deployment support services should be rendered well in advance before the deployment of the member. This data suggests the need for intervention measures to be put in place to ensure that spouses are well prepared and cared for by the organisation before members are deployed. Furthermore, the literature (Adams, 2003:ii) supports the notion that families

need to be well prepared for deployment. This will enable them to cope during the absence of members. Addressing the abovementioned needs will enhance the coping abilities of spouses during the absence of members.

4.3.1.4.2 Sub-theme 2: During deployment

According to 100% (60) of the research subjects, deployment support services are even more critical during the deployment period. This period has been found to be the most stressful and problematic. Spouses identified their deployment support needs in this regard. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "Provision of an accessible telephone facility (free lines) for both the spouse and the children, they should be able to call the member at least twice per week".
- "Regular home visits by the multidisciplinary team, particularly the social work officer".
- "Practical assistance, for example with replacing the light bulbs, fixing the car and replacing tyres".
- "Transportation of children to school and to hospital".
- "Transportation of the spouse for purchasing of groceries and account payments, particularly with regard to those who reside in outlying rural areas where there is no transport available".
- "Constant support by the unit and the Officer Commanding (OC)".
- "Two weeks off after every three months".
- "Establishment of a deployment support group that will be able to converse and share deployment related experiences and frustrations".
- "Feedback on the period of deployment, including the extension thereof".
- "Home visits now and then, telephone calls from the unit".
- "Spot checks by the unit just to confirm that they are still safe especially regarding those in military housing".

- "The social work officer and the chaplain should act as a link between the family and the member".

- "More support from the unit such as letters of encouragement, cards, gifts, unit news of encouragement".

- "A 24 hour help desk or halfway house should be established, even if it is just for communication purposes".

- Recreational facilities should be provided in order to keep the members involved during their free time".

- "More support services should be rendered by the chaplains, particularly with regard to prayer sessions, financial management programmes (one of the research subjects indicated that the unit should make provision for loans in case of need during the absence of the member such as money for unplanned school trips for children)".

- "Parenting skills in dealing with adolescents during the absence of the member".

- "The provision of employment opportunities for spouses with skills".

- "Sufficient communication is vital during the deployment of the member".

This data indicates the need for spousal support during the external deployment of the member. Some studies (see Hornig, 1994:28-29; Bell et al., 1996:4) reflect the importance of spousal support during the absence of the member. Provision of support services to spouses during the absence of members will enable members to carry out their task effectively, knowing that their families are well taken care of. Combat readiness will thus be ensured. The researcher further aligns herself with the possibility of establishing a Family Support Group (FSG) within the SANDF, which will act as a forum through which deployment-related frustrations and challenges of spouses, as well as the abovementioned needs, would be addressed during the absence of members.

4.3.1.4.3 Sub-theme 3: Post-deployment

In the researcher's view, as much as homecoming is exciting, it also has its own share of frustrations and challenges. Further readjustment to the already existing patterns within the family has to take place. The comments below give an indication of the general responses:

- "Thorough preparation for homecoming is critical".
- "Marital counselling is essential".
- "Debriefing should be given priority".
- "The organisation should show some interest in what is happening in the family".
- "The organisation should show appreciation and concern for the sacrifice that the members are making".
- "Homecoming recess every three months is vital and would make a significant difference to the marital relationships".
- "I want to continue doing things my own way".
- "I was used to having the space in the bed all to myself suddenly I have to share it with someone".
- "I had already established my own set of rules and procedures suddenly that has to change".
- "HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and provision of information to the spouse relating to the results of the HIV test undertaken by the member upon arrival from the mission area".

This data attests to the fact that reintegration into the family poses a problem, because the pattern of adjustment within the family is negatively affected. It further involves changes to the already existing family structure that was established in the absence of the member. The literature (Kaslow, 1993:180-181) confirms that post-deployment has its own challenges, due perhaps to fear of the unknown. This is as a result of the fact that both the member and the spouse

have created expectations for themselves, and experience uncertainty regarding whether or not these expectations will be met. Readjustment becomes a major problem, to the extent that there might be thoughts of unfaithfulness on the part of both the member and the spouse. Thus, the fact that the abovementioned responses from research subjects suggest that problems arose when members came home confirms the need for a model for spousal support during the absence of the member.

In addition, the abovementioned data indicate that the organisation is not doing enough in terms of the provision of support services to spouses during the external deployment of members. Resilience of the family is critical to ensuring that members are mission ready and mentally healthy. Therefore, the organisation has a role to play in terms of ensuring that sufficient intervention measures are put in place during the external deployment of the member, thereby promoting family values. In this way, the organisation will help to bring about stability in military communities.

4.4   SUMMARY

This chapter gave a detailed presentation, analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data that were obtained from the empirical study. Literature was incorporated into the findings of the qualitative study. The next chapter will focus on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the quantitative study.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In the quantitative study, a sample of 350 research subjects was selected to take part in this study. Questionnaires were used as a quantitative data collection method to elicit information from SANDF members who had been involved in external deployment regarding the nature of social support services during their external military deployment. Social workers who were deployed with those members were requested to assist with the completion of the questionnaires. In total, 261 questionnaires were completed by SANDF members who were involved in external military deployment during the period between June and November 2007. The response rate was thus 75%. According to De Vos, Fouché and Venter (2002:223):

> Data analysis in the quantitative paradigm entails that the analyst breaks down data into constituent parts to obtain answers to research questions and to test research hypothesis. The analysis of research data, however, does not in itself provide answers to research questions. Interpretation of the data is necessary.

5.2 Section A: Biographical data

Section A of the quantitative study dealt with biographical data of research subjects, which is discussed below.

5.2.1 Gender

Figure 4: Gender distribution of respondents
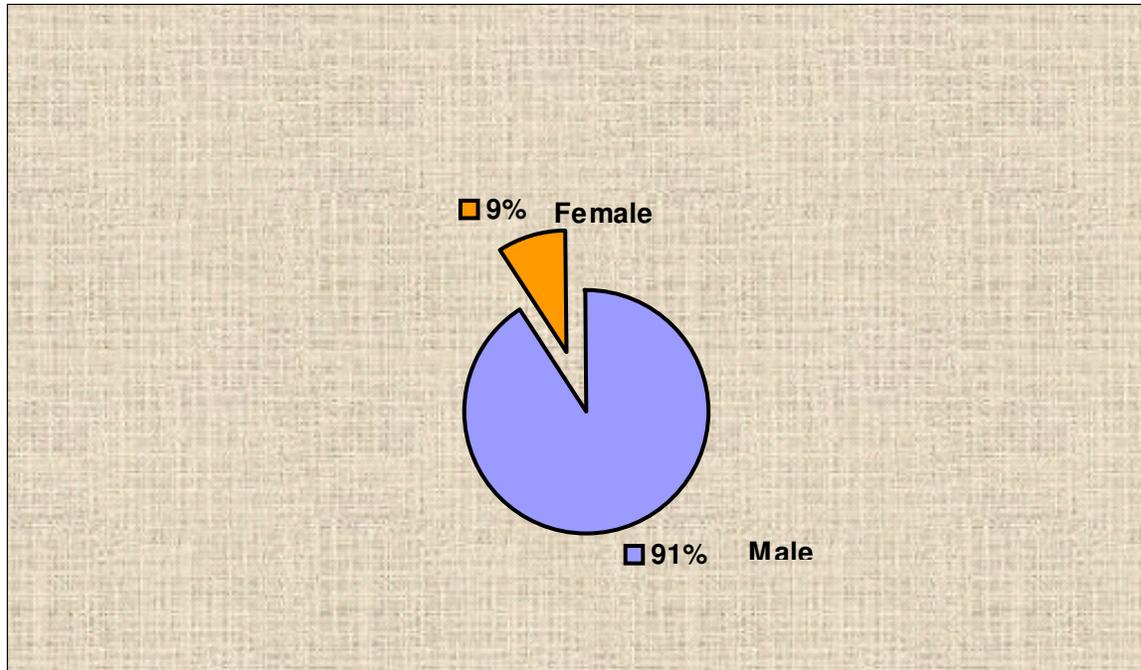
Figure 4 above indicates that 237 (91%) of the research subjects were male, while 24 (9%) of them were female. The abovementioned data confirms that the SANDF organisation is still predominantly male – however, the demographics are gradually changing. The literature (Kaslow, 1993:30-31) confirms changes in the demographics of armed forces. A large number of members within the SANDF are male, and the number of female soldiers is low in comparison to that of males. The fact that the SANDF is still predominantly male suggests that men need to be empowered to ensure that women are fully supported during their absence. The focus of support services should also on the women, who have the responsibility of keeping everything at home in order during the absence of members.

5.2.2 Age distribution

Figure 5: Age distribution of respondents
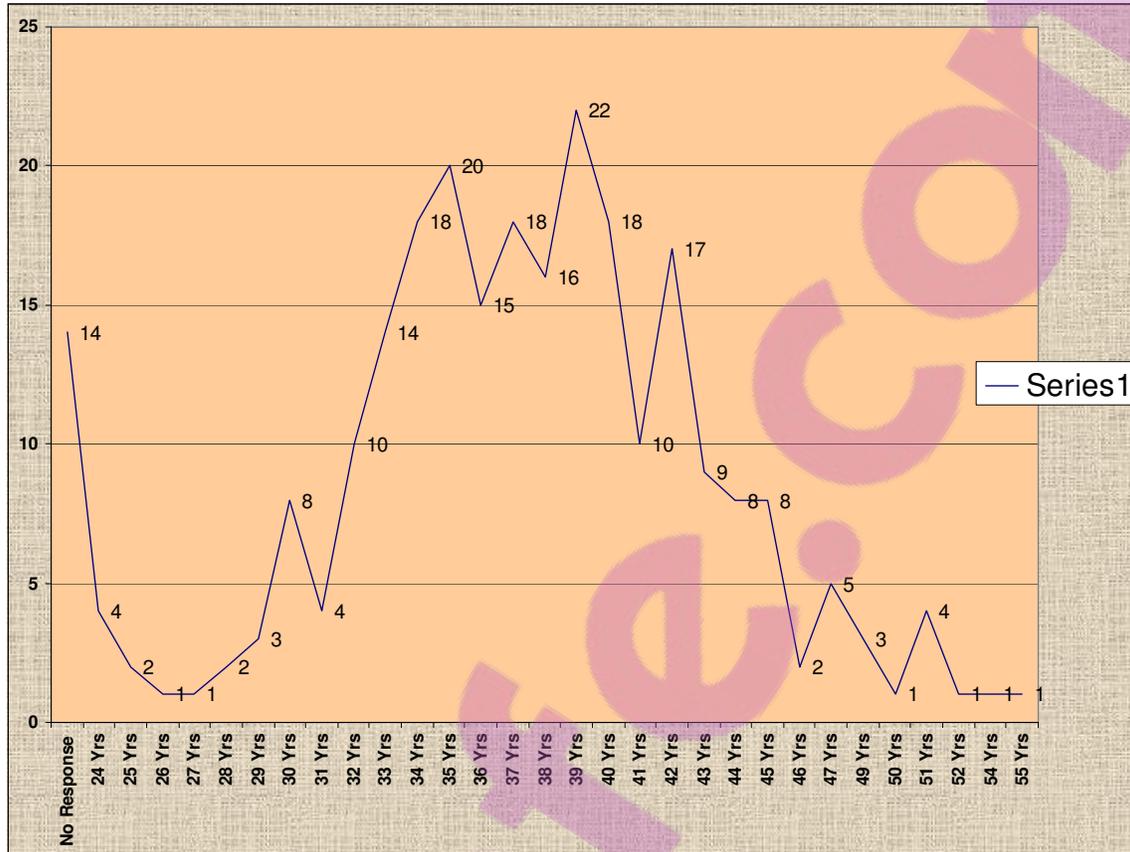
Figure 5 above indicates that in this study, the age of the research subjects ranged between 24 and 55. A large number, 161 (62%), of the research subjects fell within the age group 35 to 45, 67 (26%) fell within the age group 24 to 34, while 18 (7%) of the research subjects fell within the age group 46 to 55. Fourteen (5%) of the research subjects did not answer the question. The average age of the members who were externally deployed was 38. This data therefore indicates that the members of the SANDF who are involved in external military deployment are somewhat young, and this correlates with the average age (36) of the spouses. Furthermore, in the researcher's view, if one analyse this data, this age group correlates with the fact that a considerable number of the members are married and should therefore have a stable lifestyle. The needs of the members also increase because they are in charge of their own families.

Despite the fact that members have a task to fulfil, the promotion of family norms is also of great importance. Therefore, the fact that members are purportedly engaged in stable marital relationships possibly implies that social work officers within the SANDF have a critical role to play in terms of ensuring that family norms and relations are maintained during the absence of the member.

5.2.3 Relationship status

Figure 6: Relationship status of respondents
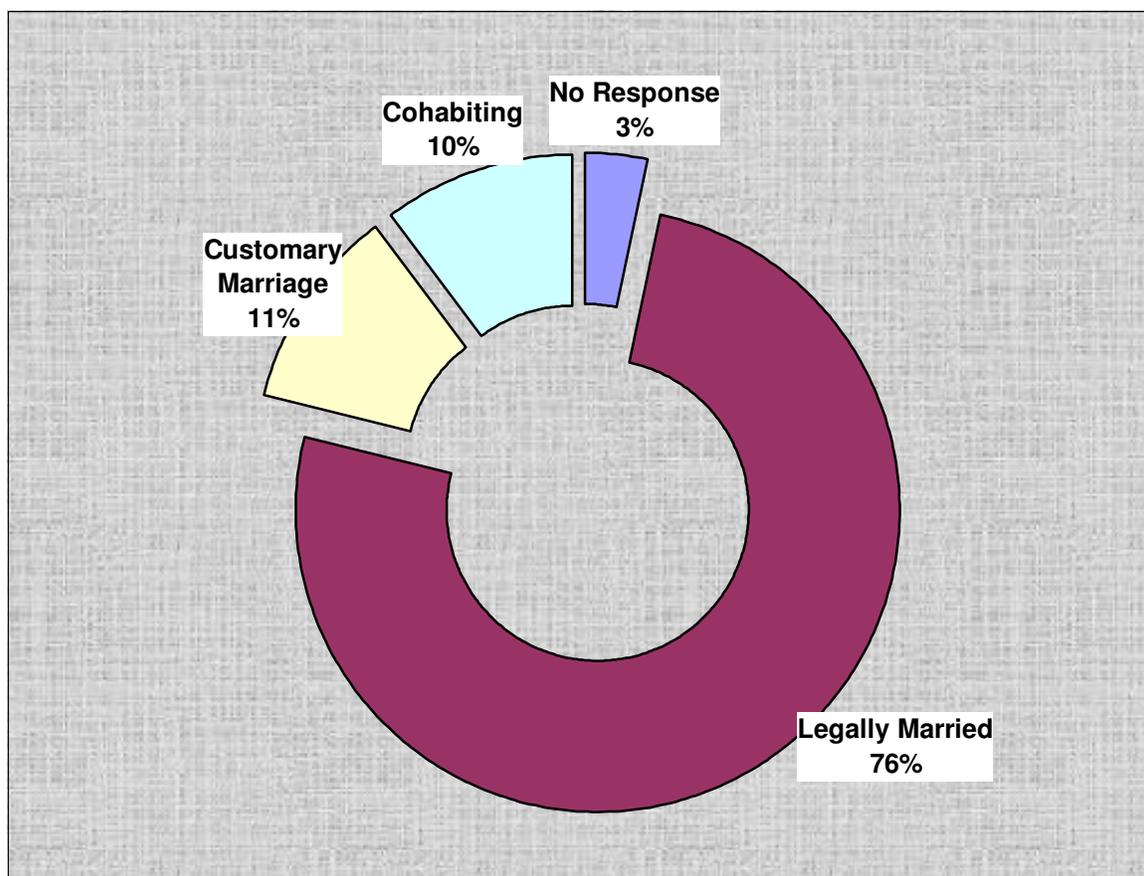
Figure 6 above indicates that a large number, 197 (76%), of the research subjects are legally married, 28 (11%) are customarily married, and 27 (10%) are cohabiting. Nine (3%) of the research subjects did not answer the question. This data confirms that there are families and relations to maintain during the execution of the task at hand. Employee wellbeing is critical to ensuring the

success of the mission. It therefore demands of the organisation to put measures in place to support the spouse during the absence of the member, in order to enhance these relationships. The organisation should be proactive in terms of ensuring that there is a constant balance between the task at hand and maintenance of marital relations.

5.2.4 Years in the relationship

Figure 7: Years in the relationship
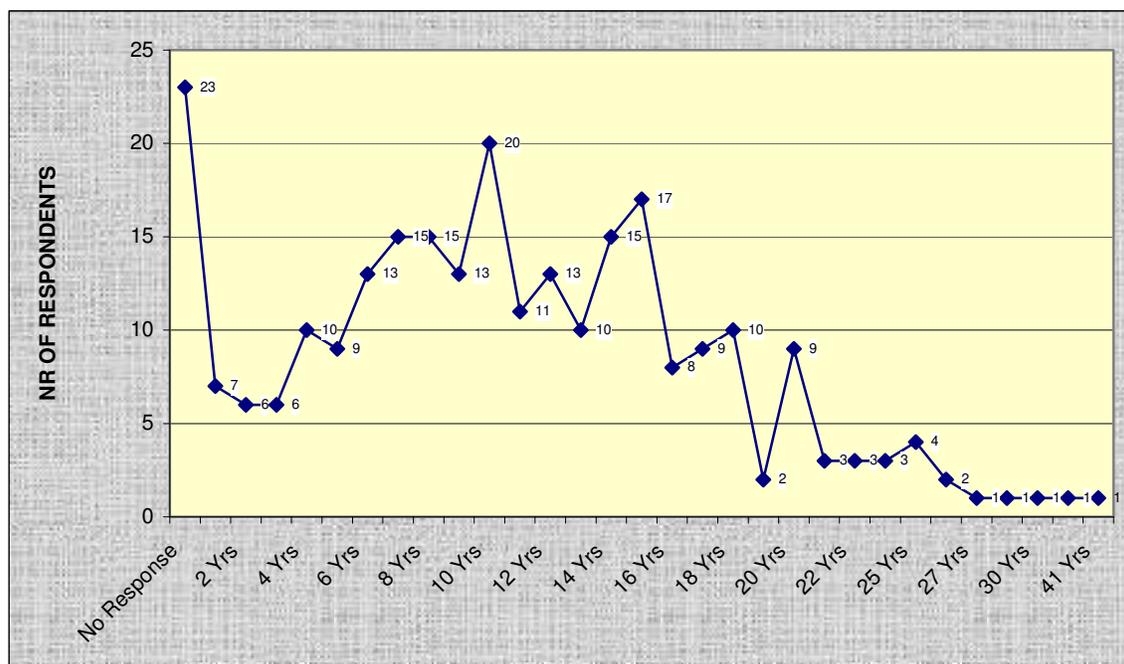
Figure 7 above gives an indication of the number of years that the respondents have been in the relationship. The period ranges between one and 41 years, with the majority of the research subjects having been in the relationship for between one and 20 years. However, 23 (9%) of the research subjects did not answer the question. Therefore, the abovementioned data confirms that the research subjects had an average of 11 years' experience in the marital relationship or were cohabiting (permanent partnership) for more than a year. The fact that the research subjects had an average of 11 years' experience in their marriage might

imply that they have experience in terms of their relationship and are able to cope with whatever challenges they might encounter. However, this does not seem to be the case, as confirmed in this study. All the research subjects encountered some form of deployment-related problem during separation, irrespective of the years of experience that they had in the marriage. This situation is indicative of the fact that the SANDF has a responsibility to ensure that those relationships are nurtured by means of support measures during the external deployment of members. Social work officers should ensure that members and their families are well prepared before the members go on deployment. Preparation for deployment should form part of the daily task of social workers, particularly with regard to those who are functional within deploying units.

5.2.5 Occupational status of the spouse

Figure 8: Occupational status of the spouse
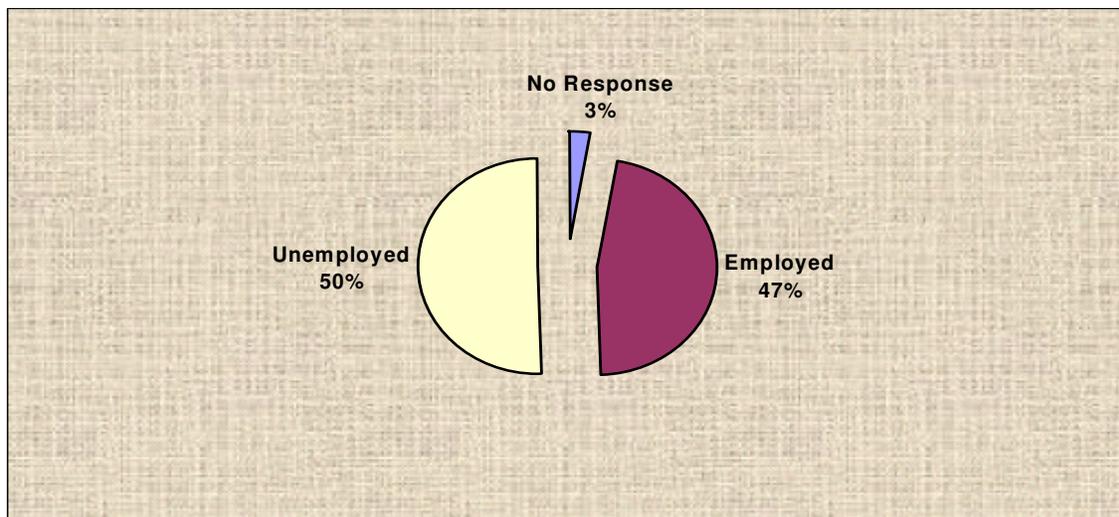
Figure 8 above gives an indication of the occupational status of the spouses of members who had been involved in external military deployment. One hundred and twenty two (47%) of the research subjects' spouses were employed, while 132 (51%) were unemployed. Seven (3%) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data correlates with the responses in the qualitative

study, which indicated that 50% of the spouses were employed, while 50% were unemployed. No difference could be found between the number of spouses who were employed and those who were unemployed. In other words, the percentage of employed and unemployed spouses is more or less the same. However, according to the researcher, this correlates with the high rate of unemployment that South Africa is presently faced with. The labour force survey (Lehohla, 2007:xxiii) confirmed a decline in the South African unemployment rate from 25,5% in September 2006 to 22,7% in September 2007. Furthermore, reports (Masiteng, 2008:1) confirmed that South Africa's unemployment rate declined to 23% in September 2007, a figure that is the lowest since the first labour force survey in 2001. Thus, the 22, 7% unemployment rate in South Africa attests to the fact that unemployment is high. In light of this, the employment and unemployment rates of the spouses of SANDF members who are or have been involved in external military deployment cannot be viewed in isolation, but should be viewed within the context of issues with which the country is faced. Therefore, the need for robust support measures during the absence of the member is clear. Spouses of SANDF members, particularly those who are unemployed, need to be empowered and supported in order to enable them to be resilient when dealing with deployment-related stressors during the absence of members. Empowerment programmes need to be conducted by social work officers within the organisation, in order to ensure that spouses are independent and self-reliant.

5.2.6 Rank distribution of respondents

Figure 9: Rank distribution of respondents
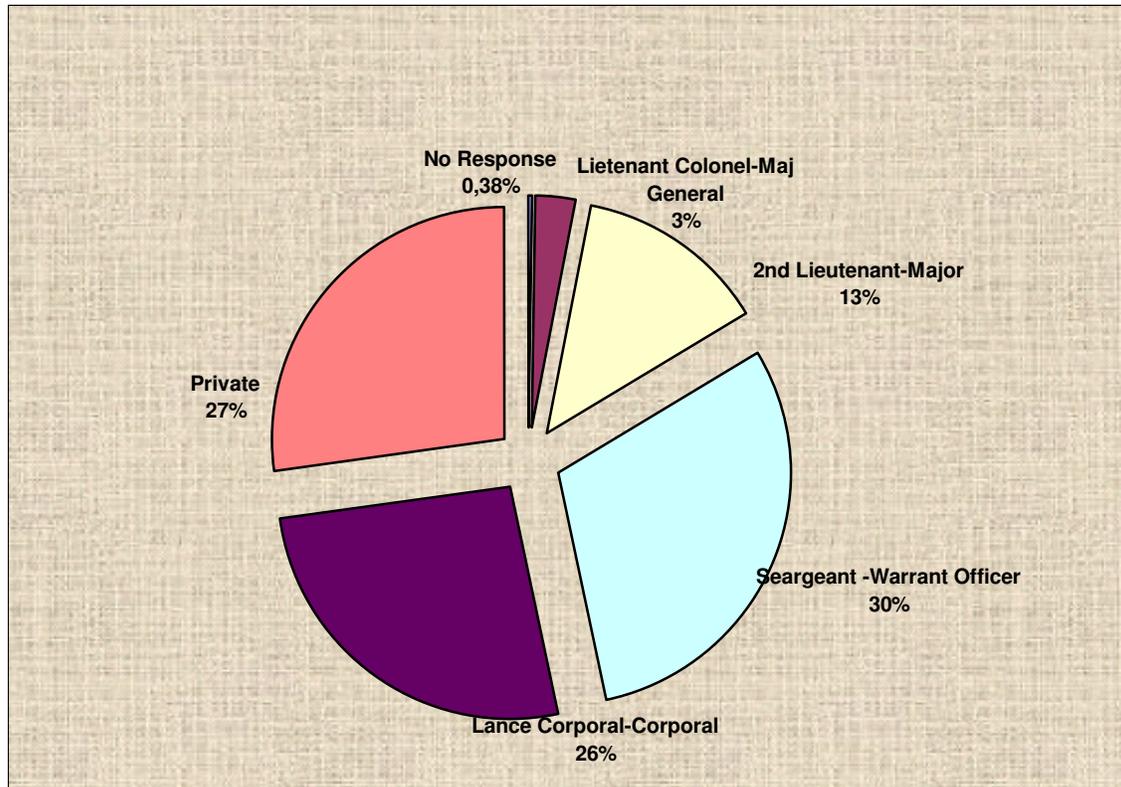
Figure 9 above gives an indication of the rank distribution of members who were involved in external military deployment. This data shows that 71 (27%) of the members fell within the rank group of Private, 68 (26%) within the rank group of Lance Corporal to Corporal, 79 (30%) within rank group of Sergeant to Warrant Officer, 35 (13%) within the rank group of 2nd Lieutenant to Major, and 7 (3%) within the rank group of Lieutenant Colonel to Major General. Only 1 (0,38%) did not respond to this question. As indicated in the qualitative study, this data also confirms that a large percentage of the members who were involved in external military deployment fell within the rank group of NCOs. The researcher acknowledges the limitation of her questionnaire with regard to combining the rank groups of Sergeant and Warrant Officer. These are two separate rank groups, which are of an unequal status. However, it can be confirmed that in the

case of the quantitative study, the majority of members (53%) who were externally deployed fell within the rank groups of Private and Corporal. If one further analyses this data, while taking cognisance of the fact that these members are engaged in marital relationships, the financial incentive that is associated with deployment could be the reason for this situation. The literature (Van Breda, 1993-1996:60) suggests that more senior ranks and officers are characterised by an absence of risk factors, are fairly secure in their lives, have relatively limited financial difficulties and are able to adapt to changes in their life-styles. The qualitative study also confirmed that the financial incentive associated with deployment made it possible for members to make changes in their households (for example, extending the house, buying a car and purchasing new furniture), something that they would not necessarily be able to do if they were at home. The implication is that these members and their families could be empowered in order to deal with deployment-related stressors during the absence of members. Intervention measures should be put in place to address this issue.

