

## Chapter 2

Adventure captures the imagination.

In-context experiences are listened to and described.

Do to others as you would want them to do to you.

- Luke 6:31 (NIV 1999)

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter will strive to focus on the purpose of the research leading towards the methods and criteria used. Qualitative research and participatory- action research were investigated. It will also look at how and why participants or “Co-researchers” were selected to partake in this research process. The issue of the impact of intervention on the participants is touched upon in this chapter. The development of Peace-keeping missions in the world, but particularly in Africa since 1991 is looked at, in order to better understand context of the situation that peacekeepers found themselves in.

A closer look at the emotional impact of deployment on soldiers is looked at in this chapter. Criteria and conditions for international involvement in peace operations are focused upon. Attention is given to factors that motivate peacekeepers to be deployed in a foreign country. We will attempt to understand why people are willing to deploy far away from their loved ones and their own familiar world. The question of how one can understand loneliness is also touched upon. Loneliness and isolation will also be addressed in chapter six. The critical question of what is understood by “Care” is tackled. With the constant emphasis on representivity currently high on the national agenda, racial representivity will also be attended to in this chapter. How unheard or marginalized voices in a narrative sense should be understood is also addressed. Finally, at the end of chapter two, a closer look will be given to what motivates soldiers to deploy. Self-care and force preparation will end the chapter.

### 2.2 The Purpose of Research

This research was directed by three basic narrative principles. Müller (2001:76-96) referred to them as the “*not knowing position*”, the “*responsive active listening*” and the use of “*conversational questions*”. Müller (2004:3) further stated that, based on these principles, research is not a linear process, but rather reflects an emergent design that is focused, but nevertheless flexible, interactive and continuous and, therefore, gives narrative research the character of an evolving spiral. It could be argued that the narrative approach viewed in this way is without a definite beginning or end. This spiral is a continuous process and research can describe the experiences and write

it down as a particular point of understanding and interpretation as at that moment of mutual understanding.

New insights and understanding can change “understanding” and in that sense it could continue indefinitely. For the sake of our own need for completion, understanding as gained at a particular point is accepted to suffice at that moment. The process of understanding and interpreting these experiences is addressed in the following chapter. It is possible that when either writer or reader reads the description on paper, new interpretations and understandings could be formulated and re-formulated as part of the ongoing spiral of the ‘not knowing position’.

The goal of the researcher is to learn from others. That is why these “others”, are not referred to as research objects but as co-researchers. They are not only research objects but co-determine what could be learned from their insights and experiences. Their stories need to be listened to and described in such a way that they not only agree with the factual correctness of their experiences, but also agree with the spiritual and emotional contexts of their experiences and how these are described in the research. This immediately implies a bigger impact on the co-researchers’ life than a questionnaire completed in ten minutes.

Carla Willig (2001:13) recalls how she, as an undergraduate student, thought of “research methods” in terms of recipes. Choosing the right ingredients (the representative sample, the appropriate statistical test, a standardised measurement instrument) then, in the right order, they must be administered (the “procedure”) Having done our utmost to get it right, one will now hold one’s breath hoping that the “experiment” had “worked” while waiting in the kitchen with anticipation for the perfect feast to emerge from the oven, if the correct recipe was followed to the letter.

Willig (2001:2) considered research from a different angle, where the research methods have become ways of approaching questions. Research methods have also become a way of justifying an answer. In short, the change in approach has moved from a mechanical (how to apply appropriate techniques to the subject matter) to a more creative (how can I find out?) approach. Willig (2001:2) consequently changed her metaphor from the research as recipe to an approach to view research as an adventure! Adventure captures the imagination. A real adventure will change a person through its very experience. Such a person will most probably never be the same again. An adventure is perceived to be a positive experience although it can be a somewhat risky endeavour.

My intention is to approach my research as an adventure similar to getting on a rubber duck with my fellow rowers. While having a general broad idea of the way ahead, moving within the boundaries of the river (the research methodology guidelines), but in all honesty with really no idea of what it would really feel like to go down the rapids or gliding smoothly in calm waters. The endeavour will, therefore, obviously not only be plain sailing but will also include moments of suffering and agony, trying to keep one’s head above water, and arriving not only intact, but better for the adventure.

I hope that while reading the written documentation of my research adventure, you may experience something of the excitement, exhilaration, even frustration, in addition to the joy that this adventure brought to me. It must be

understood that the research does not only affect my life, but also those people who are either directly or indirectly affected by the research.

Carla Willig (2001:151) stated that it is our research questions, which motivate our research activity, and that in turn give direction to our research. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, research methods are not recipes to simply follow, but an adventure in the way that we approach the process. Our own skills, linked with the inputs, made by the research participants or co-researchers, will not determine the eventual outcome of the research. I would like to think of the interviewing process as an adventure that will not only capture my imagination, but also the imagination of all the co-researchers and maybe, even some of those who might read and share their stories as these developed in this research. Imagine that!

## 2.3 Intervention

Müller stated (Müller et al, 2004:3) that research is a form of intervention, a given fact. Narrative research is by nature not at ease with the concept of intervention. But by the same nature, it cannot avoid intervening in people's lives during research. Without conversations and stories brought forward through dialogue and enquiries, no narrative research would be possible, but the mere fact that certain questions, however innocent in purpose, may contain the possibility of having a big impact on the respondent.

During the sharing of stories, both parties become involved in the experience. While the one sharing the story may re-live some of it, the listener gets drawn into the story just through the act of listening to it! It is essential in listening to the stories, before describing them, to feel or even experience something of the story! This implies that the researcher is also drawn into the process and is not an objective outsider. The term utilised here is subjective integrity. The extent of the level of intervention is determined via the different approaches and the dialogue skill level of the researcher. For example, when the quantitative research approach is utilised, an emphasis is placed on numbers.

Müller explained (Müller et al, 2004:3) that human behaviour is described in terms of the relationship between different variables. Babbie stated (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:48-49) that the "researched" are seen as outsiders. The description by the researcher is done with little if any intention to intervene and effect any change! Filling in a quick questionnaire without any feedback at all may leave the person with only a faint feeling of time wasted but hardly feelings of huge intervention and change in their lives.

## 2.4 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research starts out from the insider's point of view. The mere fact that we are now not only looking at numbers, but at an insider's perspective and viewpoint, is an indication of the escalation of intervention.

This approach was developed in the 1930s and 1940s in the Chicago School and played an important role in the process which is increasingly interested in

the insider's perspective. According to Babbie (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:55-56) the goal is to describe and to understand, and their research influenced social reform. Willig (2001:15) stated that qualitative data collection techniques must be participant-led, or bottom-up. The approach ought to be open-ended and flexible enough to smooth the progress of the surfacing of new, and unanticipated, ideas, categories of meaning and experience. Creswell (1998:15) emphasised that "the researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words; reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting". This implies more detailed information from the respondent - information offered by his or her own choice. It would be ideal if the co-researcher can be as open and transparent not only regarding "fact", but also about how they personally experienced situations.

The interviews are unstructured and open to the opinions and inputs of respondents. The imagination of the respondents is not excluded from the process and is accommodated in a narrative approach. After the initial interviews, the co-researchers (respondents) are included in a feedback loop to enable them maximum opportunity to respond, comment or change previous and current inputs made during interviews. They are not only included in the description of experiences, but also in the subsequent process of the spiral in interpreting those experiences.

Qualitative research is not needed when the aim is to determine how frequently people wash their hands or what product they buy. However, as Rubin (1995:17) rightly said: "If you want to know what people think, why they watch so much television, or whether people feel that they gain status by buying a particular product, qualitative interviewing is the right approach".

To understand more complicated problems, you must be able to explore the topic during your discussions. Rubin (1995:17) states that subsequent, qualitative research requires intense listening, curiosity and respect for people and about what they say. It is a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people tell you. For that reason questions regarding how people think and feel about deployment and how do people cope with deployment, are more suitable in the qualitative approach than the quantitative approach.

Through qualitative interviews, one tries to learn more about the world of others, but one must be under no illusions, for real understanding may still be elusive. Even if both speak the same language, the words may have different meanings or nuances. The moment that interviews are cross-cultural, communication may even be more difficult. This difficulty increases when one or both parties are not using their mother tongue but a second or even third language.

In South Africa, cross-cultural communication problems as well as the "Apartheids" history are not only part of our legacy, but an everyday reality.

