

**THE IMPACT OF ON-DUTY KILLINGS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE
SERVICE (SAPS) ON SPOUSES OF DECEASED MEMBERS**

BY

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CHAPTER 1 THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1. INTRODUCTION

Weizman and Kamm (1985:114) describe the family as an arrangement of persons related and connected to each other, and each contributing towards a whole unit. It is an arena for many relationships, and a general feeling exists when all are together. The family has characteristics relating to ways of operating, solving problems, caring for each other emotionally, performing tasks, providing food and clothing, dividing chores, having fun, and handling crises. One change or sudden change in an individual affects all participants as well as the family life cycle. According to Shapiro (1994:9), when a parent or sibling dies with young children still at home, the gradual, expectable ebb and flow of change over the course of the family life-cycle is radically altered. The family is challenged to absorb the reality of death, with its many emotional and practical implications, into the already demanding work of growing up together as a family.

Death of a breadwinner in a family has greater impact on a stay-at-home spouse and mother who depended more entirely on her/his late spouse for living. The bereaved mother is now left alone where she is expected to readjust and to be a parent by herself for her children, all of whom had suffered the agonising blow of a father's death. According to Riches and Dawson (2000:5), when children are born, leave home or get married, or if couples separate, then the family pattern changes.

This is the same as the absence of someone within the family through death. A change through death requires a negotiation of new roles and the construction of new stories and history within the family. Each member has to adapt their internal working model to fit the altered circumstances. Death of a spouse therefore fundamentally threatens the sense of who the surviving spouse is. It wipes out many assumptions about the future, and shakes the permanence of one's relationships. It calls into question the point at many of one's family activities and

roles. To a greater or lesser extent, parental identity is destroyed by a spouse's death, and this, in turn, diminishes the self (Riches & Dawson, 2000: 5).

Death of a spouse or loved one within a family, be it a child or adult, carries with it some element of grief that brings about traumatic changes as relationships once relied on are the very ones destroyed by death. Trust in the world is shaken, and mental energy is taken up with the adjusting to this loss. There is a sense of personal isolation and the impression that nothing can ever be the same again.

In this study, the researcher concentrated on the 'on-duty' police killings within the Gauteng Province.

According to the researcher's experience, not only did the on-duty police killings affect the spouses of the deceased, but also their colleagues and the management within the service. Dussich (2003:1) states that police victimisations result in direct injury or death of an officer while on-duty, while being witness to the injury or death of another officer, or a non-officer, is very traumatic. Colleagues as well as management seemed to cope well afterwards because of having in-house helping professions at their disposal. However, the question remained: *What about the spouses of the deceased who are directly affected by such killings?*

According to Nqakula (as cited in Dussich, 2003:1), the average line of on-duty death over the last ten years in Japan has been seven per year, in a police personnel numbering 262 240. In the United States of America, in 1992, there were 61 officers killed in the line of duty with a population of 435 346 officers. However, in South Africa the number of line of duty death was 163 for the year 2001 for a total number of 147 560 police officers. The majority of these were in the Gauteng Province. Thus, with the increase of the on-duty police killings within the Gauteng Province, this study aimed at investigating the impact thereof on spouses, as well as the nature of support the spouses of the deceased members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) have received in the past following on-duty killings. This study determined how long, how far, and how well the spouses could cope

with their grief, and what nature of support and assistance could be offered to them at home, as well as within the society they live in, so that they were able to cope with the situation of losing their partners.

According to the EAPA (1990), one of the objectives of the EAP is to serve the organisation, its employees, and their families, by providing a comprehensive system from which the employees can obtain assistance in addressing personal problems that may affect their work performance. According to the researcher, families seem to be neglected, and more so when they have lost their loved ones in the line of duty. A common trend within the EAP environment is to focus more on the employer and the employee, and to pay little or no attention to their families back home. This is supported by writers such as Francek (1985:1), who indicates that the EAP was initially formulated in an attempt to assist employees in their job performance or resolve behaviour problems related to alcohol misuse or alcoholism.

The following reasons motivated the researcher to engage in this study.

The researcher has been a chaplain in the SAPS for ten years. He has been exposed to, and has experienced police killings, carried death messages to the families of the deceased, and attended and officiated at official and unofficial funerals. He has, however, also experienced that no scientific enquiry has ever been undertaken as to what the effects of the on-duty deaths are on the families of the deceased within the Gauteng Province in particular. The nature of the programmes and projects that should be made available to the spouses has not been studied and defined. In particular, the role of the Employee Assistance Services in the SAPS has not been made conspicuous.

Since the researcher's tenure as chaplain in the service, the researcher counselled several widows/widowers of the on-duty police killings whose emotional state was due to the following problems and concerns:

- lack of income, which resulted into these widows being evicted from their houses, police barracks, and married quarters;
- delays in pension pay-outs or non-recovery of these pay-outs;
- kids having to leave school at an early age; and
- payments having to be contested between wives or sometimes between the spouse and the parents of the deceased.

As a result, the researcher conducted a scientific enquiry to determine how on-duty police killings affect the spouses of the deceased and what could be done to prevent the problems experienced by the spouses of police officers killed in the line of duty. The researcher also questioned the effectiveness and the impact of the support currently provided by the Employee Assistance Services (EAS) within the police service, and made recommendations on how the EAS could be improved and what the role of the EAS practitioner should be in such cases.

The research done on the killings of the police, either on- or off-duty, has been concentrated more on the statistics, motives for such killings, and the prevention thereof. The researcher therefore concentrated on the other side of the coin and addressed the new version of the effects thereof, as he questioned how far such killings taxed spouses psychologically, emotionally, spiritually, financially, and otherwise and what kind of support they got from the EAS – namely; chaplains, social workers and psychologists within the service, and to provide them an opportunity to mention what had been unsatisfactory.

Adding value to this, is an incident described in the Finesse Magazine (2004:28), concerning a Mrs. Louise Hechter, a nursing sister, from Vanderbijlpark. The article reported that Mrs Hechter lost her husband, the late sergeant Machiel Hechter, who was killed in the line of duty. A friend delivered the death message to her through an SMS (Short Message Service). It is further reported that a Police Chaplain was unavailable during this time of need: *“Daar was geen polisie kapelaan met die pers lint om sy pet om die nuus aan haar oor te dra nie...”*

Secondly, the Sunday Sun (2003:26) had a headline reading: WIDOW OF A SLAIN COP FEELS LET DOWN. This was yet another sad and painful story about Mrs. Pretty Shabangu, a widow of a slain police officer, the late Sergeant Godfrey Shabangu, who died in the line of duty in a shootout during a robbery in July 2003 at the Cresta Shopping Centre in Johannesburg. Mrs Shabangu complained of the trauma that she and her children were experiencing due to the lack of counselling: *“The widow added that after her husband’s death, she was promised counselling by a Police Chaplain but this did not materialise. My two children constantly ask when their father is coming back.”*

Lastly, the researcher has a professional interest in knowing and studying the effect of on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased, and how that affects them in their day-to-day living. This study is beneficial to both management and the EAS within the Gauteng Province as to how effectively they can be of assistance to the spouses of the deceased, and also to clarify the role of each component within the helping professions in dealing with the after-care of on-duty police killings.

Literature review can be described as the prior reading of the relevant literature for the research proposal. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:22), state, in order to conceive the research topic in a way that permits a clear formulation of the problem and the hypothesis, some background information is necessary. This is mainly by reading whatever has been published that appears relevant to the research topic. This process is called literature review.

Recent studies, that the researcher engaged himself in on the subject line of on-duty killings or death of police members, included those who died off-duty and those who committed suicide.

During 2000, the Provincial Suicide Prevention Committee engaged itself in research on the theme *Attacks, Suicide and murders on members of the South*

African Police Service. According to the researcher's opinion, the research was more on statistics compiled on the cases registered on the Crime Analysis System (CAS), as well as the report received at Crime Information Centre from various police stations. Such research on murders and attacks on police officials was conducted with the aim of identifying problematic spots, as well as to find measures of protecting members from such attacks. The effects thereof on the spouses of the deceased members, which the researcher sees as a major concern, and which must be addressed, had not been covered.