5.2.7 Period of employment in the SANDF

The period of employment of members in the SANDF ranged between 1 and 33 years. Ninety-eight percent (257) of the research subjects had an average of 15 years' employment experience in the SANDF. Four of the research subjects did not answer this question. When one analyses this data, it becomes apparent that most of the members had been working in the SANDF for some time. In the researcher's view, if one compares the average period (15 years) of employment in the SANDF of most of the research subjects (98%) with their rank distribution in Figure 9 above, and their average age in Figure 5 above, one could conclude that although they had been working in the SANDF for some time, they had low ranks. This implies that prospects for promotion are minimal, and their needs in order to enable them to meet their family responsibilities have increased with time. Therefore, they would seize any opportunity that would make a difference to

their family situation. The omitted responses could be as a result of a lack of interest in completing the questionnaire or the need to remain anonymous.

5.2.8 Period away on deployment in the last 12 months

Figure 10: Period away on deployment in the last 12 months (months)
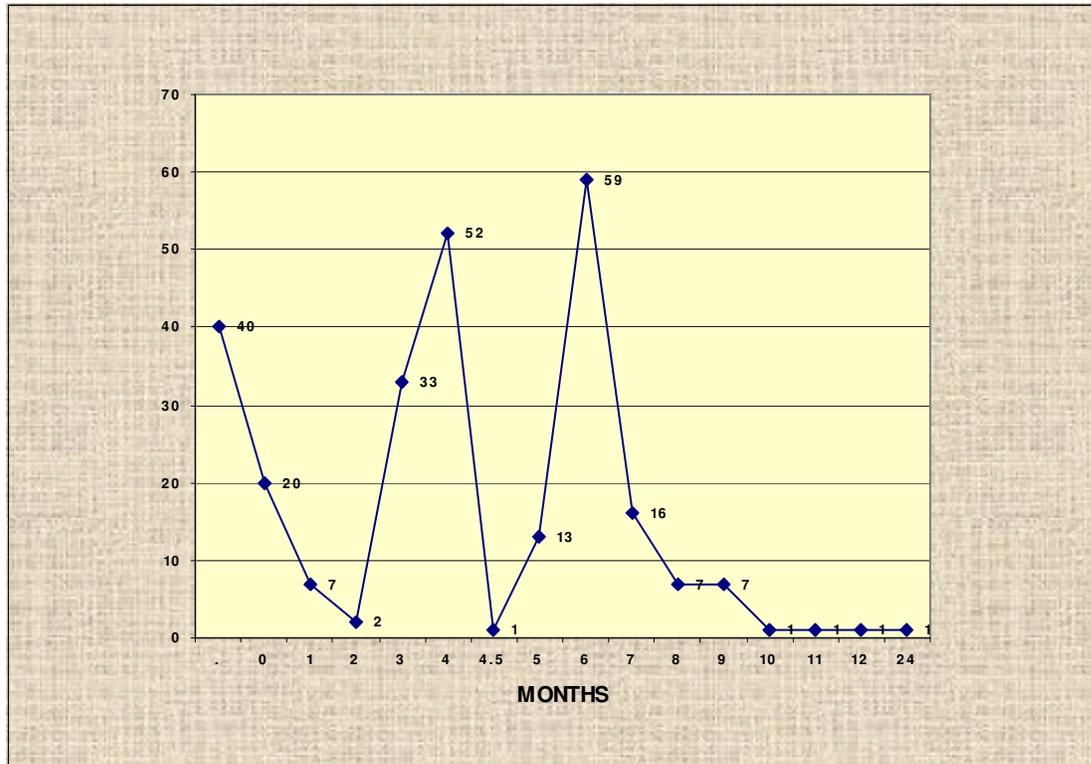
Figure 10 above gives an indication of the period for which the member went away on external deployment. This period ranged between 0 and 24 months. Eighty-five percent (221) of the research subjects were away for an average of four months. Forty of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms the fact that when one excludes their current external military deployment, most of the members were separated from their spouses as a result of external military deployment. This was also confirmed in the qualitative study. The literature (see Paap, 1991:39-40; Wood et al*.,* 1995:217-218; Suttle, 2003:2-4) supports the notion that deployment and separation are part of military life.

Deployment forms an integral part of the duties and responsibilities of a soldier. However, deployment has its own challenges and frustrations. Furthermore, separation, irrespective of its duration, is just as challenging as homecoming. As a result, deployment brings about change, separation and loneliness. Families struggle to survive during the absence of members. Therefore, the above-mentioned data confirms that separation from families occurs as a result of external military deployment. In addition, deployment has been identified as a military way of life. One can thus deduce that families have been exposed to a lot of stress as a result of external military deployment. There is therefore an urgent need for spousal support measures to be in place. Furthermore, as a result of the fact that deployment forms an integral part of the military way of life, it is critical that social work officers implement measures that will ensure that members and their families are well supported during separation. On the other hand, the organisation has a responsibility to ensure that resources such as transport and telephones are provided to social work officers, so as to enable them to carry out this task effectively.

5.2.9 Frequency of involvement in external military deployment

Ninety-five percent (249) of the research subjects had an average of 2 years' involvement in external military deployment. On the other hand, 5% (12) of the research subjects did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, it can be concluded that most of the members had been involved in external deployment at least twice, since some of the members went on deployment more than once. This confirms the fact that members had been separated from their spouses. Therefore, spouses were aware of the concept of external military deployment. However, as was also confirmed in the qualitative study, their ability to deal with this deployment is questionable. One would assume that knowledge about deployment and previous involvement in external military deployment implies an ability to deal with separation. This, however, does not seem to be the case. Deployment-related challenges and frustrations have been noted in this

study, irrespective of experience of deployment. The literature (Motumi, 2004:2) supports the notion that this requires the organisation, in particular the Department of Social Work, to ensure that members and families are supported during the absence of members, thereby bringing about a balance between the demands of the military system and the needs of its members. In this way, mission readiness will be ensured.

5.2.10 Country of deployment

Table 6: Country of deployment

Country	Number of Respondents	Percentage
DRC	177	68%
Sudan	73	28%
Burundi	113	43%
Comores	4	2%
Ivory Coast	1	0.38%
TOTAL	**368**	**141.38%**

This study confirmed that SANDF members were deployed on external military peace missions in conflict-stricken countries in Africa. Sixty-eight percent (177) of the research subjects were deployed to the DRC, 28% (73) were deployed to Sudan, 43% (113) were deployed to Burundi, 2 percent (4) were deployed to the Comores, and 0.38% (1) was deployed to the Ivory Coast. The total percentage indicated in Table 6 above is over 100%, as a result of the fact that the research subjects had an opportunity to provide more than one response to this question, and had been deployed more than once. DeLong (2004:21) confirms that as a result of the struggle for power, countries are riddled with conflicts, which requires the intervention of military forces to assist with peace missions. Therefore, like any other armed forces, SANDF members are externally deployed to African countries and other parts of the world whenever the need arises. Research subjects in this study also indicated that they were deployed to other

countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Germany, England and Nigeria. Therefore, as indicated in the qualitative study, this data confirms that SANDF members had been involved in external military deployment. The implication of this is that members have to be separated from their families in order to carry out the task at hand. Family readiness, on the other hand, determines successful mission accomplishment. The success of the mission depends on combat readiness of members, and combat readiness is determined by the extent to which members and their families are supported before, during and after the deployment period. Implementation of support measures by the SANDF during deployment is thus vital.

5.2.11 Participation in the preparation for deployment programme

Figure 11: Participation in the preparation for deployment programme
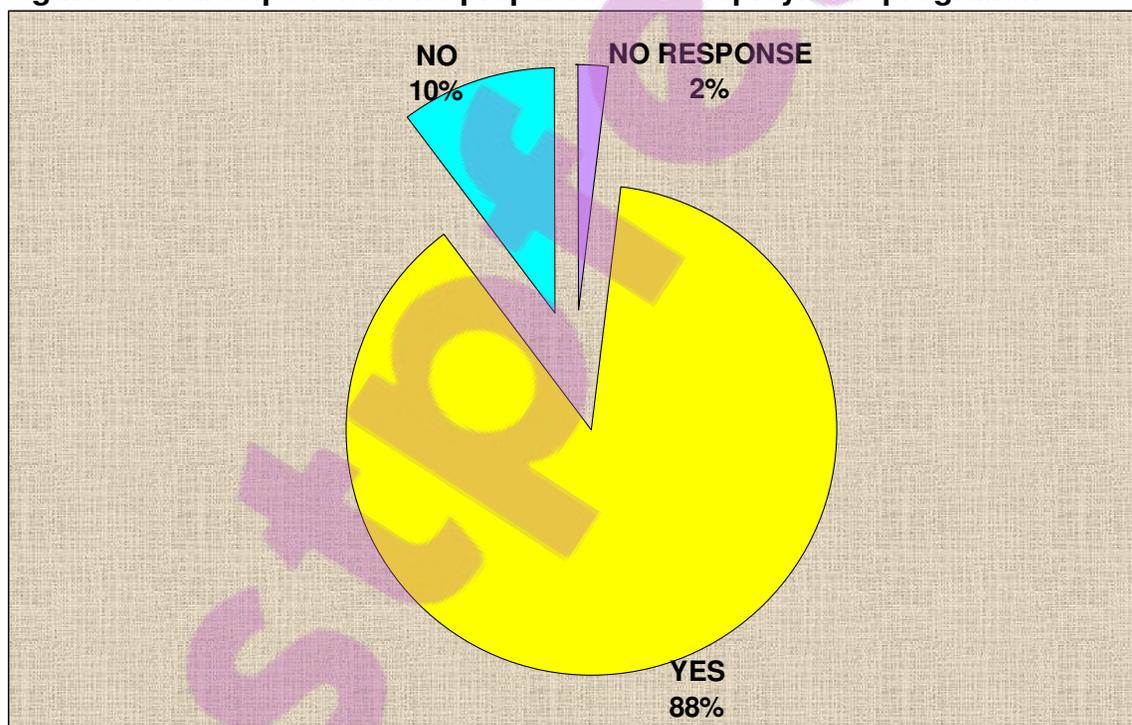
Figure 11 above indicates that 88% (229) of the research subjects took part in the preparation for deployment programme, while 10% (27) of the research subjects indicated that they did not take part in any deployment preparation

programme. Two percent (5) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms the fact that most of the SANDF members took part in the preparation for deployment programme. Furthermore, 13 (48%) out of 27 (100%) research subjects who did not take part in this programme indicated that they did not have any knowledge of the programme, while 11 (41%) of the research subjects indicated that they did not attend the preparation for deployment programme because they were not given time to attend this programme. Therefore, a need was identified for the organisation to ensure that all members of the SANDF who are involved in external military deployment are prepared for deployment, in order to enable them to be combat ready, thereby ensuring the success of the mission. The researcher supports the view of (Hornig, 1994:1) that if members and their spouses are well prepared for deployment, productivity will be enhanced. Preparation for deployment and combat readiness go hand in hand. The coping abilities of both the member and the spouse are improved as a result of preparation for deployment. The importance of spousal support and family preparedness in terms of the overall goal of total combat readiness and the outcome of the task at hand cannot therefore be overemphasised.

If one further analyses this data, one would be inclined to conclude that since a large percentage of the members took part in a preparation for deployment programme, members and their families will be resilient enough to deal with deployment-related stressors. However, this does not seem to be the case. Deployment-related challenges and frustrations are still documented, despite this intervention. Typical problems and challenges faced by spouses in the qualitative study also attest to this. Social work officers should thus be proactive in preparing members for deployment. Efforts should be geared towards ensuring that both members and their families undergo thorough preparation for deployment.

5.2.12 Spousal participation in the preparation for deployment programme

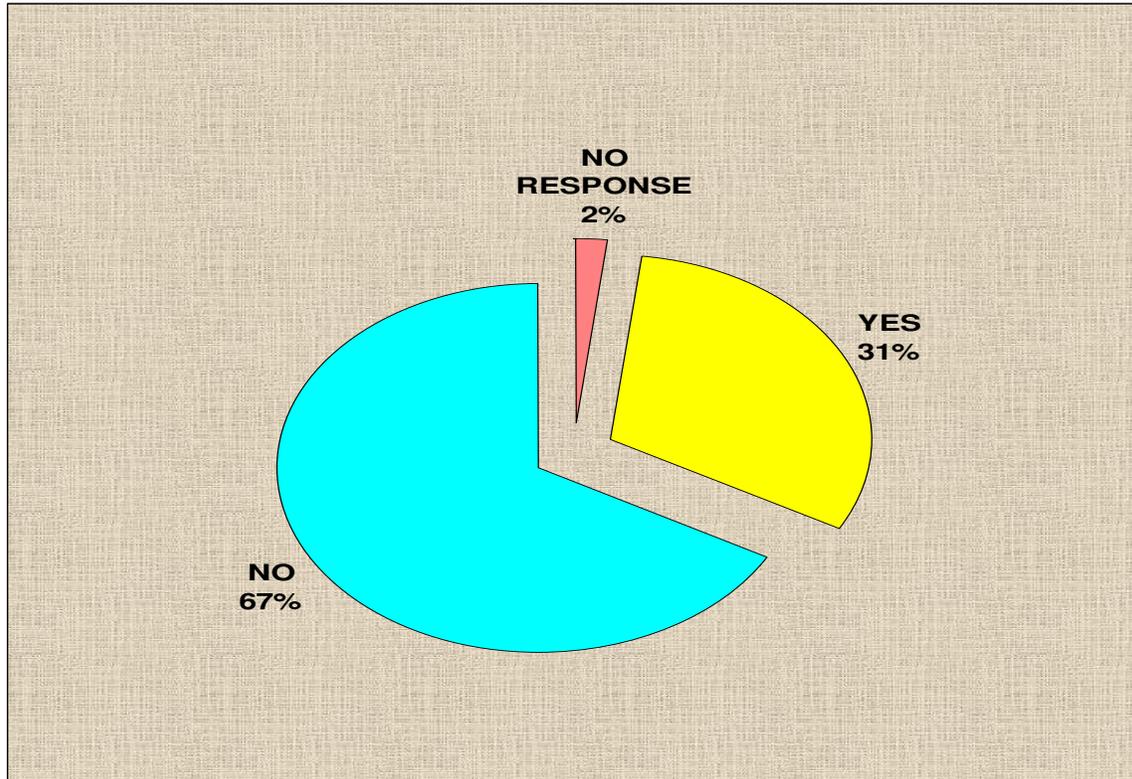**Figure 12: Spousal participation in the preparation for deployment programme**

Unlike the responses to members' participation in the preparation for deployment programme, as indicated above, 31% (81) of the research subjects indicated that spouses took part in a preparation for deployment programme, while 67% (175) of the research subjects confirmed that spouses did not take part in a preparation for deployment programme. Five (2%) did not complete this question. Reasons for non-participation in the spousal preparation for deployment programme were given as follows: having no knowledge of the programme (39% (69)), lack of interest in the programme by the spouse (3% (5)), distance from the unit (48% (84)) and lack of transport for getting to the unit (7% (13)). This data confirms the fact that a considerable number (67%) of the research subjects' spouses did not participate in the preparation for deployment programme, while some (31%) of

them did take part in the programme. In the researcher's view, despite the fact that some of the spouses took part in the spousal preparation for deployment programme, those spouses who did not take part should also be brought on board. Hornig (1994:2-3) emphasises the importance of spousal participation in the preparation for deployment programme, as bonding within the family will be promoted as a result. The organisation has a role to play in terms of promoting family values while also focusing on mission accomplishment. Despite the various reasons stated for non-participation, participation in the preparation for deployment programme is vital. Spouses can be identified as being vulnerable during the preparation for deployment phase, and social workers should therefore ensure that measures are put in place to address this problem. The possibility of actively involving social work officers from other regions could be explored.

5.3 Section B: Nature of problems experienced by members during external military deployment

Section B of the quantitative study deals with an assessment of the nature of problems experienced by members during external deployment, which are discussed below.

5.3.1 Finance-related problems encountered while on external military deployment

Fourteen percent (5) of the research subjects indicated that the finance-related problems that they encountered were as a result of lost bank cards, 6% (2) was as a result of lost/forgotten pin codes, and 20% (7) was as a result of mismanagement of funds. Other finance-related problems that were experienced by research subjects were stop order problems, insufficient funds in the account for purposes of stop order deductions, and problems with bank cards that were taken by the machine.

Thirty one percent (11) of the research subjects encountered financial problems during deployment, compared with only 3% (1) before deployment and 11% (4) after deployment. Finally, 3% (1) of the research subjects indicated that they encountered these problems before, during and after deployment. This was also confirmed in the qualitative study.

In addition, 23% (8) of the research subjects approached the social worker for assistance with regard to the abovementioned financial problems, 9% (3) approached the chaplain, 6% (2) approached the psychologist, 6% (2) approached the contingent commander, 3% (1) approached neighbours, 20% (7) approached friends, 17% (6) approached relatives, while 3% (1) did not approach anyone. Others indicated that they consulted the bank and their financial adviser with regard to the financial problems that they encountered.

If one analyses this data, it can be confirmed that finance-related problems were encountered before, during and after external deployment of the member. Most of the spouses encountered these problems during deployment. In addition, it can also be confirmed that various resources were consulted in order to resolve the abovementioned financial problems. The social worker, friends and relatives were most frequently consulted. The literature (Bell, 1991:2; Martin et al., 1993:25; Segal and Harris, 1993:85; Roberts, 1991:49; Van Breda, 2001:241) confirms that families documented financial problems during the deployment of members. Therefore, the importance of financial preparation of spouses before deployment cannot be overemphasised. The need for a financial management programme before, during and after deployment is crucial. As was also confirmed in the qualitative study, financial problems encountered by members and spouses could be attributed to the fact that most of the spouses are given the responsibility of managing the finances of the home for the first time upon the deployment of members. The fact that financial problems have been documented in this study suggest that social work officers should be proactive when it comes to the implementation of the financial management programme with members

and spouses long before deployment. Spouses must be empowered in the management of finances at home. Social work officers who are working in the deploying units should take a leading role in ensuring that this programme is rendered to members and spouses on an ongoing basis. Monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of such a programme should also be carried out in order to ascertain whether or not the desired outcome has been achieved.

5.3.2 Views on a joint financial account

Figure 13: Views on a joint financial account
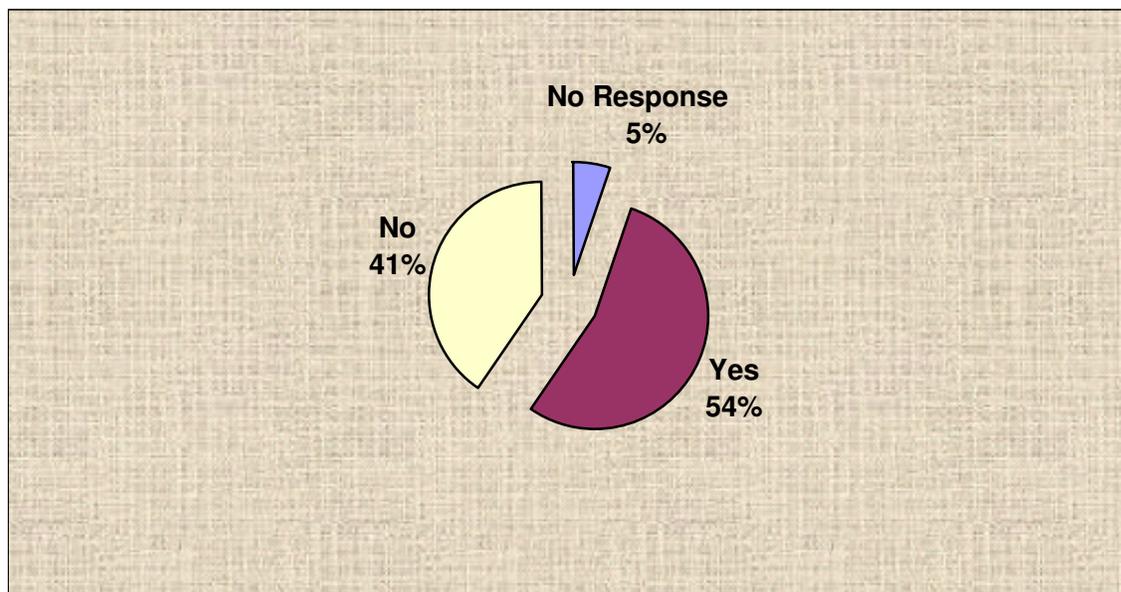
Figure 13 above gives an indication of the research subjects' views on a joint financial account. Forty-one percent (106) of the research subjects indicated that they did not have any joint financial account, 54% (141) indicated that they did have a joint financial account, while 5% (14) did not answer this question. This data confirms that a higher percentage of members have a joint financial account. If one analyses this data, one would assume that since 54% of the members have a joint financial account, financial problems should be limited. However, this does not seem to be the case. Financial problems documented in both the quantitative and qualitative studies attest to this. As indicated above, this

data further confirms that not all spouses are fully involved in the management of family finances. A lot of financial problems encountered by spouses emanate from a lack of involvement in family finances. Therefore, spouses who are not involved in the management of family finances should be identified and empowered accordingly. Social work officers could play an active role in this regard.

5.3.3 Reliance on one another even during deployment

Figure 14: Reliance on one another even during deployment
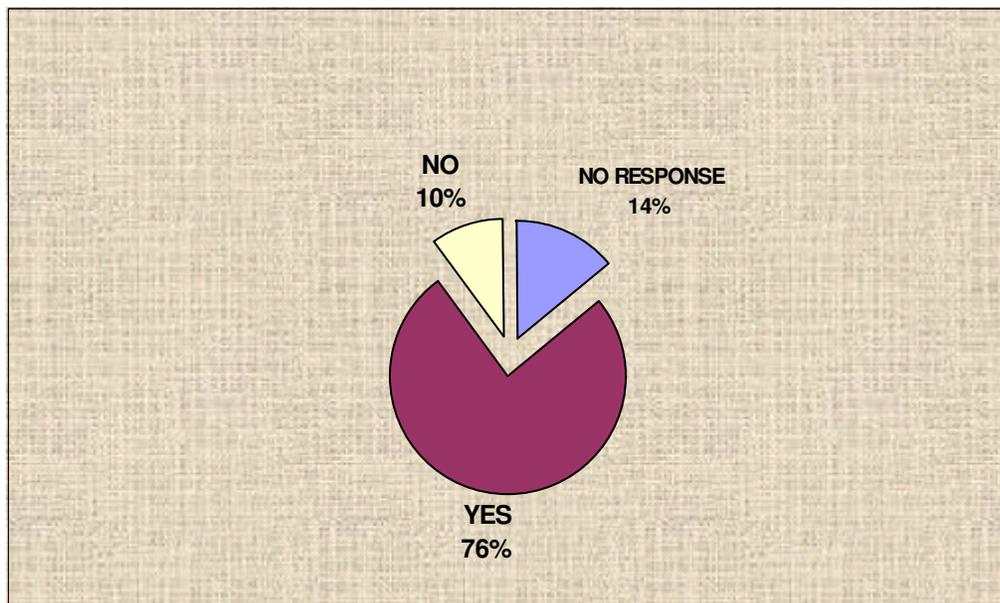
Figure 14 above gives an indication of the extent of the members' and spouses' reliance on one another, even during deployment. Seventy-six percent (198) indicated that they relied on one another even during deployment, 10% (26) indicated that they did not rely on one another even during deployment, while 14% (37) did not answer this question. This data confirms the fact that most of the research subjects rely on one another, even during deployment. The researcher is in agreement with Cutrona (1996:59-60), who emphasises the importance of being supportive of one another as a couple. Not wanting the spouse/partner to have any knowledge about the work circumstances of the

member could be the reason behind some couples not relying on one another even during deployment. In the researcher's view, if one analyses this data, one would assume that due to the fact that a large percentage of the research subjects rely on one another even during deployment, deployment-related problems and challenges would be minimal. However, this study found otherwise. It is vital that those family members are supportive of one another even during deployment. Social work officers should thus identify those spouses who are vulnerable, and ensure that intervention measures are put in place for the purposes of support. Evaluation of the nature of support by others should be conducted in order to reinforce the support that is said to be in place. The importance of ensuring that spouses are informed of the work circumstances of members should also be reinforced. Social work officers should also ensure that programmes such as family days are introduced within the units on a regular basis. The formation of family support groups and family support committees should be explored and implemented, as has been suggested in this study.