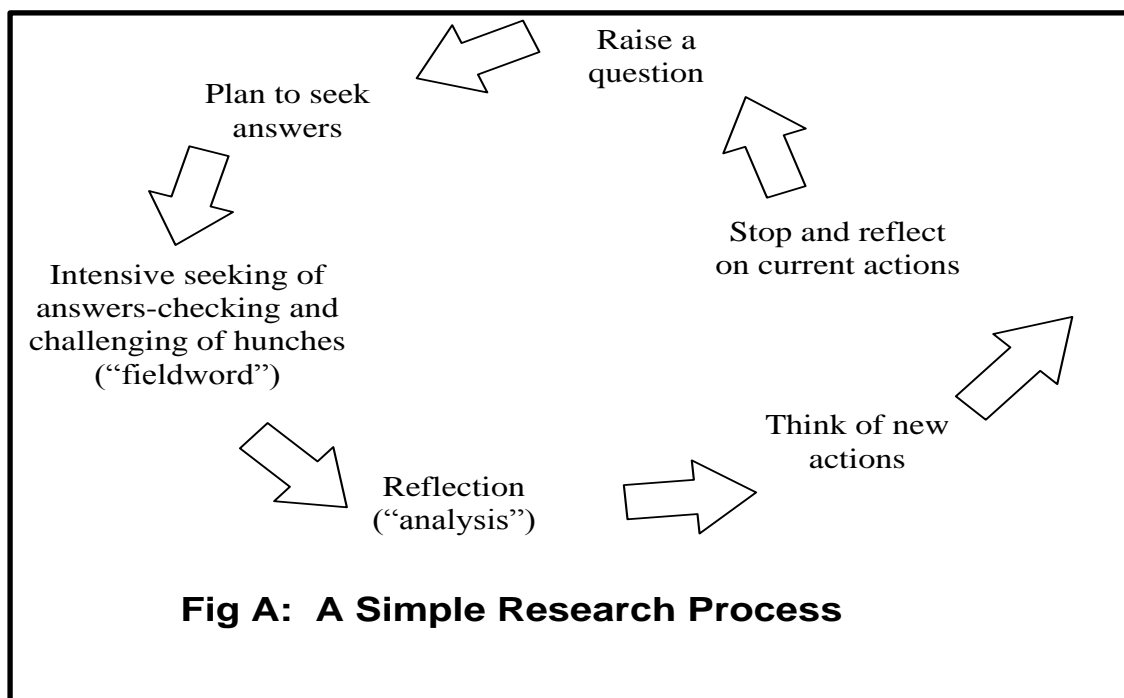
The discourse of racism will be addressed in chapter four. All the co-researchers, black and white, mentioned at some stage the problems they experienced with cross-cultural communication during their deployment. Being a white male added an extra burden to me to ensure that my descriptions of their experiences are as accurate as possible. In order to elicit in-depth answers about culture, meaning, processes, and problems, one can choose from different closely related types of qualitative interviews.

Rubin (1995:5) stated that although each of these approaches to interviewing differs somewhat, they still reflect the same philosophy of qualitative research. The aim is to find out what others think and know, and to avoid dominating your respondents or interviewees by imposing your own world on theirs. This sounds very easy on paper, but it is not always that easy. Due to either the researcher's own enthusiasm of the topic, or new insights, he/she may have heard from the co-researchers during an interview to allow them sufficient time to express their opinion, and not to guide them towards the researcher's own expectations regarding that particular comment, is sometimes quite difficult.

The extent of intervention between these different approaches is quite obvious where participatory action research intervention is even bigger than in qualitative research. The impact on the researched through intervention is not only important for the specific individual affected, but needs to be addressed on an ethical level as well.

Wadsworth (1998) uses Figures A, B and C to explain different approaches in research. In Fig A, a cycle of action, reflection, and the raising of new questions form a cyclic process is depicted. In this continuous process, current and past actions are reviewed.

**Figure A A Simple Research Process**

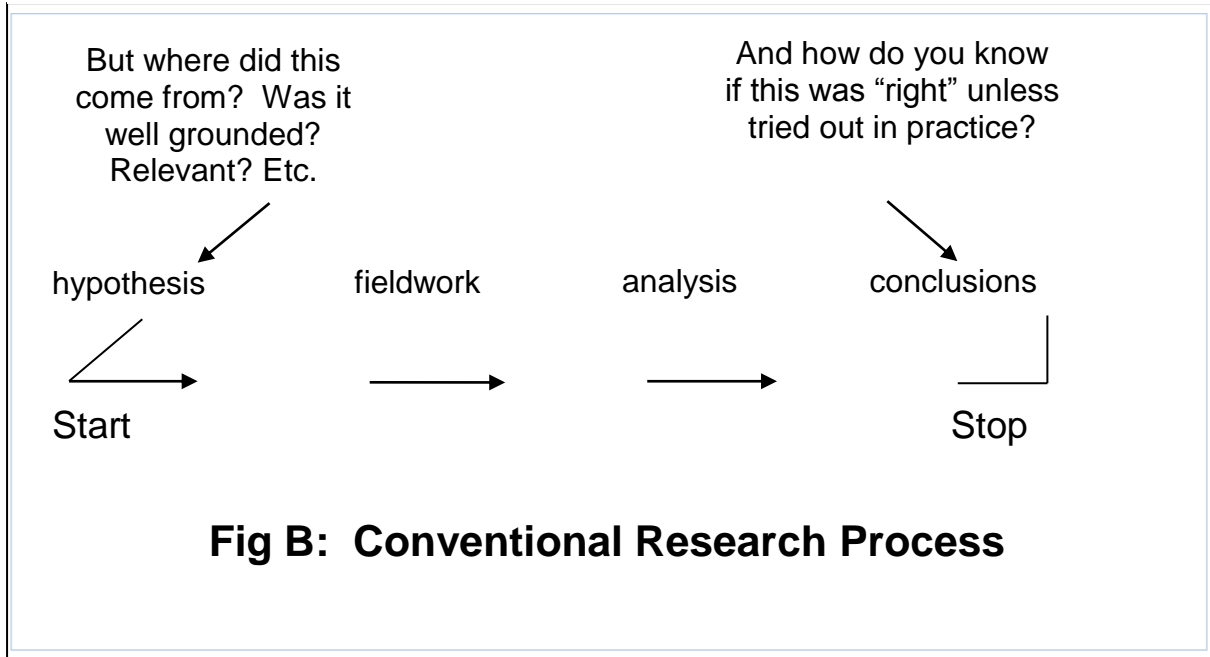


If we are to distinguish this cycle in any way from what we "do all the time", we find that the important distinctions are in magnitude rather than manner. That implies that normal thought processes in everyday life also utilise a similar circle of thought. Most people are not even aware of the fact that they ask questions like "what are we going to do this weekend?", and go through a process of seeking and finding answers. This can work very well for everyday issues.

This circle of thought unfortunately implies little to no growth, almost a quest to nowhere. This is in contrast with Fig B which uses an old paradigm of thought. Moving in a very confident way, in an all-knowing way, “these are the questions and we will find the answers” or even stronger, “we know all the answers already”.

One of the ways this understanding of research differs from conceptions of conventional research or ‘old paradigm science’ is revealed in the diagrams. Conventional research often sees itself as proceeding from point A to point B along a straight line - commencing with a hypothesis and proceeding to a conclusion, which may then be published in a journal, article or book.

**Figure B Conventional Research Process**



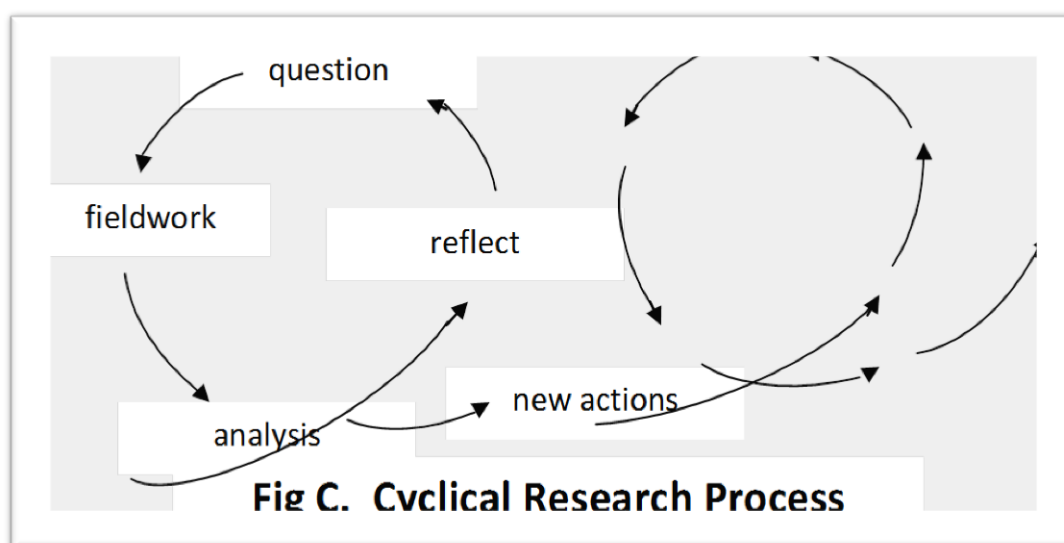
Instead of a linear model, participatory action research proceeds through cycles, “starting” with reflection on action, and proceeding to new action that is then further researched. The new actions differ from the old actions - they are literally in different places. Fig C shows the spiral effect of this process and the almost unlimited continuation thereof as long as it remains relevant and of interest for those in the process. The “traditional research” is “extractive” research, meaning that information is extracted from the subjects. The research is carried out by universities and governments where “experts” go to a community, study their subjects, and take away their data to write their papers, reports and theses; they operate from a position of “knowing”.