Kempen (1999:14) propagates the traditional research method of concentrating on the statistics, motives, and preventative measures on the police killings. These had been matters of concern even to the former state president F.W. de Klerk, who requested the Goldstone Commission on 14 July 1993 to investigate the origins of serious attacks on members of the South African Police (SAP). Joining in the same chorus was the Minister for Safety and Security in May 1999.

In her research, Kempen (1999:16) confirms limited information on the effects of on-duty killings on colleagues, referring to the emotional stress resulting from such killings. The impact on spouses of the deceased and on management was however ignored.

The research by Bailey and Peterson (1994:53-74) does not address the effects of police killings on spouses and families of the deceased members, but is limited to:

- Assessing the state of knowledge regarding murder, capital punishment, and deterrence.
- Explicating the need to consider different types of homicide in examining the deterrence question.
- Examining the possible deterrent effect of capital punishment on lethal assaults against police.

In summary, the research by Bailey, according to the researcher, still concentrates more on:

- the statistics of police killings on or off-duty; and
- those injured on or off-duty coupled with the kind of punishment that should be enforced on the perpetrators in order to prevent police killings.

Through a literature study on Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) (Violanti, Study 11, 1997: 5), done by the researcher, it has been discovered that COPS, as an organisation, is more concerned over the police killings and does address the effects of these on the spouses, officers, dispatchers, civilian personnel and those close to the scene of the murder.

Therefore, the researcher continued the research on the effects as outlined in the theme above, but in a South African context with a special focus on the Gauteng Province.

To add more value to the research, the researcher contacted some of the people who are in contact with the issues that affect the daily life of the spouses of the police killed on-duty, such as Social Workers, Chaplains, Psychologists and the Service Termination unit within the SAPS.

Staudacher (1987) and other authors cover to a larger degree the impact following the death of a loved one. According to Staudacher (1987: 53), the impact following the death of a loved one is both physical and emotional, in that the spouse experiences a depressed mood, sadness, exhaustion, loneliness, and incomplete, prolonged and excessive crying and insomnia.

The researcher wanted to investigate what has been mentioned by the above authors from his position within the South African Police Service, and to pay more attention to the effects of on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased.

Violanti (1997:2) writes from his western experience. In his study samples, he summarised the impact of the line-of-duty killings on surviving spouses as follows:

- The experience heightened symptoms of psychological distress after the death of an officer.
- They revealed higher trauma symptoms, including greater symptoms of obsessive compulsiveness, depression and paranoia.
- They also experience post-traumatic stress disorder, and demonstrated low self-esteem and negative attitudes towards themselves.

A lot on the impact of on-duty killings has been covered by Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:30), particularly the issue covering the effects of bereavement to health. There is a widespread commonsensical notion that people can be so traumatised by the loss of their loved ones that it can change them forever, or can lead to their premature death. There is evidence of increased deaths from heart disease, liver cirrhosis, suicide, and other violent deaths, with less evidence for an increase in cancer deaths.

The information by Rainone (2001: 1) does cover a lot on the topic under study by the researcher. According to Rainone (2000: 1), when one has lost something very dear, valuable, or close to him/her, grief comes to the fore.

Grief is an individual's feeling and thoughts following a loss. Grief is the emotional, physical, mental, and even spiritual response to human beings' experience when their dreams and plans for life take an unexpected turn. In summary, death of a loved one brings about sadness, anger and disappointment to the spouse concerned, and grief and mourning are normal and healthy responses thereof.

According to Cilliers in De Vos (2002:212), the wealth of literature represents only a section of knowledge of certain people. In order for the researcher to obtain more

information, the researcher also contacted persons who have been trained in a specialised area, who have undertaken research, or who have been active for many years in that specific area.

Following the above advice, the following experts were consulted:

- Rev. J P L Van Straaten (2006), the chaplain at the Provincial office of the S.A Police Service assigned to collate all the death reports from the seven areas and to submit them to the Provincial Commissioner, the Human Resources Management (HRM) Provincial Head, and the national office of the Spiritual Services. According to Van Straaten (2006), these areas are too slow to react to the needs of the spouses, and hence ending up going to the media with their problems.
- Senior Superintendent A. Blignaut, the Provincial Section Head for Employee Assistance Services (2006). According to Blignaut (2006), there are no specific Programmes and Projects provided by the social workers and the psychological services to the spouses of the deceased. The only programme that is available is the quarterly after care that is provided by the chaplains' services. This only focuses on the spiritual aspects, and does not meet all the needs of the spouses of police members killed on-duty.
- Captain M. Ndlela of the Provincial Office, who is placed at the service termination of the police (2006). This official assisted the researcher with the statistics, dates, and the addresses of the spouses of the deceased. According to Ndlela (2006), there is a delay in the payout of funds to the spouses concerned. This causes problems to the families, as there is no income for a period of twelve months and more in certain cases.
- Organised labour movements, the South African Police Union (SAPU) and POPCRU, which are the most popular unions within the SAPS. The Unions have a lot of information concerning the needs of the survivors, as they are

always consulted for legal advice. According to the Unions (2006) the Employee Assistance Services (EAS) are not doing enough about the aftercare of the spouses of the deceased police officials.

- Legal services within the SAPS (2006). Most of the employees and the families, including the management, always consult legal services for advice during crisis situations. The spouses always consult Legal Services when the estate of the deceased is contested between wives, girlfriends, or the parents of the deceased.
- COPS: This is a private organisation that is concerned daily with police survivors. A representative of the organisation in South Africa has been consulted on the nature of support provided by the organisation to the families of the deceased.

Hence, according to the researcher, this study:

- Benefits both the management and the EAS, as they can effectively assist the spouses of the deceased, and also clarifies and improve the role of the EAS in dealing with the aftercare of the on-duty police killings.
- Makes recommendations on the nature of the programmes and projects that should be made available to the spouses of the deceased by all the units within the EAS. This will build on the current quarterly after-care programme offered by the Chaplains.
- Limits and resolves the problem of the SAPS being exposed to the media by some angry dissatisfied spouses of the deceased, as it has been the case recently.

2. PROBLEM FORMULATION

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:15), in this section the researcher describes how he/she is going to commence with the research project, as well as the factors that should be taken into account before embarking on the project. The new dictionary of social work (1995:45) states that problem formulation is the process of defining the phenomenon into which research is carried out.

According to Haley (as cited in Mikesell, Lusterman & McDaniel, 1995:91), when the family is *struck*, meaning the loss of one member, the equilibrium is disturbed and the family is experiencing difficulties moving on to the next stage of development. Family therapy is the process by which normal family development can continue.

According to Anderson and Steward (1983: ix) situations, where change is a necessity, they are often characterised by resistance to change, i.e. the people's attitude to resist new situations. When a member of the family, such as a spouse, dies, such families are expected to:

- respond to new situations very flexibly;
- take advantage of fortuitous circumstances;
- make sense out of ambiguous or contradictory messages;
- recognise the relative importance of different elements of a situation; and
- synthesise concepts by taking concepts and putting them together in new ways.

According to Anderson and Steward (1983:1), resistance to change in general, and resistance to being influenced in particular, always occurs when individuals, groups, and systems are required by circumstances to alter their established behaviours.

According to Kissane and Block (2002:26), family therapy or *operational mourning*, as they call it, is the answer to the families that are struck by death. Such families need professionals to accompany and encourage them to reflect on their laws, share associated feelings, and attempt to understand the impact of death on themselves as well as to share thoughts and feelings about their loss.

During the researcher's conversation with the two provincial heads, Superintendent (Supt) R. Steyn, of the Social Work Services, and Supt M. Hough of the Psychological Services respectively, it came to the attention of the researcher that the two abovementioned professions do not have specific programmes and projects in place for spouses of the deceased members within the services. The spouse's problems are still treated as a private matter that should be dealt with at a distance, or as the responsibility of the chaplain.