5.3.4 Social support systems that would be approached in case of emergencies

Figure 15: Social support systems that would be approached in case of emergencies

	Social worker	Chaplain	Psychologist	Contingent Commander	Neighbours	Friends	Relatives	Church Cell Groups
Would be contacted	129	99	27	55	51	50	91	31
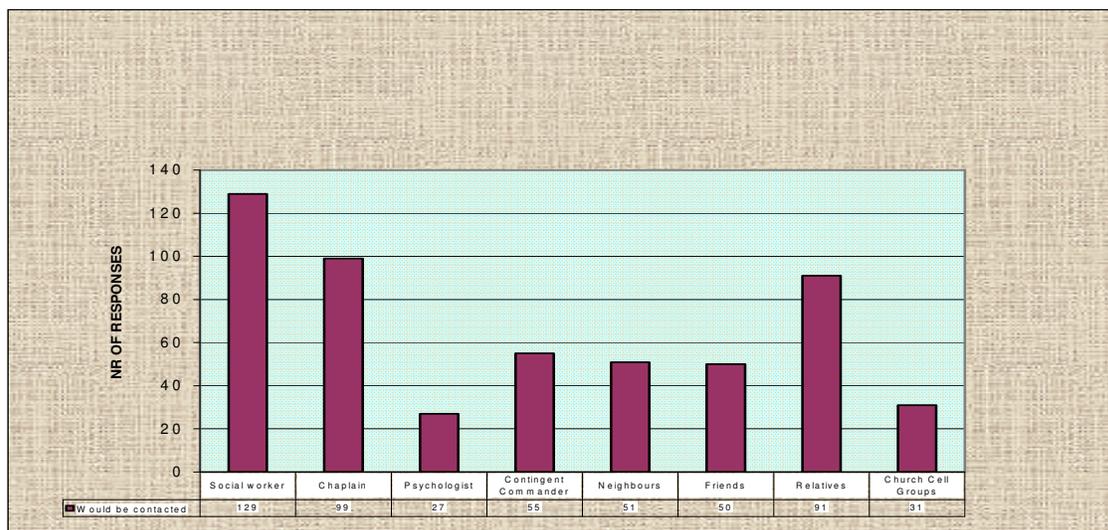
Figure 15 above gives an indication of social support systems that would be approached in case of emergencies. Forty–nine percent (129) of the research subjects indicated that they would consult a social worker in the case of an emergency, 38% (99) would contact a chaplain, 10% (27) would consult a psychologist, 21% (55) would consult the contingent commander, 20% (51) would consult neighbours, 19% (50) would consult friends, 35% (91) would consult relatives, and 12% (31) would consult the church cell group. Research (Pehrson, 1993:441; Wood et al*.,* 1995:219) indicates that when all subjects' responses to the types of social support were analysed, they listed family as the most frequently used social support, followed by friends, no-one, outside (non-military) sources and religious sources. As indicated in this study, various sources were consulted in the case of emergencies. The social worker would be used by most of the research subjects, followed by the chaplain and relatives. Social workers could have been rated high on the list of sources to consult in case of emergencies as a result of the fact that they were deployed with the members and were available within the units at home most of the time. A few of the research subjects would make use of the psychologist. This could be because psychologists within the SANDF are not always available and accessible. They are a scarce resource. Both the formal (for example, social workers, chaplains and psychologists) and informal sources (for example, neighbours, relatives and church cell groups) were consulted. It is unfortunate that the researcher excluded peer support networks as a source of support in this question. However; the research subjects had an opportunity to include sources of support other than those that were listed by the researcher at the end of this question. Therefore, there is the possibility that the research subjects in this study did not use peer support networks as a source of support in case of emergencies. The fact that social workers were rated high on the list of sources that were consulted in case of emergencies suggests that they should be actively marketing their services, both within mission areas and at home, and try as much as possible to be supportive of both spouses and members during separation. On the other hand, the organisation should provide the necessary resources to social

work offices in order to enable them to carry out their tasks effectively. In this way, mission accomplishment would be guaranteed. In addition, the fact that relatives featured prominently as a source of support in case of emergencies might suggest that social workers should look into the possibility of establishing a network of family support systems.

5.3.5 Nature of communication with the spouse

Figure 16: Nature of communication with the spouse
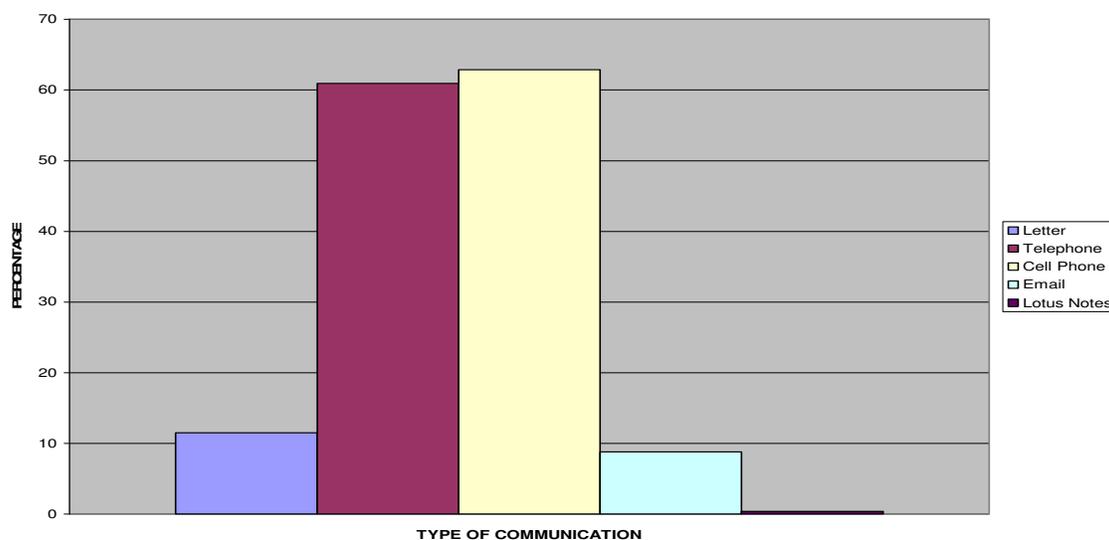
Figure 16 above gives an indication of the nature of communication that members had with their spouses. Eleven percent (30) of the research subjects communicated by means of letters, 61% (159) communicated by means of telephone, 63% (164) communicated by cell phone, 9% (23) communicated by email, and 0.38% (1) communicated by means of Lotus Notes. The abovementioned data confirm that the means of communication used ranged from cell phone and telephone to letters and e-mail. Studies (Martin, Vaitkus, Johnson and Mikolajek, 1992:3) indicate that information flow between partners was identified as the major concern of family members during the deployment of US soldiers to Europe and South-West Asia in 1991. This has also been confirmed in this study. Although the nature of communication with spouses

during deployment varied, some form of communication was at least maintained. However, the quality of this service needs to be reviewed. Furthermore, research (see Bell, 1991:1; Martin et al., 1992:3; Krueger, 2001:15) shows that spouses encountered communication problems during deployment. Communication plays an important role in bringing families closer together, even though they are separated. Therefore, the importance of a reliable communication system cannot be overemphasised.

5.3.6 Frequency of communication with the spouse while on deployment

Figure 17: Frequency of communication with the spouse while on deployment
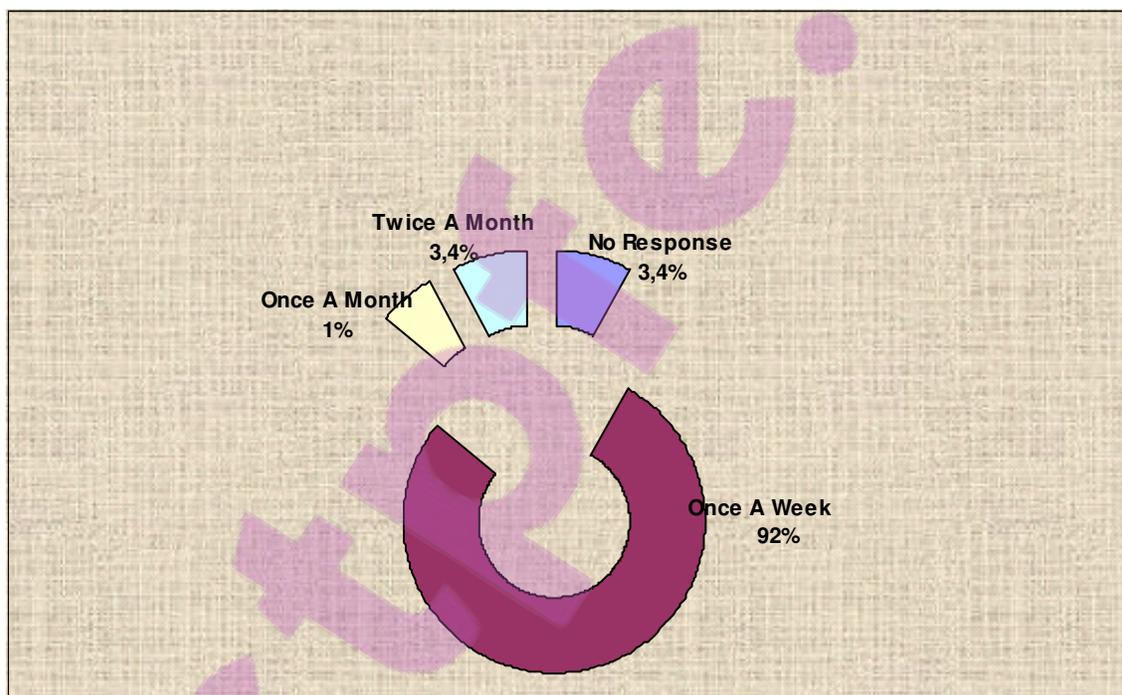
Figure 17 above gives an indication of the frequency of communication with the spouse while on deployment. Ninety two percent (241) of the research subjects indicated that they communicated with their spouses once a week, 1% (2) communicated with their spouses once a month and 3% (9) communicated twice a month, while 38% (9) of the research subjects did not answer this question.

This data confirms that most of the members communicated with their spouses while on external military deployment, despite the communication challenges that were documented in both the qualitative and quantitative studies. Therefore, regular communication between all members and their spouses should be encouraged at all times. The organisation should ensure that measures to enable all members to communicate regularly with their spouses are put in place. The CMI department should play an active role in this regard.

5.3.7 Problems experienced in communicating with the spouse during deployment

Figure 18: Problems experienced in communicating with the spouse during deployment
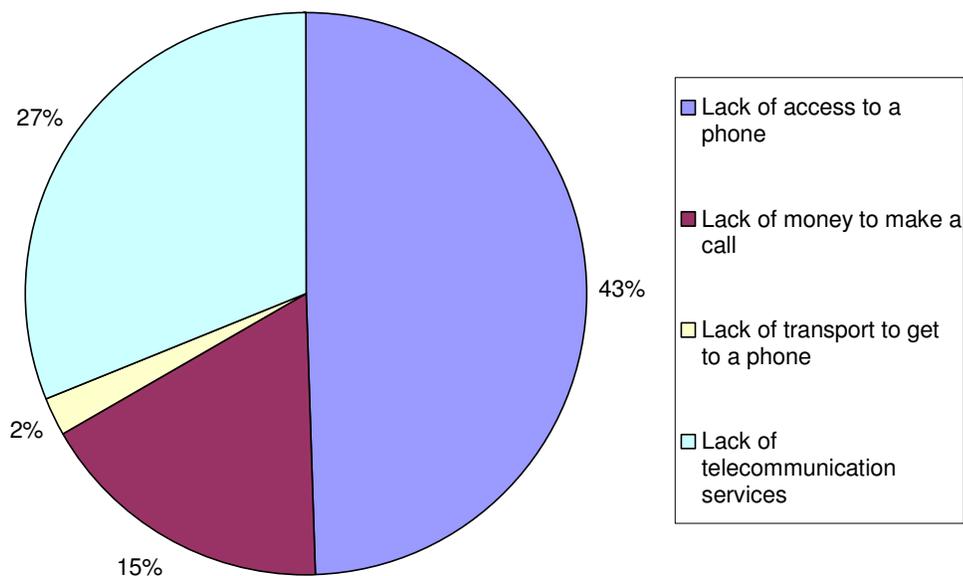
Figure 18 above gives an indication of problems experienced in communicating with the spouse during external military deployment of the member. Twenty-

seven percent (71) indicated that they had the problem of a lack of telecommunication services, 2% (6) indicated that they had transport difficulties in getting to a telephone facility, 15% (39) indicated that they did not have money to make a call, and 43% (111) indicated that they did not have access to a telephone. As confirmed in the ODS/S research (see Bell, 1991:1; Krueger, 2001:15), members also experienced communication problems and a lack of control over deployment events. In terms of this study, this situation could be attributed to a lack of communication resources. In the researcher's view, if one analyses this data, one would be inclined to assume that the fact that Figure 17 above shows that 92% of the research subjects communicated with their spouses at least once a week would imply an absence of communication problems. However, Figure 18 indicates otherwise. Communication problems were experienced by members and spouses. Therefore, there is a need for means of communication to be put in place in order to enhance communication of the rest of the members with their spouses. In this way, family relations would be maintained and productivity would be enhanced. The organisation, in particular the CMI department, should play an active role in addressing this issue.

5.3.8 Solutions to communication problems

Figure 19: Solutions to communication problems
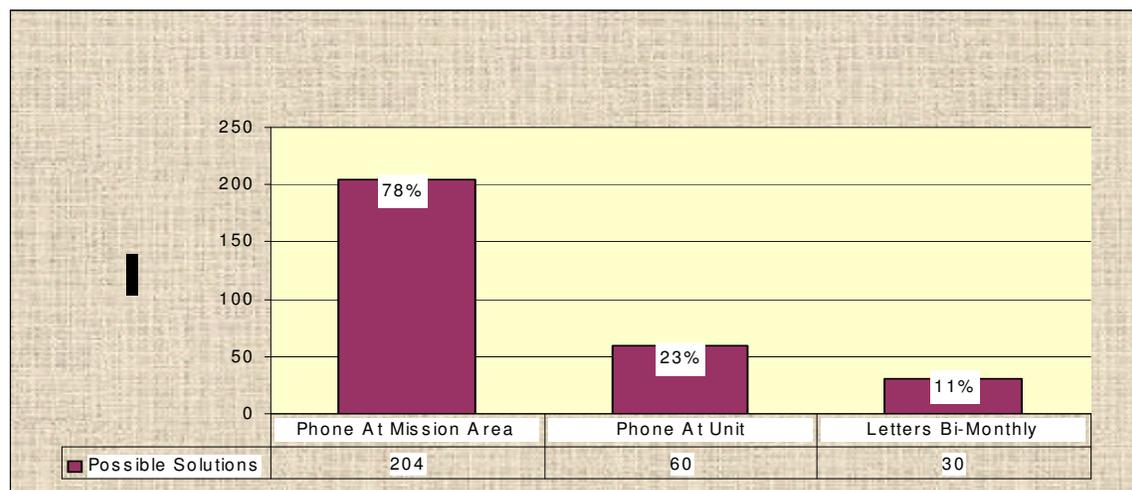
Figure 19 above gives an indication of possible solutions to communication problems. Seventy-eight percent (204) of the research subjects indicated that a telephone should be made available at the mission area to facilitate communication with spouses at least once a week, 23% (60) indicated that a telephone should be made available at the unit to facilitate communication with spouses, and 11% (30) indicated that letters should be sent to members at the mission area and replies sent back to spouses at least twice a month. This data confirms that there is a definite need for communication resources to be put in place in order to enhance communication between the spouse and the member. This was confirmed in both the qualitative and quantitative studies. The qualitative study indicated the need for provision of an accessible telephone facility (free lines) for both spouses and children, and that they should be able to contact members at least twice a week. Therefore, a large percentage of the research subjects suggested that access to a telephone within the mission area was critical, followed by making a telephone available for use by spouses within the units. The fact that a large percentage of the research subjects indicated that a telephone should be made available at the mission area to facilitate communication with spouses suggests that the CMI department should be proactive in facilitating a communication network for families during separation.

5.3.9 Members' perceptions regarding whether or not unit commanders are concerned about the welfare of spouses

Figure 20: Members' perceptions regarding whether or not unit commanders are concerned about the welfare of spouses
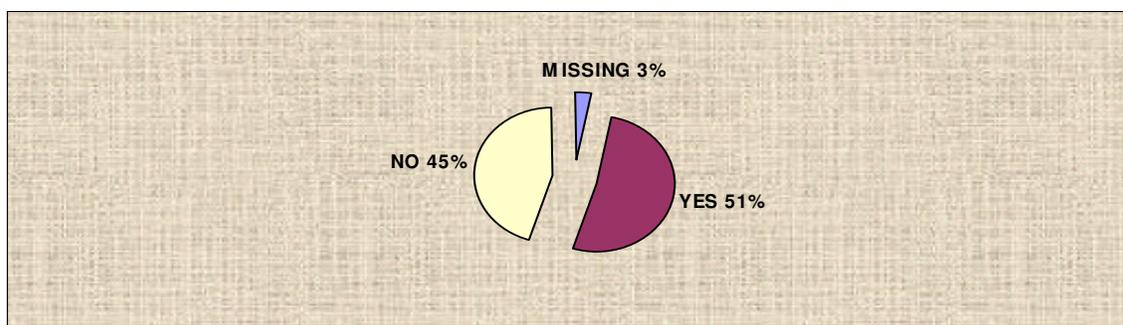
Figure 20 above gives an indication of the members' perceptions regarding whether or not unit commanders are concerned about the welfare of spouses. Fifty one percent of the research subjects (134) indicated that the unit commander was concerned about the welfare of their spouses, while 45% (118) indicated that the unit commander did not care about the welfare of their spouses. Three percent (9) did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, the fact that a considerable number of the research subjects confirmed that the unit commander was not concerned about the welfare of their spouses implies that there is a need for more involvement in the provision of social support services to spouses, particularly during the external deployment of members. Unit commanders are not doing enough in this regard. Reasons given for this response were that 42% (50) of the research subjects were of the opinion that the unit commander was not interested in their welfare, 8% (10) were of the opinion that the unit commander was unapproachable, 12% (14) were of the opinion that the unit commander was never available, and 45% (53) of the research subjects were of the opinion that the unit commander was more concerned about the mission than the personnel. The literature (Amen et al., 1988:445; Koshes and Rothberg, 1994:456; Adler et al., 1995:18) emphasises the importance of spousal support programmes. Deployment-related stressors are alleviated as a result of the implementation of appropriate support measures during the deployment of members. The fact that some (45%) of the research subjects were of the opinion that unit commanders were not concerned about the welfare of their spouses confirms the need for more involvement by the unit commander in the welfare of spouses during the external military deployment of members. It appears that most of the unit commanders are task-orientated and do not have the time to think about members and their families. Unit commanders should play an active role in ensuring that families are well supported during the absence of members. Social work officers could act as advisors to unit commanders regarding the measures of support that could be implemented for members and their families during deployment.

5.3.10 Services that could have been offered to improve the situation of the spouse during deployment

Figure 21: Services that could have been offered to improve the situation of the spouse during deployment
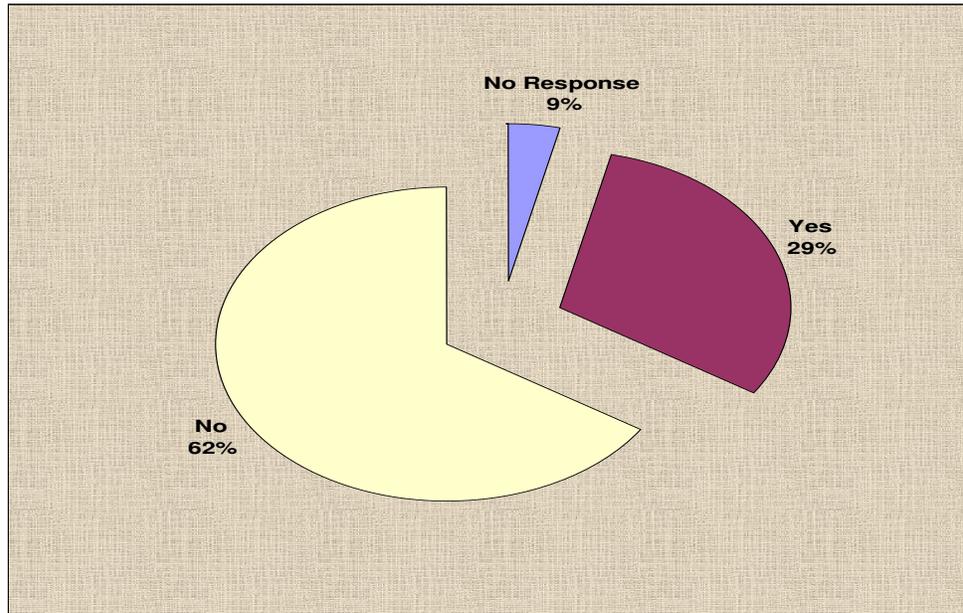
Figure 21 above gives an indication of whether or not there were any services that could have been rendered to improve the situation of the spouse. Twenty nine percent (75) of the research subjects indicated that there were services that could have been rendered to improve the situation of spouses during deployment, while 62% (162) indicated that there was no need for additional services. Twenty three (9%) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms that social support needs of members and spouses are varied. This further indicates that a large percentage of the research subjects were satisfied with whatever services were offered to them, while others felt a need for additional services, which ranged from more support from social work officers, transport of dependants to the sickbay/unit, deployment counselling, social support services while members were at home, video conferencing with spouses, visits by the unit officer commanding (OC) to deployed members on a monthly basis, home visits by the social work officer, unit and spiritual services,

access to a telephone, even if only for five minutes (free), a break given to members at least every two months, special treatment at sickbay/1 Military Hospital for spouses of deployed members, better postal services so that parcels sent home could reach their destination with the minimum delay, respecting of the rights of lower ranks (privates), legal services, information about the extension of the deployment period and developments within the home unit, provision of newspapers, and a resilience programme for members and spouses. The fact that a large percentage (62%) of the research subjects saw no need for the provision of additional support services during deployment could be attributed to the fact that most (91%) of the research subjects who took part in this study were male. In general, males, particularly African men, do not want to be seen as having problems. They would indicate that they did not have problems, even when it was obvious that there were problems. Somehow, acknowledging the existence of problems seemed to reduce their status as the head of the family. The qualitative study, on the other hand, suggested otherwise. Spouses indicated the need for provision of additional services that could be helpful during the absence of members. Amongst others, these services also correlated with the needs that the spouses identified during the qualitative study, for example, the need for a social work officer to be present during all the stages of deployment, provision of an accessible telephone facility, home visits, and transportation of children to school and hospital. The literature (Sims, 2002:90; McCubbin and McCubbin, 1992:160) also shows that social support services are varied. They enable families to cope better and survive a crisis situation. Furthermore, despite the fact a large percentage of the research subjects felt no need for provision of additional services to their spouses during separation, some research subjects (29%) required the provision of additional services, which might imply that social workers should implement preventative programmes that will address the problems and challenges of members during deployment. The need for provision of spousal support services during the absence of the member is thus evident.

5.3.11. Type of relaxation preferred by members while deployed

Figure 22: Type of relaxation preferred by members while deployed
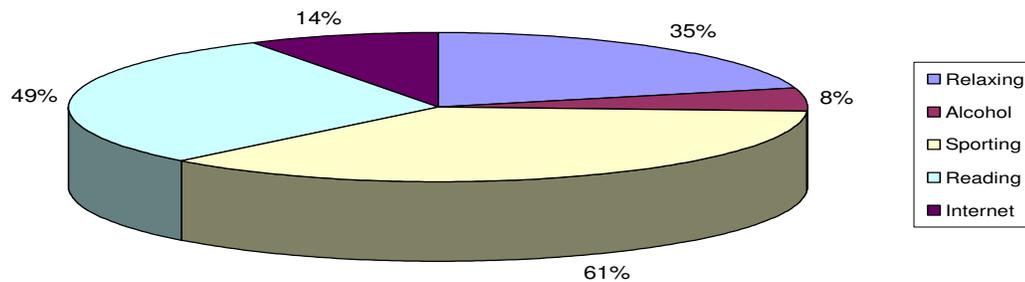
Figure 22 above gives an indication of the type of relaxation preferred by members during external military deployment. Thirty five percent (92) of the research subjects indicated that they spent their leisure time relaxing in the deployment area, 8% (20) indicated that they spent their leisure time drinking alcohol inside and outside the deployment area, 61% (158) indicated that they engaged in sporting activities such as soccer, swimming and running, 49% (127) indicated that they spent their leisure time reading, and 14% (36) indicated that they spent their leisure time on the Internet. Others indicated that they spent their leisure time socialising with colleagues, bird watching, singing in the choir, watching movies on the laptop and going to church, and one of the research subjects indicated that he/she was busy with his/her Masters studies at UNISA. The abovementioned data confirm that the research subjects used various means to spend their leisure time. A large percentage chose involvement in sporting activities as a way to spend their leisure time. However, more could still be done in this regard. Despite the fact that a large percentage (61%) of the research subjects spent their leisure time engaging in some form of sporting activity, a coordinated effort could be made to ensure that all members cooperate with one another when they are not working at the various satellites in the

mission areas. This would boost the team spirit amongst members and promote combat readiness and enhance productivity to a certain extent, thereby enhancing the success of the mission. Therefore, the organisation, particularly the department of Physical Training, Sports and Recreation (PTSR), should play an active role in ensuring that recreational facilities are provided and activities are coordinated to the benefit of all members.

5.3.12 Sexual relationship formation during deployment

Figure 23: Sexual relationship formation during deployment
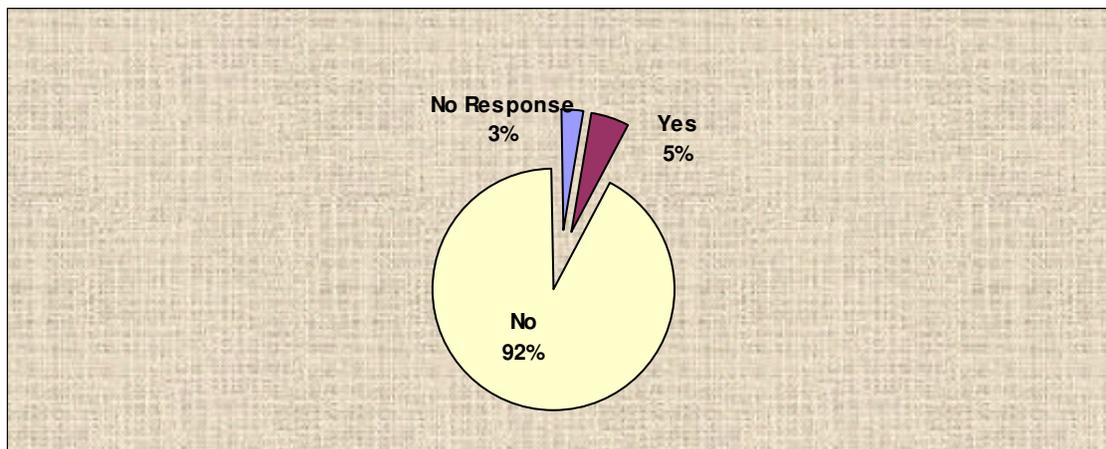
Figure 23 above gives an indication of whether or not any sexual relationships were formed during the external deployment of members. Five percent (13) indicated that they had formed sexual relationships while they were deployed, 92% (240) indicated that they never formed any sexual relationships while they were on external military deployment, and 3% (8) of the research subjects did not answer this question. Furthermore, 15% (2) of the research subjects indicated that there were children born from those relationships, while 85% (11) indicated that there were no children born from those relationships. The researcher acknowledges that this was a sensitive question to ask of research subjects, and that they might not have responded honestly to this question. As a result, only a small percentage (5%) of the research subjects indicated that sexual

relationships were formed during the external deployment of members. The researcher noted that only a few of the research subjects were honest in responding to this question. However, the issue of formation of sexual relationships by members was one of the concerns documented by spouses in the qualitative study. The researcher was, however, aware of the fact that the percentage of members who engaged in sexual relationships was even higher. It happened even when the members were at home. It would in fact be worse with separation. The fact that there were children born out of these relationships implies that members engaged in unprotected sex, which made them vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), particularly HIV. Faithful partners who were left behind, on the other hand, became the victims. This area of concern was also documented in the qualitative study. This further implies a security risk to the country. Multiple infections could occur and many other people at home could be involved. The image of both the country and the organisation could also be negatively affected. In addition, it cannot be confirmed whether or not members without children born out of these relationships engaged in safer sex. Therefore, this situation demands that HIV/AIDS education be given to all members who are involved in external military deployment. Social work officers, in cooperation with the departments of nursing and HIV/AIDS, should be proactive in ensuring that all members are empowered with all the information pertaining to sexual issues long before deployment. STD and HIV tests should be administered to all members upon their return home, and spouses should be involved as well.