Qualitative interviewing is a way of finding out what others feel and think about their worlds. Rubin (1995:1) sums it up in saying:

“...you can understand experiences and reconstruct events in which you did not participate. Through what you hear and learn, you can extend your intellectual and emotional reach across time, class, race, sex, and geographical divisions.”

The research is based on the principle of conversations with strong similarities to an everyday conversation with questions and answers.

### Figure C Cyclical Research Process



According to Rubin (1995:2) qualitative interviewing differs from ordinary conversations in three important aspects. Firstly, it is used as a research tool to learn about people’s feelings and thoughts, gathering information that will later be analysed and shared; it is not simply an ordinary conversation.

Secondly, qualitative interviews are held between strangers as well as associates and even friends. This research involves a relationship with certain obligations and expectations. This includes the important question regarding ethics, currently growing rapidly in importance due to growing concern about ethical issues as well as legal implications. This responsibility or obligation extends also to the specific approach to learning as accepted by the researcher.

A third difference in qualitative interviewing is that the researcher, who intentionally introduces certain questions into the conversation, steers the research in a particular direction and guides the conversation. This steering action is not one of dominating the conversation, but if the topic of interest were coping with deployment, to steer the respondent back on track if he/she, for example, prefers to deviate to the detail of the current stock prices of platinum on the Japanese markets.

This raises the question of what weight the research attach to the researcher, or the researched, or respondent in the outcome of the research. These



questions dwell on the influence between the researcher and the researched or, as called in this study, the co-researchers/respondents and the extent of their influence in the outcome of the research. The balance between the parties swings noticeably towards the researched or co-researchers in participatory research.

According to Willig (2001:18), within the qualitative methodologies there are also big differences; at the one end of the continuum, there is participatory-action research or Memory Work where the distinction between “participant” and researcher is indistinct. The reason is that the researcher becomes a participant in the research, while the participants actively contribute to the analysis of the data they helped to bring about. In some cases there is almost no distinction between researchers and participants, because the researchers are actually studying (observing) themselves. At the other end of the continuum, there are qualitative methodologies, such as discursive psychology or conversations analysis where the participants generate the data as requested by the researcher without any further involvement in the research process.

## 2.5 Participatory-Action Research

Participatory-action research is the third approach path and takes involvement even a step further. The online Encyclopaedia Wikipedia, which is maintained by the public’s inputs and ideas, is an excellent example of participatory action and knowledge. The information in this Encyclopaedia is open to the public to add to as they see fit and is, therefore, in a constant process of changing and a growing source of knowledge. It is not managed or maintained by an individual or a few selected persons. This is not a source that normally would be sited or quoted in academic research, but what I am trying to emphasize is the participatory side of the general public and not only of a small group of academics.

The online Encyclopaedia Wikipedia (Wikipedia, 2007) explains that participatory-action research has emerged in recent years as a significant methodology for intervention, development and change within communities and groups. It is now promoted and implemented by many international university programs, development agencies as well as numerous local community organizations around the world.

Muller (Müller et al, 2004:3) agrees with the idea that the researched becomes actively part of the research process. Thus, the researched is not a passive uninvolved party, but is actively involved to the extent that he/she can actually determine the outcome of the research. The “researched” is not merely a participant or subject. Here the influence of the respondent or co-researcher is able to move the research in a new and even unexpected direction. This unexpectedness implies unpredictability towards possible outcomes of research.

Big institutions often don’t like that aspect of unpredictability because it might disagree with their own expectations of what that research should entail. It might differ from the pre-conceived ideas and concepts that should be ‘proven’ by the research.

## 2.6 The Participation Element in Action Research

Wadsworth (1998) made the following comment:

“Essentially Participatory Action Research (PAR) is research which involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it. They do this by critically reflecting on the historical, political, cultural, economic, geographic and other contexts, which make sense of it.”

Wadsworth expanded on the idea that it is action which is researched, changed, and re-researched. This is done in the research process by participants. It aims to be active co-research, by and for those to be helped. Nor can it be used by one group of people to get another group of people to do what is thought best for them - whether that is to implement a central policy or an organisational or service change. Instead, it tries to be a genuinely democratic or non-coercive process whereby those to be helped, determine the purposes and outcomes of their own inquiry. This implies a big difference from the traditional research method and indicates a new movement in terms of understanding the relationship between the researcher and the researched.

Müller (Müller et al, 2004:11) confirms this when he wrote “research is action and therefore participation”. This participation from the researcher is active and subjective, never passive and objective. Research as action involves all relevant parties; both those who are being researched and the researcher are drawn into the action. The aim of participatory research is social change, and there is also an intention of interaction between the researcher and the researched! Boog (Boog et al, 2003:419) defined participatory research as “...social action research which is particularly and practice-oriented, which aims to find solutions to social problems and to emancipate individuals and groups confronted with such problems”.

According to Rubin (1995:5), the different approaches and theories are not just of academic interest, but also have practical implications. It allows us to really understand what is going on, why people do what they do, and with the background knowledge shared by them of how they felt during those experiences. With the right knowledge and understanding, you can help solve a variety of problems, hopefully including casting new light on the question of how caregivers can cope more effectively with deployment.

Robert Mc Taggart of Deakin University made the following comment in a paper presented in September 1989 at the Third World Encounter on Participatory Action Research, Managua, Nicaragua: “...Action research is the way groups of people can organise the conditions under which they can learn from their own experiences and make this experience accessible to others”.

## 2.7 Action Researchers

Wadsworth (1998) explained action research in that they are really just researchers who have come to understand the practical and ethical implications of the inevitability of the value-driven and action-effects of their inquiry, that is:

1. The effects of raising *some* questions and not others.
2. The effects of involving *some* people in the process and not others.
3. The effects of observing *some* phenomena and not others.
4. The effects of making *this* sense of it and not alternative senses, and
5. The effects of deciding to take *this* action (or “no” action) as a result of it rather than any other action and so on.

Qualitative and Action researchers acknowledge the fact that any question asked may have a possible cycle of response of action and emotions. These possible outcomes must be considered on ethical and moral grounds to try and prevent the intervention from unnecessarily hurting or harming the co-researchers during or after the research process.

I personally like the idea of how people can learn from their own experiences and in the process retain the freedom to organize the conditions under which they learn. Equally important is their willingness to share their own newly gained insight with others. They are active co-researchers even if they are only thinking about the topic and are willing to share their own thoughts and experiences.

It is not possible to do any social research without the participation of other human beings. The extent of the intervention and the possible influence of this approach on both the researcher and researched are obviously much bigger than with the Quantitative approach. Essentially, participatory action research is research that involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action, which they may experience as problematic at that time, in order to change and improve it. They do this by critically reflecting on the historical, political, cultural, and practical contexts, which help them to make sense of it.

Wadsworth said (1998:17) that current problematic action might range from the trivial to the life threatening. To a great extent, participatory action research lies between these ends of the scale, and typically involves yourself, those who share your concerns, experiences and interests; as well as those suffering from the problematic situation. The approach is to bring the different interested parties together, and allowing new ones to enter in the discussions as the research effort proceeds to unfold, not merely a side issue of ‘entry to the field’ but a central focus for achieving understanding and change.

Action research does not have a problem with the “researcher/s” identifying with “the researched” and the “researched for”, seeing this rather as essential to the gaining of engaged understanding. What drives research? Is it our “need to know?” The question is, what do we do with the new found knowledge? Do we gain knowledge, just for the sake of gathering it, or do we utilise gathered knowledge in order to bring about change? If so, then how desired the change might be is a research topic on its own.

We often use the phrase “these are our values”. In the Air Force we have specific core values that are embedded in our “blue culture”, for instance “Service Before Self”, “Integrity”, “Respect” and “Human Dignity”. Rather than seeing this holding-of-values as subjective and potentially a source of bias, the strength of the values we embrace will determine the direction of our research efforts. The moment that you admit your own value system and cultural background and are open to listen to the inputs of the co-researchers, you are aware of the fact that they too have their own value system and cultural background that most probably differ from your own.

## 2.8 Imagination in Research

An additional factor that will shape the way that we will conduct our research is the strength of our imaginations. This enables us to theorise more creatively, deeply and imaginatively. Imagination and creativity still need to be in line with the academic theories and practices that we are observing.

Like any other research, the significant moment is that of “discovery”, or to a certain extent “invention” of a different and better way of seeing and understanding our realities.

The old saying about science and research being 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration may still hold true! The hard work and drudgery comprise the long hours of talking and thinking and sharing the results of our conversations or interviews with one another. The moment of inspiration, or inspired thinking, is when collective thoughts lead to new understanding i. e. how mutual values are re-expressed in a new way of connecting ideas, flowing to a new way of understanding the world. This advances the shared situation of partakers in life’s journey.