Masi (1992:1) states that as recently as the early 1980's, many employees would have been reprimanded or even dismissed, because of the problems they experience. This is equally true of the spouses of the deceased, some of whom are themselves employees of the SAPS and some employed by other state departments and elsewhere. They also might face being reprimanded or even dismissed due to problems that they experience, as stated by Masi (1992:1), if someone does not come to their rescue.

The **problem statement** can be summarised as follows:

Members of the SAPS within Gauteng Province are killed on-duty daily. Such killings have an effect on the spouses of the deceased. Current support services to the spouses and families of the deceased from on-duty killings - as rendered by the Employee Assistance Services - may not meet the needs of spouses of those members killed on-duty, resulting in family members not being able to adapt to a normal lifestyle after such deaths.

3 PURPOSE, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The researcher agrees with De Vos (2002:107) that, the terms *goal*, *purpose* and *aim* are very often used interchangeably, i.e. as synonyms of one another. Their meaning implies the broader, more abstract conception of the end towards which effort or ambition is directed. The purpose has something to do with the ‘dream’ or the ‘picture’ that one needs to attain.

Adding to this, Mouton, in De Vos (2002:109), discusses research goals as exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory.

The **goal** of this study is to explore and conduct scientific enquiry on the impact of on-duty killings on the spouses of the deceased. Unlike the purpose, goal, and aim as explained above, the *objective* according to De Vos (2002:107) denotes the more concrete, measurable, and more speedily attainable concept of such end, toward which effort or ambition is directed. The objective has something to do with 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.

Following the above, the objectives of the research are:

- To explore and describe, through literature study, the impact of on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased.
- To explore the practical factors – following the killing of a member – that may have an impact on the spouse(s) of the deceased within the Gauteng Province.
- To explore the exact needs of the spouses of the members killed on-duty within the Gauteng Province.
- To make recommendations for the EAS within the Gauteng Province in handling the impact of the police killings on spouses of the deceased.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDY

Cresswell (1998:99) maintained that, in order for the researcher to do justice in his research proposal, he must be able to restate the purpose of the study in more specific terms and start with words such as *what* or *how*, rather than the *why* question.

Following the statement by Cresswell, the research question in this proposal is:

What is the impact of on-duty killings in the SAPS on spouses of deceased members?

5. RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Leady (as cited in De Vos,1998:15) the nature of data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology. Judging from the proposed research, the researcher's methodology is qualitative, since all data (all factual information and all human knowledge) reaches the researcher as words rather than in numerical form. Secondly, it is qualitative since the researcher's aim is based on understanding the meaning that the spouses attach to everyday life, obtained through the information obtained either through the words of the spouses themselves or through quotes from documents and transcripts.

In other words, the research approach is qualitative, since most descriptions and interpretations are portrayed through words rather than numbers, although numerical data are used to elaborate the findings identified in a qualitative analysis.

6. TYPE OF RESEARCH

According to Bless and Higson–Smith (1995:37), the characteristics of the problem, the initial level of knowledge, the properties of the variables, as well as the purpose of the investigation all influence the type of research to be used.

Judging from the reason for the research under study as indicated above, the most appropriate type of research was applied, i.e. applied social research. The goal of applied social research most often is the scientific planning of induced change in a troublesome situation to develop solutions for problems and application in practice according to De Vos (2002: 108). Hence in this study, the researcher intended to explore and determine the impact of on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased, and to make recommendations for the EAS services which may be applied in practice.

7. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The new Social Work Dictionary (1995: 63) defines a research design as that plan of a research project through which data is gathered in order to investigate the hypothesis, or to realize the aim thereof.

Research design and methodology is said to be a blueprint or detailed plan on how a research study should be conducted. According to De Vos (2002:271), the term design *is used to refer to those groups of small, worked-out formulae from which prospective researchers can select or develop one (or more) that may be suitable to their specific research goal.* This has to do with all the decisions the researcher makes in planning the study.

The design is the overall plan for conducting the whole research study. This refers to all the decisions made in planning the study, meaning the design to be used, the sampling, sources and procedures for collecting data, measurement issues and data analysis plans.

Judging from the research under study, the suitable design or strategy for this study had been **phenomenology**, which enabled the researcher to understand and interpret the impact that the subjects (spouses of the on-duty police killings in this case) may experience, resulting from the phenomenon of on-duty police killings.

According to Cresswell (as cited in De Vos, 2002:273), a phenomenological study is regarded as that kind of study which describes the meaning that experience of a phenomenon, topic or concept has for various individuals. In the end, the researcher used this strategy to succeed in reducing the experiences to a central meaning or the essence of the experience and to use the product of the research as a description of the essence of the experience studied.

7.1 Data collection

According to De Vos (2002:29), two kinds or methods of interviews can be used for information collection during qualitative research: the one-to-one interview, and the focus-groups interview. Of these two methods, one is not superior to the other. The researcher had been guided by the purpose of the research under study to choose the most effective method. A focus group, as an interview method, is indicated to be meaningful in the case of a new topic, or when one is trying to take a new topic to a population, or if one wants to explore thoughts and feelings and not just behaviour.” (De Vos, 2002:291)

Morgan (as cited in De Vos, 2002:306) describes the focus group as a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. This is a more group-oriented method than a one-to-one method. Therefore this method had not been suitable for the purpose of the research under study, due to the sensitive nature of the topic under discussion.

Thus, a semi-structured one-to-one interview method, which is generally used by researchers to gain a detailed picture of participants’ belief about, or perceptions or

accounts of, a particular topic (De Vos, 2002:302), seemed to be the research method suitable for this study. This is the kind of method where flexibility is the norm, where the researcher is at liberty to make follow-ups on interesting avenues that emerge within the interview, and where the participant can provide a fuller picture thereof. According to De Vos (2002:302), semi-structured interviews are suitable where one is particularly interested in complexity or process, where an issue is controversial or personal, as is the case with the research under study.

The researcher had a set of predetermined questions on the interview schedule and used the schedule as an instrument to engage participants (**See annexure 3**). The interviews had been guided by the schedule, rather than dictated by it (De Vos, 2002:302).

The researcher requested the Provincial Termination Services to supply a detailed list of all the police officers who died on duty between 2003 and 2005. De Vos (2002:198) is of the opinion that, to know about the behaviour of certain people, one must take relatively small samples of all possible experiences. From this list, random sampling had been conducted for the purpose of this study. The participants had been notified of, and prepared for the envisaged interviews.

The type of data collection method deployed in this research is participant observation and in-depth interviewing, mostly used by market researchers. Twelve spouses with similar circumstances had been identified for this purpose.

The desired questions had been clearly formulated in at least three to four focused questions, formulated in a manner that has the potential to bring about the required results or information.

The researcher then conducted a semi-structured one-to-one interview in order to obtain information on what the impact of such police killings is on the spouses of the deceased. The researcher informed the respondents that their participation will

be anonymous and confidential. A letter of informed consent had been given to each participant member to sign. They had also been informed of how the data will be utilised. All discussions had been audio-taped with the permission of the participants.

Statistical data for this research has been collected through the review of relevant documentation and records obtained from the Human Resource Department: EAS within the service and other related police publications. Thereafter all collected data had been scientifically analysed.

7.2 *Data analysis*

Data obtained from the participants focused on the transcription of data from audio-tapes, listening to the information, and identifying themes from the data – which could then be supported by **or challenged** through relevant and appropriate literature.

8. **PILOT STUDY**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:155) describe the pilot test as being a small study conducted prior to a large piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments, and analysis are adequate and appropriate.

Following in the same steps is Strydom (in De Vos, 2002:178), who describes the pilot study as one way in which the prospective researcher can orientate himself to the project he has in mind. The Social Work language committee in the New Dictionary for Social Work (1995:45) describes the pilot study as a process whereby the research design from a prospective survey is tested. The researcher agreed that a pilot study was needed and should be done to ensure accuracy and appropriateness for the desired standard research project standard.

8.1 *Pilot test*

Following the above, and since the methods of data collection will be participant observation and interview; the researcher conducted the pilot test as follows:

The researcher selected 2-3 spouses of deceased members, prior to the actual interview in planning – in a semi-structured one-to-one format with the topic under study, i.e. *the impact of the on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased*.