SECTION C: NEED FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Section C of the quantitative study involved an assessment of the need for social support services during external deployment of members, which is discussed below.

The literature (Roberts, 2005:38-39) supports the notion that due to the fact that deployment has become part and parcel of the military way of life, it is important that intervention programmes be implemented in support of families who are left behind. Therefore, it is vital that the needs of members while they are on external military deployment are addressed.

5.4.1 Number of weeks in advance that the respondents received notice of deployment

Figure 24: Number of weeks in advance that the respondents received notice of deployment
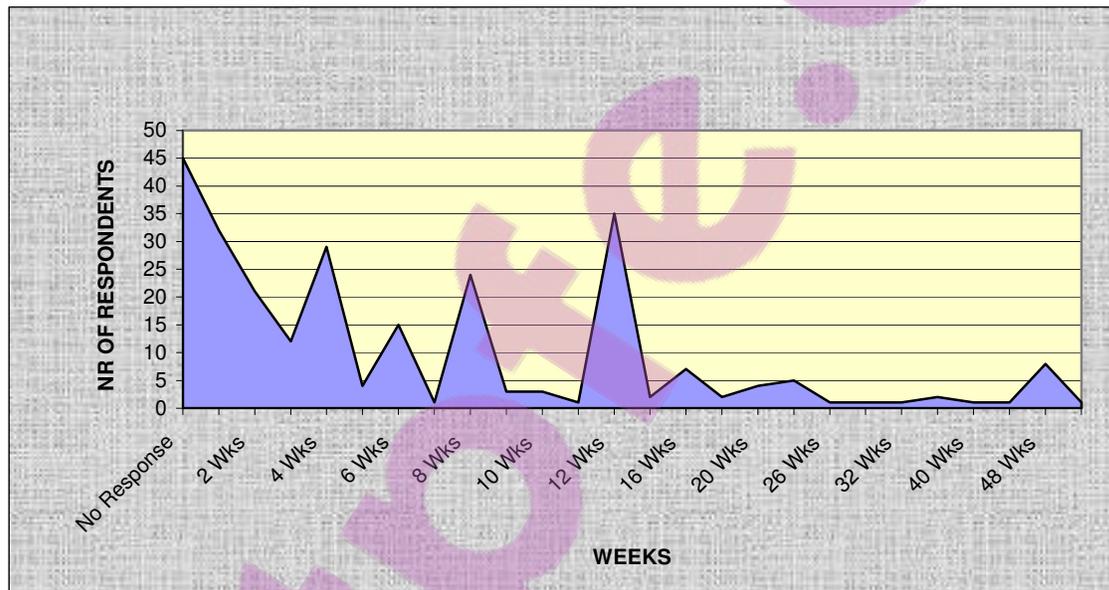
Figure 24 above gives an indication of the number of weeks in advance that the research subjects received notice of deployment. This number ranged between 2 weeks and 48 weeks. A large percentage of the research subjects 83% (216) had an average of 10 weeks' notice prior to deployment. Seventeen percent (45) of the research subjects did not answer this question. When one analyses this data, it is evident that the majority of the research subjects were informed in advance about their deployment. Some of the research subjects were, however, not informed well in advance about their deployment. This could be due to the fact

that deployment is often not planned. In other words, information regarding deployment is given at short notice. The literature (Bell et al., in Van Breda, 2001:259) suggests that the manner in which the military manages deployment has an impact on the coping abilities of spouses. If deployment is erratic and unplanned, stress levels within families increase as a result of the fact that insufficient time has been provided for preparation before deployment. Krueger, in Van Breda (2001:259), goes on to state that "with a minimum turnaround time between deployments equal to twice the length of the deployment" As indicated by Van Breda (2001:259), "no such policy is existing within the SANDF". Members are often subjected to erratic deployment, as indicated in the qualitative study, and are not given sufficient time for preparation and in order to rejuvenate their relationships. Therefore, in the researcher's view, sufficient time is needed to ensure that all the necessary arrangements can be made and that families are resilient enough to cope during the absence of members. The fact that members are often subjected to erratic deployment could possibly imply that social work officers should be proactive in ensuring that members are well prepared for deployment at any point in time. Preparation for deployment programmes should be rendered on an ongoing basis, in order to reduce the adverse effects of deployment at short notice. Programmes that are geared towards building and enhancing relationships should be implemented on a regular basis. Social workers should also take a leading role in ensuring that members are given sufficient time to be with their families after each deployment.

5.4.2 Ability to make the necessary arrangements before deployment

Figure 25: Ability to make the necessary arrangements before deployment
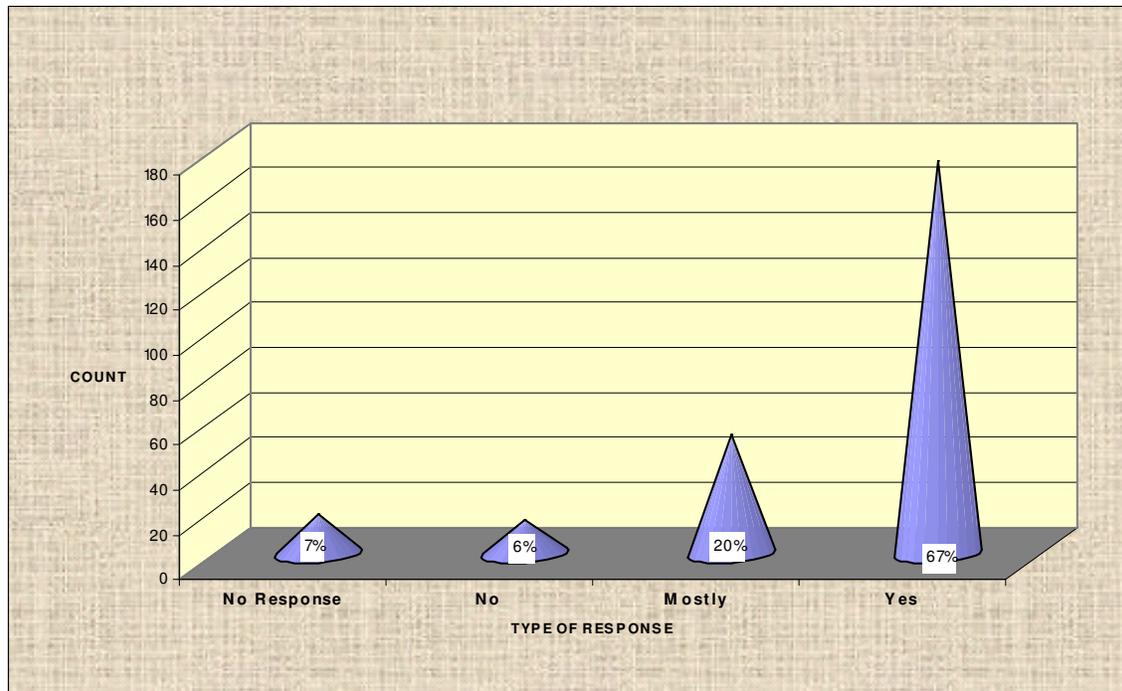
Figure 25 above gives an indication of the research subjects' ability to make the necessary arrangements prior to deployment. Six percent (15) of the research subjects indicated that they were not able to make the necessary arrangements, 20% (53) indicated that they were mostly able to make the necessary arrangements, while 67% (175) of the research subjects indicated that they were able to make the necessary arrangements. If one analyses this data, it can be deduced that most of the research subjects were able to make the necessary arrangements prior to deployment. In the researcher's view, this could be due to the fact that most of them are men, and the responsibilities of men in the family differ to those of women. Therefore, men have less to worry about than women do, as the latter normally shoulder family responsibilities. As indicated by Kaslow (1993:30-31), female parents tend to have more daily responsibilities than their male counterparts. Previously, a limited number of soldiers had both children and spouses who worked. The non-working mother addressed family responsibilities.

Nowadays, however, the demographics have changed. The need for spousal support services during the absence of members has become even more important. The fact that not all members were able to make the necessary arrangements prior to deployment suggests that social work officers should implement preventative measures to ensure that members and spouses are prepared for deployment.

5.4.3 Types of services that would have helped in making the necessary arrangements for deployment

Figure 26: Types of services that would have helped in making the necessary arrangements for deployment
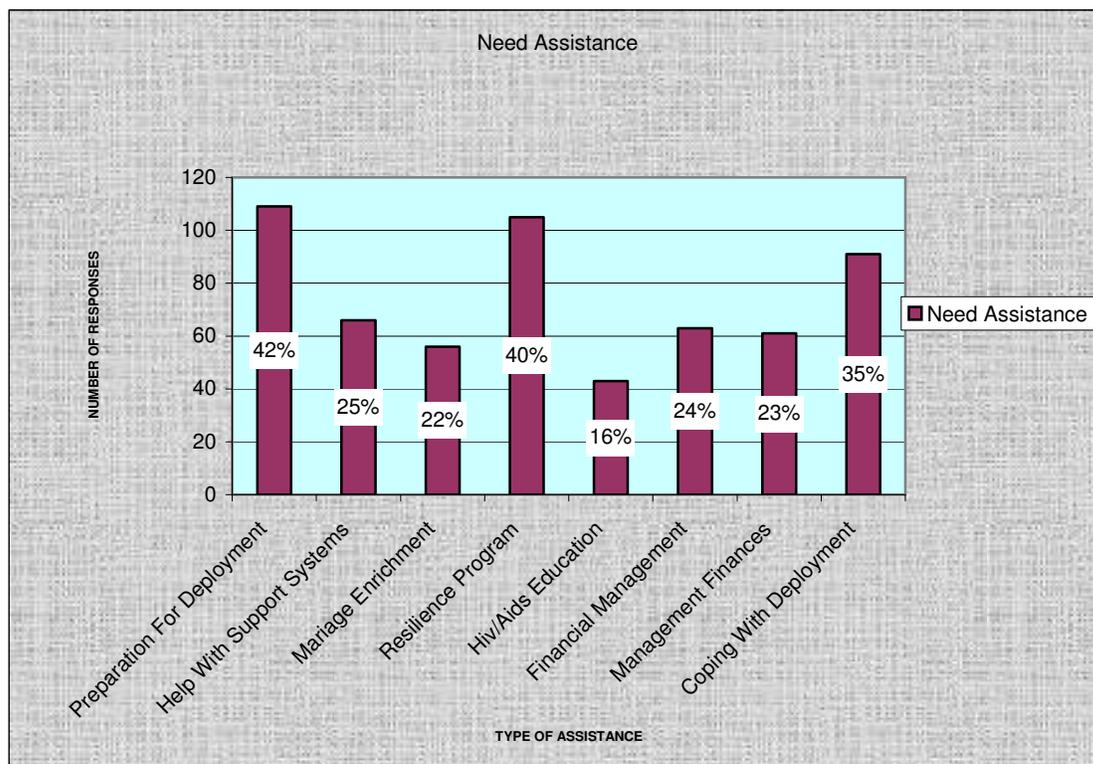
Figure 26 above gives an indication of the types of services that would have helped in making the necessary arrangements before deployment. Forty two percent (109) of the research subjects indicated that preparation for deployment would have been helpful, 25% (66) indicated that help with support systems

could have made a difference, 22% (56) indicated that marriage enrichment could have been helpful, 40% (105) indicated that a resilience programme could have been useful, 16% (43) indicated that HIV/AIDS education could have been helpful, 24% (63) indicated that a financial management programme could have helped, 23% (61) indicated that assistance in managing finances could have made a difference, and 35% (91) indicated that assistance in coping with deployment could have been helpful. Others (2% (3)) indicated that a month's leave before deployment would have made a difference. This data confirms the fact that irrespective of the fact that most (67%) of the research subjects in Figure 25 above stated that they were able to make the necessary arrangements prior to deployment, most of them still required some form of services to assist them in making the necessary arrangements in preparation for deployment. Preparation for deployment was rated the highest by most of the research subjects, followed by the resilience programme and coping with deployment.

In the researcher's view, this further supports the fact that although most of the members had sufficient time to prepare for deployment, their ability to be fully prepared for deployment was negatively affected. Hence, the need for services that could have assisted in decreasing the stress related to deployment, as indicated in Figure 26. One could probably argue that no amount of time is sufficient where preparation for deployment is concerned. Furthermore, the literature (Segal and Harris, 1993:2) confirms the need for provision of spousal support services in order to address deployment-related stressors and contribute to combat readiness of members. In this way, the mission can be successfully accomplished. Therefore, provision of support services prior to deployment enables the member and the family to deal with external military deployment. Furthermore, the researcher is in support of Segal and Harris, and is of the opinion that deployment and social support are inseparable. The one cannot exist without the other. Due to the fact that the research subjects expressed a need for services that would help in making the necessary arrangements prior to deployment, the implication is that the organisation could play an active role in

ensuring that members and their families are fully prepared for deployment. Social work officers, particularly those who are working in the deployment units, should implement preventative programmes tol ensure that this task is accomplished.

5.4.4 Deployment effects on the relationship

Figure 27: Deployment effects on the relationship
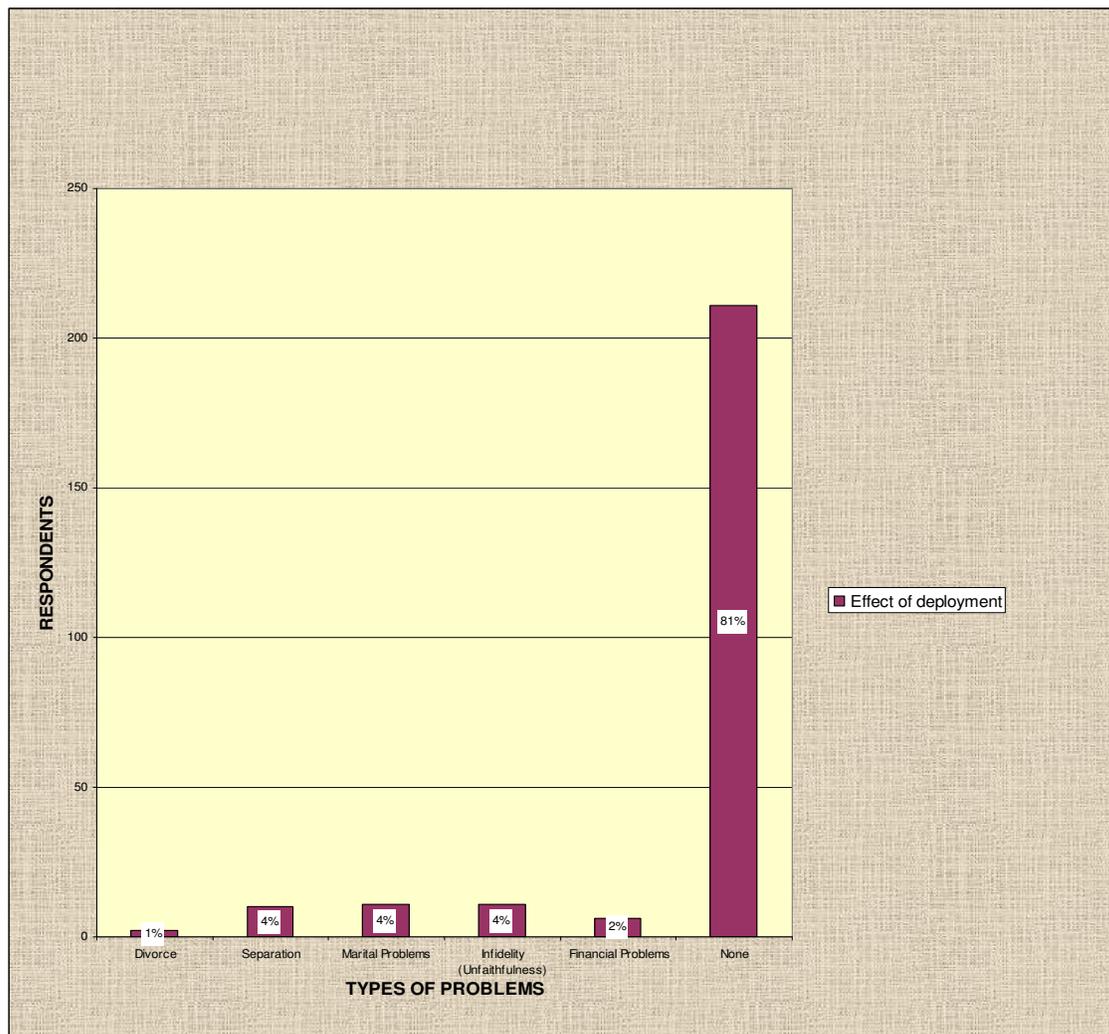
Figure 27 above gives an indication of the effect that deployment had on research subjects' relationships. One percent (2) of the research subjects indicated that it led to divorce, 4% (10) indicated that it led to separation, 4% (11)

indicated that it led to marital problems, 4% (6) indicated that it led to infidelity, 2% (6) indicated that it led to financial problems, and 81% (211) indicated that it brought them closer together. Due to deployment-related stressors, this data confirms the fact that deployment does have an effect on the relationship between the member and the spouse, be it positive or negative. The literature (see Moritz, 1991:109; Hornig, 1994:113) confirms that separation of families as a result of deployment is challenging and frustrating. Both the member and the spouse are exposed to various stressors before, during and after deployment as a result of being separated from one another. Therefore, the couple need to be aware of deployment-related challenges and frustrations, and be able to make the necessary arrangements in order to increase their resilience during the absence of the member.

Furthermore, according to the researcher, if one analyses this data, one would be inclined to conclude that since a large percentage (81%) of the research subjects indicated that deployment brought them closer together, deployment- related challenges and frustrations were minimal. As was confirmed even in the qualitative study, however, this has not been the case. The fact that external military deployment-related challenges and frustrations that negatively affect the relationship have been documented in this study suggests that social work officers should implement intervention programmes to ensure that both members and their spouses are resilient enough to deal with whatever deployment-related stressors they may encounter during the absence of members. The possibility of forming family support groups could also be explored as a source of support to spouses during external military deployment.

5.4.5 Family responsibilities that interfered with combat readiness

Figure 28: Family responsibilities that interfered with combat readiness
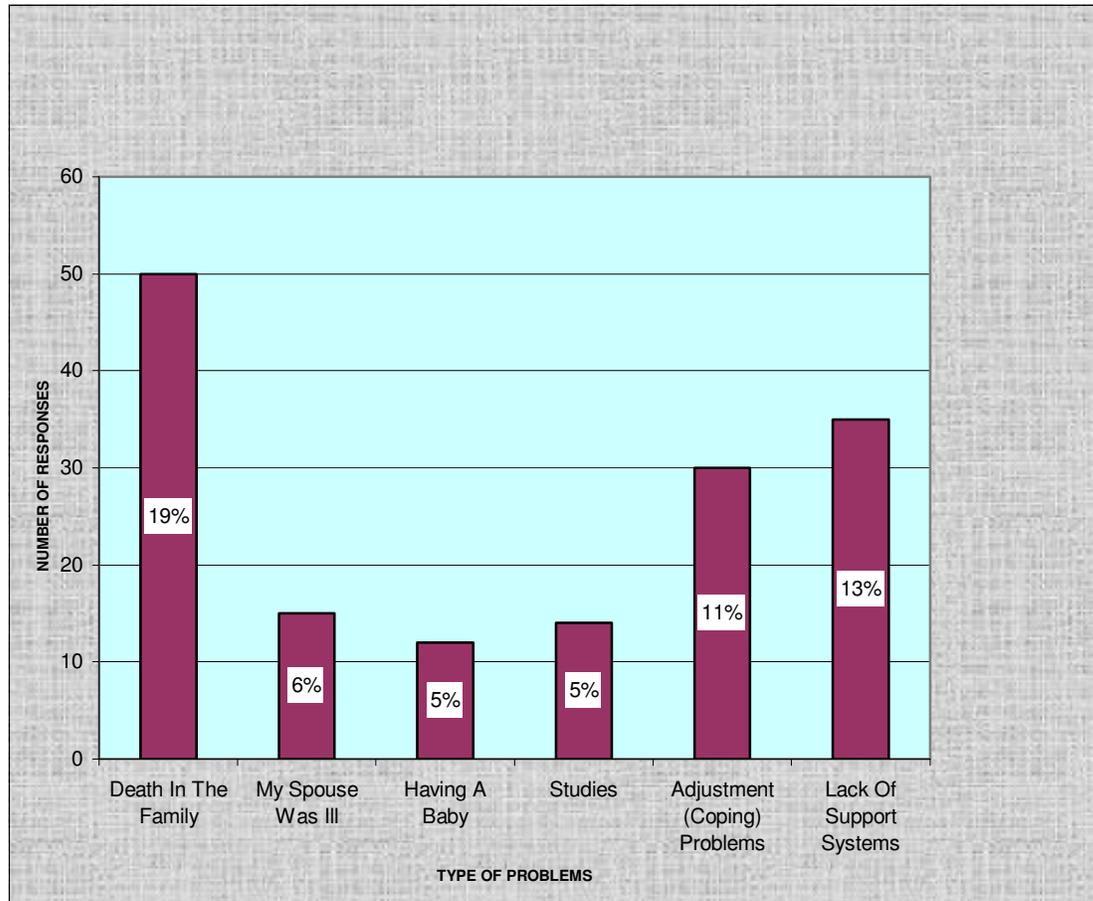
Figure 28 above gives an indication of the family responsibilities that interfered with combat readiness. Nineteen percent (50) of the research subjects indicated that they had experienced a death in the family, 6% (15) indicated that their spouse had been ill, 5% (12) indicated that having a baby interfered with their combat readiness, 5% (14) indicated that studies interfered with their combat readiness, 11% (30 indicated that adjustment problems interfered with their combat readiness, and 13% (35) indicated that lack of support systems interfered with their combat readiness. In the researcher's view, this data suggest that the research subjects encountered problems that interfered with their combat readiness. The researcher acknowledges the fact that the issue of a death in the

family was rated the highest (19%) by the research subjects in terms of interfering with combat readiness, and that nothing can be done about this. However, the researcher is of the opinion that the issue of lack of support systems and adjustment (coping problems) that have been identified by some of the research subjects as having had a negative impact in the combat readiness of the members could be as a result of lack of proper preparation for deployment. They have been rated as problems that interfered with combat readiness by 13% and 11% (respectively) of the research subjects. This has also been confirmed in the qualitative study. As indicated in this study, Roberts (2005:39) supports the notion that preparation for deployment is of great importance. The fact that lack of support systems and adjustment problems has been documented in this study might imply that social work officers should implement intervention measures such as support systems, coping with deployment, marital counselling, financial management and conflict management in order to support spouses during the absence of members.

5.4.6 Rating of the importance of different forms of assistance during deployment

Table 7: Rating of the importance of different forms of assistance during deployment

Type of Service	Not Important	Less Important	Uncertain	Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Unit spousal support group	8%	5%	10%	18%	18%	33%
Regular communication with spouse	3%	5%	2%	10%	16%	58%
Spousal support centre	8%	3%	8%	18%	19%	34%
Stress management	10%	4%	7%	17%	20%	35%
Parenting skills	10%	5%	5%	18%	21%	33%
Empowerment programme	7%	5%	5%	22%	20%	33%
24 hour Help Line	7%	3%%	7%	16%	17%	42%
Conflict management	11%	5%	8%	19%	23%	28%
Support systems	4%	5%	5%	20%	22%	38%
Marriage enrichment	8%	8%	5%	20%	19%	37%

HIV/AIDS education	8%	4%	5%	13%	19%	45%
Telephone calls from the unit	10%	8%	8%	17%	19%	36%
Home visits	19%	10%	7%	16%	12%	28%
Crisis management	10%	5%	5%	14%	16%	21%
Resilience programme	8%	4%	4%	11%	16%	30%

Table 7 above gives an indication of the research subjects' rating of the importance of different forms of assistance during deployment. The researcher acknowledges the fact that this item is not wholly valid, as it has been poorly formulated and is thus open to various interpretations – in other words, it could be based on actual experiences or upon their anticipation of deployment. The fact that the heading "service" was rated as important by most of the respondents indicates that it was viewed as an item to be rated, and was thus incorrectly interpreted.

Therefore, from the researcher's point of view, and based on the fact that it is a poorly formulated item, the researcher suggests that this item be merely viewed from the perspective of services that could be helpful upon deployment. In other words, services that might not necessarily be rendered by the organization or that the research subjects might not have experienced per se, but which could be helpful to members and their spouses in future deployments. Based on this, 3% (8) of the research subjects rated the service as not important, 3% (9) rated the service as less important, 6% (16) were uncertain, 15% (38) rated the service as important, 16% (43) rated the service as very important, while 31% (80) rated the service as extremely important, and 26% (67) did not answer this question.

Eight percent (21) of the research subjects rated the unit spousal support group as not important, 5% (12) rated the service as less important, 10% (25) were uncertain, 18% (47) rated the service as important, 18% (47) rated the service as very important, while 33% (85) rated the service as extremely important and 9% (24) did not answer this question. This data confirms that a spousal support group is needed during the deployment of members, as was indicated by most of

the research subjects. The fact that the unit spousal support group was rated highly by most of the research subjects could imply that OCs and social work officers should explore the possibility of the formation of spousal support groups, particularly within deploying units.

Three percent (7) of the research subjects rated regular communication with the spouse (at least once a week) as not important, 5% (12) rated it as less important, 2% (5) were uncertain, 10% (25) rated it as important, 16% (44) rated it as very important, while 58% (152) rated the service as extremely important. Six percent (16) of the research subjects did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, it is evident that regular communication with the spouse was rated as being extremely important by most of the research subjects. This suggests that the organisation should ensure that communication measures are put in place in order to contribute to the maintenance of family relationships.

Eight percent (21) of the research subjects rated the spousal support centre as not important, 3% (8) rated it as less important, 8% (20) were uncertain, 18% (48) rated it as important, 19% (50) rated it as very important, while 34% (89) rated the service as extremely important. 10% (25) did not respond to this question. This data suggest that a spousal support group centre is essential, as it was rated highly by most of the research subjects. This may possibly imply that social workers could explore the possibility of establishing such a centre within the organisation. This will enable spouses to have a point of contact if and when external military deployment-related challenges are experienced.

Ten percent (25) of the research subjects rated the stress management service as not important, 4% (11) rated the service as less important, 7% (18) were uncertain, 17% (44) rated the service as important, 20% (53) rated the service as very important, while 35% (92) rated the service as extremely important and 7% (18) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data also confirms that the stress management service is critical during deployment, as

indicated by most of the research subjects. The fact that the stress management service was highly rated by most of the research subjects might imply that psychologists and social workers could explore the possibility of jointly implementing such a service for those members and their families who are involved in external military deployment.