After examining the different research approaches, the effect of intervention within the narrative research process and narrative paradigm, utilising inputs from the participatory action research should be better answered.

## 2.9 The Narrative Approach

While qualitative researchers refer very easily to Narrative and Narrative Research, it is relatively unusual to find a definition. According to Webster's dictionary (1966:1503) the definition of a Narrative tale is: "...story, recital of facts, especially story told in the first person; kind of composition or talk that confines itself to these (OED) or discourse designed to represent a connected succession of happenings".

A narrative as a discourse, or an example of it, is designed to represent a connected succession of happenings. To complicate matters even more, there is also a distinction between narrative therapy and narrative research. According to the Anglia Ruskin University's web page (2007) their definition of a narrative is a presentation of an articulate series of actions; these coherent actions are connected to each other, which led the narrator to convey the actions, feelings and thoughts of the narrator in story or narrative form. The process is continued by sharing not only happenings/action, but also feelings and thoughts and how they are connected to each other through the stories that are told. These stories need to be listened to and then must be described with the intention to be interpreted and understood later in the research process.

A broad definition would be to say that any research or study that uses or analyses narrative material, is applying the narrative approach or is doing narrative research. The data that are being analysed can be in the form of a conversation, a story, or even personal notes or letters. Usually these are presented in either a story or narrative format. Müller wrote (2003:8; & Müller et al, 2001:77) that the narrative approach links with the action research in many aspects, but has to be understood against the backdrop of the social-constructionist paradigm.

## 2.10 Social Constructionism

Social construction is also addressed in-depth in Chapter Four (be consistent). Here a brief introduction to the concept is given while trying to convey the difficulty in explaining it.

Demasure (2006:410) correctly said that it is hard to define social construction because it entails a wide range of quite different viewpoints. What they agree upon is that it is a social phenomenon between people and how they relate to one another and how this relation is constructed. Social constructionism, or social constructivism, is a sociological theory of knowledge that considers how social phenomena develop in particular social contexts. Within constructionist thought, a social construction is a concept or practice, which may appear obvious to those who accept it, but in reality is a creation of a particular culture or the social order. Social constructs are usually understood to be the consequence of, or unintended, numerous human choices rather than laws resulting from divine will or nature.

This acceptance of social construction has a direct impact on the researcher's worldview as well as religious foundation in accepting that we influence our reality by choices and are not solely by laws directed by God. This admittance of our role in creating a specific cultural or social order increases our responsibility to accept accountability for our reality. A focus area of social constructionism is to discover the behaviour of how groups and individuals contribute in the construction of their perceived social reality. It involves looking at the way social phenomena are created, institutionalised, and formed into traditions.

Socially constructed reality is seen as an ongoing, dynamic process - people acting on their interpretations and their knowledge of it reproduce reality. Constructionism became prominent in the U.S. with Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's 1966 book, *The Social Construction of Reality*. Berger and Luckmann argue that all knowledge, including the most basic, taken-for-granted common sense knowledge of everyday reality, is derived from and maintained by social interactions. When people interact, they do so with the understanding that their respective perceptions of reality are related, and as they act upon this understanding, their common knowledge of reality becomes reinforced. It is in similar fashion that the internet encyclopaedia is socially constructed.

It is in this sense that it can be said that reality is socially constructed. Social constructivism thus emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what is happening in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding. During research, the different social constructed realities created by deployed members in a foreign country and between different people with different viewpoints, must be considered when asking how to cope with deployment.

## 2.11 Micro and Macro Social Constructionism

Burr (2004:2) uses a metaphor of a family to try and explain social constructionism; as in a family, the members share a number of things with each other, but they also differ on a number of viewpoints. Burr (2004:21-22) makes a distinction between micro and macro social constructionism. Micro social constructionism entails the study of microstructures and the use of language in interaction. This takes place in everyday conversations.

Macro social constructionism focuses on macro linguistic and social structures, which eventually forms the skeleton on which our social and psychological lives take form. This movement accepts the fact that language has constructive power, accepting that this power is dependent on the results of social construction, social relationships and institutionalised practices.

Demasure and Müller (Demasure, 2006:413) pointed out that the notion of power is essential in this approach; this power is acquired as people participate in the different discourses creating a society. Deconstruction's purpose is to reveal these power relations, and critical analysis of the text demonstrates how the text succeeds in imposing a certain image of the world on us. Demasure (2006:413) continues to point out how deconstruction is concerned with the historical and cultural production of knowledge and how certain construction contributes to power and social action.

## 2.12 Aim of This Research

To use the Participatory Action Research approach was a strong option when choosing an approach, but my intention is to try to limit the impact of the research intervention on participants. I am aware that they will think and re-think on what happened during deployment. They will be encouraged to

analyse their own experiences and, therefore, will be affected in one way or the other by their experiences, with or without our conversations regarding their experiences. I am hopeful that the research intervention will assist them with the coping process and with their coping skills, and provide insights in how they coped during their deployment. My preference is, therefore, the Narrative Approach.

It is not my intention to try to change the way the current SANDF deployment system functions. It is my intention to broaden the base of understanding of how caregivers cope during their deployment.

My primary intention is to broaden my own understanding of how different caregivers cope with deployment. Secondly, to facilitate understanding among the co-researchers of how they coped and looking in retrospect at the insights they may have gained in the process. Thirdly, my intention is to strive to increase understanding amongst senior military members, especially those in positions of command and authority. And hopefully, to influence them to a decision-making process that will enhance caregivers' ability not only to better cope themselves, but to constantly improve their ability to care for others! The slogan or motto of the Air Force chaplains is, therefore, very appropriate - "Caring for our people!"

This chapter on the one hand has looked at the different approaches of listening to the research interviews. It will further strive to look at the *context* of peacekeeping as a *prelude* to peacekeeping and also at some of the symptoms associated with deployment.

## 2.13 The 7- Movement Approach

As I have opted for the 7-Movement Approach, the second movement is that of "in-context experiences are listened to and described". This phrase, therefore, is also the heading of Chapter Two. Context is very important for research to be valid. The context contains the current situation, but also the background history and the discourses which played a role in this particular milieu.

Context: "(kon-'teks). The part of a sentence, paragraph, etc, surrounding a word or passage and determining its exact meaning" (Oxford, 1964).

Experience: "(ik spēar'ē nsə). The act of living through an event. Anything or everything observed or lived through. Training and personal participation. Knowledge or skill resulting from this" (Oxford, 1964).

The explanation of the word experience refers to the knowledge and skills resulting from living through an experience; the personal experience of living through an event which in this focus area is peace-keeping deployment. The researcher strives to listen to stories of coping and to describe them, the more specific the focus, the better the hope of hearing the voices.

It is almost impossible to focus in one document effectively on all possible aspects of either *coping* with deployment, or deployment during a Peace-keeping Operation. One can look at the Social, Political, Strategic and Ethical questions relating to the intervention in a foreign country.

I am looking at the impact of all these different aspects on the individual person who is sitting amidst the actual deployment. Different Arms of Service are deployed with a wide variety of specialised skills. Soldiers' careers vary from infantrymen, pilots, Navy divers and VIP protectors to radar technicians, from logistic support to spiritual support.

These entirely different fields of specialisation all work together like the spokes in a wheel. The moment that one or more of the spokes falls too far out of line, the functioning of the rest of the wheel is affected and even nullified. Caregivers are tasked with the responsibility to ensure that people are able to work together similar to spokes in a wheel.

My attempt to be less vague and generalised in terms of whose stories I will listen to, initially led me to focus on chaplains' stories of coping. This was a natural occurrence due to my working environment and own experiences. Focusing on a smaller group assisted me in my efforts to sidestep generalisations. The approach of concentrating on a smaller "marginalized" group is also in line with narrative research. This is also in line with the qualitative and participatory-action research approach. The role of participants in qualitative research or, as I prefer, co-researchers, can be very different from the subjects used in qualitative research.

## 2.14 Caregivers in a Multi-Professional Team

My interest in a smaller specific section of uniformed members was born out of a growing concern over the wellbeing of colleagues who were deployed. Asking questions regarding their wellbeing, and listening to their responses, were a short step away from asking 'how do they cope?'

My interest in the topic intensified after listening to stories of how my colleagues coped and thinking back towards my own experiences of coping with deployment. When I refer to colleagues, I include not only chaplains, but also other members of the Multi-Professional team. In the SANDF they form a close-knit group of professionally trained members, consisting of different Medical personnel for instance, the doctor, health professionals (nurses) social workers, psychologists, and the chaplain. In some instances this may even include the law officer if he/she were available.

Therefore, the natural choice was to extend my interest to the well-being of chaplains and not only to their stories of coping. Members of the Multi-Professional team are working closely together focusing on different, although



sometimes overlapping areas. A theme that also naturally arises is the one of caring for the caregiver which is ever growing in importance.