Since we have within the province quite a number of spouses of deceased police members, who are themselves employees of the SAPS, the researcher utilised such respondents. Such an arrangement assisted the researcher in ensuring the availability of the respondents, and also minimised the costs involved. Since they are themselves employees of the SAPS, permission had been requested from their immediate supervisor(s) and a letter of permission to conduct such a study, signed by the Provincial Commissioner or his delegate, had been produced (Annexure 1).

Such a pilot test of interview assisted in ensuring that the language used, and the way of asking questions was on a level the participants were comfortable with. This also assisted in providing information on the languages used by the majority of the people in this province to enable the researcher to translate questions into the major languages of the province and to arrange alternatives such as interpreters if needed.

After the necessary amendments had been done, semi-structured one-to-one in-depth interviews had been undertaken with the spouses identified in the sample. These were face-to-face interviews and took place in the researcher's office during lunch-time (13:00 – 13:30) not to interfere with the respondents' day-to-day involvement. It took two days with one respondent per day. The secretary had been requested to hold all incoming calls so that the sessions would not be disturbed and absolute privacy would be ensured. Because these interviews were

conducted in the workplace, the respondents and the researcher had not incurred any costs.

8.2 *Feasibility of the study*

According to Reid and Smith (1981), as well as Sarantakos (as cited in De Vos, 2002:199), the major reason for sampling is feasibility. This means that time and cost considerations make the study of the whole population a prohibitive undertaking. Therefore, for the sake of feasibility of the study, researchers are encouraged to make use of samples for more accurate information which will be accumulated within limited time and cost effectiveness. In this way, better quality research, better instruments, more in-depth information, and better interviewers, or observers will be produced.

Permission to conduct this study within the SAPS had been granted by the Gauteng Provincial Management. Capt. M Ndlela of Termination Services had been consulted to assist with all the details of the deceased spouses, who in turn, had been contacted by the researcher to request him/her to participate in the research.

On approval, the researcher secured a date and time for the interview. The respondents had been given an option to choose the place where the interview will be conducted. The transport costs of those who chose a place away from their homes had been incurred by the researcher. If the respondents chose to conduct the interviews in their homes, the researcher used his own transport.

As the researcher is also an employee of the SAPS, logistical arrangements had been easier. The researcher provided transportation for respondents to the venue and back.

9. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION, LIMITATION/ BOUNDARY OF SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

9.1 *Universe*

Arkava and Lane (as cited in De Vos, 2002:198), correctly draw a distinction between the two terms *Universe* and *Population* for the purposes of a research proposal. According to De Vos (2002:198), the term *universe* refers to all potential subjects who possess the attributes in which the researcher is interested.

Deaths have an impact on the families, friends, colleagues, and the management of the police. Secondly, police deaths occur in various ways and are categorised within the police service as either natural or unnatural, on- or off-duty. In this instance the universe is all spouses of police killed on or off duty in the whole of Gauteng Province, is the universe.

9.2 *Population*

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:84) defines population as *the entire set of objects or people which is the focus of the research, and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics*. On the other hand, the term *population* sets boundaries on units. It refers to individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics. According to Powers *et al.*, (as cited by Strydom and Venter in De Vos, 2002: 198), the population is where all the measurements of interest to the practitioner or researcher are represented. Neuman (1997:202) describes populations as the large pool, which has an important role in sampling. The researcher agreed that population plays an important role in sampling. For purposes of this study, the population comprised spouses of SAPS officers killed on-duty in the Gauteng Province. The researcher agrees with Powers *et al.* (as cited by Strydom and Venter in De Vos, 2002:199) that if the population is too large to study, the researcher may not have sufficient time or resources to do the job. In

such a case it would be possible to study only a portion of the population or a sample.

More specifically, the population, according to the study under review, is the spouses of the police officers who had died in the line of duty as a result of killings during the period between 2004 and 2006 within the Gauteng Province. In other words, a study of this selected population will be a study of the whole as stated by Seaberg (as cited by Strydom and Venter in De Vos, 2002:198): *Population is the total set from which the individuals or units of the study are chosen.*

9.3 Sample and sampling method

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 83), sampling is defined as a technical accounting device to rationalise the collection of information, to choose in an appropriate way the restricted set of objects, persons, events, and so forth, from which the actual information will be drawn.

This is supported by Strydom (De Vos, 2005: 202), however, we are not able to study an entire population, owing to limitations of time and cost, and we are obliged to draw a sample. Therefore, to meet the objective of this research, the researcher had been obliged to draw a sample. For the purpose of this study under review, **accidental or availability sampling**, based on the availability of respondents meeting the set criteria, had been established.

The sampling strategy had been to select units that are judged to be the most common in population under investigation. Since there are not many members who die in the line of duty, as compared to those dying off-duty, availability sampling had been the most appropriate in this regard.

This sample called for the researcher to select, according to his research, those elements that contain the most characteristic representative or typical attributes of the population. Sampling had been done according to availability by identifying, as

a portion of the population. Twelve persons whose spouses had died in the line of duty, twelve people from killings that took place in the Gauteng Province between 2004 and 2006. The sample used from the most recent killing working back in time until the respondents had been identified who are available and willing to participate in the research project. This sample comprised of the following characteristics:

Respondents:

- could be living in rural or urban areas;
- respondents must have been able to speak a variety of languages; and
- could have been legally or customary married to the deceased SAPS member.

Late spouse:

- should have been working in the Gauteng Province;
- could have belonged to any religious grouping;
- could have been from any racial groupings;
- could have been from any of the different rank levels within the Police Service;
- could have been working in any of the different functional units within the police; and
- could have been either male or female – due to members of both sexes being killed on duty.

The researcher did not know the actual size of the population, i.e. the number of spouses of on-duty killings in the mentioned time span.

10. ETHICAL ISSUES

The aim is to establish ethical principles that are considered of the utmost importance. To master this, researchers are called upon to make the most responsible decisions, by spelling out some of the pitfalls involved, and by offering some firm guidelines on the relevant ethical principles. Strydom (De Vos, 2002: 63). This is emphasised by Dane (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:75) when saying, the final responsibility rests with each individual researcher to eventually present a study that meets all the ethical requirements.

According to Strydom (De Vos, 2002:75), ethics can be defined as *a set of widely accepted moral principles that offer rules for, and behavioural expectations of, the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students*. For the researcher to succeed in his research, he needs to internalise the ethical principles in his personality to such an extent that guided decision-making becomes part of his total lifestyle.

Since research deals with human beings and life, Strydom identified some of the essential ethical issues that need to be addressed, namely harm to experimental subjects or respondents, informed consent, deception of subjects and respondents, violation of privacy, actions and competence of researchers, cooperation with collaborators, release or publication of the findings, and the restoration of subjects or respondents which will be discussed below:

10.1 Harm to experimental subjects and respondents

Respondents are very crucial and essential in this research, and need to be handled with care and diligence. Emotional harm can easily occur, and is often not recognised as easily as physical harm, but this can cause more far-reaching consequences for respondents. The researcher has a crucial responsibility to protect the respondents by pro-actively avoiding such harm, rather than repair or attempt to minimise such harm afterwards.

10.2 *Informed consent*

According to Babbie (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:65), research has to do with voluntary participation. It is crucial that the researcher informs the respondents from the beginning that they will form part of a research project and request their consent. This means that the researcher had fully informed the respondents about the interviews and the research project. According to Strydom, in De Vos (2002:65), this implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the procedure that will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which respondents may be exposed, as well as the credibility of the researcher, be rendered to potential subjects or their legal representatives. The informed consent form (**Annexure 2**), stating the purpose of the study, name of the respondent and signature, name of the researcher, signature, and other particulars of the researcher had been issued to the respondents beforehand.