Ten percent (25) of the research subjects rated the parenting skills service as not important, 5% (12) rated the service as less important, 5% (14) were uncertain, 18% (47) rated the service as important, 21% (56) rated the service as very important, while 33% (86) rated the service as extremely important. Eight percent (21) of the research subjects did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, it can be deduced that a parenting skills service is needed, as indicated by most of the research subjects. It also confirms that there is a possibility that spouses experience challenges related to the upbringing of children during the absence of members. The fact that a parenting skills service was rated highly by most of the research subjects might imply that social workers should look into the possibility of implementing programmes relating to children within the organisation. A lot of problems related to children could therefore be solved as a result of this intervention.

Seven percent (18) of the research subjects rated the empowerment programme as not important, 5% (12) rated the service as less important, 5% (12) were uncertain, 22% (58) rated the service as important, 20% (51) rated the service as very important, while 33% (87) rated the service as extremely important. Nine percent (23) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms that the empowerment programme service was rated as important by most of the research subjects. Therefore, it can be confirmed that it is a need, particularly during deployment. This could be as a result of spouses who are unemployed. The fact that an empowerment programme was identified as a requirement by most of the research subjects could imply that social workers should implement intervention programmes that are geared towards the

empowerment of spouses. Self-reliance and independence would be fostered as a result of this intervention. In this way, the resilience of spouses would also be enhanced. They would be better able to deal with deployment-related challenges and stressors.

Seven (17) of the research subjects rated the 24 hour help line service as not important, 3% (8) rated the service as less important, 7% (18) were uncertain, 16% (43) rated the service as important, 17% (44) rated the service as very important, while 42% (110) rated the service as extremely important. Eight percent (21) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data also confirms that the majority of research subjects regarded a 24 hour help line service as very important. Although such a service does not exist within the SANDF, it would enable spouses to have a point of contact in case of emergencies at any time. This would ease the burden of deployment on spouses. The fact that a 24 hour help line service was identified as a need by most of the research subjects might suggest that the organisation should look into the possibility of instituting such a service for spouses during deployment.

Eleven percent (30) of the research subjects rated the conflict management service as not important, 5% (14) rated the service as less important, 8% (20) were uncertain, 19% (49) rated the service as important, 23% (59) rated the service as very important, while 28% (74) rated the service as extremely important. Six percent (15) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms that conflict management is a need during deployment, as expressed by most of the research subjects. It was also confirmed in the qualitative study that conflict ensued as a result of deployment. The fact that conflict management was identified as a need by most of the research subjects might imply that social workers should implement preventative measures to enable members and their families to handle conflict situations during deployment.

Four percent (10) of the research subjects rated support systems as not important, 5% (13) rated them as less important, 5% (12) were uncertain, 20% (51) rated the service as important, 22% (58) rated the service as very important, while 38% (99) rated the service as extremely important. Seven percent (18) of the research subjects did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, it can be deduced that the implementation of a support systems service is vital for research subjects during deployment, as most of them rated the service as extremely important. This might imply that social workers should ensure that such a service is established for those members and their families who are involved in external military deployment.

In addition, 8% (21) of the research subjects rated the marriage enrichment service (for example, communication skills between the member and spouse, and emotions associated with deployment) as not important, 3% (8) rated the service as less important, 5% (12) were uncertain, 20% (52) rated the service as important, 19% (49) rated the service as very important, while 37% (97) rated the service as extremely important. Eight percent (22) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms that a marriage enrichment service is important during deployment, as indicated by most of the research subjects. The fact that marriage enrichment features prominently as a very important service suggests that social workers should implement preventative programmes that are geared towards the enrichment and building of marital relationships during deployment.

Eight percent (20) of the research subjects rated the HIV/AIDS education service as not important, 4% (11) rated the service as less important, 5% (12) were uncertain, 13% (33) rated the service as important, 19% (50) rated the service as very important, while 45% (117) rated the service as extremely important and 7% (18) of the research subjects did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, it is evident that a large percentage of research subjects rated the provision of an HIV/AIDS education service as extremely important. Therefore, it is a

definite need during deployment. This could be as a result of sexual relationships that are formed during deployment, and many concerns (such as infidelity) that were raised in this study. Due to the fact that HIV/AIDS education was identified as a need by most of the research subjects, this might suggest that social workers and other health care professionals within the SANDF should implement vigorous HIV/AIDS intervention measures long before deployment.

Ten percent (25) of the research subjects rated telephone calls from the unit as not important, 8% (3) rated it as less important, 8% (22) were uncertain, 17% (45) rated the service as important, 19% (49) rated the service as very important, while 36% (94) rated the service as extremely important and 7% (18) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms that telephone calls from the unit are important for most of the research subjects. This need might be based on the perception that units do not care about members' well being during deployment. Therefore, due to the fact that telephone calls from the unit featured prominently as a service needed by members during deployment, this might suggest that the organisation should put measures in place to ensure communication between deployed members and their spouses.

Nineteen percent (49) of the research subjects rated the home visit service as not important, 10% (26) rated the service as less important, 7% (18) were uncertain, 16% (41) rated the service as important, 12% (31) rated the service as very important, while 28% (72) rated the service as extremely important and 9% (24) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data confirms that the home visit service is a need during deployment, as expressed by most of the research subjects. This implies that social workers should ensure that visits to spouses of deployed members are conducted on a regular basis for support purposes.

Ten percent (26) of the research subjects rated the crisis management service as not important, 5% (14) rated the service as less important, 5% (13) were

uncertain, 14% (36) rated the service as important, 16% (41) rated the service as very important, while 21% (55) rated the service as extremely important. Twenty nine percent (76) of the research subjects did not answer this question. If one analyses this data, it can be confirmed that the crisis management service is a need during deployment, as expressed by some of the research subjects. Therefore, this might imply that the organisation should make provision for such a service.

Finally, 8% (21) of the research subjects rated the resilience programme as not important, 4% (11) rated it as less important, 4% (10) were uncertain, 11% (29) rated the service as important, 16% (41) rated the service as very important, while 30% (78) rated the service as extremely important. Twenty seven percent (71) of the research subjects did not answer this question. This data also confirms that a resilience programme is a need during deployment, as it was highly rated by most of the research subjects. The rating of the different forms of assistance varies from one service to another, but it is evident that the research subjects rated all the services as important. These needs are in agreement with most of the needs of spouses in the qualitative study. The fact that the resilience programme was identified as a need by most of the research subjects might suggest that social workers should be proactive and implement such a programme throughout the deployment period. In the researcher's view, the importance of implementing a resilience programme on an ongoing basis cannot be overemphasised.

5.4.7 Period when assistance was most needed

Figure 29: Period when assistance was most needed
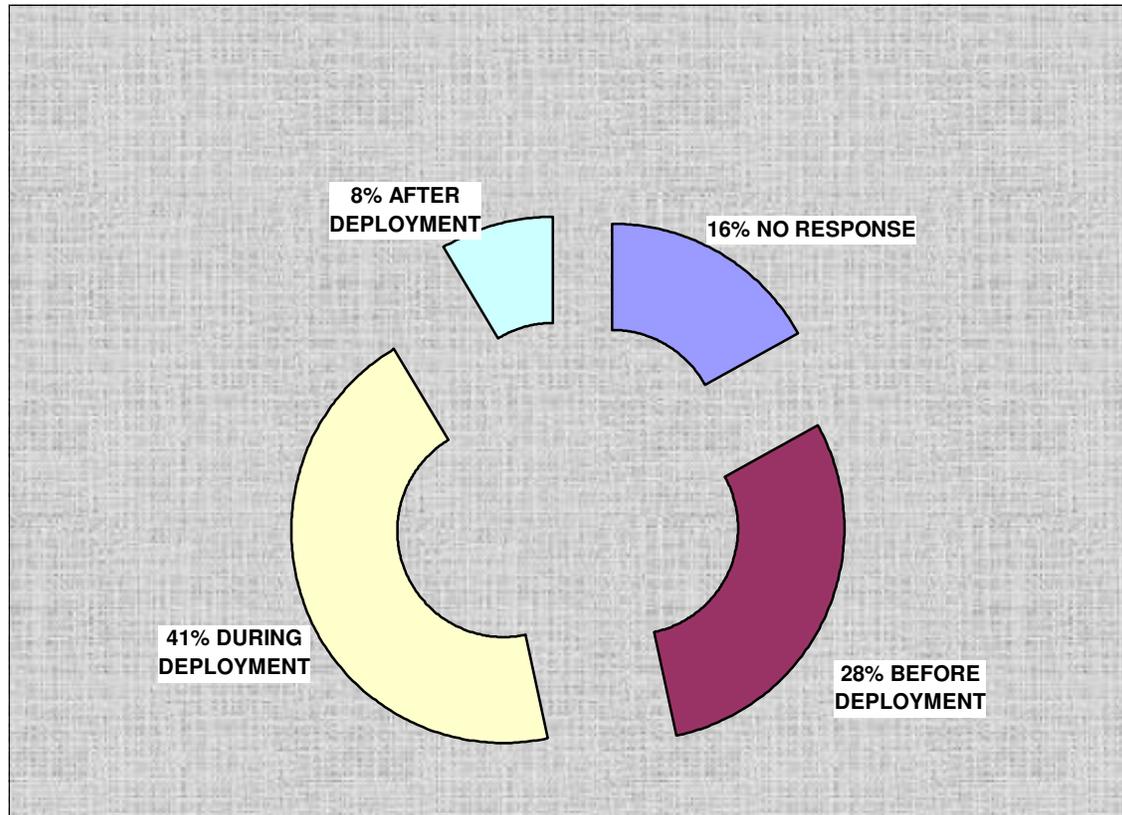
Figure 29 above gives an indication of the period when assistance was most needed. Twenty-eight percent (72) of the research subjects indicated that they needed assistance the most before deployment, 41% (108) indicated that they needed assistance the most during deployment, while 8% (21) indicated that they needed assistance the most after deployment. 16 percent (41) of the research subjects did not answer this question. It should, however, be noted that 8% (21) of the research subjects further indicated that they needed assistance the most before, during and after deployment, 5% (12) needed assistance the most during and before deployment, 1% (3) needed assistance the most during and after deployment, while 1% (2) needed assistance the most before and after deployment. If one analyses this data, it can be confirmed that while some of the research subjects required assistance before and after deployment, a large

percentage of the research subjects needed assistance the most during deployment. As indicated by Spellman et al. *(*1991:2), the process of family support has three distinct phases: before deployment, during deployment and after deployment. Therefore, the importance of provision of support services during all phases of deployment cannot be overemphasised. The fact that a large percentage of the research subjects required assistance during deployment suggests that social workers should ensure that measures to ensure support of members and their spouses during deployment are in place.

5.4.8 Emotions experienced at homecoming

Figure 30: Emotions experienced at homecoming
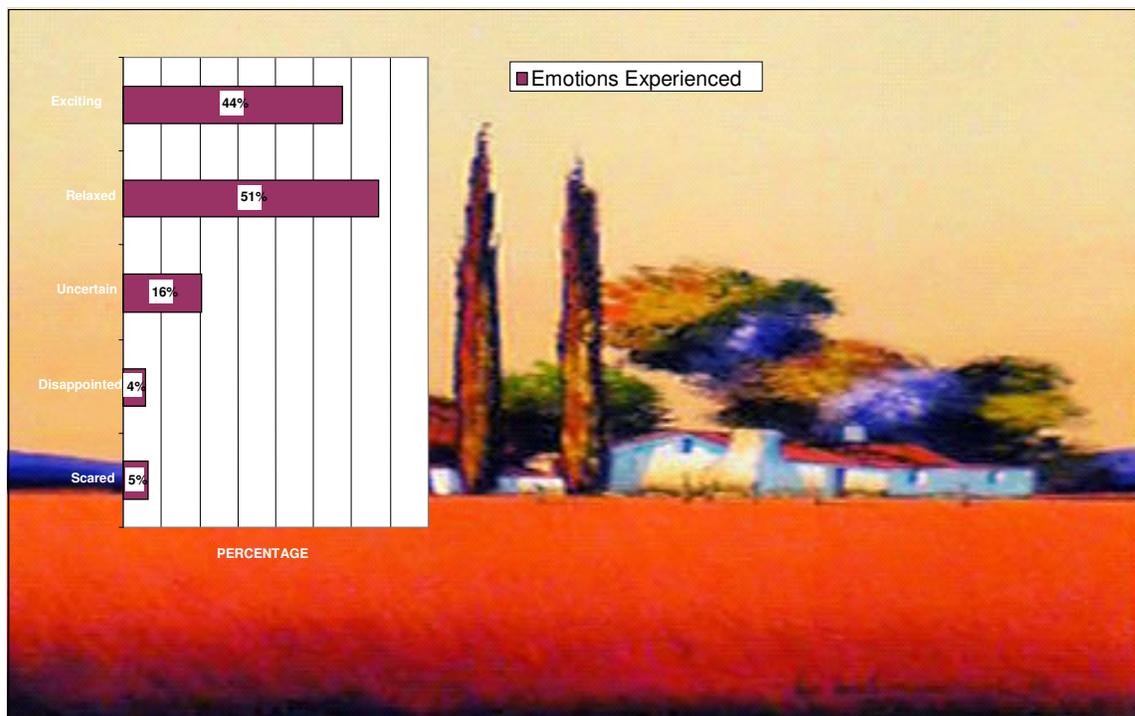
Figure 30 above gives an indication of the emotions experienced by the research subjects at the time of homecoming. Five percent (13) of the research subjects indicated that they were scared, 4% (11) indicated that they were disappointed, 16% (41) indicated that they were uncertain, 51% (134) indicated that they were relaxed, and 44% (115) indicated that they were excited. This study confirms that

the research subjects experienced certain emotions at the time of homecoming. Most of the research subjects were relaxed, followed by excitement and uncertainty. Feelings of uncertainty, disappointment and being scared could be as a result of fear of the unknown. The literature (Logan, 1987:45-46; Van Breda, 1993-1996, Suttle, 2003:3) also suggests that with homecoming, members experience various emotions such as anxiety, relief, excitement, disappointment and uncertainty, as was confirmed in this study. The reasons for these feelings are varied. Some members may experience feelings of uncertainty, which emanates from a concern regarding what they will find at home and the changes that may have been effected during their absence. Some may be anxious. This could be as a result of concerns about the relationship with their spouse, and a feeling that they no longer have anything in common with their loved ones. Not knowing what to expect upon their return home can be stressful, and it is therefore important to deal with these emotions.

Furthermore, some research subjects indicated that they were scared and disappointed. The researcher is of the opinion that the reason for this could be as a result of the fact that particularly among Africans, men do not often express or talk about their emotions, no matter how strong they may be. It could also be as a result of the fact that it has traditionally been expected of SANDF soldiers to be tough super beings who do not express any emotions. The fact that the research subjects experienced varied emotions with homecoming might suggest that social work officers should ensure that members and their spouses undergo thorough preparation programmes that focus on typical emotions that can be experienced with deployment, as indicated by Logan (1987:43-46).

5.4.9 Additional social assistance required after deployment

Figure 31: Additional social assistance required after deployment
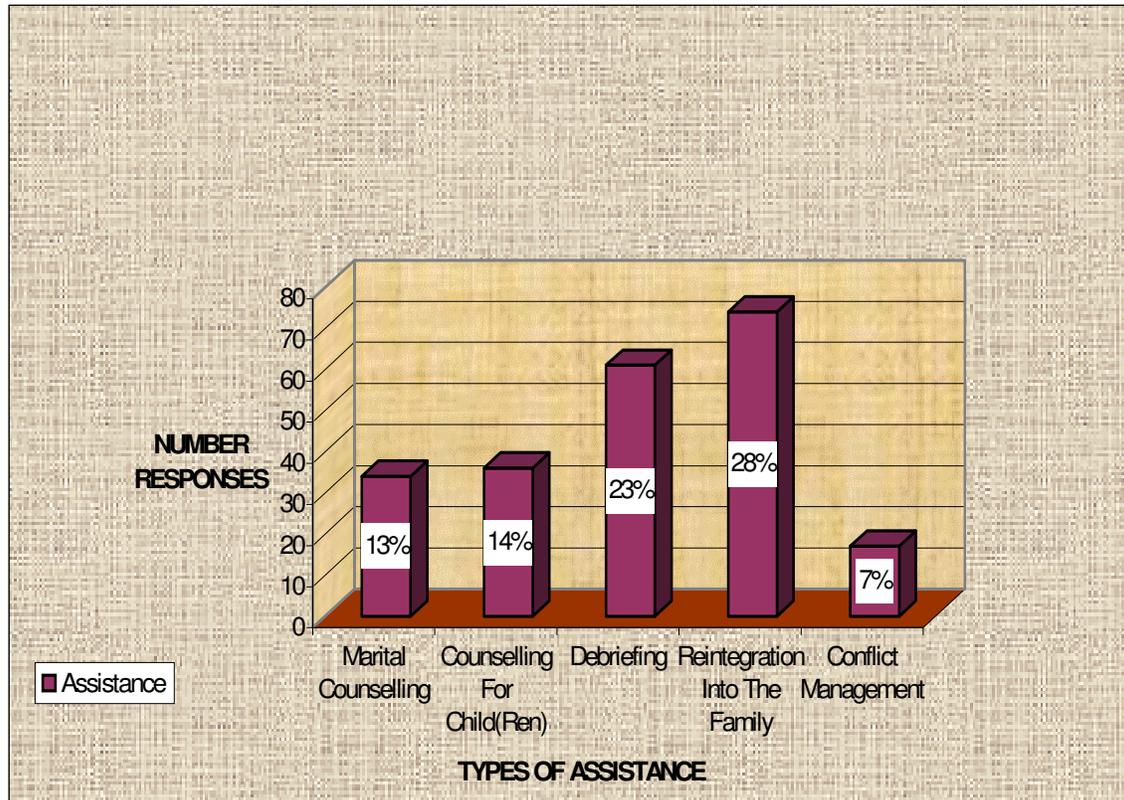
Figure 31 above gives an indication of additional social assistance required by research subjects after deployment. Thirteen percent (34) of the research subjects indicated that they required marital counselling services, 14% (36) indicated that they required assistance with counselling for children, 23% (61) indicated that they required debriefing services after deployment, 28% (74) indicated that they required assistance with reintegration into the family, and 7% (17) indicated that they required assistance with conflict management. The fact that reintegration into the family was rated the highest by research subjects suggests the need for additional support services. Studies (Logan, 1987:46; Van Breda, 1997b:157-158) confirm that homecoming also presents its own challenges and frustrations. Although this stage is characterised by positive emotions such as happiness and contentment, conflict can occur as a result of

the fact that both the member and the spouse experienced changes during separation. These changes are perhaps due to the fact that the member and the spouse designed their own coping mechanisms to enable them to deal with deployment-related stressors. Therefore, homecoming implies a reorganisation of already established patterns or ways of doing things. This has the potential to cause conflict. Furthermore, Spellman et al. (1991:7) indicated that it is important for support services to be provided to those families who are experiencing adjustment problems after deployment. These services may, for example, include marital counselling, parenting skills and possibly addressing issues of fidelity and anxiety concerning reunion. Therefore, the fact that reintegration into the family was rated highly by most of the research subjects might imply that social workers should ensure that members and spouses are supported upon members' return home. Measures should be put in place to ensure that relationships are enhanced. In the researcher's view, the need for additional services such as marital counselling, counselling for children and debriefing, which was documented by the research subjects, might imply that the provision of such services is not in place. This suggests that the organisation should ensure that members are well supported, even after deployment.

5.4.10 Whose responsibility is it to support the spouse of the deployed member?

Figure 32: Whose responsibility is it to support the spouse of the deployed member?
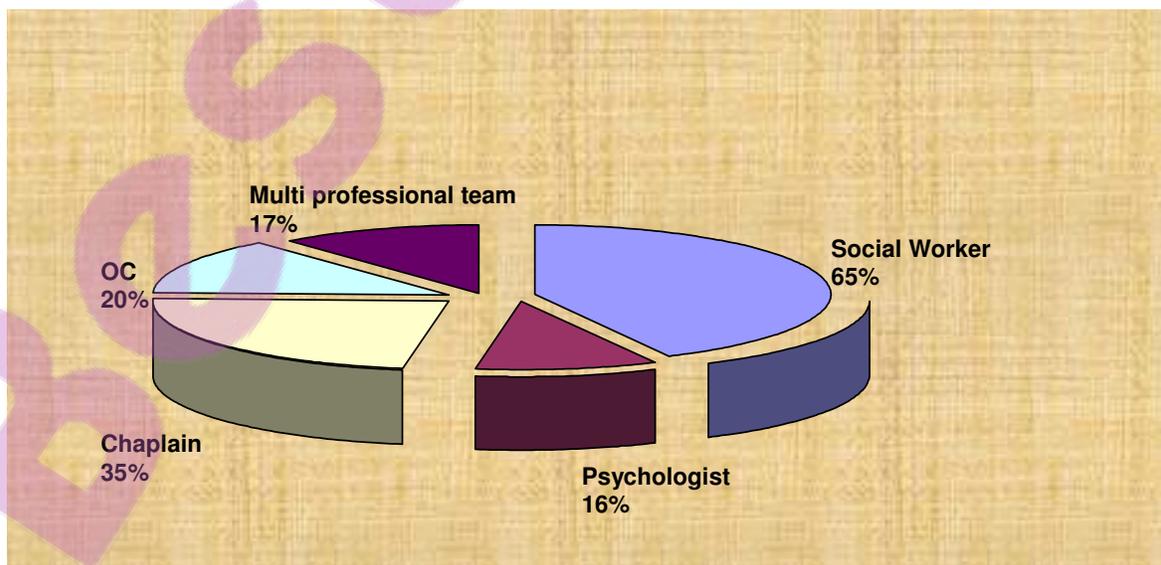
Figure 32 above gives an indication of the responses of research subjects regarding whose responsibility it should be to support the spouse of the deployed member. Sixty-five percent (170) of the research subjects indicated that it was the responsibility of the social worker, 16% (41) indicated that it was the responsibility of the psychologist, 35% (92) indicated that it was the responsibility of the chaplain, 20% (53) indicated that it was the responsibility of the OC, and 17% (45) indicated that it was the responsibility of the multidisciplinary team. This data suggest that the research subjects were of the opinion that the social worker is responsible for providing support to the spouse of the deployed member, due to the fact it was rated the highest by most of the research subjects. It further confirms that the social worker should be the custodian of this programme. On the other hand, the fact that some of the other team members, such as the chaplain and the OC, were selected suggests that the provision of support to spouses during deployment of members is everybody's responsibility. The literature (Hornig, 1994:1) indicates that the responsibility for spousal preparation for deployment rests with everyone. Everybody will benefit from this because that the member will be combat ready and the mission will thus be accomplished. Therefore, while the social worker is confirmed as the custodian of this service, other members such as the chaplain and the OC should also be involved in the provision of support services to families during external military deployment. The fact that the social worker was once again identified (refer to Figure 32) as the person who is responsible for the provision of support services to the deployed member might suggest that social workers should play a prominent role in ensuring that members and their spouses are well supported during external military deployment. With the involvement of other team members such as the chaplain and the OC, social workers should ensure that programmes geared towards the provision of support to SANDF members and their spouses are implemented during external military deployment. Social workers should facilitate the establishment of a support network system.

5.4.11 Feelings about external military deployment

Figure 33: Feelings about external military deployment
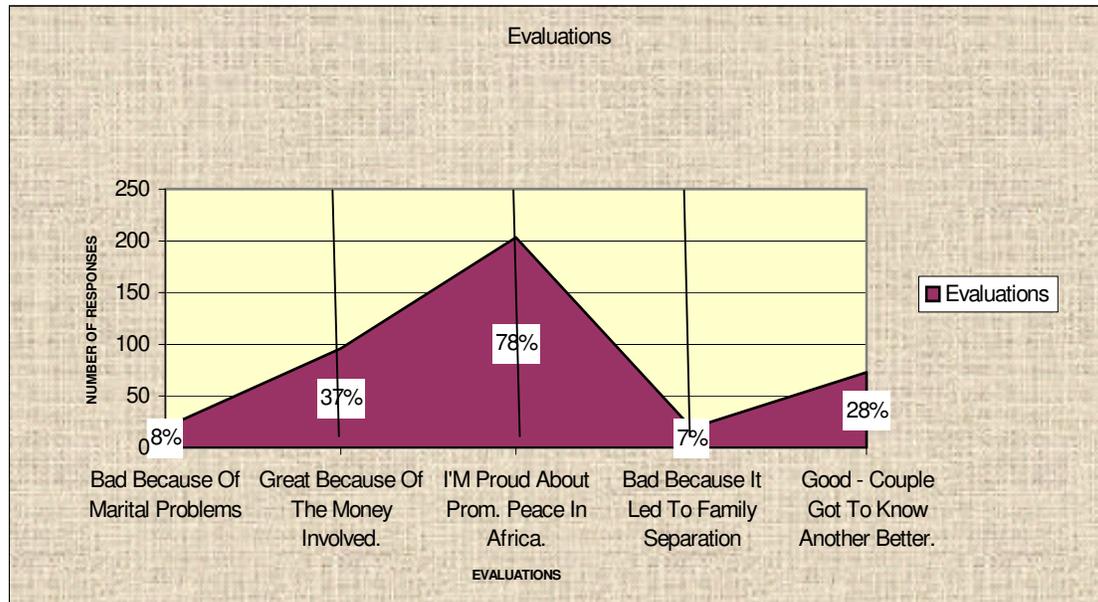
Figure 33 above gives an indication of research subjects' feelings about external military deployment. Eight percent (20) of the research subjects indicated that they felt negative about deployment because it led to marital problems, 37% (96) indicated that they felt positive about deployment because of the money involved, 78% (203) indicated that they felt proud about promoting peace in Africa, 7% (19) indicated that they felt negative about external military deployment because it led to family separation, and 28% (73) indicated that they felt good about external military deployment because they and their spouses got to know one another better. In addition, one of the research subjects (0.38%) indicated that being away for months without leave was very difficult. If one analyses this data, it confirms that the research subjects had different perceptions regarding external military deployment. This situation probably results from the effect that it had on the family. If it was positive, the feelings towards it would also be positive, and if it was negative, the feelings would be negative as well. Research (Eastman et al., 1990:114; Van Breda, 1997a:20) also shows that the attitude of the member and

the spouse towards deployment depends on the experience that the couple had during deployment. If the family was resilient enough to be able to deal with deployment stressors, then the attitude would definitely be positive. The opposite was also true, as confirmed by this data and the qualitative study. In addition, the rationale behind deployment also contributes to the attitude of the family towards deployment. As indicated in this study, most of the research subjects rated promoting peace in Africa the highest, followed by the fact that they felt positive about it because of the money involved, and the fact that they got to know each other better. It is also evident that some of the research subjects did not feel positive about deployment. Therefore, the researcher is of the opinion that there is a need to ensure the implementation of social support measures to enable the member and the spouse to deal with deployment. The fact that experience of deployment plays a prominent role in determining the attitude towards deployment might imply that social work officers should ensure the promotion of resilience of members and their spouses during deployment.