### 2.14.1 What is Care?

Prof Andries Baart (2004:14) asked the following questions, indicating that criteria for the quality of care are at stake:

1. What makes normal common care, good care?
2. What do we mean with 'basic' or 'fundamental' care?
3. Is antiretroviral medicine more fundamental than bread, or decent funerals?
4. Is it more basic than personal attentive proximity and treatment with honour or respect?

Obviously there is a bottom line: Life! Without life all our talk about rights, education and respect is pointless, but the moment we rise above that absolute bottom line, we are in trouble.

The second question to be asked is, what is good care and if good, then good in what respect? This links with the question of the "objective" determination of human needs; here the best-known attempt is by Maslow of whom a simple example can explain our human needs on different levels.

If the poor need food, why should we not smash it in their face? As Baart (2004:14) stated, food is after all what they want! But it is much more; they need the food to be given to them in a specific manner - with respect and with dignity. This point is very important in the understanding of how we care for people. Material things alone are simply not enough to satisfy all human needs. Perhaps this question of basic human dignity may answer a number of the issues raised during the research on "Coping with Deployment".

People, who are in need of care, need to be treated without degradation or belittling. Being hungry can be preferable to the loss of self-respect. Therefore, it is quite clear that those cultural possessions, such as being someone and belonging to a specific group, will in most of the instances dominate the so-called basic needs! These basic needs are very fundamental and often differ between individuals and groups; it is influenced by culture, education, personality and our worldview.

The word *care* in Afrikaans, Dutch and German has in various aspects the same meaning as in English. The Afrikaans word, "sorg" or "versorg" in German "fürsorge", "besorgen" have similar meanings as care, but there are certain differences. Baart (2004:14) shared the interesting social phenomenon that the term "care" is used in numerous trendy ways in the Netherlands, for example, a maid (domestic worker) is called an "interior care-taker" a vehicle dealership issues a "passport to care".

Baart (2004:14) continued with a summary of how care could be understood:

Care is the effort to keep life going when it's deteriorating, weak, threatened, at risk, in pain and when quality of life, autonomy and self-sufficiency are lost, or being lost. In other words, if life is left to itself and the forces that are influencing that situation, it will probably turn into something bad, hurting and totally undesirable.

Care is an everyday activity and in fact quite common, it is not only applicable to humans, but also to animals and plants and even to things, as in taking care of your car, swimming pool or whatever may be applicable. It is not restricted to professionals and specialists, women or adults, nor limited to specific domains such as health. Since caring is a common practice, this need of one another is also universal; here the modern exaggerated interpretation of autonomy is criticized. The normal situation for social beings is mutual dependence, not autonomy.

Care is also more than just trying to fix something if it is broken, to repair it, or to try to put things right after they have been disturbed. Care is, therefore, supposed to be given before, during and after endangerment to the continuum.

Care is an everyday occurrence, a common occurrence, children looking after their aging parents, or parents looking after their children, depending on the phase of life that they are in.

Care is directed to enhance or retain "good life". Therefore, a desired or preferred quality of life is strived for, the criteria of what may be valued as "good" or "good care", depends on the local valued qualities of life. Here, local would correlate strongly with the care-receivers' experience and feedback of the care. This "good life" has more to do with "sensible life" than with "comfortable and undisturbed life". The quality of life of the terminal patient and the dignity with which a person is treated may mean more than a few days extra.

An interesting question arises when we consider whether caring feelings and intentions are really caring. Can one justly assert to care if no actions are linked to the care? For example, the following statement "I care about HIV/AIDS" may imply that I am very concerned with the HIV/AIDS situation, but maybe not enough to do anything about it. If you have never done anything about a particular situation, but often think about it, there might be a real concern and even interest in the way HIV develops, but to say that there is real care would not be genuine because there is no action!

This argument implies that real care constitutes doing something actively to improve the situation, to alleviate pain and suffering or to assist in making it bearable. The aim is to help people to cope with their particular situations in such a way that it really makes a difference and not merely caring on an academic, philosophical or spiritual level.

## **2.14.2 Faith and Deeds**

As is so aptly put in James 2:14-18 (NIV: 1999), show me your faith in deeds, or, in other words, show me your caring with action:



*<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?*

*<sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

### 2.14.3 The Result of Care

Baart (2004:17) stated quite correctly that an adequate changeover into action does not necessarily imply that good care has good results; the results of the action determine to a large extent whether my care has been adequate.

The outcome of care is not necessarily linked with the action input into the care-given situation. With terminally ill patients, no amount of action, time or energy will guarantee the ultimate recovery of the patient, but that does not imply that the care given to that patient was not outstanding! Here the care is related to the contribution in the quality of life and the dignity of the terminal patient during their journey through the last stages of life. Therefore, the intention, the aim of care, needs to be established.

There is no "good care" unless it is on the same wavelength to the need, the endangered quality, and not only to the continuity of life, but also hopefully even an improvement of life. Baart (2004:17) hoped that care will be "well tuned", "fine tuned" or "adequately linked". If the care is not on the same wavelength and tuned into the need of the receiver, the effect may be different than anticipated. The response of those in need of care may then be perceived as ungrateful and unappreciative, simply because different expectations were at work. My personal opinion is that these different wavelengths, in terms of expectations between the caregiver and deployed personnel, are probably some of the main reasons for mutual unattainable expectations.

### 2.14.4 What is a Caregiver?

It is vital to understand the different meanings of the word "caregiver" and in which context it is utilized in this research. Broadly, the term can be divided in to two categories - voluntary caregiver and professional caregiver. Following on my decision to consider the opinion of the "public", I once again refer to the public encyclopaedia Wikipedia to consider their public opinion of what exactly a caregiver is.

The term voluntary caregiver is used in some countries to describe an unpaid spouse, relative, friend or neighbour who assists with activities of daily living of a disabled person or child. Voluntary caregivers provide care and assistance to those unable to fully take care of themselves.

I prefer to utilize the term caregiver in its professional capacity. The term "caregiver" (Womenshealth, 2007) may also apply to many professional providers of services. The words "voluntary caregiver" are broadly used in American English to describe those individuals, other than parents, whose contributions are normally not compensated for. The term used by most international organisations and agencies is, more simply "carer". Caregivers, according to some definitions, are people who take care of other adults, most often parents or spouses or children, who are ill or disabled. The people who receive care usually need help with basic daily tasks.

With the term Professional Caregiver, I am referring to people who have tertiary training, and are currently caring for people in performing their duties.

They may include ministers of religion, referred to in the military as chaplains, social workers, previously referred to as “welfare officers”, and professional nurses, or as currently referred to as health care professionals.

Captain Paul Rosebush (1998:559) from the Canadian Forces, used the term “mental health professionals” with the primary task of providing psychological assistance to Canadian soldiers. Rosebush (1998:163) stated that: “Military mental health professionals are given a broad role during operational tasking and are required to prepare soldiers for their post-deployment adjustment and to provide direct clinical support through counselling and the application of ‘debriefing’ interventions.”

## **2.15 Ethical Consideration Methods used in Selection of Co-researchers**

Due to the nature of narrative research, it is vital to the integrity of the research process and possible outcomes that the selection of participants is done in such a manner as to support the research and not undermine its validity. Gottlieb and Lasser (2001:191-194) expressed some of the critique and concerns against narrative research, especially the possibility that some voices could become ‘privileging voices’ and thus be favoured. In a replay to Gottlieb and Lasser, critical commentary on narrative research ethics, William Smythe and Maureen Murray, responded with their own perspective.

Smythe and Murray (2001:38) explained that the issues of participant selection inescapably arise within narrative research. This is due to the demands of self-disclosure that the research places on them. These demands may be totally unintentional, but the mere act of sharing one’s story, by telling what happened and how the participant or “co-researcher” experienced it, inevitably leads towards a process of opening emotions and bringing issues forward that the individual may have tried to hide.

Smythe and Murray (2000:311-312) rightly stated that the narrative researcher must be aware of the risk of limiting research participants to the articulate and those who are able to grasp the meaning of “multiple narrative meanings”, as well as those with the ability to be self-reflective.

Smythe (2001:38) pointed out that the requirement to be openly and articulately reflective on one’s own experiences in the presence of another is not easily met by most people. Therefore, even without any specific selection on the part of the researcher, there is considerable self-selection amongst participants within the narrative research, people will automatically either distance themselves from the research, or they will indicate their willingness to participate in the research process.

My experience in practice is in line with the comment made by Smythe and Murray (2001:38) that it is not as easy to participate in narrative research as would initially be expected. Just to tell your story may sound very simple, but after experiencing the memories that resurface through telling those stories, emotions become part of the equation. On the other hand, some potential co-researchers were from the outset not able to participate or contribute towards the research due to geographical or other practical reasons, preventing them

from having the required amount of time needed to comply with the research process.