As part of ethics, the researcher ascertained the legality and the psychological competence of the participants to give consent and to make them aware that they are at liberty to withdraw from the investigation at any time. This emphasises the issue of voluntary participation without victimisation or the prospect of payment afterwards. This has an impact in positively influencing the results. According to Kutchians (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:66), the participants are very crucial to the research; they need to be given a complete explanation of the total investigation, without pressure or unnecessary interference, in a clear and intelligible language. Informed consent ensured the full knowledge and cooperation of subjects, while also resolving, or at least relieving, any possible tension, aggression, resistance, or insecurity of the subjects.

10.3 *Deception of subjects and respondents*

According to Neuman (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:66), deception occurs when the researcher intentionally misleads subjects by way of written or verbal

instruction, the actions or other people, or certain aspects of the setting. This is echoed by Loewenberg and Dolgoff (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:65), who described the deception of subjects as that act of deliberately misrepresenting facts in order to make another person believe what is not true, violating the respect to which every person is entitled. It is unethical to inaccurately record the findings. The researcher undertook not to indulge in any form of deception of the subjects and respondents, and saw to it that the findings were recorded accurately.

10.4 Violation of privacy / anonymity / confidentiality

There is a very thin line between privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. These can be viewed as being synonymous. According to Sieber (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:67), privacy implies that which normally is not intended for others to observe or analyse. The researcher agrees with the author that there will always be an element of personal privacy which must be considered confidential and which calls for the researcher to handle such information with care and in a confidential manner.

Dane and Babbie (as cited by Strydom in De Vos, 2002:68), clearly distinguish between anonymity and confidentiality. According to them, confidentiality implies that only the researcher and possibly a few members of his staff should be aware of the identity of participants, and that the latter should also have made a commitment with regard to confidentiality. Anonymity means that no one, including the researcher, should be able to identify any subject afterwards.

Since the researcher dealt with data of a sensitive nature, and because audio recordings and writings of the information during the interview took place, it was ethical and essential that the subjects had been assured of privacy and confidentiality. It is also the opinion of Strydom (De Vos, 2002:68) that the *more sensitive the information, or the more concealed the manner in which the information was gathered, the greater the responsibility of the researcher and all concerned to treat the information as extremely confidential.* Grinnell (1997:58)

stresses the issue of confidentiality that must be assured to each and every client as that which forms part of his/ her constitutional rights.

Since the research topic under study is in itself a sensitive one, and for such a research to run quite smoothly, without fear and mistrust by the subjects, the researcher committed himself to abide by the instances as stated by Strydom (De Vos, 2002:69) as follows in the documentation when the respondents were briefed:

- He will under no circumstances whatsoever condone the use of concealed media such as video cameras, one-way mirrors or microphones, without the knowledge and written consent of the research respondents.
- All possible means of protecting the privacy of the respondents will be applied.

The researcher also concurs with the author that many, if not most, matters in the Social Sciences, could never have been researched if the privacy of subjects was not encroached upon to some degree. Therefore, in all cases these matters had been negotiated with the respondents, their cooperation had been respectfully requested, and its importance had been carefully explained; if refused, however, it had been accepted and respected.

10.5 Actions and competence of researchers

The research under investigation is of a very sensitive nature. In order to handle this with care and diligence, the researcher was obliged to ensure that he is competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation. The whole research investigation had to be ethically correct, and the analysis of data and the results of the study needed to be accurately reported. The ethical responsibility had to be adhered to, right from the beginning up to the end of the investigation.

As an adequately qualified and equipped investigator, the researcher was aware of the cultural groups and racial / cultural prejudice that might exist, and this was handled with care and diligence, since it might hamper the research proceedings in the long run. The researcher concurs with Strydom (De Vos, 2002:70) in saying that researchers must make a thorough study and become sensitively aware beforehand of the values, norms and climate in a community before the research project can commence at all. This helped the researcher to obtain proper cooperation from these respondents.

As part of ethics, the researcher showed great respect towards his subjects, and avoided empty promises at all times. He also assumed responsibility for honouring any promises made to his subjects.

Communication is not only through word of mouth, but can also take place through actions, attitudes, and clothing. According to Strydom (De Vos, 2002: 70), for the research to continue smoothly, ethically correct actions, attitudes, and clothing for every specific research project should be considered under all circumstances by the competent researcher, and should be part and parcel of equipment as a researcher. The researcher endeavoured to adhere to these guidelines as stated by Strydom in his publication.

10.6 Release or publication of the findings

Ethically, all research ends up with the findings thereof being released for use by others. According to Strydom (De Vos, 2002: 72), these findings need also to be presented in simple language to the subject concerned as a form of recognition, and in order to maintain future good relationships with the community concerned. Ethically, such findings must be accurate, objective, clear, unambiguous, and must contain all essential information. All forms of emphasis or slanting in order to bias the results shall be considered unethical, and all researchers should avoid such practice.

Since the findings are released for public consumption, the temptation of plagiarism becomes a very serious offence and unethical issue in research. The researcher concurs with Strydom (De Vos, 2002:72), that all due recognition must be given to sources consulted and people who collaborated, and that shortcomings and errors must be admitted.

10.7 Debriefing of respondents

Since the research under review is sensitive in nature, the researcher is of the opinion that such a study might revoke past experiences, feelings, and grief to certain participants, in that they end up becoming sensitive and emotional. This is supported by Strydom (De Vos, 2002:73): *In some situations where qualitative approach is utilised, the problem can sometimes arise that subjects benefit and get involved in the therapy or research to such an extent that they may suffer harm on completion of the programme.*

To overcome this, the researcher is called upon, according to Strydom (De Vos, 2002: 73), to arrange for debriefing sessions after the study. This had been done and during these sessions subjects received the opportunity to work through their experience and its aftermath, and to rectify any misperceptions that may have arisen in the minds of the participants after completion of the project.

The researcher had arranged with the following staff members of the SAPS to provide debriefing sessions to those respondents who may be in need:

- A psychologist, Ms. Margaret Matsimele;
- the social worker, Mrs. Lerato Mochatsi; and
- Chaplain J.P.L Van Straaten, who debriefed those overtaken by emotions.

The researcher opted for these three staff members from the three disciplines of the EAS for the respondent to have a choice of whom they would want to consult.

11. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP)

The Standard Committee of EAPA, SA, (2005: 4) defines the EAP as follows: *An EAP is a work-site-based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employee impaired by personal concerns including but not limited to health, marital, family financial, alcohol, drugs, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance.*

Bruce (1990: 4) defines an EAP as a programme that is designed to meet specific problems of the employees by utilising professional human services and personnel, on either a contractual or an employment basis, to meet the needs of troubled employees

According to the researcher, the EAP is a programme made available by an employer organisation to its employees to help them deal with their day-to-day social, emotional, and psychological problems which may end up impairing job performance and thus lead to low or no productivity.

ON-DUTY KILLINGS

This term refers to the killing of the serving member / reservist of the SAPS who has been killed while executing official duties. This means that the official was on-duty at the time of his / her death or his / her death was a consequence of him / her being in the service of the South African Police Service (1998: SAPS).

SPOUSE

In some literature studies done by the researcher, it was discovered that some authors use the term *survivors*, which is an all inclusive term that refers not only to spouses, but the rest of the family members of the deceased, their colleagues, and management, who are left behind and affected by the deaths of their beloved ones

(COPS, 2001). The South African Oxford School Dictionary (1996: 429) defines spouse as *someone's wife or husband*. In this study, the term spouse is designated to refer to a wife or husband of the deceased member of the SAPS.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

This term is used in the SAPS to refer to professionals in the service with advanced learning or science training to provide support or assist someone to access the support that will alleviate any pain or difficulty experienced. This group of people previously known as *helping professions* encompasses three components, namely:

Spiritual Services (formerly called chaplains' services) whose main objectives are:

- Equipping members of the SAPS with spiritual values.
- Accompany members of the SAPS in crisis situations.
- Establishing spiritual strength in members of the SAPS and
- Establishing an ethical code in the SAPS (SAPS, 2002: Job Description- Spiritual Services Level 1-6).