5.4.12 Perception regarding the importance of provision of standardised unit social support services to spouses during external military deployment of members

Figure 34: Perception regarding the importance of provision of standardised unit social support services to spouses during external military deployment of members
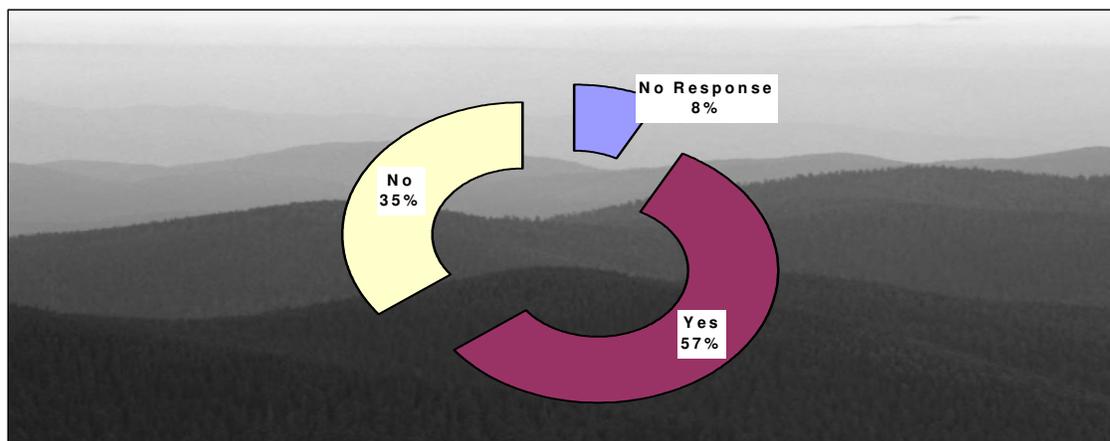
Figure 34 above gives an indication of the perceptions regarding the importance of provision of standardised unit social support services to spouses during external military deployment of members. According to the researcher, the term 'standardised' implies a uniform approach to the provision of unit social support services to spouses during external military deployment. This data indicates that 57% (149) of the research subjects responded with a 'Yes' to provision of standardised unit social support services to spouses during external military deployment, while 35% (92) responded with a 'No'. Eight percent (20) of the research subjects did not answer this question. The fact that 8% of the research subjects did not respond to this question could be due to the fact that they did not understand the meaning of the word 'standardised'. The literature (Segal and Harris, 1993:1) confirms the importance of spousal support services during the absence of members. The implementation of policy actions geared towards addressing the issue of support services during deployment is of great importance. Presently, the SANDF has a Draft Resilience Policy in place, which is aimed at addressing deployment-related challenges and frustrations. In this way, as indicated in the literature (Segal and Harris, 1993:1), the SANDF will be meeting its objective of social responsibility, while also contributing to combat readiness and mission accomplishment. If one analyses this data, it can be confirmed that there is a need for a social support model for spouses during external military deployment, as indicated by most of the research subjects. This was also confirmed in the qualitative study. The fact that the research subjects indicated the need for standardised unit social support services to spouses during external military deployment might suggest that a model for social support services to spouses during external military deployment should be designed.

5.4.13 Additional comments about social support services to spouses during external military deployment of members

In order to highlight the importance of spousal support during the external military deployment of the member, most of the research subjects made additional

comments in the open question about social support services that should be rendered to spouses during external military deployment of members, which are cited as follows:

- Respect from Commanders during deployment is important.
- Spousal support and preparation for deployment is critical. It should not only be done with the members but also with the spouses
- SWO needs to be visible all the time and access (visits) to families should be addressed even to those in rural areas. This will show that the DOD cares about them.
- During the Sudan deployment we could at least afford to make a telephone to call to our home everyday.
- Unequal treatment and nepotism by Commanders in the mission area should be looked into.
- A telephone call (or cell phone allowance) at least once a week will make a difference.
- Assist with reintegration into the workplace.
- The resilience programme should be monitored to check whether it is taking place, as it should.
- Resilience programme is non-existent.
- Formation of a support group to spouses of deployed members is critical.
- No assistance was provided to my spouse when she relocated to another house whilst I was on deployment.
- OCs should send letters to families and should communicate with members in the deployment areas.
- Members should be given time to go home to sort out problems when necessary.
- It must be a woman visiting the family and not a male. It should be a male if the spouse is a male.
- Special treatment should be provided to spouses of deployed members at sickbays/hospital.

- Regular consultation/sharing amongst one another on external deployment problems for example, discussing topics such as administration versus leadership skills on a monthly basis.
- Young ladies within the deployment area must learn to say no and look after themselves.
- Seven days leave every three months would be helpful. Members will come back refreshed.
- Church services should be held on regularly basis and not only on Sundays within the mission area and married members should be reminded about their moral obligations and that they are there for the purpose of promoting peace and not to destroy the community of women and children.

The abovementioned issues that were raised by most of the research subjects in both the qualitative and quantitative studies confirm the need for spousal support during the external deployment of the member. As indicated by Segal and Harris above, while pursuing the strategic objectives of the organisation, the SANDF has a contributory role to play in terms of meeting its moral and social responsibilities. The fact that most of the members expressed the need for additional social support services during deployment suggests that the organisation should put intervention measures in place to ensure that families are resilient enough to deal with deployment-related stressors. Social work officers should play a key role in ensuring that the necessary intervention programmes are implemented.

5.5 SUMMARY

This chapter gave a thorough overview of the research methodology, as well as presenting the findings, analysis and interpretation of the quantitative study. Literature was incorporated into the findings of the quantitative study. In the next chapter, conclusions and recommendations will be presented.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Deployment and separation are issues that the SANDF cannot avoid. Deployment is a parliamentary objective that is non-negotiable. As a result, spouses of SANDF members are exposed to many frustrations and challenges emanating from external military deployment. This study was conducted as a result of the observed impact that external military deployment has on military families, dissatisfaction relating to the nature of social support services that should have been rendered to spouses while members were on external military deployment, and the lack of scientific evaluation of the nature of social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. In cases where some social support services were rendered, there were complaints that these were insufficient. Therefore, in Chapters 4 and 5, qualitative and quantitative data related to social support services to both the spouse and the member during external military deployment of the member were presented, analysed and interpreted.

This chapter will present conclusions and recommendations for this study. It should further be noted that these conclusions and recommendations are based on the outcomes of both the qualitative and quantitative studies that were conducted. It will form the basis for formulation of a model for social support services during the external military deployment of the member, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

However, the researcher will start by giving an indication of how the goal and objectives of this study were attained, and how the research questions provided a

framework for the formulation of a model for social support services during the external military deployment of the member.

6.2 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

6.2.1 Goal

This research set out to design a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members.

This study identified problems and challenges experienced by members and spouses during the external military deployment of the member. Based on this, the researcher designed a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of the member. Following is a discussion of the objectives of the study.

6.2.2 Objectives

The objectives of this study were as follows:

-       To conduct an in-depth literature review in order to conceptualise social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of the member.

This objective was attained through an in-depth literature review, which was presented in Chapter 2. This second chapter investigated the nature of social support services during external military deployment.

-       To evaluate the implementation, efficiency and effectiveness of existing social support services to spouses of SANDF members while members are on external military deployment.

This objective was attained through the collection of qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) data from both spouses and SANDF members who had been involved in external military deployment (see Chapters 4 and 5).

- To design a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members as a prerequisite for combat readiness amongst SANDF members.

This objective was attained (see Chapter 7), based on the fact that the conclusions and recommendations presented here formed the basis for the design of a model for social support services during external military deployment of members.

- To inform the SANDF management about the results of the study in terms of the need for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members.

The researcher will ensure that this research is made available to the SANDF management and research subjects once this study has been acknowledged and approved. Where feasible, the researcher will make presentations at senior management meetings such as the Force Preparation Forum, the Command Council and the Military Council.

6.3   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study:
- What is the nature of the social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment?

Through the collection of qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) data from both spouses and SANDF members who had been involved in external

military deployment, the researcher was able to obtain information on the nature of social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. This information was presented in Chapters 4 and 5, and is incorporated into the conclusions and recommendations in this chapter. It has however, also been confirmed that social support services were not rendered to all the SANDF members and their spouses during external military deployment.

- What is the efficiency and effectiveness of social support services rendered to spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment?

Data obtained from both the qualitative and quantitative studies in Chapters 4 and 5 made it possible for the researcher to obtain a better understanding of the efficiency and effectiveness of social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. Furthermore, information presented in the conclusions and recommendations in this chapter informed this question.

- Is there a need for additional social support services to be rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

Based on the fact that the item that was supposed to answer this question was poorly formulated, the researcher suggests that the results be merely viewed from the perspective of services that could be helpful to members and their spouses in future deployments. The information presented in Chapters 4 and 5 formed the basis for the design of a model for social support services during the external military deployment of members, which is presented in Chapter 7.

- Are there sufficient resources to render efficient and effective social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

This question was answered by the responses obtained from the qualitative and quantitative studies, as reflected in Chapters 4 and 5, as well as from complaints received from social work officers (cf problem formulation) within the organisation. However, the researcher is of the opinion that on its own, this question could be another area of research that should focus on service providers such as social work officers, psychologists and chaplains. Nevertheless, provision of resources by the organisation and support to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members are inseparable. One cannot work without the other. Therefore, although not detailed, information obtained in this study informed this question to a certain extent.

- Is there a need for a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members?

As reflected in the responses of the research subjects, information obtained from this study suggested that there was a need for a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members. Hence, this model was designed and presented in Chapter 7. Furthermore, the conclusions and recommendations also informed this question.

- What type of model should be implemented if necessary?

Responses of the research subjects, particularly with regard to the question on the identification of deployment support needs throughout the deployment period, and additional needs identified during the different stages of deployment, informed this question. In other words, information obtained from the qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) studies (see Chapters 4 and 5)

formed the basis for the decision regarding the type of model that should be implemented in support of SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members, as shown in Chapter 7 of this study.

- Which discipline will be the main custodian of such a model?

Although the responses were varied, and despite the fact that there are other forms of support that need to be explored, social work was chosen as the discipline that should be the main custodian of such a model by most of the research subjects.

In light of the above, it can be confirmed that this study was guided and informed by the abovementioned research questions, as reflected in the findings and conclusions of this study.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the scientific investigation that was undertaken, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- As a country, South Africa has an obligation to promote and maintain global and regional security. As mandated by the President of the country, and due to the fact that the SANDF is structured in such a way that it has a primarily defensive orientation and stance, it is expected of the SANDF to meet the governmental imperative of promotion of peace within the continent. The fact that most African countries, such as the DRC, Sudan and Burundi are conflict ridden suggests that the SANDF will be involved in peace missions within Africa for some time to come. The study confirmed that SANDF members were deployed on external military peace missions in various countries. Sixty eight percent of the members were deployed to the DRC, 43% to Burundi and 28% to Sudan. The fact that the percentage of members who were deployed to these areas is high

indicates that members were deployed to these areas more than once. A small percentage of the members were also deployed to the Comores (2%) and the Ivory Coast (0.38%). It has also been confirmed that members were deployed to other countries such as Lesotho, Tanzania, Kenya, Germany, England and Nigeria. This clearly shows that external military deployment is a task that the SANDF organisation cannot avoid. Preparation for this task is thus of great importance to ensure the success of the mission. In the researcher's view, because SANDF members are deployed to various areas on peace missions, the provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment is non-negotiable.

- The average age of the research subjects who took part in the qualitative study was 36, which means that they are relatively young and have children who still need the guidance and support of both parents, especially where adolescents are concerned. Spouses are also in relationships that need to be nurtured and preserved. Furthermore, due to the fact that not much of a difference could be noted in their average age, the same can be said of the research subjects who took part in the quantitative study, whose average age was 38. Therefore, according to the researcher, maintenance of family relations is of great importance. The organisation has a responsibility to ensure that relations are maintained during deployment.

- Most (98%) of the research subjects had an average of 15 years' experience working in the SANDF. In the researcher's view, the fact that members had an average of 15 years' experience working in the SANDF implies that they are familiar with the organisational objectives, such as participation in peace missions around the globe, and have adjusted well to this task. One would also assume that their spouses have the necessary knowledge regarding this task and are well prepared to deal with its associated challenges and frustrations. However, this study indicated the opposite. Despite the years of employment experience in the SANDF, members and spouses encountered difficulties as a

result of deployment. According to the researcher, this suggests that they are probably not well prepared for dealing with deployment-related stressors. Therefore, the importance of provision of social support services to SANDF members and their spouses cannot be underestimated. This will ensure that members are combat ready and the mission is successfully completed. Productivity will as a result be enhanced, and the name of our country will be held high.

- An average of 11 years' experience in the marriage was documented in this study. More often than not, it is generally assumed that having a number of years' experience in the marriage suggests stability within the relationship. It is often taken for granted that the couple is resilient enough to deal with whatever life stressors they might experience. However, the opposite can be said with regard to external military deployment. The fact that spouses and members have an average of 11 years' experience in the marriage does not necessarily imply that they are able to cope with deployment-related challenges and stressors. Therefore, separation from family members as a result of external military deployment has a negative impact on marital relationships in military families, as confirmed in this study. The organisation should thus be proactive in terms of ensuring that spouses and members are resilient enough to deal with deployment-related challenges and stressors.

- It was confirmed that the majority (53%) of the members who were involved in external military deployment fell within the rank group Private to Corporal, a rank group that normally deploys internationally. According to the researcher, the fact that a large percentage of the members who were deployed fell into the NCO rank group could also be attributed to salary packages that are not attractive or adequate enough to meet the needs of families. They therefore volunteer to be deployed on more than one occasion, in order to meet the demands of family life. Therefore, irrespective of family circumstances at any point in time, members will probably seize any opportunity to be deployed in

order to make money. Social support services during external military deployment should therefore be rendered on a continuous basis, particularly within deployment units. Social workers who are working in these units must play a leading role in ensuring the implementation of these services.

-        A considerable number (85%) of research subjects went away on external military deployment for an average of four months. This implies that spouses encountered deployment-related stressors as a result of deployment, as confirmed in this study. It has been noted that irrespective of the duration, deployment brings with it challenges and frustrations that have an effect on the member and the spouse during their separation. Therefore, social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during separation should ensure the inclusion of programmes to enhance spousal adjustment to separation.

-        In addition, 95% of the research subjects had been involved in external military deployment at least twice. In the researcher's view, the fact that members were deployed more than once in the past twelve months also posed a serious challenge to family life, as indicated by spouses in the qualitative study. Due to the fact that members were deployed once or twice in the past twelve months, it was not possible for members and their spouses to obtain sufficient time to work on their relationships. Families were exposed to a lot of stress as a result of deployment, which was not even combined with a recess period. Thus, family relationships suffered. Therefore, while it is vital for social support services to be rendered by the SANDF during deployment, it is also critical that members be allowed sufficient time to work on their relationships before the next deployment. The organisation must ensure that this forms a vital part of social support services to members and spouses during separation, in order to contribute to combat readiness of members and to nation building.

-        Fifty percent of the research subjects in the qualitative study were unemployed while 50% were employed. The fact that 50% of the spouses were

unemployed implies that they are reliant on members for maintenance and support. Absence of the member caused an even further strain on the family, particularly with regard to finances. Therefore, the organisation has a responsibility to ensure that spousal empowerment and preparation for deployment (particularly in sofar as finances are concerned) is enforced, and that the provision of employment opportunities for spouses with skills is given attention. Officer commanders and social workers should play an active role in ensuring the realisation of this objective.

- Provision of social support services to spouses who are residing in rural areas is hindered by the fact that rural areas are underdeveloped and not within reach due to lack of roads and transport in the country. As a result, it becomes difficult for social work officers to access them and render appropriate social support services during the deployment of members. Geographical fragmentation of military families also hampers the provision of social support services to spouses during separation. Spouses in rural areas find themselves in a position whereby they are isolated and have to fend for themselves when they experience deployment- related challenges and problems. It has, however, been found that to a certain extent, deployment-related challenges experienced by spouses in rural and urban areas are similar. Therefore, the importance of reaching out to all spouses and including their identified needs in the social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment is critical in enhancing their resilience during separation. Networking with social workers from the Department of Social Development with regard to areas that are not accessible, and the formation of family support groups for spouses who live in proximity could improve the provision of social support services to spouses during external military deployment of members, and improve the standard of social support service delivery to spouses during deployment.

- Most of the research subjects experienced transport-related difficulties during the absence of members. These problems placed a lot of strain on

spouses during the absence of members. Therefore, social support services that are rendered to spouses during the external military deployment of members should include assistance with transportation of children to school and to hospital, as well as transportation of the spouse for purchasing of groceries and payment of accounts in order to ease the stress of transport- related problems experienced by spouses during separation, and to enhance the resilience of families. The OC should play a pivotal role inso far as the issue of provision of transport to spouses during deployment is concerned.

- Financial problems weree one of the issues that posed a challenge to a large percentage of research subjects during separation. This was also confirmed in the quantitative study. Due to the fact that some of the spouses were unfamiliar with managing the finances of the home, some of them only started doing this upon the deployment of the member. This implied further problems in the financial affairs of the family. This was also confirmed by the nature of financial problems encountered by spouses during the absence of members. Family adjustment to deployment was thus negatively affected as a result of financial difficulties experienced during external military deployment of members. Therefore, family financial security during the absence of the member should be included in the social support services that are rendered by the organisation, long before the deployment of the member, on an ongoing basis in order to enhance the adjustment of spouses during separation. The importance of ensuring that spouses are empowered to manage the finances of the home cannot be overemphasised, and financial management programmes are therefore suggested. One of the research subjects indicated that the unit should make provision for loans during the absence of the member, such as money for unplanned school trips for the children.

- It was interesting to note that despite the fact that 54% of the research subjects had joint financial accounts, financial problems were documented in this study. Therefore, the possibility of including robust financial management

interventions in the social support services that are rendered to spouses before and during external military deployment should be explored. It is known that a financial management programme is being rendered to SANDF members during deployment. The fact that financial problems were documented despite the fact that this programme is in place is a cause for concern. Various reasons, such as access to spouses, could be attributed to this situation. It is thus vital that this programme be monitored and evaluated in order to identify problems associated with its implementation and the success of the programme.

- Separation as a result of deployment is challenging and often frustrating. For various reasons, marital problems emerged as one of the challenges faced by most of the spouses during the absence of members. This was also confirmed in the quantitative study. The extension of the deployment period only exacerbated these problems. The researcher is of the opinion that these problems would not necessarily occur in the absence of deployment, particularly with regard to the issue of role changes. Taking on the role of both the spouse and the member places a lot of stress on the family. As a result, marital relationships are negatively affected by deployment. Furthermore, the family stability that prevailed before deployment is negatively affected. There is also a possibility that spouses may be in danger of contracting HIV/AIDS in cases where extramarital affairs have occurred. This poses a further security threat to our country. Therefore, the importance of building families and protecting the country while also meeting the organisational objective of participating in peace missions elsewhere cannot be overemphasised. Formation of family support groups would also help greatly in building families.

- Despite the fact that members and spouses used various means of communication in order to try and communicate with one another, communication problems between members and spouses during deployment were documented in this study. Although 63% of the research subjects made use of cell phones and telephones, they still experienced challenges and frustrations in doing so. Forty

three percent of the research subjects encountered problems related to access to a telephone facility, 27% had problems with a lack of telecommunication services, and 15% had problems with a lack of funds to make the required call. According to the researcher, communication is the only way in which spouses can keep in contact with members and rekindle the love that they have for one another while they are separated.

- The researcher also noted that despite communication challenges, the research subjects communicated with one another, which is a positive thing. A large percentage (92%) of the research subjects communicated with one another at least once a week, while a small percentage (3%) communicated with one another twice a month. In the researcher's view, constant communication between members and their spouses during separation plays an important role in the preservation of emotional ties. Furthermore, it enables the member to be kept up to date with developments at home and the spouse with developments in the mission area. Without communication, the relationship can suffer. Therefore, social support services that are rendered to spouses and members during deployment must concentrate on the provision of a reliable and accessible communication system, so as to lessen the problems associated with separation and contribute towards building relationships, enhancing deployment resilience and ensuring mission success.

- In addition, possible solutions to the abovementioned communication problems were documented in this study. Most (78%) of the research subjects suggested the introduction of a phone within the mission area to facilitate communication with spouses at least once a week, while 23% of the research subjects suggested that a telephone should be made available at the unit to facilitate communication with spouses. Eleven percent of the research subjects indicated that letters should be sent to members at the mission area and replies back to spouses at least twice a month. The provision of an accessible telephone facility (free lines) for both spouses and children at least twice a week was also

suggested by most of the research subjects in the qualitative study. Based on this, the researcher concludes that provision of accessible telephone facilities within mission areas should be included in the social support services that are rendered to members and spouses during external military deployment. The organisation, in particular the Communication Management Information (CMI) department, should be proactive in establishing a communication network with families during separation, in order to enhance their resilience during deployment.

- Deaths and illnesses in the family and admission to hospital were some of the hardships that spouses experienced during separation. While the researcher acknowledges the fact that not much can be done to prevent events such as death and illness in the family, she also found that some of the spouses and their children became ill as a result of the effect that separation had on them. The inability to adjust to the deployment of the member possibly led to their illness and admission to hospital. This shows that spouses were not resilient enough to deal with the deployment-related challenges that they experienced. It is thus vital that social support services for spouses during deployment include intervention measures that will enable them to cope with whatever challenges they might encounter.

- Maintenance-related problems were identified as one of the challenges that most of the spouses encountered during the absence of members, as tasks such as replacing light bulbs, fixing the car and replacing tyres are generally ones that are carried out by male members. The Implication here is that these things became a serious challenge during their absence, as most of the spouses were unable to carry out these tasks themselves, or were not empowered in terms of how to deal with these problems during the absence of members. As confirmed in this study, only 5% of the spouses indicated that they did not have a problem in this regard because they had the ability to address the problems themselves as a result of previous experience in handling typical maintenance- related

problems. This situation may be due to the fact that social support services to spouses during deployment do not include their empowerment insofar as maintenance-related problems are concerned. Logistical support is thus vital in ensuring that spouses are empowered to deal with whatever maintenance-related challenges they might encounter during the absence of members. This would ease the burden of deployment on spouses.

- Due to the fact that spouses had children as young as one year old and up to adolescents, most of them mentioned problems with children as one of the challenges they encountered. Obviously, children cannot be as understanding as spouses where separation is concerned. As documented in this study, the occurrence of behavioural problems in children attests to this. This further implies that children, irrespective of their age, are also affected by deployment. The instability of children during deployment places even more stress on spouses. The normal family life that existed is therefore destabilised. Spouses confirmed an inability on their part to cope with problems related to children during deployment. The fact that problems with children were documented as a problem for spouses suggests the inability to deal with children during separation. Social support services to spouses do not address the issue of children before, during or after deployment. In order for spouses to be able to cope with deployment, parenting skills for dealing with children, especially adolescents, during the absence of members should form part of the social support services rendered before, during and after deployment. Family stability would be enhanced as a result, and members would be able to perform their tasks, knowing that the family is well taken care of. A parenting skills programme would probably assist spouses in dealing with issues related to children, particularly during deployment.

- While interference by in-laws was viewed positively by some of the research subjects, others had a negative experience in this regard, therefore it was identified as a problem during deployment. Although in-laws served as a source of support for some of the spouses during deployment, they were a

source of stress for others. In-laws posed a challenge to the stress already existing in families, thereby leading to further disorganisation and instability within families. Spouses should thus be assisted in the identification of social support networks that will be of value to them during the absence of members, in order to alleviate deployment-related stressors and enhance the functioning of families. The formation of family support groups could be an ideal solution in this regard.

- Loneliness and emotional problems were documented by most of the research subjects as issues that posed a challenge during deployment. This study confirms that spouses experienced loneliness and emotional problems as a result of deployment. This had a definite negative effect on the resilience of spouses during the absence of members. The fact that spouses did not have a shoulder to lean on or someone to talk to about their daily experiences and challenges made this situation worse. It also suggests that spouses did not have the ability to deal with the loneliness and emotional problems that they experienced during deployment. A spousal/family support group could be ideal in assisting spouses in coping with loneliness and emotional problems during deployment. This would enable spouses to share their deployment-related experiences and find possible solutions to these challenges. In this way, family unity would be enhanced and deployment stressors would be reduced.

- The fact that both the qualitative and quantitative studies confirmed the need for additional social assistance after deployment implies that provision of social support services after deployment is imperative. Social support needs identified by the research subjects after deployment ranged from the fact that thorough preparation for homecoming is critical, as well as marital counseling and post-deployment debriefing, and the fact that the organisation should show some interest in what is happening in the family and should show appreciation and concern for the sacrifice that the members are making. A recess period every three months was also identified as being essential, as it would make a significant difference to the marital relationship. The need for HIV/AIDS

awareness campaigns and provision of information to the spouse relating to the results of the HIV test taken by the member upon return from the mission area is also vital. A relationship exists between social assistance needs expressed by both members and spouses. Reintegration into the family was rated by 28% of the research subjects in the quantitative study, followed by debriefing (23%) and counselling for children (14%). Therefore, post-deployment social support needs expressed by the research subjects confirm the fact that the post-deployment period is just as challenging as deployment itself.

- The fact that most of the spouses had a negative attitude towards deployment could be attributed to the fact that they encountered a lot of problems during the external deployment of members. It further suggests that spouses were unable to deal with deployment-related stressors, and also indicates a gap in the support services that are supposed to be provided by the organisation. It is thus critical that comprehensive social support measures be included in the provision of service delivery by the organisation. The Social Work department could play a pivotal role in this regard by establishing a family support group that would serve as a source of support for spouses during deployment. In this way, the resilience of spouses during deployment would be enhanced.

- The fact that spouses documented deployment-related problems and challenges shows that although some forms of social support services are being rendered by the organisation, they are insufficient, as indicated in this study. Spouses would otherwise have been resilient enough to deal with these challenges. Therefore, the organisation is not doing enough to support members and spouses before, during and after deployment. The finalisation and implementation of the Draft Resilience Policy would probably be the solution to this problem, as it would enforce the implementation of social support services for SANDF members' spouses during deployment, thereby contributing towards combat readiness and improved productivity. This would further support the idea expressed by 95% of the research subjects that a uniform/standard form of

deployment support should be rendered to spouses during external military deployment. Provision of social support services to spouses is thus a prerequisite within the SANDF, as long as participation in peace missions is applicable. The development of a model that is tailor-made for the needs of SANDF members' spouses is thus critical.