After initially mentioning to some colleagues that I am planning to do research on the reasons why some caregivers are able to cope better during their deployment in Peace-Keeping operations than others, a course of action started to develop with almost a life of its own. I was contacted by some, or referred to other caregivers who were quite willing - some even eager, to assist me in my research. I allowed the selection process to develop naturally. Some voluntarily withdrew; others expressed interest in the research but preferred not to become involved. Due to the intensity of being a co-researcher, some experienced difficulty to participate.

These difficulties range between either time or distance constraints, but particularly the emotional experience of pain during deployment prevented some from becoming involved in the research. They simply stated that they “are not emotionally up to it”. Just talking about and remembering some of their experiences were so painful, that one co-researcher requested to be excluded from the research project. Using a narrative approach implies that the “subjects” are not objects, but form part of the research process. The withdrawal of a co-researcher is, therefore, also part of the research process and indicates the level of emotional pain experienced by some. The reasons for withdrawal, therefore, also form part of the research process.

A rapidly growing awareness of the importance of ethics was triggered by the collapse of big business. For instance, Enron’s unethical ([www.time.com](http://www.time.com), 25 March 2010) behaviour provoked not only a renewed intensity within the business community, but definitely within the academic world to focus on ethics - particularly organisational ethics.

It is not surprising that the same basic ethical considerations apply to the treatment of subjects or participants/co-researchers in both quantitative and qualitative research.

Willig (2001:18) mentioned that the following points should be considered when thinking of ethical considerations regarding participants in the research process:

1. Informed consent. This implies not only permission to partake in the research, but to be fully informed on what the research is about and understand what is expected from them.
2. The right to withdraw. The participants must retain the ability/freedom to withdraw from the research at any time that he or she feels the need to do so without any risk to them.
3. No deception. This implies that deceit must, as far as possible, be avoided and not be used to manipulate participants into participation.
4. Confidentiality. To retain complete confidentiality is vital; due care must be taken to protect the participants’ identity, or they must give their full consent before it could be disclosed.
5. Debriefing. This refers to the process where, after the data have been collected, participants receive feedback from the researcher,

as arranged in the initial agreement. This feedback may include aspects such as the research results or the chance to read a written copy of the conversations as these were recorded.

The co-researchers/participants who assisted me with this research were given a written copy of their own conversations. A second interview of them reading their own experiences was also recorded. Debriefing formed part of a feedback-loop.

Willig (2001:18-19) sums up the ethical consideration as follows: "Researchers should protect their participants from any harm or loss, and they should aim to preserve their psychological well-being and dignity at all times. Many qualitative researchers go beyond these basic ethical guidelines. Instead of merely protecting participants from any harm or loss, they aim to deliver positive benefits for participants".

This approach moved into the realm of actively improving (changing) the research participants' lives. As Van Dijk (1987:4) wrote, critical science asks further questions, such as:

1. Who is responsible?
2. Whose interests are being served?
3. What ideology is underlying or influencing the situation?

This approach aims to actively challenge social inequity, injustice as well as the relations of power. Here, the entire question of subjective integrity comes to mind. To adopt a specific ethical stance is rapidly growing in importance through which most universities are trying to maintain their credibility and academic standing. They not only have specific procedures in place, but also have an ethics committee, which tries to ensure that the research ethics of all students are above reproach. Before studies can commence, the ethics committee must first provide approval after ensuring that the researcher is not only aware of the ethics applicable to his or her research, but that the research also complies with the institution's ethical guidelines.

Therefore, the growing importance of the question of coping with deployment in the SANDF is not only important for the research participants themselves or for other caregivers, but it is also relevant to all soldiers, especially in view of the high number of peace-keeping operations and the number of soldiers deployed in Africa. According to statistics presented at the Chief of Air Force (CAF) Operational Readiness Forum in October 2006, an average of 3 300 SANDF members were deployed at any given time somewhere on the African continent.

The current expectations are that the South African government will remain involved with peace-keeping efforts, especially in Africa. The only reason that more soldiers are not deployed is simply the lack of available and mission-ready deployable personnel and resources. The financial outlay in peace-keeping missions is substantial. The importance of the effects of current deployment on our members is already part of current testimony. The fact that all the Air Force chaplains deployed during the last three years until May 2007, returned with stories of pain and anger, not only increased the urgency, but also motivated them to assist me in my research. Their co-operation and

assistance were possibly made easier by the fact that I am relatively well known amongst the willing co-researchers. However, being well known also poses the likelihood of being too close to home.

## 2.16 Criteria for Co-researchers

Initially, I started out with chaplains, but due to logistical problems, such as geographical distance (I was living at AFB Louis Trichard when I commenced my studies), the unavailability of some of the co-researchers as well as a growing interest from other professionals in my topic, I expanded my focus to “caregivers”. Eventually my co-researchers consisted of a group representing chaplains, social workers and health professionals. All these co-researchers are fulltime soldiers in the South African National Defence Force and are serving in either the Air Force or the Military Health Services, none in the Army or Navy.

“Mental health professionals” is a phrase that can also be substituted for the term that I use for caregivers. My concern with choosing the phrase “mental health professionals” is the probable debate in terms of the health care professionals (nursing) in that they are not primarily focused on mental health care. Therefore, I have opted to use the term “Caregiver”. The term “Health Professionals”, or “Healthcare Professional”, is also often utilised by Medical Aid companies and even the Health Professions Council and may exclude chaplains. Criteria for co-researchers are therefore:

1. The first criteria were to determine whether all co-researchers were professional caregivers. This implied that they must be in possession of the necessary qualifications to enable them to work as professional caregivers.
2. Secondly, they must all be employed as soldiers in the SANDF in their capacity as caregivers.
3. Thirdly, these caregivers, themselves, must have been deployed outside the borders of the Republic of South Africa for a minimum of three months.
4. A fourth criteria were that co-researchers had to be part of narrative research. I had to explain the concept of the narrative research briefly in order for them to be able to indicate their willingness to be part of the research process and share their stories. This includes their willingness to allow me to record our conversations, and to use their stories and the re-interpreted versions of their second perspective after having looked back at their own stories and adding new inputs.

The difficult part for me was drawing the line and deciding to work with the current group, therefore not accepting new co-researchers. Nobody was initially unwilling or declined to be interviewed and recorded, but due to time and geographical constraints, arranging the conversations proved to be very difficult. The follow-up interviews also proved quite difficult to arrange. The growing effect of the intervention on the personal and emotional lives of the



co-researchers did not go unnoticed. The full voluntary participation of co-researchers remained one of my prime criteria throughout the research.

## 2.17 Representivity in South Africa

With the constant emphasis on representivity currently high on the national agenda, and within the narrative approach, marginalized voices need to be heard. I tried to be as representative as possible within the available caregivers who qualified in terms of deployment and their willingness to contribute and who also expressed interest and willingness to become involved in the research. Listening to the interviews would definitely touch on representivity, gender and other underlying discourses.

To be representative of race in South Africa is still important. Therefore, I have selected co-researchers who wave Afrikaans, English and Sesotho as home language. In trying to balance all of these, the co-researchers turned out to be predominantly female. The available diversity of voices was also guided by practical concerns in terms of the availability of co-researchers and the geographical distance between people.

This research would have been done in Afrikaans as my first choice, however, as English is the official language of communication in the Defence Force, the research would simply have been ignored had it been conducted in Afrikaans. Interviews with Afrikaans-speaking co-researchers were done in Afrikaans, unfortunately this created difficulty for our Sotho-speaking co-researcher to understand their comments. With the rapid decline of Afrikaans-speaking members in the SANDF, Afrikaans is currently also a marginalized voice, as is fast happening in the rest of South Africa.

## 2.18 Unheard or Marginalized Voices

A potential problem in the research process is finding the balance between the unheard voice of an individual and the unheard voice of the bigger group. In my opinion, the Caregivers, in this case the chaplains, the social workers and health workers, are in fact the unheard voices since they are the people who always listen to and support the rest of the deployed members. Seldom, anybody ever listens to their stories.

Caregivers seldom complain, and almost never to the people in a managerial or decision-making position who can make a difference in the lives of the caregivers, or to the well-being of deployed members as a whole. When they do complain, it normally creates uncertainty amongst superiors in terms of how to respond to the complaints. Caregivers, especially the chaplains, can be very isolated during deployment in terms of emotional and spiritual support.

Interestingly enough, a second marginalized voice is that of the Air Force chaplains, due to their small number in comparison with the South African Army. Amongst the different Arms of Service, there is a lot of healthy competition and friendly rivalry. Unfortunately, due to the differing

management styles and manners in which the Air Force operates, Air Force members sometimes experience such rivalry as jealousy from the Army's side. All participating co-researchers confirmed this feeling of sometimes being marginalized.

This phenomenon was confirmed by the Chaplain-General at the annual Air Force chaplains work session in October 2007, after a comment from my side regarding some of my preliminary findings on how caregivers cope with deployment. The Chaplain-General's only response was to ask how many Army chaplains were involved in the research. After explaining why no Army chaplains were involved, he responded that if no Army chaplains were involved, the research was not really relevant.