Social Services whose main objectives are:

- Advising SAPS and Police Social Work Services (PSWS) management about trends that can influence the work performance to do strategic human resource management, planning and development.
- Preventing and / or addressing psychosocial-related problems, which have a negative impact on job performance.
- Implementing PSWS pro-active programmes as well as the HIV / Aids strategy to promote a well-balanced lifestyle for the SAPS organisation, its employees, and their immediate family.
- Participating in joint helping professions actions (SAPS, 2002: Job Description- Social Work Services Level 1-6).

Psychological services whose main objectives are:

- Mental Health: Actions to improve the mental well-being of members and interventions to assist people with emotional and personal problems.
- Evaluations: The evaluation of members/ activities by means of psychometric tests, interviews, or any other method embedded in a scientific process.
- Empowerment / Organisational Development: Actions which address the underlying dynamics of working groups and the optimal functioning of the organisation in order to reach organisational objectives. These interventions also address the low morale of members.
- Victim Empowerment Programme Training: A Programme focused on a user-friendly and supportive infrastructure in dealing with victims of crime. This objective is reached through the empowerment of police officials in dealing with victims in a more person orientated way.
- Research Project: The scientific process to gain information in order to understand certain issues better and improve service delivery (SAPS, 2002: Job Description - Psychological Services Levels 1-6).

12. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

More than 75% of the police officers in Gauteng originate from outside the province and their next of kin thus reside outside the province. In most cases when these officers die, they are buried in their home towns. As a result it was difficult to locate and to reach these spouses. Some spouses had agreed to be interviewed, but at the last moment changed appointments or withdrew their permission for the interview.

Time was always a challenge as interviewees had other commitments, and thus the interview had to be rushed through. Though the intention was to interview

spouses in a secure and secluded environment, some interviewees preferred to be interviewed in their homes in the presence of other family members. This in itself impacted on the depth of the interaction and the capacity of interviewees to speak on issues that are very personal and intimate or freedom to say whatever is in their hearts.

CHAPTER 2 EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF ON-DUTY KILLINGS ON SPOUSES OF DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The researcher interviewed twelve female respondents whose spouses were killed in the line of duty between 2004 and 2006 in the Gauteng Province. Their real names have been changed to protect their identity. The interview was conducted face-to-face at a place where the respondent felt very safe. For the majority, this was done at their homes and for a few at the police premises. All respondents responded to the three questions as per the interview schedule (Annexure 3). Each interview lasted approximately twenty minutes.

Table 1: Profile of the respondents

Respondent	Age	Race	Qualification	Employment
A	21	African	Grade 12	Student
B	31	African	Grade 12	Unemployed
C	31	African	Grade 10	Unemployed
D	40	African	Grade 9	Unemployed
E	36	African	Grade 9	Unemployed
F	26	African	Grade 12	Unemployed
G	24	White	B.A (Hons)	Employed
H	25	White	Grade11	Employed
I	27	White	Grade 12	Unemployed
J	36	African	B.A (Hon)	Employed
K	40	African	M.A	Employed
L	34	African	Grade 9	Employed

2. RESPONSE FROM SPOUSES OF ON-DUTY KILLED POLICE MEMBERS

2.1 *Response on the impact of the death of spouse on respondent and family*

Theme: Shock

According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:23) there are many psychological responses to loss and bereavement. Bereaved people experience a range of problems that are sometimes labelled *psychosomatic*. According to Constant (1993:2), people tend to have some common reactions when they are notified of a death of a loved one, and shock is more common.

Almost all the respondents confirmed that they experienced shock on hearing of the death of their spouse. For respondents B, C, D and E it appeared as though it was some kind of a joke or a dream. For Respondent E, who was in tears, she said *Monna wa ka oka re o ile mosebetsing, o ka re a ka tsena nako e nngwe le e nngwe*, meaning that up until today it is as if her husband who died three hours after leaving home has just gone to work as usual and might come back at any time. This is also a state of denial as stated by Harvey and Bahr (1980:6). A woman is quoted by Harvey and Bahr (1980:6) saying: *My husband is never late. I got supper and he wasn't home...* These were the exact words of Respondent D who said her shock started when her husband did not arrive home in time and did not even call to indicate that he will be home late that evening.

According to Raphael (1984:194), the death of a loved one within the family leaves behind some void, i.e. the empty place at the table and the empty half of the bed confront the family. This is what the feeling of four respondents (A, H, G & K) was.

Discussion

Shock is a common response to the death of a loved one. It is accompanied by a state of denial. However, there is an indication that shock was also experienced earlier when the spouse did not arrive home at the usual time.

Theme: Anger

Anger is one impact, expressed through pain and stress that arises from a wide variety of feelings, beliefs and situations. According to Violanti (1997:3), this anger may be directed to media coverage, the criminal justice system, death notification, and funeral arrangements proceedings.

Seven respondents confirmed and expressed an element of anger on hearing of the death of their loved ones. Respondent I was left with a two year old and was also four months pregnant with her second child. She confirmed anger and fear for the future.

According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:23), feelings of anger may also be about feeling cheated of a shared future, such as a long awaited and eagerly anticipated retirement together. Respondent G, whose husband died four months after their marriage said: *I have been robbed of the kind of life I wanted to live; I actually thought we will go on pension together.* Her anger was directed towards the perpetrators in this case. She even went to an extent of saying that if the criminal justice system would release the perpetrators from the court case (scheduled for January 2008) that would be the day that she would go mad, seeking these criminals and kill them herself.

Respondent H, who is herself a police reservist, anger was directed towards herself. She and her husband were on duty on that day and her husband was murdered in front of her and she could do nothing about it.

Respondent D and K directed their anger towards the criminal justice system as their husbands' murderers were released without any punishment because they were said to be under aged. The same sentiments were shared by Respondent B who up until the interview, almost two years since the death of her husband, did not know what happened to the perpetrators.

Four respondents (A, B, C and J) directed their anger towards the Department (SAPS) as it has immediately after the funeral of their loved ones cut off ties with the families, leaving them to face the reality of death of a loved one alone. Respondent C even said *Hoja monna wa ka a ne a sa sebetsa maphodiseng nkebe a phela kajeno* meaning that if my husband was not employed by the police he would have still been alive even today.

Discussion

There is an indication that the police need to properly investigate the death / murder cases thoroughly and present genuine findings to the criminal justice system to ensure that the outcome of the justice system should be accepted by the families. Families need also to be kept informed as the investigation process unfolds; it is their right to know and also to be invited for the final case hearings.

This is supported by Constant (1993:2) when saying that *police agencies must recognise the situation and develop clear, open and well defined responses for death of its members*. This means that support by Police Agencies should continue even beyond the funerals. Appropriate department's response to the death of a police officer has been shown to reduce post-traumatic stress for a bereaved spouse in that good interaction, between bereaved spouse and a police support group, lower psychological distress more effectively than contact with other groups outside of policing.

Theme: Financial Constraints

Death of a breadwinner in a family has greater impact on a stay-at-home spouse and mother who entirely depends on her late spouse for a living. Six respondents are unemployed and are left with children that they have to parent single-handedly. Respondent B who was left with three children, aged 4 years, 8 years and 2 months, was compelled by the situation to change two of her children from one school to another because she could no longer afford the fees. Respondent D was nearly kicked out of her house due to the mortgage bond that had not been paid for several months. The issue of food on the table was hard to almost all the families except the two families, that of Respondent G and Respondent H, who received assistance from their own families. The family of Respondent A was compelled to have tenants in their house to gain some income for food and schooling.

According to Riches and Dawson (2000:48), the loss of a loved one carries with it some element of change and fear. Fear becomes very strong, people fear death itself, fear for loneliness, shopping alone, driving alone by oneself, sleeping in a house alone, fear for income and the raising of children alone in cases where children are still young. It means that one spouse is expected to play roles of both the father and the mother.

According to Nadeau (1998:212), the death of a loved one may also be viewed positively by survivors. There is a notion of growth as a result of someone's death in that some start to rediscover themselves and what they are capable of doing on their own without depending on the deceased. This has been true of Respondent D's family where the spouse built a nine roomed house by herself, whereas for the Respondent F and Respondent B, they learnt to drive and got driver's licences and can now transport their own children to school.