- Needs that are generic to all the research subjects were identified in this study. The need for various types of social support services for members and spouses before, during and after deployment should be met through social support services. Social support needs that were generic to all the research subjects before deployment in terms of the qualitative study were provision of sufficient time for emotional preparation of the family for deployment, preparation of children, particularly with regard to communication, assistance with emotional adjustment, fostering the understanding of what deployment is, provision of a map of the mission area (that is, provision of information on deployment and its dynamics), particularly when one deployment is followed by another, marital counselling and enrichment, particularly with regard to role clarification, communication, extramarital relations and financial management.

- Social support needs that were generic to all the research subjects during deployment were the establishment of a unit deployment support committee/group that would enable them to converse with each other and share deployment-related experiences and frustrations and focus on deployment-related problems of spouses. Provision of a pamphlet with all the relevant information was also important to respondents. Feedback on the period of deployment, including the extension thereof, telephone numbers of who to contact in case of emergencies, two weeks off for members every three months, and regular home visits by the multidisciplinary team, particularly the social work officer, were also mentioned as needs. More support services should be rendered by the chaplains, particularly with regard to prayer sessions, and constant support and telephone calls should be provided by the unit and Officer

Commanding (OC), as well as spot checks by the unit just to confirm that they are still safe, especially with regard to those in military housing. Recreational facilities should also be provided in order to keep members occupied in their free time. Combat readiness of members would be ensured as a result of the provision of comprehensive (as identified by spouses) social support services to SANDF members' spouses during deployment. The formation of a family support group would also play a vital role in minimising most of the challenges and frustrations associated with deployment. A social work officer should be present during all stages of deployment.

- The fact that needs for social support services after deployment of members were identified by spouses indicates that they encountered difficulties during the post-deployment period. Members are often threatened by the already established patterns that have been working for the family. Fitting in might also be a problem. Therefore, the need for provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses after deployment of members is thus vital in order to improve family relationships. In addition to other intervention measures, post-deployment debriefing should focus on marriage enrichment programmes that are geared towards building families and dealing with all possible post-deployment-related stressors.

- Most (88%) of the research subjects (members) participated in a preparation for deployment programme. On the other hand, a considerable number (67%) of the research subjects (spouses) did not do this. Various reasons were cited for non-participation by both members and spouses, such as having no knowledge of the programme, not being given time to attend the programme, a lack of interest in the programme, distance from the unit and lack of transport. This study confirms that social support services are not rendered to all members of the SANDF and their spouses during external military deployment of members. In the researcher's view, despite the fact that a large percentage of the members attended a preparation for deployment programme, they still

documented deployment-related challenges and stressors. One could therefore assume that this programme is not meeting the needs of members and spouses. In other words, it is not having the desired result. Typical deployment-related challenges and stressors faced by spouses in the qualitative study also confirm this. Therefore, concerns raised by these members need to be incorporated into the preparation for deployment programme and addressed, in order to enhance the resilience of members. All members and their spouses should form part of the preparation for deployment programme. Social workers should play a prominent role in the provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members, and should ensure that spouses are identified as being vulnerable during this time. A joint effort by social workers from all the regions could be the solution to identification of all spouses of SANDF members who have been involved in external military deployment. This will ensure the provision of a consolidated, comprehensive social support service to spouses during deployment.

-       A large percentage (76%) of the research subjects relied on each other, even during deployment. According to the researcher, the results of this study suggest otherwise. Despite the fact that the majority of research subjects relied on each other even during deployment, deployment-related problems and challenges were still noted in this study. The researcher concludes that the nature of the support relationship that exists between spouses and members who engage in external military deployment is not strong enough to ensure their resilience during deployment. Therefore, the introduction of other forms of support should be explored. Social workers, particularly those who are working in deployment units, should identify vulnerable spouses and explore the possibility of forming family support groups that will serve as a source of support during the absence of members. This will ensure that spouses have someone to rely on during deployment. In this way, a lot of deployment-related stressors will be avoided, and members will be productive in carrying out the task at hand, knowing that their spouses are well taken care of.

- Fifty one percent of the research subjects were of the opinion that unit commanders are concerned about the welfare of spouses, while 45% believed that unit commanders do not care about the welfare of spouses. According to the researcher, the fact that some of the research subjects had a perception that unit commanders do not care about the welfare of members' spouses implies that not much is being done by the organisation in terms of ensuring that the necessary support services are rendered to spouses during deployment. The organisation, particularly the unit commanders, plays a critical role in ensuring that members are combat ready and resilient enough to be able to cope during deployment. This objective cannot be achieved without the involvement of the organisation in ensuring the implementation of necessary intervention support measures for spouses during deployment. Therefore, besides other forms of support needs that were documented in this study, unit commanders are an important source of support for spouses during deployment.

- In the researcher's view, the importance of members engaging in constructive relaxation activities during deployment cannot be overemphasised. In this study, despite the fact that the research subjects engaged in a variety of relaxation activities while deployed, 61% spent their leisure time engaging in some form of sporting activity, which is of great significance. The fact that various activities such as sport, drinking alcohol, reading, going to church and using the Internet were documented in this study implies that a coordinated effort, which is vital to maintaining an 'esprit de corpse' amongst members, is not in place. It is also a prerequisite in order for soldiers to remain combat ready. Therefore, the organisation, particularly the department of Physical Training, Sports and Recreation (PTSR), should ensure the inclusion of coordinated activities in the social support services that are rendered to members during deployment.

- Despite the fact that a large percentage (92%) of the research subjects indicated that they never formed any sexual relations while on external military deployment, some of the members (5%) did form sexual relations during this

time. Three percent did not answer this question. However, spouses in the qualitative study documented this issue to the extent that a concern was raised that spouses should be informed of the HIV test results of members upon their return home. Of concern to the researcher is the fact that although the percentage of those who engaged in sexual relations during deployment is very low (5%), 15% of the research subjects, in the follow-up question, stated that there were children born out of these relationships. The fact that no relations existed in terms of their responses to these questions confirmed that the research subjects had not been honest in their responses. This also implies that the research subjects engaged in risky sexual behaviours, which could be costly to the country, organisation and family. National security could be affected as a result of this behaviour. Therefore, the importance of inclusion of HIV/AIDS and STD-related programmes in the social support services that are rendered during deployment cannot be underestimated. Social workers and nursing personnel should play an active role in addressing these concerns.

- Most (65%) of the research subjects stated that it was the responsibility of the social worker to support spouses of deployed members. The chaplain was rated the second highest by 35% of the research subjects, followed by the OC (20%), the multi-professional team (17%) and the psychologist (16%). The lack of accessibility to psychologists within the SANDF could be the reason for this situation. Therefore, the social worker should play a predominant role in ensuring the provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses. This also implies that the social worker should be the custodian of social support services to spouses of deployed members. This does not, however, imply that social workers should function in isolation in providing these services. Social workers must be proactive in the provision of social support services to spouses during deployment, and must ensure that the support of other important role players is enlisted for the provision of these services. In this way, a support network that would ensure the provision of comprehensive social support services during

deployment could be established. In this way, combat-ready forces would be ensured and families would be kept intact.

-       Most (95%) of the research subjects felt that the provision of standardised unit social support services to spouses during the external military deployment of members is important. This was also confirmed in the quantitative study. The fact that the research subjects supported the notion of provision of standardised unit social support services to spouses during deployment suggests that a model for social support services to spouses during deployment should be designed. This further confirms the need for provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses in order to enhance their coping skills during deployment.

-       As shown in the literature review presented in Chapter 2, it was found that similar deployment-related stressors and needs were identified in this study. In other words, deployment challenges and needs are common to all deployments, irrespective of the country from which the spouses originate - for example, loneliness and emotional problems, communication problems, financial problems, marital problems and problems with children. The implication here is that although it is focused on the South African military setup and informed by the outcome of this scientific investigation, the model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses will not be totally different to what other militaries are offering. Therefore, due to the fact that the outcome of this study is not totally different to what has been indicated in the literature, and the fact that this study included an analysis of social support services rendered to the SANDF members and their spouses during external military deployment, as requested by the Director of Social Work, the model will to a certain extent include social support services that are already in place.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the abovementioned conclusions that have been drawn in this study, the following recommendations can be made:

- Due to the fact that deployment is a task that the SANDF cannot do away with, the researcher recommends that the organisation regard the provision of social support services to SANDF members and their spouses during external military deployment as a priority.

- Because of the deployment-related challenges that were documented in this study, the researcher recommends that social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment be implemented. In other words, social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment are a need that should be addressed by the SANDF. The Draft Resilience Policy should be finalised and implemented within the SANDF.

- In order to reduce the effect of deployment-related stressors on members and their spouses, the researcher recommends that the deploying units ensure that a resilience programme is rendered to SANDF members' spouses on a continual basis.

- In view of the fact that members had been deployed once or twice in the past year, the researcher recommends that sufficient turnaround time between deployments be provided, in order to provide an opportunity for building family relationships and enhancing the resilience of families.

- Due to the fact that some of the SANDF members' spouses are unemployed, the researcher recommends that spousal empowerment programmes be incorporated into the programme of social support services

during external military deployment, so as to enhance spouses' resilience and adjustment during deployment.

- Since some of the spouses of members who are involved in external military deployment live in rural areas, the researcher recommends that those spouses be identified as a group that is more at risk, and that they are supported accordingly. The researcher further recommends that the establishment of family support groups in these areas be effected. Networking with social workers in these areas would be helpful in enhancing the resilience of spouses in rural areas.

- Since both members and their spouses experienced similar problems and challenges during external military deployment, the researcher recommends that social support services during external military deployment focus on addressing these challenges.

- As a result of transport-related challenges experienced by most of the spouses during deployment, the researcher recommends that provision be made for transporting spouses to places such as the hospital and shopping centre during deployment, particularly for those who are living in rural areas where transport is a common problem for members of the community.

- Based on the fact that financial problems during deployment were documented in this study, the researcher recommends that financial management programmes be rendered on a regular basis to all spouses and members who are involved in external military deployment, in order to minimise financial problems during deployment. In other words, they should be rendered long before deployment, during deployment and after deployment.

- Due to the fact that marital problems were documented as one of the issues faced by spouses during deployment, the researcher recommends that

social workers be proactive and include marriage enrichment programmes in the social support services that are rendered to members and their spouses during deployment. The formation of family support groups could be a tool for enhancing marital relations.

- In view of the fact that communication problems were experienced by the research subjects in this study, the researcher recommends that the organisation, in particular the CMI department, put measures in place to improve communication between the member and the spouse during the external military deployment of the member. In other words, there should be a communication system in place that will contribute to building family relations and to the success of the mission. Social workers within the mission area should also act as mediators on behalf of members, particularly in areas with no communication infrastructure. They should serve as a link between the member and the spouse, and should communicate with the spouse on behalf of the member.

- Preparation for deployment should not only include issues over which members have control, but should also include those that are beyond the control of members and spouses. Therefore, due to the fact that there are challenges beyond the control of members' spouses during external military deployment, the researcher recommends that issues such as preparation for death and dying, illness and admission to hospital be incorporated into the social support programme that is rendered to members and their spouses during deployment, in order to enable them to be resilient enough to deal with such events when they occur.

- Based on the fact that spouses encountered maintenance-related problems during the external military deployment of members, the researcher recommends that the organisation put measures in place to address these problems. Spouses should be empowered to handle maintenance-related tasks by themselves such as putting in a light bulb and replacing tyres. In addition, a

deployment support committee that will also address maintenance-related issues during deployment should be established within deploying units.

- Due to the fact that problems related to children were documented in this study, the researcher recommends that preparation for deployment that is focused mainly on the theme of children and deployment is implemented, and that a parenting skills programme be included in the resilience programme during deployment.

- As a result of the fact that some of the spouses encountered problems of interference by in-laws, the researcher recommends that social workers be proactive in terms of identifying social support systems that will not serve as a source of stress to spouses during deployment. Spouses should be involved in the identification of support systems that would make a difference to their lives during deployment. A family support group consisting of spouses of members who are involved in external military deployment could be ideal in this regard.

- Due to the fact that loneliness and emotional problems were documented in this study, the researcher recommends that the issue of dealing with loneliness and emotional problems be incorporated into the resilience programme that is rendered to spouses during deployment. Even in this case, family support groups within deploying units could serve as a means for alleviating loneliness and emotional problems.

- In view of the fact that social support services were not rendered to all the members and their spouses in preparation for deployment, the researcher recommends that preparation for deployment and social support services during and after deployment be rendered to all members and spouses during deployment. The organisation should enforce measures to ensure that social support services are rendered to all members and their spouses.

-       Due to the fact that the need for a standardised unit social support programme for deployment support was documented in this study, the researcher recommends that a model that specifically addresses the challenges experienced by SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment be designed.

-       Based on the fact that a need for additional social support services after deployment was documented in this study, the researcher recommends that these additional services are incorporated into the social support programme that is rendered to members and their spouses after deployment. Thorough preparation for homecoming will reduce potential conflicts that are likely to arise after deployment.

-       Despite the fact that social workers were identified as the custodians of the social support programme rendered to spouses during deployment, the researcher recommends that a multi-disciplinary approach be followed in the provision of social support services to spouses of SANDF members during the external military deployment of members. The involvement of other forms of support should also be explored. Unit commanders' involvement in supporting SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, and the formation of unit family support groups, would ensure the success of the mission due to the fact that members would be combat-ready and spouses would be able to deal with whatever deployment-related crises they might encounter. Furthermore, the organisation should ensure that Military Community Deployment Committees (MCDCs) that address employees' well-being within the mission areas are fully functional.

-       The organisation, in particular the PTSR department, should ensure that a coordinated and comprehensive recreational service be provided to members during deployment, in order to reduce typical deployment-related stressors.

-       A model that specifically addresses the needs of SANDF members'
spouses during external military deployment should be designed. In other words,
the deployment-related needs that were identified in this study before, during and
after deployment should serve as a framework for a model for social support
services to SANDF members' spouses during the external military deployment of
members.

6.6 SUMMARY

In summary, the abovementioned conclusions and recommendations provide
clear guidelines for a model for spousal support services during the external
military deployment of members. As indicated in this chapter, the framework for a
model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external
military deployment is based on the needs that were identified in the qualitative
and quantitative studies, and the assessment of social support services that are
currently rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military
deployment. The deployment-related challenges and needs identified in this
study, which will serve as a framework for designing a model for social support
services to SANDF members' spouses, are not uniquely South African. They
have been found to be similar to those experienced by spouses in other
countries. This model will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

MODEL FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES TO SANDF MEMBERS' SPOUSES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapters 4 and 5 of this study demonstrated that a model for social support services is needed by SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. The importance of provision of spousal support services was reflected in the nature of problems and challenges encountered by spouses during deployment. Therefore, a model for spousal support services should take cognisance of typical deployment-related challenges and frustrations experienced by spouses, and should incorporate their needs.

Silverman (2000:77) postulates that "models provide an overall framework for how we look at reality. In short, they tell us what reality is like and the basic elements it contains (ontology) and what is the nature and status of knowledge (epistemology)". Bailey (in De Vos, 2002c:37) defines a model as:

> A copy, replica or analogy that differs from the real thing in some way. A social science model consists mainly of words, a description of a social phenomenon, abstracting the main features of the phenomenon without attempting to explain or predict anything from the description. Thus, the goal in social science models is not necessarily to include all features of the system being modelled, but only those necessary for research purposes.

In this study, the model that is designed in this chapter is based on the following factors: assessment/evaluation of social support services that are supposed to have been rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, as requested by the Director Social Work (complaints received by the Department of Social Work concerning the fact that no or insufficient social support services were rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external

military deployment formed the basis for this decision), deployment-related challenges and frustrations, and the needs that were identified in both the qualitative and quantitative studies. As was confirmed in Chapter 2 and in the quantitative and qualitative studies, it was also found that deployment-related challenges and frustrations of spouses appear to be similar, irrespective of the country of origin. For example, as long as there are no social support services, loneliness and isolation will remain problems for spouses during deployment, irrespective of where they are. Therefore, due to the fact that this model does not exist in isolation, but is tailor-made to specifically address the needs of SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, it will focus on SANDF spouses, but is not totally unique to other DODs such as the US DOD, which is in the lead insofar as spousal support services during deployment are concerned. This is probably as a result of the fact that they have, for many years, been involved in different forms of deployment throughout the world.

According to Fawcett, Suarez-Balcazar, Balcazar, White, Paine, Blanchard and Embree (in De Vos, 2002d:407), "by studying successful and unsuccessful models or programmes that have attempted to address the problem, researchers identify potentially useful elements of an intervention. This synthesis of existing knowledge helps to guide design and develop activities". In the researcher's view, despite the fact that not much has been written on the description of models, these successful models or programmes will serve as a guide in designing a model for spousal support services during external military deployment of members. Therefore, in this design phase, the researcher endeavoured to design a model that could be used to support SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the goal of this model is to contribute to healthy family functioning, thereby fostering combat readiness amongst SANDF members. The researcher made use of the conceptualised stages of the design of a protocol by Barnes-September (in De Vos, 2002d:407-8), which were developed from the D&D model by Thomas and Rothman (1994). The researcher aligned herself with

these stages, due to the fact that they are relevant and applicable to this study. Therefore, according to the researcher, the following stages of protocol development by Barnes-September (in De Vos, 2002d:408) are recommended:

Stage 1: Problem analysis derived from the findings of the information gathering and synthesis phase.
Stage 2: Setting the objectives for protocol development.
Stage 3: Considering optimal approaches and materials.
Stage 4: Drafting and designing.
Stage 5: Consulting, editing, assessing and taking corrective action.

Following the guidelines provided in the findings and conclusions of this study, a model for social support services during external military deployment of members has been designed as follows:

7.2 STAGES OF MODEL DEVELOPMENT

7.2.1 Problem analysis (stage 1)

As indicated by Barnes-September (in De Vos, 2002d:408), the first step in the design phase is problem analysis, as derived from the findings of the information gathering and synthesis phase. According to Mark (1996:81) and Babbie and Mouton (2001:78), "social work research begins with a problem". Therefore, problem identification forms the basis for the design of any model, otherwise there would be no need for research. Hastings (in De Vos, 2002d:397) provides the following definitions of social problems: "social problems are conditions of society that have negative effects on large numbers of people, a social problem is a condition that has been defined by significant groups as deviation from some social standard, or breakdown of social organisation, a social problem is a condition affecting a significant number of people in ways considered undesirable, about which it is felt something can be done through collective action".

The focus of the abovementioned definitions is thus on the identification of a particular social problem that negatively affects a number of people, and on which specific problem solving mechanisms need to be in place in order to resolve the problem. The researcher conducted this study in order to design a model for spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. Complaints about insufficient or no spousal support services and the need for a scientific assessment of social support services provided to spouses during deployment informed this study.

As indicated in Chapter 3 of this study, this phase involves the analysis of the problem in preparation for the planning of a project based on the findings of the scientific inquiry. Therefore, the researcher conducted qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) studies in order to obtain a better understanding of social support services rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. A summary of the findings of these studies indicated that:

- SANDF members have been involved in external military deployment;
- deployment has its own challenges and frustrations;
- spouses encountered a lot of deployment-related stressors as a result of deployment (for example, loneliness and emotional problems, communication problems, problems with children, transport problems, maintenance problems, marital problems and financial problems);
- some of the spouses did not participate in the preparation for deployment programme;
- there was a lack of support during deployment;
- all spouses should take part in the preparation for deployment programme, in order to enhance their resilience during deployment;
- measures should be put in place in order to ensure that those spouses who have been identified as being vulnerable are also supported during deployment;

- spousal empowerment programmes should be incorporated into the social support services programmes that have been rendered to spouses during deployment, in order to enhance their resilience; and

- social support services should be provided to spouses during all the stages of deployment.

According to the researcher, based on the analysis and findings of the qualitative and quantitative studies that were conducted and presented in Chapters 4 and 5 of this study, it became apparent that spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment was a problem that needed to be addressed by the organisation. In light of these outcomes, the researcher decided that a model that addresses the problem of spousal support to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment should be designed. Brewer and Collins, as quoted by Barnes-September (1998:139), referred to "multi operations paradigm that assumes that some degree of error and truth are inherent in all research methods". The researcher is in agreement with this view, and in order to try and overcome this limitation, she made use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative studies. Once the problem had been analysed, the next step was to set objectives to guide the design of the model.

7.2.2 Setting objectives for model development (stage 2)

In the researcher's view, the findings in the problem analysis phase clearly indicated that social support to SANDF members' spouses is a problematic issue during the external military deployment of members. Based on these findings, the primary goal of this study was to design a model for social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members. This programme should be rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members. Once the problem had been analysed, the next phase in the process of designing a model, which is setting objectives for the development of a model for spousal support services to SANDF members'

spouses during external military deployment, followed. Therefore, the objectives of the designing of a model for spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment were as follows:

- To incorporate literature on social support, as referred to in Chapter 2, in order to substantiate the model.
- To incorporate the needs of spouses that were identified in the study.
- To propose programmes that will ensure that spouses are well prepared for deployment during all stages of deployment, based on the findings of this study.
- To include a social support system as an overall concept in the model.
- To highlight a variety of social support services at different stages of deployment.
- To consider governance as an important concept in the model.
- To enhance the resilience of spouses during external military deployment.

These objectives served as a guideline in the formulation of the model. The next step in the design phase is considering optimal approaches and materials.

7.2.3 Considering optimal approaches and materials (stage 3)

According to Noy (in Campbell, Campbell, Schultz and Styles,1991:42), "the concept of spouse readiness has been coined by military policy makers and researchers to acknowledge the importance of the military family to the successful fulfillment of the Army's overall mission". Furthermore, according to Campbell et al. (1991:42), "given the importance of the family, it can be concluded that just as soldiers must be prepared for immediate deployment, the military spouse must be prepared to assume the role and duties of household head to ensure family functioning during deployment." The researcher agrees with the abovementioned authors' view, and is of the opinion that the SANDF has an obligation to ensure that spouses are well prepared to deal with whatever

deployment-related challenges they might be faced with during deployment of members. The Draft Resilience policy, which ensures the implementation of social support services to spouses during deployment, should be finalised and fully implemented.

According to Cobb (in Hunter and Nice, 1978:210), "it seems reasonable to generalize from this evidence that the military wife and family unit would be better able to manage the stresses of deployment if they were aware of one or more of the basic types of social supports available in their community". Using Cobbs' framework, these social supports would include information such as "leading the wife and family to believe that they are cared for and loved, esteemed and valued and belong to a social network of communication and mutual obligation" (Cobb, in Hunter & Nice, 1978:210).

In addition., according to Spellman et al. (1991:6-7; see also Hornig, 1994:8-59), deployment and family deployment is challenging and frustrating for both the member and the family. Family support enhances combat readiness of the member. Involvement of commanders in the family support groups (FSGs) as part of preparation for deployment is regarded as one means by which the organisation can express concern about the welfare of families. A FSG is viewed as an effective way of providing support to families during deployment, and is their most immediate source of support. Functional FSGs have to a great extent enhanced the resilience of spouses during deployment. The focus of treatment is on all levels, namely prevention, treatment and aftercare. Issues such as problems with children, stress management, questions of fidelity and anxiety over reunions can be discussed at these FSG meetings. Combat readiness of the member is thus enhanced by the knowledge that his/her family is well supported during deployment.

Based on the abovementioned, the importance of the formation of spousal support groups cannot be underestimated. Caliber Associates (1991:32) are of

the opinion that "mutual support groups or self-help groups offer individuals an opportunity to interact socially and to share feelings and discover that others are experiencing similar feelings (i.e. that their feelings are normal)". Pinch (1994:56) also indicated the importance of an informal network of wives' clubs for spouses of deployed members.

Furthermore, Caliber Associates (1991:11) postulate that in order for organisations to be effective and efficient in the preparation of their members for deployment, it is vital that they have a project plan in place that clearly outlines programmes that will be at the disposal of spouses during deployment. A well coordinated FSG service should be regarded as a priority, and should include crisis management in collaboration with other organisations. The researcher is in support of the idea of collaborating with other organisations, particularly for areas that are not accessible. These organisations can be useful in cases where expert services such as counselling are required.

This plan, according to Caliber Associates (1991:13), "should be written in a manner, which is most useful to leadership and agencies at the base. Although planning is crucial, flexibility during deployments will be necessary. Once a plan is developed, the plan should be reviewed on an annual basis". The researcher agrees with the aforementioned authors, and is of the opinion that once the model is fully operational, it should be evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to assess whether or not it has achieved the desired outcomes. Based on the findings of this study, this will be another area for future research.

In order to design and develop a comprehensive model for spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of members, existing models were reviewed and used as guidelines in the development of the SANDF Unit Family Support Groups (SANDF UFSGs) model. The researcher believes that both formal and informal UFSGs should be established within all deploying units in the SANDF, in order to holistically

address challenges and problems experienced by spouses and members during external military deployment. The Officer Commanding, with the support, advice and assistance of the multi-disciplinary team, should ensure that these SANDF UFSGs are established, and should monitor their functioning. The involvement of spouses of members who are involved in external military deployment is critical, particularly those who have been identified as vulnerable.

The researcher further agrees in principle with the abovementioned authors with regard to the fact that deployment-related stressors can best be dealt with once spouses are informed of the social support services at their disposal. Having information about who to contact plays an important role in the stability of families during the absence of members. The knowledge that the spouse is supported during deployment will enhance the productivity of the member in the mission area. The formation of UFSGs within the SANDF should be a forum in which all spousal deployment-related frustrations and challenges can be raised and addressed. This need was identified in both the qualitative and quantitative analyses and findings. In this study, the research subjects made reference to the formation of a unit spousal support group. However, the researcher preferred the usage of the term 'FSGs', which is essentially a unit spousal support group, because the term 'SANDF UFSGs' is more applicable, all-inclusive and relevant as a model for family support groups within the SANDF. Therefore, the researcher proposes the UFSGs model in the SANDF as one that can address all the challenges and problems that have been identified in this study. The formation of UFSG committees in all the deploying units in the SANDF in order to address deployment-related problems and challenges is thus of great importance.

As indicated by Hornig (1994:41), the importance of provision of social support services throughout the different stages of deployment is clear, as also confirmed in this study. In this way, the functioning of military families will continually be improved. As identified in this study, the importance of provision of social support

services to SANDF members' spouses during the external military deployment of members, and during all stages of deployment, cannot be overemphasised. SANDF UFSGs should be functional within the deploying units on an ongoing basis. This will ensure stability and continuity of social support service delivery to members and spouses who are involved in external military deployment. The following is a brief discussion on each of the stages of deployment:

▬ Predeployment

► Predeployment entails preparing service members (including personal and family affairs, family care plans, deployment briefings or materials). According to Hornig (1994:60), FSG initiatives could also include predeployment training classes or programmes.

► Logistics of processing service members on the mobility line (including the presence and role of FSGs and other agencies on the mobility line).