In order to stick to the marginalized voices, I am not going to use any co-researchers from the Army. I do consider involving Army Chaplains as a control group to test the results from the research and some of our findings in order to determine if the research were applicable to all Arms of Service or only to the Air Force and Medical Corps. MacDonald's (MacDonald et al, 1998:477) research indicated that there is a growing consensus that with the increasing rate of peace-keeping forces, such missions place stress on the personnel involved. There is little research that investigates the effect of such deployments on the physical and mental health of peacekeepers, and especially on the caregivers. MacDonald (MacDonald et al, 1998:477) confirmed that most research is in the field of the strategic and political, or either on the economical impact of the whole peace-keeping endeavour. Very little research is being done to determine how those that need to take care of others are taken care of.

## 2.19 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOS)

The term "Non-Governmental Organisations" refers to both international and national organisations which are constituted separately from the government of the country in which they are founded and operate. They normally focus on humanitarian activities in different parts of the world where conflict or natural disasters have brought unbearable hardship, pain and suffering to the people. This support could be short-term after an earthquake, or long-term with prolonged strife and conflict over decades. Fiawosime (Aboagye et al, 2005:171) explained that NGO's differ from Inter Governmental Organisations (IGO's), which are constituted by two or more governments and often include UN agencies and other regional organisations, such as **Economic Community of West African States** (ECOWAS), or the European Union (EU). NGOs have their own constitution and focus areas and normally try to separate their activities from government.

Fiawosime (Aboagye et al, 2005:171) states that over 300 NGO's operate in various parts of Liberia alone. They are running different programmes ranging from gender equity, empowerment of women, education, HIV/AIDS programmes, healthcare, nutrition, agriculture, and food distribution, to advocacy and empowerment. These organisations continue to play an important role within the peace-keeping process, especially with the long-term support role they are able to fulfil.

## 2.20 Civil-Military Coordination in Peace-keeping Operations (CIMIC)

Civil-Military coordination has become an integral part of how the UN conducts peace-keeping missions. The DPKO (SGTM: 10) explanation of the military side defines Civil-Military Coordination as an exchange of information, negotiation, mutual support, planning all actions that ensure that there is a continuous coordination amongst all role players, be it military, civilian, police, other government departments or groups involved.

Fiawosime (Aboagye et al, 2005:172) correctly stated that the military and civil society organisations and groups have to work together if the common goal of saving lives and alleviating human suffering were to be achieved. The military is in charge of most of these missions. These missions seek to establish and maintain a secure environment for sustained peace-making efforts in order to ensure that safe humanitarian activities can take place. This interaction is geared towards saving lives and/or to alleviate suffering. Fiawosime (Aboagye et al, 2005:179) wrote that the military ensures safety and is often responsible for transport, where the NGOs are often more directly in contact with the local population, frequently focusing on the provision of humanitarian aid.

Unfortunately, due to their constitutions and general view point, NGOs are not always keen on allowing the military to take command. Some see it as a loss of independence, or resent the military's way of doing things. Therefore, each situation determines the level of collaboration between the military and the humanitarian agencies.

Fiawosime (Aboagye et al, 2005:185) highlights a potential harmless and equally dangerous interaction between soldiers and children. Children normally congregate around troops, either out of curiosity, or with the hope of receiving favours. These children often hang around the camps, especially where food is prepared. This often results that the children are fed from the leftovers.

To gain and keep the favour of the soldiers, the children will wash up the dishes and clean the kitchen area. This phenomenon, which was associated with ECOMOG and ECOMIL, was labelled as child abuse by a children's protection agency.

Typical of the military, to prevent any future accusations, all children were instantly banned from the area and all leftovers were declared as waste and thrown away, with hungry children hanging around the perimeter fences. This episode had a very negative impact on the soldier's morale as well as the local population who experienced the change of heart very negatively. Good intentions by NGOs and the military alike, through decisions of which the effects were not properly considered, may have a negative unintended impact on those whose interests are to be served. This incident is ample prove of how important good communication is, and that impulsive decisions may have a bigger impact than originally anticipated or expected. Knowledge is vital in order to serve the purpose of the peace-keeping mission. This knowledge

would include local, military, political, social, religious and understanding of the specific civilian NGO's values and standard operating procedures.

## 2.21 Peacekeeping Since 1991

Since the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the deployment of troops worldwide has increased dramatically. However, the knowledge of the effects of frequent deployment on the general psychological health of soldiers is not known. Stuart (1997:737) makes an interesting statement by pointing out that numerous studies have indicated that life in the military is psychologically more stressful than life in civilian society.

Ferreira's (1984:44) is one of numerous studies done in South Africa regarding the service in the South African Defense Force (SADF) and especially on the Angola/Namibian border. Ferreira focused for instance on the effects of compulsory National Service in "Die invloed van Grensdiens op die Rolvervulling in die Gesin". Unfortunately, due to momentous political changes in South Africa, most of the studies conducted prior to 1994, are currently of little value in terms of the experiences of soldiers during deployment.

The value of the research done in pre-1994 South Africa is more in terms of the history and understanding of the experiences rather than the influence of the research on soldiers' lives today. Even so, certain human characteristics, such as stress and feelings of unpleasantness due to separation from loved ones, remain the same, regardless the politics that influenced such separation. Currently, all soldiers are volunteers and no compulsory National Service is required from the general public. Only persons who completed their studies in any medical-related field are currently expected to do a year of community service.

## 2.22 In-Context Experiences and Emotional Impact

When a soldier is deployed to serve in a foreign country, he or she makes several large transitions in life; they are likely to feel increased stress and are, therefore, potentially vulnerable to problems associated with stress. The accelerated cycle of military deployment mirrors the complex task that challenges family members at transitional points. However, in military life, adjustments must be made rapidly during compressed time frames.

Rosebush (1998:560) rightly mentioned that many adjustments are required from soldiers facing operational circumstances. He referred to an abrupt change in lifestyle, environment, climate, diet, and hygienic standards, as well as heavily increased or decreased demands on time and energy; all these serve as additional stressors. Richie (1994:372) added that separation from family members is a common source of stress which may be intensified by uncertainty about return dates, poor communication with home, and a belief that the stress of peacekeepers goes unrecognised.

Waters (1994:41) points out that monotony and boredom are also frequent problems soldiers experience during deployment and also that, due to cultural differences, personnel may encounter difficulties when working with members from different nationalities. Monotony and boredom are dramatically increased when soldiers are required to be restricted to base, also known as “confined to camp”, or “confined to base”. The reason for this confinement is normally for safety or political motivations according to the particular peace treaty stipulations. This restriction on movement can even lead to feelings of claustrophobia, or feelings of “being in jail”.

When this confinement to base continues for an extended period, the deployed personnel are all affected by it in one way or the other. They might be affected by the constant possibility of a threat against their life or simply the loss of being in control of one’s own life or movements. Most of the time boredom is the biggest threat. The more time people have to think about how they are, the more these thoughts will have an influence on their perception of their own well-being.

Almost every aspect of a soldier’s life is tightly controlled in a foreign country. Therefore, soldiers can experience an enormous lack of control over their lives while they are deployed. These circumstances all contribute to the accumulation of stress. Rosebush (1998:560) mentions that members who fail to accept these conditions are likely candidates for stress reactions and to exhibit problems with performance.

Although peace-keeping forces are not usually engaged in active combat, again note the difference between peace-enforcement and peace-keeping! The nature of their mission may subject them to distressing and potentially traumatizing events. O’Brien (1994:443) mentions events that have been reported as particularly upsetting for deployed soldiers; this include the witnessing of atrocities and torture, the indifferent handling of civilians especially children, and the retrieval of and disposal of human remains.

Canadian Forces deployed in Rwanda on humanitarian and peace-keeping operations have found themselves in very grim circumstances. As a result of their deployment, many soldiers developed stress reactions that interfered with their daily social functioning. Rosebush (1998:559) mentioned that the major psychological conflict for personnel was the denial of powerlessness that soldiers and especially medical personnel grappled with.

It is important to remember that Military training prepares people to actively respond to a crisis with an active approach, and that often the deployment directives prevent them from becoming actively involved in the crisis right in front of them. To remain detached from human suffering is easier said than done.

The situations In Rwanda, and often elsewhere in Africa were severe and most soldiers knew it would not be solved by their presence or intervention. Coping with the ocean of human misery meant that soldiers had to quickly develop their own personal coping mechanisms to help them get through their tour of duty. Denial was the major coping mechanism used by soldiers deployed in Rwanda. They had to deny the “big picture” (macro-level problems) to reduce their anxiety and learn to focus on smaller things on a day-to-day basis, where they were able to gain some small measure of control. This lack of control or loss of personal control is a recurring theme.