Discussion

Financial constraint is in itself a dual problem, that of the department and of the individuals themselves. On the side of the department there is a delay in pay-outs of death benefits. Some families have to wait for a period of more than 6 months to

a year without recovering what is due to them and hence the financial struggle in between. This needs to be revisited and rectified as families suffer most. With regard to the latter, there is a need to expose employees to proper budgeting, saving of money, and the securing of policies that will pay out immediately to the family in the event of disaster or death.

Theme: Cultural Constraints

Cultural constraints refer to a situation where the surviving spouse is troubled or stressed by the immediate family of the deceased. The situation becomes so alarming that the family imposes decisions and dictates on the surviving spouse, accuses him / her and unnecessarily demanding shares from the deceased estate.

Mrs. Nokuthula Khumalo, the President of the Mzansi Widows' Forum, which aims *to fight the in-laws from hell* confirmed this when she said our focus is mainly on the rights of widows, most of whom goes through unpleasant experiences after the loss of their spouse. The in-laws get away with it and they forget that we have rights too (Daily Sun, 2006 May 18). According to her, the forum intends to protect:

- the right to keep their homes and property;
- the right to inheritance, land ownership, and possession;
- the right to keep their children; and
- the right not to be forcibly married to the dead husband's family.

According to Riches and Dawson (2000:2), social role, culture, and deferring position in a relationship appear to affect individual responses. This is supported by Raphael (1984:194) who states that a further complicating issue for the family, especially older family members, may be the division of property after death. Nine respondents confirmed the situation where they were troubled by the deceased's next of kin. Respondents B, J, and E were accused of having caused the death of their husbands so that they can enrich themselves with the deceased's' estates.

They were ordered to move out of their houses with the family insisting that the deceased be buried without their involvement or at a place not preferred by the spouse. Four respondents (A, E, F and J) were told to sell their houses and come and join the deceased's families. Respondents F and K were forced to marry the deceased's younger brothers so that they can further their late brothers' families, which the widows refused.

Four respondents (A, B, C and E) have experienced unknown women and illegitimate children, whom they never knew about, being brought forward by families as being the wives and children of the deceased. This was done so that these women and children can have a share in the estate of the deceased. Respondent B was compelled by law to share the R200 000 grant she got with the children she had never known before. Respondent F said that some of her late husband's policies still indicated two of his brothers as beneficiaries.

All of the above caused a very serious delay in the processing of relevant documentation and related pay-outs, hence some financial constraints were faced by most of the surviving spouses.

According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:21), mourning is a natural process and one who is in grief or pain must be allowed time to feel and express one's emotion. It has been confirmed by all the respondents that due to the said cultural constraints they were not given enough time to mourn their loved ones, hence the negative impact on their lives. Respondent F even contemplated family suicide where children were fetched from school for the mission. She planned the date, time, place and means of suicide.

Respondents G and H never experienced the family challenges mentioned by other respondents. They indicated that they appreciated the support received from the deceased's families, including financial support from them.

Discussion

The problems of extra-marital affairs and illegitimate children seem to be a serious one with some employees. Some deceased members seemed to have been secretive about certain issues while they were alive. These affect the whole family in the long run.

Theme: Death Message

According to Harvey and Bahr (1980:11), this is one aspect that must be handled with the utmost care and diligence. According to Constant (1993:5), the passing of a death message should be handled strictly by professional people, preferably a chaplain. Many police agencies should have chaplains whose duties include working with police families when a death occurs.

Five respondents confirmed that the death message was delivered by a Police Chaplain. For Respondent H, the chaplain was a family friend who also married the couple. For Respondent I, the unit commander accompanying the chaplain seemed to be drunk, while Respondent J indicated that the delivery of the death message was unprofessionally handled. Three respondents (B, C and D) indicated that when seeing a Police Chaplain coming into their houses, they suspected that something was wrong as the Police Chaplain does not come when nothing is wrong.

According to Violanti (1997:2), the manner in which death notification is handled, by who, when, and how has an impact on the family. Respondents A, F and G indicated that they received the death notification from relatives and police officers. Respondents A, D and F confirmed that the death notification was delayed and only reached them very late. This had a negative impact on them as they were supposed to have been the first people to be notified.

Respondent F also indicated that she collapsed and fainted long before the police officer could finish the sentence notifying her of her husband's death. When she

woke up the following day, she was in hospital and saw the news on TV reporting the death of the five Kagiso SAPS Police Officers with a picture of her husband as well and that of his colleagues. This caused her severe trauma, which will stay in her mind as long as she lives.

Discussion

Almost all the families who were given death notifications by a Police Chaplain have confirmed satisfaction and support thereafter. However, there is a great need of notifying the family of the death of their loved ones quite timely as this can affect the survivors negatively.

Theme: Counselling

According to the SAPS Work Book on EAP (2003:1), sometimes people need help, therefore intervention, support and assistance are necessary during difficult times. Thus the EAP within the department is an instrument to promote safety through support and assistance to the troubled employees and their immediate families.

All respondents, except for Respondent H, confirmed that they never received any counselling from the SAPS EAS since the death of their loved ones. This was also confirmed by the emotions displayed by the respondents during the interviewing sessions with the researcher. Police Chaplains were last seen at the funerals and thereafter disappeared when they were needed most by the families. According to Constant (1993:5), the Police Chaplain within the organisation should be primarily concerned with spiritual, emotional, and mental needs of the police family. According to the respondents, the Police Chaplain was more concerned with funeral arrangements and was assisting them more on the issue of claiming policies for the funeral.

According to Respondent G, the police social workers only came once to counsel the family. Respondent G also indicated that she asked the social workers not to

come back as their approach was not good, but too judgemental on her. Respondent H indicated that she received excellent counselling from the Police Chaplain who happened to be a friend of the family but also the pastor that married them. Further counselling was received from people outside of the police service.

Discussion

According to Constant (1993:6), a Police Chaplain is an excellent and necessary response by police agencies to meet the spiritual, emotional, and mental needs of the police family.

According to the respondents this was unfortunately not so as the Police Chaplain was more concerned with transporting the family around for insurance policy claims towards the preparations for the funeral. The researcher is in agreement with Constant (1993:6) that police agencies need to create a post of a Family Assistance Officer who must take care of all the practical and personal needs in times of death and other crises to enable the Police Chaplain to take care of the spiritual, emotional, and mental needs of the families. The Police Chaplain and the Family Assistance Officer must work closely with each other and even often overlap. However, the two positions should be distinct, i.e. the Chaplain should primarily be concerned with counselling the family members, while the Family Assistance Officer should make sure that the right forms are filled out and all revenue sources are secured.

2.2 Response on the services rendered by the SAPS after the members have been killed on duty

Assistance

According to respondents B, C, D, F and L, there was an immediate cut off between the family and the department after the funeral of the police officer, thus

leaving the spouse to face the reality of the death of a loved one alone. Three respondents (B, C and D) expressed their disappointment towards the police. They indicated that their spouses were loyal and faithful towards the police and yet after their deaths, the police treated them as nobodies. Respondent D said *Monna wa ka o ne a tsoga bosiu, a re siya a ya mosebetsing, a se na pelaelo* meaning that my husband will even wake up in the middle of the night when on call and leave the family alone for his job without any complaint.

According to Respondent A, the services from the police were just touches and were incomplete to such an extent that when one person - who was assisting the family - was not at work, the service toward the bereaved family would stop until that person came back. For Respondent L it has been almost two years since the death of her husband and she has to date not received any benefits from the police.

All families confirmed their state of confusion immediately after the funeral as they did not know where to go, what was due to them, what documents to complete. It was not explained to them where all the monies they received came from, what it was meant for and what was left of it.

According to the respondents, this is the period where the department is mostly needed by the surviving spouse particularly to give guidelines pertaining to policies and payments that are due to her or him. Some assistance was received from police officers who were not on duty. They did this during their spare time using their own transport.