► Organisation and coordination of family support services (identifying the services and supportive efforts to be provided by the base, base agencies and units) (Caliber Associates, 1991:13).

Predeployment preparation is vital. As confirmed in this study, the researcher supports the idea that the abovementioned social support services or programmes should be rendered to members and spouses before deployment.

▬ Deployment

► Deployment entails the coordination of family support services (strengthening supportive efforts at the base, base agencies and units).

► Additional support services (including developing services such as a telephone hotline and expanding needed services such as children's programmes).

► Coordination with schools (including determining protocols with

schools and identifying an agency or leader to serve as a liaison with schools) (Caliber Associates, 1991:13).

According to Hornig (1994:59), "many other activities that FSG commonly sponsor, coordinate or participate in also directly or indirectly foster family support goals". These typically include:

- Sponsoring new families;
- Holding newcomers' orientation;
- Organizing holiday and other unit parties or outings;
- Arranging employment or relocation briefings;
- Compiling listings of available childcare or actually providing short-term care;
- Arranging transportation, especially during deployment, to essential locations such as the commissary or hospital and to FSG meetings;
- Obtaining discount tickets for family activities, especially during deployment;
- Making plans for homecoming;
- Raising funds;
- Providing workshops on topics such as coping with stress, managing loneliness, military benefits, prenatal care, preparing for deployment (emotionally and practically) or using community services; and
- Distributing deployment assistance materials and Community Resources Directories to all family members (Hornig, 1994:59).

The researcher agrees with the abovementioned author, and is of the opinion that some of the programmes mentioned above are also applicable within the SANDF, as has been identified in this study.

— Reunion (Post-deployment)

► Reunion entails the return of service members.

► Reunion preparations.

► Reunion support services (Caliber Associates, 1991:13).

The importance of provision of social support services to members and their spouses after deployment has also been documented in this study. As a result, the reunion stage cannot be ignored. Intervention measures that incorporate the needs of spouses should form part of social support services upon homecoming. Furthermore, the United States Department of Defence (US DOD) makes use of the FSG model to support families during deployment. Although it is US based, this model was used as a framework in the design of the model for spousal support to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. This is based on the fact that similar deployment-related stressors were documented in this study. As shown in this study, there are many commonalities between the challenges and problems experienced by Army spouses and members who are involved in military deployment all over the world. However, there are also differences. For example, some of the programmes that have been proposed in this model are not totally suited to SANDF spouses and members' needs - for example, antiterrorism precautions, especially overseas. As indicated by Silverman (2000:77), it will be used as a framework for designing the model for spousal support to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment.

The next phase in the design and development of a model for spousal support services within the SANDF during external military deployment is that of drafting and designing, as indicated by Barnes-September (in De Vos, 2002d:408).

7.2.4 Drafting and designing (stage 4)

7.2.4.1 Introduction

Drafting and designing is the 4[th] stage in the development of a model for spousal support services within the SANDF during external military deployment. Based on the abovementioned, the SANDF UFSGs model may be suitable for addressing deployment-related challenges of SANDF members' spouses during

external military deployment of members, due to the fact that it takes cognisance of the assessment/evaluation of social support services that are supposed to have been rendered to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, and because it is needs-based. In other words, the findings of the qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) studies provided a discourse for the designing of this model. As a result, it was found to be suited to the challenges and frustrations of SANDF spouses during external military deployment of members for the following reasons:

- It provides solutions and answers to the challenges and problems raised by the research subjects in this study.
- It is all-inclusive and holistic.
- It incorporates support needs of spouses.
- It will make a significant contribution to combat readiness of SANDF members who are involved in external military deployment, and the promotion and maintenance of healthy military family units.

7.2.4.2 Design Questions

In order to provide direction for the design of the model for spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment, the following questions were formulated:
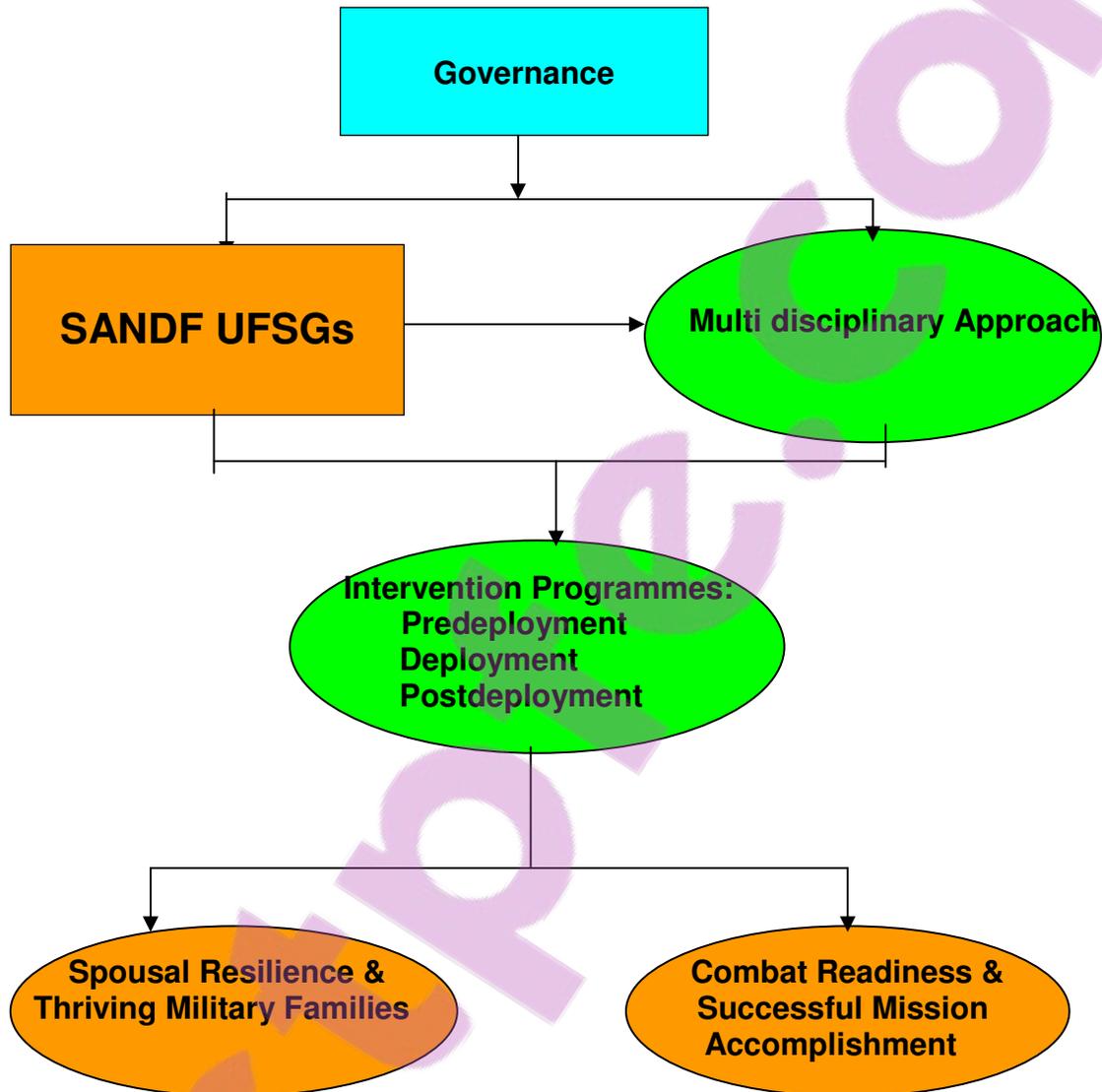
- What legislates the provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment?
- What are the key components of the model?
- What are the phases of deployment?
- What is the nature of social support services needed by spouses during each phase?
- What are the overall needs of spouses?
- Who are the key role players and what are their obligations?

- Are there time frames associated with the provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment?

The proposed SANDF UFSGs model stresses the importance of organisational provision of social support services and spousal resilience, resilient military families and combat readiness of members during external military deployment. Spousal resilience is critical to successful mission accomplishment and is therefore the ultimate goal. Lack of resilience of the spouse will lead to family problems that will force the organisation to send the member back home in order to resolve these problems, which is costly for the organisation. The proposed model further recognises that the SANDF Draft Policy on Resilience, which mandates that social support services be rendered during deployment, can to a great extent influence spousal resilience. It should, however, be amended to include the institution of SANDF UFSGs within deploying units in the organisation. Spousal support services are not uniformly implemented within the SANDF. Therefore, the model emphasises the importance of provision of social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment by means of the establishment and implementation of SANDF UFSGs in all units. Although social workers have been identified as the custodians of this model, a multi-disciplinary approach should be followed in the implementation of this model.

7.2.4.3 SANDF Unit Family Support Groups (SANDF UFSGs) Model

Figure 35: SANDF UFSGs Model for spousal support during external military deployment of members

7.2.4.3.1 Contents of the model

The main objective of the SANDF UFSGs model is to improve the resilience of spouses during external military deployment, thereby promoting thriving military families. The model can be outlined as follows:

The text of the SANDF UFSGs model will consist of three main sections.

- Section 1 deals with an overview of the model, the purpose of the model, the SANDF UFSGs approach, the multi-disciplinary approach and key role players.

- Section 2 provides an overview of the phases of deployment.

- Section 3 deals with intervention programmes that are aimed at the provision of social support services to spouses during external military deployment, and which are applicable to each phase, based on the findings of the scientific investigation.

The SANDF UFSGs model can be explained as follows:

SECTION 1

7.2.4.3.2 Overview

This SANDF UFSGs model is based on the concept that spouses need to be prepared in order to be able to deal with whatever stressors they might be faced with during external military deployment. The importance of maintenance of healthy family systems cannot be underestimated, particularly during deployment. SANDF UFSGs should be established within all the deploying units in order to ensure that SANDF members' spouses are well supported during external military deployment.

7.2.4.3.3 Purpose of the SANDF UFSGs

SANDF UFSGs can play a critical role in the promotion of resilience of spouses

during external military deployment. The purpose of the SANDF UFSGs is as follows:

- It instils the sense that the organisation cares about the well-being of spouses during external military deployment.
- It serves as a source of support for spouses during deployment.
- Experiences and expertise with regard to dealing with deployment frustrations and challenges are shared amongst spouses.
- It provides a sense of belonging to spouses.
- It serves as a resource for dealing with deployment-related challenges and frustrations.
- It serves as a platform for venting frustrations related to deployment.
- It enhances the self-esteem of spouses of SANDF members who are involved in external military deployment.
- It contributes to nation building.
- It contributes to the maintenance and promotion of healthy family relationships.
- It serves as a link between the spouse and the member.
- In general, it contributes to combat readiness of members and successful mission accomplishment.

7.2.4.3.4 SANDF UFSGs Governance

Provision of spousal support services by the organisation to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment is non-negotiable. In order for the organisation to be successful in its mission accomplishment, provision of social support services to spouses should be enforced. The Draft Policy on Resilience should be amended to incorporate the formation of UFSGs within all deploying units, and be finalised and implemented. Once implemented, it will serve as the policy that will guide the management and implementation of spousal support services during external military deployment. SANDF UFSG meetings should

take place at least once a month in order to address deployment-related social support issues. For the purposes of overall coordination of social support services to the SANDF organisation as a whole, the Resilience Advisory Committee (RAC), which consists of representatives from all Arms of Services and Divisions, should ensure that regular meetings are held for feedback purposes and to address higher level challenges. At unit level, Military Community Development Committees (MCDCs) should include feedback reports on the functioning of UFSGs that specifically focus on deployment support issues. This report should be submitted to the RAC, which is responsible for deployment issues within the SANDF organisation, on a monthly basis. SANDF UFSGs should thus form part of the agenda items for discussion within the MCDCs. It should be noted that the MCDC is responsible for the overall wellbeing of members of the organisation. SANDF UFSGs, on the other hand, will focus on the provision of spousal support services during deployment. Therefore, issues that were identified in this study should form part of deployment support intervention programmes that are rendered to spouses during deployment. The Draft Resilience Policy should also incorporate the fact that MCDCs are regarded as the unit umbrella body that is responsible for ensuring that SANDF UFSGs are functional within the organisation. Due to the fact that MCDCs are not operational within all units in the SANDF, the Draft Resilience Policy must enforce their implementation, as the MCDCs have a responsibility to ensure the proper functioning of SANDF UFSGs.

7.2.4.3.5 Multi-disciplinary approach

Although the Social Work department has been identified as the custodian of this model, a multi-disciplinary approach should be followed in addressing the issue of spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. Provision of spousal support services during deployment is the responsibility of the organisation as a whole. Therefore, all disciplines should be involved in maintaining and contributing to healthy military families during

deployment. All disciplines within various units should ensure that UFSGs are operational on a continuous basis. One would assume that the member and the family play a pivotal role in ensuring that support services are in place well before the deployment of the member. However, this does not seem to be the case. Problems experienced by spouses during the absence of members suggest otherwise. Hence, there is a need for the organisation to ensure that spouses are empowered to be resilient during deployment. Key role players in the provision of spousal support services during deployment are as follows:

- The Officer Commandings (OCs);
- Social workers;
- Psychologists;
- Chaplains;
- Nursing personnel; and
- Spouses.

7.2.4.3.6 Roles and responsibilities of key role players

The Policy on Resilience should serve as a guide in the implementation of spousal support services during external military deployment.

- The Officer Commandings (OCs)

OCs play a leading role in ensuring that spouses are well supported during deployment, and that UFSGs meetings and programmes are conducted on a regular basis. OCs should ensure the success of these programmes by means of their presence, providing resources, namely transport for spouses to attend these meetings, as well as funds for refreshments and guest speakers when necessary. OCs have a responsibility to enhance the perception that the organisation cares about spouses during deployment. They have to chair the meetings in which issues related to spousal support during deployment are discussed and resolved. Their involvement and participation is vital to the

achievement of the UFSGs goal. Furthermore, OCs should ensure that feedback regarding the provision of spousal support services within their areas of responsibility is sent to the RAC on a monthly basis.

- **Social Workers**

Social workers play a critical role in enhancing the resilience of spouses during deployment, and have a particular responsibility to maintain a balance between the demands of the organisation and the needs of members. They have to identify deployment-related stressors of spouses, provide counselling or refer them for counselling to another professional workere such as a nurse or psychologist if necessary, and ensure the implementation of preventative/promotional intervention measures to address these challenges and frustrations. Of critical importance is the provision of advice and guidance to UFSGs meetings and the OCs. Due to the fact that deployment support services to spouses need to be rendered on an ongoing basis, members should take part in activities/programmes that are conducted with spouses, for example, marriage enrichment and conflict management, when they are home. In most cases, these programmes are only conducted with members in the units. Therefore, both spouses and members should be subjected to these programmes when they are back home. This will enhance their resilience. Networking with other social workers is of critical importance in cases where spouses are not within reach. The RAC must ensure the institution of SANDF UFSGs in all the deployment units in the organisation, in order to ensure that spouses who are living in South Africa can attend these programmes.

- **Psychologists**

Psychologists also play an important role in the provision of spousal support services during deployment. They have to be part of UFSGs meetings. They also provide psychological advice and guidance in these meetings. In addition, they

provide counselling services or refer accordingly when necessary, and provide programmes during the meetings - for example, stress management programmes.

- Chaplains

Chaplains play an important role in the provision of spousal support services during external military deployment. From a spiritual point of viewe, chaplains provide counselling services or refer accordingly if need be. Along with the rest of the other professional team members, chaplains provide intervention programmes such as the HIV/AIDS value-based programme.

- Nursing personnel

Nursing personnel also play a vital role in the provision of spousal support services during external military deployment. They form part of the UFSGs meetings and provide the necessary counselling and advice insofar as health issues are concerned. Along with the other professional team members, they provide intervention programmes such as HIV/AIDS and health information sessions.

- Spouses

Spouses play a pivotal role in the SANDF UFSGs. Social support services during external military deployment should be implemented according to their needs. Representatives of spouses should be present at all the planning meetings of the UFSGs, due to the fact that they serve as a mouthpiece for other spouses. They acte as a source of support for one another during external military deployment. Therefore, they should be present in all the UFSGs meeting/functions.

SECTION 2

7.2.4.3.7 Overview of the phases of deployment

This study confirmed that there are three phases of deployment, namely pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment. The following is a discussion of each phase:

— **Pre-deployment phase**

The pre-deployment phase refers to the phase before the actual deployment. It thus entails preparation for deployment. This phase plays a critical role in ensuring the combat readiness of members. During this phase, spouses should be prepared for deployment of members. Spousal preparation before deployment ensures that spouses are resilient enough to cope with deployment- related challenges and frustrations. All spouses should undergo the preparation of deployment programme along with members. SANDF UFSGs must ensure that spouses are ready long before the actual deployment. Preparation for deployment programmes should be implemented with spouses in order to contribute to the ultimate organisational goal, which is successful mission accomplishment.

— **Deployment phase**

The deployment phase refers to the phase during which the actual deployment of members as a result of external military deployment occurs. As confirmed in this study, provision of spousal support services is even more critical during this phase, due to the fact that it involvess many stressors, and this has an effect on the combat readiness of members. SANDF UFSGs can play a pivotal role in this phase. The UFSGs serve as a tool by means of which the resilience of spouses

can be enhanced. Various intervention programmes that are needs- based should be implemented by the organisation during this phase.

— **Post-deployment phase**

The post-deployment phase refers to the phase after deployment, and involves the reunion of the family after reintegration. As confirmed in this study, as much as homecoming is exciting, it also has its own challenges and frustrations. Provision of spousal support services even after deployment will facilitate family adjustment. SANDF UFSGs should continue to function even after deployment, in order to ensure continuity.

In general, provision of spousal support services before, during and after external military deployment is an organisational responsibility. The SANDF UFSGs are a means by which comprehensive social support services can be provided to spouses during external military deployment. As documented in this study, different challenges and frustrations were experienced by spouses during each phase. Based on this study, the need for various social support services during deployment were identified by spouses in each phase. The following gives an indication of the identified programme interventions that are applicable to each phase:

SECTION 3

7.2.4.3.8 Intervention programmes applicable to each phase

The intervention programmes applicable to each phase are as follows:

— **Pre-deployment phase**

The following aspects should be included as part of the SANDF UFSGs' intervention measures for spousal support during external military deployment in the pre-deployment phase:

- Provision of sufficient time for emotional preparation of the family for deployment.
- Fostering an understanding of what deployment is.
- Assistance with emotional adjustment.
- Transport arrangements for both children and spouses.
- Preparation of children, particularly with regard to communication with the member.
- Provision of a map of the mission area (in other words, provision of information on deployment and its dynamics), particularly when one deployment is followed by another.
- Marital counselling and enrichment, particularly with regard to role clarification, communication, extramarital relations and financial management.
- The establishment of a unit deployment support committee that will focus on deployment-related problems of spouses.
- Provision of a pamphlet with all the relevant information and telephone numbers of who to contact in case of emergencies.
- Parenting skills programme.
- Preparation for events such as death and illness in the family.
- Resilience programme.

─ Deployment phase

The following aspects should be included as part of the SANDF UFSGs intervention measures for spousal support during the deployment phase:

- Provision of an accessible telephone facility (free lines) for both the spouse and the children, who should be able to call the member at least twice a week.

- Regular home visits by the multi-disciplinary team, particularly the social work officer.

- Practical maintenance assistance, for example, replacing light bulbs, fixing the car and replacing tyres.

- Transportation of children to school or to the hospital.

- Transportation of the spouse for purchasing of groceries and account payments, particularly with regard to those who reside in remote rural areas where there is no transport available.

- Constant support by the unit and the Officer Commanding (OC).

- Two weeks' recess for the member after every three months of deployment.

- Establishment of a deployment support group that will enable spouses to converse with one another and share deployment-related experiences and frustrations.

- Feedback on the period of deployment, including the extension thereof.

- Home visits and telephone calls from the unit every now and then.

- Spot checks by the unit just to confirm that the family is still safe, especially for those in military housing.

- The social work officer and chaplain should act as a link between the family and the member.

- More support from the unit should be provided, such as letters of encouragement, cards, gifts, unit news etc.

- A 24hour help desk or halfway house should be established, even if it is just for communication purposes.

- Recreational facilities should be provided in order to keep members occupied in their free time.

- More support services should be rendered by chaplains, particularly with regard to prayer sessions and spiritual support, financial management

programmes (one of the research subjects indicated that the unit should make provision for loans in case of need during the absence of the member, such as money for unplanned school trips for children).

- Parenting skills for dealing with adolescents during the absence of the member.
- The provision of employment opportunities for spouses with skills.
- Stress management programme.
- Deployment counselling.

— **Post-deployment phase**

The following aspects should be included as part of the SANDF UFSGs intervention measures for spousal support during the post-deployment phase:

- Thorough preparation for homecoming.
- Marital counselling.
- Debriefing.
- The organisation should show some interest in what is happening in the family. In other words, the functioning of SANDF UFSGs should continue even after deployment.
- The organisation should show appreciation and concern for the sacrifice that members are making.
- HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and provision of information to the spouse concerning the results of the HIV test undertaken by the member upon arrival back home.
- Conflict management.
- Counselling for children.
- Reintegration into the family.
- Reintegration into the workplace.
- Redefining of roles.

Implementation of the abovementioned intervention measures within the SANDF UFSGs will make a significant contribution to spousal readiness, and will contribute towards combat readiness of members. In this way, healthy military families will be enhanced, and the organisational objective of successful participation in peace missions will be attained. Following the design phase is the phase of consulting, editing, assessing and taking corrective action.

7.2.5 Consulting, editing, assessing and taking corrective action (stage 5)

Consulting, editing, assessing and taking corrective action is the 5[th] and final stage in the designing of the proposed SANDF UFSGs model for spousal support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment. According to Barnes-September (in De Vos, 2002d:408), the final phase in the design and development of a model involves consulting, editing, assessing and taking corrective action. In this phase, the researcher consulted various sources, edited and assessed the model and took corrective action based on the outcome of the literature review and suggestions made by her study promoter and colleagues.

7.3 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the conclusions and recommendations made in this study, areas for future research were identified as follows.

- The issue of sufficient resources to provide efficient and effective social support services during external military deployment of the member should be explored with service providers.

- The SANDF UFSGs model should be pilot tested, implemented and evaluated.

- Social support services in terms of the needs of female SANDF members who are involved in external military deployment require further exploration.

7.4 SUMMARY

In summary, the SANDF UFSGs model may be an ideal model for addressing the challenges and problems experienced by spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment. Older versions of journals and articles were used because they were more relevant and applicable. Social support services to SANDF members' spouses should be rendered on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that members and their spouses are resilient enough to cope during the absence of members due to external military deployment.

The implementation of the SANDF UFSGs model may enable spouses to deal with deployment-related stressors and foster healthy family relationships on the one hand, and contribute to combat readiness on the other hand. The researcher confirms that the goal of this study which was the design of a model on social support services to SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment was attained. The attainment of this goal was made possible through the achievement of the objectives of this study as indicated in Chapter 6.

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ATTACHMENT A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (Qualitative phase)

This interview is aimed at determining social support needs of SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of the member. Please note that this interview is strictly confidential and to guarantee this, your name will not be disclosed. Please note that there are two sections to this interview namely:

Section A: Biographical information

Section B: Response questions

Please respond to all the questions honestly. Take note that the first answer that comes to mind is the most applicable.

Thank you for participating in this research!

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Relationship with the SANDF member:
4. How long have you been in this relationship?
5. Rank of SANDF member:
6. Are you employed?
7. Description of residential area (that is, is it rural or urban).
8. In the past 12 months how often has your spouse deployed?
9. To which country/countries did your spouse deploy?
10. Date of Interview:

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

11.   Are there any social support services **(In the case of this study, social support services refers to intervention measures (for example, financial management programme, spousal support services such as home visits, phone calls and letters) that are implemented in order to promote the coping skills of the SANDF members' spouses during the external military deployment of the member, thereby enhancing mission readiness)** that were rendered to you during the external deployment of your spouse (That is, before the deployment, during the deployment and after the deployment period)?

12.   If the response to the previous question is yes, please describe them (For example, home visit, financial management assistance, crisis management, letter, telephone calls and conflict management).

13.   Did this support help you in any way and how?

14.   Please describe the type of problems that you experienced during the external deployment of your spouse.

15.   Did you contact any person for help?

16.   Who will you approach when you experience a problem/need support during the external deployment of your spouse?

17.   Did you have any contact with the unit when you experienced problems during the external deployment of your spouse?

18.   If the response to question 17 above is yes, please indicate the person you had contact with?

19.	What support services would you have wanted if you had a choice (describe in terms of pre, during and post deployment period)?

20.	Do you think that units need to know more about the kind of support that spouses of deployed soldiers need?

21.	Do you think it is important to ensure that all units' support services to spouses during external deployments are of the same standard and format?

22.	Whose responsibility is it to support the spouses of the deployed member (For example, Social Worker, Chaplain, OC and Psychologist?

23.	How do you feel about external military deployment?

24.	Is there anything else you would like to tell or ask me?

Your participation in this research project is highly appreciated. You will be informed about the results of this investigation. Thank you!

ATTACHMENT B

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE ON SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SANDF MEMBERS'S SPOUSES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT OF THE MEMBER

This questionnaire is aimed at determining social support needs of SANDF members' spouses during external military deployment of the member. This questionnaire is strictly confidential and to guarantee this, you need not write your name on the questionnaire. Please respond to all the questions honestly. Please read the questions carefully, and then make a cross (X) in the box under the most applicable response. For example:

1.   Gender

Male	X
Female	

Other questions will require some explanation.

Your participation in this research is highly appreciated!

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Age in years _____

3. Relationship status
_{Assistance}
Assistance

Legally married	1
Customary marriage	2

4. How long have you been in this relationship? Years _____

5. What is the occupational status of your spouse?

Employed	1
Unemployed	2

6. What is your rank?

Lieutenant Colonel – Major General	1
2nd Lieutenant – Major	2
Sergeant – Warrant Officer	3
Lance Corporal – Corporal	4
Private	5

7. How long have you been working in the SANDF? Years _____

8. During the past 12 months, how long have you been away from home due to external deployments? Months _____

9. How many times (often) have you been on external deployment? Times _____

10. To which external country/countries did you deploy? **(More than one selection is acceptable)**

DRC	1
Sudan	2
Burundi	3
Comores	4
Ivory Coast	5

Others (specify)_____
_____
_____
_____

11. Did you participate in the preparation for deployment programme?

Yes	1
No	2

12. If the response to question 11 above is **No**, indicate why not? **(More than one selection is acceptable)**

I did not have any knowledge about the programme	1
I was not interested in the programme	2
I was not given time to attend the programme	3

V1
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH!!

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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ATTACHMENT C

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM DEPARTMENT OF INTELLIGENCE IN THE SANDF

ATTACHMENT D

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF

ATTACHMENT E

CONFIRMATION LETTERS FROM THE EDITORS

ATTACHMENT F

INFORMED CONSENT