Rosebush focused (1998:559) on the emotions experienced by the soldiers exposed to direct intense experiences. These experiences included horrible things such as cleaning up the remains of a massacre. The range of emotions experienced by soldiers after being exposed to such horrors ranged from extreme anger to emotional numbness. The consequence of having a denial break down was intense emotional distress.

The daily routine, and to keep on doing their normal tasks and duties, assisted the members by keeping them busy and helped to detach other stimuli. This is a fairly common human phenomenon in coping during the stressful period - seemingly unaffected but indeed afterwards affected. This phenomenon is often described as post-traumatic stress.

Rosebush's (1998:560) research indicated that many soldiers ended their deployment with their defences intact, only to find that the experiences during their deployment would gradually create problems in the years to follow. He stated that denial and emotional detachment are highly effective defence mechanisms used in a theatre of operations, but that they can greatly affect post-deployment functioning. This led to operational stress being recognised in the Canadian Forces as a factor that affects the functioning of soldiers both during and after deployment. Operational stress refers to the mission specific requirements and the day-to-day demands on soldiers involved in operations.

## **2.23 Loneliness**

Loneliness is indeed a personal experience. The question must be asked if there are external conditions which add to the feelings of loneliness and if these external circumstances intensified the self-felt loneliness? Are there external factors that can add to feelings of loneliness during deployment?

According to Hancock (1986:2) most people living in a Western cultural background do not seem to enjoy companionship, support and protection from their neighbours. As far back as 1976 Gordon (1976:19) made the following statement: "If someone walks out of a house with a TV set, a neighbour has no idea if it is the owner taking it to a repair shop or a burglar". Sadly, the support amongst neighbours deteriorated dramatically since 1976. Currently, many people feel like strangers in their own streets. This led to more distrust amongst neighbours and the circle spirals into more loneliness. The questions regarding the differences and similarities between loneliness, isolation, alienation and simply to be alone will be looked at in depth in Chapter Six.

## **2.24 First, Care for Yourself**

Ask yourself the following question - if while you are travelling on an airplane, an oxygen mask suddenly descends in front of you, what are you supposed to do? As we are all supposed to know, the first rule is to put on your own oxygen mask before you try and assist anyone else. If we do not comply with that simple guideline, we can quickly find ourselves incapable of ever helping

anybody again. When we first take care of ourselves, only then can we effectively help others.

This metaphor is also applicable to Caregivers. The Air hostesses and crewmembers need to breath properly and be “compos mentis” or alert before they can even consider assisting the rest of the passengers. Caring for yourself is one of the most important - and one of the often most forgotten things you can do as a caregiver. When your needs are taken care of, the person you care for will benefit, too.

The movement from the moment of listening to experiences to describing the experiences is an important part of the narrative process. The first step is to have the conversations. During the conversation you need to listen, and ask questions as you see fit at that time. The conversation, as is arranged with the co-researcher, is recorded. Afterwards the recorded conversation is transcribed into written form. This hard copy of the conversation is then relayed back to the co-researcher with the request that they must read it and reflect back on how they feel and what they agree or disagree with!

After reading and considering their own words, a second interview is held with the co-researcher, discussing the first listening experience, and moving that towards a process of describing the experiences. Subsequent to the second discussion, the new insights and even the whole conversation will then be shared with the other co-researchers allowing them to comment. The rationale is to be aware of your own story and expectations and then to look at stories of other people in similar circumstances. What we expect would have an impact on how we relate to what we find.

## 2.25 Expectations

Lewis (1993:58) mentioned that Dag Hammarskjold, a previous Secretary-General once observed: “The United Nations was not set up to bring humanity to heaven but to save it from hell”. This does not imply very high hopes of expecting to change the world completely. Looking at that viewpoint, we have made some progress; if the aim was to avoid the worst, then some successes have been achieved. Our expectations as humans, as governments, as media, as academics and as soldiers play a huge role in our behaviour perceptions and eventually in our levels of satisfaction.

Our expectations and those of the other parties involved in the outcome of the endeavour or peace-keeping operation are, therefore, vital in understanding some of our own behaviour as well as the behaviour of others. Similarly, what we expect of “care”, “caregivers’ or “peacekeeping” have a titanic impact on our experience and how we eventually describe what happened when telling and re-telling our stories.

Rave and Larson (1995:28) touched on a very important issue when they asked the following question: “How does who I am affect this process?” Although they originally posed the question to therapists working with clients; it is equally relevant for narrative researchers who must also ask the same question of themselves throughout the research to ensure that they are in touch with their own influence on the research process.

## **2.26 Criteria and Conditions for International Involvement in Peace Operations**

The extremely difficult questions of debating the criteria and conditions for international involvement in peace operations are, as a general rule, not on the agenda of soldiers, but on the table of diplomats and governments. Soldiers are bound by at least three important factors, firstly the agreed upon rules of engagement and secondly the still significant Geneva Convention. Thirdly, soldiers are bound by the applicable treaty in the area of deployment, as agreed to by, hopefully, all parties. Problems quickly arise when certain parties distance themselves from these pre-agreed conditions and criteria, by withdrawing, breaking their agreement or by not having been involved in the negotiation phase at all.

It is easy to formulate a rational list of conditions and criteria in non-critical times, sitting safely behind a desk in a fancy conference room. The problem is that international involvement in peace operations usually takes place in emotional periods of crisis when logic and reason are not predominant.

A soldier's response in a situation may be done in a blink of an eye, but the results and impact of those decisions can be debated and analysed at leisure. The decisions made by soldiers often have long-term political and economical consequences.

The other problem is that all parties might not have agreed to, or even be involved with that particular peace treaty. Similarly, politicians have an uncanny ability to change their point of view depending on the situation at that particular point of time. Using a courtroom as an example, it is in retrospect sometimes difficult to determine what course of action a reasonable person would have followed, and sometimes decisions need to be made without that luxury of contemplation time. As a result, soldiers can be charged in a court of law for split second decisions, made in sometimes very difficult circumstances. Unfortunately the deployed soldier is often the person sitting in the middle of a very complicated situation and not always equipped with the necessary skills for such a task!

### **2.26.1 Force Preparation**

Preparedness may be in the form of training, equipment or the emotional and mental ability to manage the ever-changing situation without endangering the broader political and military motives. The phase "Force Preparation" is utilised to refer to the whole process of training soldiers and preparing them in all possible aspects relating to their tasks.

Being "Force Prepared", they are then deemed ready to move into the next phase referred to as "Force Application". This process is a continuum, not linear. The preparation phase includes basic training, advanced training and continued-training. Similarly, all necessary logistical support, supply lines and equipment are included in the force preparation phase as is the training in how to utilise and manage those resources effectively.



On the Executive National Staff Program (ENSP), specific training, aimed at strategic and international affairs, is addressed and included as part of the program. Unfortunately, this is only done on a senior level and some of the commanding officers in the deployment area - Lieutenant Colonels - do not yet have the further training or experience.

## 2.26.2 Motivation

The motives behind our actions are a huge indicator of our intentions and inner preparedness to cope with an unknown future. These underlying motives are vital, especially during peace-keeping deployments that could easily stretch over a couple of months.

It is important that the individual must be open and honest about his/her own motives but must also be able to understand the bigger picture of the peace-keepers' motives and where the different role players fit in.

Role-players include the different countries involved in the peace-keeping operation as well as the NGOs actively involved in that region. It is important to keep in mind that all stakeholders are motivated by their own reasons. NGOs' motive might range from making the world a better place, alleviating pain and suffering, or to keep on receiving grants and subsidies. Governments' motives might be regional peace and stability, economic opportunities or international fame and stature.

The question of motive needs to be asked of caregivers as well; it is important to be certain of your motives, listening to the stories of the caregivers. I was interested in what motivated them to deploy. Chaplains also need to ask questions about their calling to the ministry; are they "fishers of men"? (NIV 1996, Matt 4:19), or are they "peace brokers"? (Luke 2:14).

I remember that one of my motives for volunteering on the Antarctic expedition was to spread the gospel literally to the end of the world. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (NIV 1999, Acts 1:8).

My second motive was to experience the exquisiteness of Antarctic nature and all its different aspects, from seeing icebergs, to abseiling in crevasses. The unexpected outcome, not included in my original motives before my Antarctic deployment, was the wonderful friendships that enriched my life tremendously.

What motivated ministers of religion in the first place to become chaplains and what is the focus in their own ministry? Focusing on evangelising - spreading the gospel or focusing on caring for our people - pastoral care and counselling. Another motivation for deployment can either be the monetary benefit or just to get it done! Whether it will be a rewarding experience or perceived as some kind of punishment, may be pre-determined in the initial motive for deployment.

The following question asked by Nelson Mandela is closely linked to our motives and calling as human beings on earth:

“Given the inter-dependence of the nations of the world, what is it that we can and must do to ensure that democracy, peace and prosperity prevail everywhere?”

Nelson Mandela,

General Assembly of the United Nations, New York (3 October 1994)