Four respondents (E, F, G and H) confirmed their gratitude towards the assistance they got from the police. According to them they were assisted by an officer that was provided by the Station Commander to be of assistance. Respondents G and H, who are both police reservists, also confirmed of the after care courtesy visits and SMS messages that they still enjoy from the police. In addition, they were invited to the Police Annual Memorial Services on 2 September 2007. This made

them feel part and parcel of the bigger family of the police. However, for Respondent I, who was a police reservist too, the experience was different; the police management was hostile to her, and she was told that the state cannot do anything for her and no transport was provided since assistance to her was not official. This led to her leaving the service.

Discussion

According to the above, it is clear that there is no policy governing the assistance of families after the death of a member of the force. Assistance to the families at this stage depends entirely on the personality of the Station Commander. For Respondent H and Respondent G, it is obvious that they were fully assisted as they both are reservists members of the SAPS, but this was different for Respondent I.

The need for support after the funeral is a serious one at the stage. Survivors should not feel that they have been forgotten by the family who is so important to them. According to Constant (1993:8), supervisors, co-workers, and family members have a crucial role to play. They should make several contacts with the bereaved family to ensure that the surviving family is getting all the reasonable help it needs. The agency should handle all paperwork and procedures for accessing benefits which are available, such as retirement, insurance, and unpaid compensation. The family should not have to contact someone in the Human Resource Department to find out what to do. An employee of the agency should have the responsibility to actively do everything for the family and keep them informed. The agency should also assist the family with other matters such as social security and insurance claims.

According to Constant (1993:7), the grieving process involves much more than mourning and takes longer than most people realise. The once-off visit, and subsequent immediate cut off from the department, leave a lot to be desired and

improved through continuous contacts which, according to Constant (1993:7), should be categorised as follows:

- **The first days:** These are the first hectic days before the funeral and where the survivors are still in the state of shock. Visits are important here simply for empathy but not counselling or instructions.
- **Two to four weeks:** These are the days after the funeral when the initial shock has worn off and survivors are deep into emotional aspects of the grieving process. At this stage the family should be assisted with the myriad forms and procedures with which they must contend.
- **Three months:** These are the months after the funeral where the survivors' deluge of emotions and memories begin to abate noticeably. Survivors start realising that they can go an entire day without being gripped by memories and attendant emotions.
- **Six months:** These are months after the funeral where survivors are able to go for extended periods of time without experiencing painful memories or symptoms of grief. Painful memories stop ruling the days.
- **One to two years:** One to two years after the funeral, survivors feel like they are progressing beyond death and can view the experience as a past event, or a memory. They can remember the deceased and the death without reliving the emotions. The process doesn't end here but does become much harder to predict and describe, since people vary greatly in working through the process.

If the department are to do justice to the survivors, continuous visits are very crucial during all these periods. According to Constant (1993:7) the initial phase of the process takes at least a year before survivors begin to feel like they are getting on with their lives. Thus, visitations to the family should not be treated as an event, but a process that never ends, but be done and followed as distinguished above.

2.3 *What can the SAPS do to improve on services delivered to spouses of police officers killed on duty?*

Theme: After Care Services

Eight of the respondents felt that the department should improve on the after care services. They concurred that visitations should be done in person, telephonically, and through SMS messages. They indicated that the visits should also assist them with legal issues, paper work and documentation that must be completed for submission to authorities. The department should also enlighten them about what is due to them and the due date thereof. One spouse said: *Maponesa a tshwanetse go tlogela gore mema fela ga go na le diphati, ba tshwanetse go kgathalla gore re phela jwang?* This means that the police should stop inviting them only to parties but should be concerned about their well-being also. Respondent I indicated that the police should stop inviting them to memorial services and making big promises that they cannot keep; they should focus on whether they have food or not.

Theme: Registrations of outsiders by the department

Six respondents indicated that the department should improve their way of registering outsiders who compete with them for service benefits of their late spouses without their concern. The department should first and foremost liaise with them on such issues.

Theme: Delivery of Death Messages

Four respondents (C, E, K and L) confirmed that the delivery of death messages should be improved to such extent that it is done timely and handled strictly by professional people only.

Theme: Criminal Justice System

Respondents C, D, H and L confirmed the need for improvement with regards to the information due to them in as far as the investigations of criminal cases as well as final judgements thereof.

Theme: Death grant

Six respondents confirmed the need for improvement of the once-off death grant provided by the department. One spouse said: *It is a bye-bye money to the families of those who paid the highest price with their own lives and nothing more thereafter.* Secondly, the police should not go public about making such funds available as this creates problems for them from mostly the next of kin of the deceased. They think that the spouses have been turned into millionaires and thus demand a lot from them.

Theme: Work and Education

Four respondents (C, D, F and J) confirmed the need for the police to create work for the spouses of the on-duty police killings, in order for them to take over from where their spouses left in providing food and seeing to the education of their younger ones. Failing which, the department should see to the education of their children and create an interim fund that should be made available to them while they wait for payments that take long to be effected.

Theme: Memorial Services

Only two respondents (H and I) confirmed the need for improvement on memorial services as such, i.e. that these should be made available to all the families that lost their loved ones in the line of duty.

Theme: Satisfaction with services rendered

Four respondents (G, H, I and L) confirmed their sincere gratitude for the quality service that they got from the department. One spouse said: *They were good, they were amazing; we became a family; they still visit me, phone me or SMS me until now.* According to these spouses the department stood by them from day one and were and are updated as far as information is concerned.

Discussion

Most of the issues covered here, have been discussed previously by the researcher. However, the idea of asking for areas of improvement for quality service delivery, justice can well be attained in a group form. That is, there is a need for the department to create / form a widow/widowers support club that should meet once or twice a year for support, care, and advice to deal with an array of emotional issues, as well as to become engaged in interactive dialogue providing opportunities for participants to ask questions, discuss specific issues, and share their experiences with one another in a safe environment.

3. CONCLUSION

It was not easy to get the respondents to participate in the interviews. Some respondents did not trust the researcher as he comes from the police service, or they thought the researcher was sent by their enemies who wanted to benefit from their spouses' estates. They insisted that the interview be conducted in front of other family members. Most of the respondents have lost trust in the police and are angry with the police due to alleged poor service received from them during their time of need.

CHAPTER 3 THE THEORETICAL VIEW ON THE IMPACT OF ON DUTY POLICE KILLINGS ON THE SPOUSES OF THE DECEASED MEMBERS

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher would like to start by defining the concept of a family system, describe family functioning and then changes and variations in the concept *family*, due to the loss of a loved one within the family as well as the difficulties experienced by the spouses of the deceased. This is not an attempt to give a comprehensive review of research in family functioning rather; it is an attempt to introduce some of the major issues in this complex area of study (Payne, Horn & Relf, 1990:40).

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY AS A SYSTEM

According to Cook and Oltjenbruns (1989: vii), death is a natural part of life, it's an imminent reality, it is the given reality of all living things. It is a highly personal experience that cannot be dealt with in isolation but in interaction with others, the family as a system.

Death is a family event. It occurs within the context of relationships and deep attachment. Families experience significant transformation when their systems are affected by the loss of one of their members. Thus, the individual's immediate social context – the family - needs to be taken into account in this regard, as stated by Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:40). They state that the family is characteristically the primary provider of socialization, social control and support, and as such will have a profound influence on the way its members' deal with significant life events.

Weizman and Kamm (1985:114) describe the family as an arrangement of persons related and connected to each other, and contributing toward a whole unit. It is an arena for many relationships, and a general feeling exists when all are together. The family has characteristic ways of operating, solving problems, caring for each

other emotionally, performing tasks, providing food and clothing, dividing chores, having fun and handling crises.

Kissane and Block (2002:9) define a family as a group of persons linked by kinship, which can be established through links of descent that connect blood relatives or through marriage. Systematic theorists describe the family as an organised interdependent system, regulated by a set of norms and rules... less globally the family can be seen to organise itself to meet the demands of each stage of the family life circle (Mikesell et al., 1995:91).

All the authors agree that the emphasis is on the significance of every part of the family, so if there is one change in the system, or a change in an individual, it affects all participants (Weizman & Kamm, 1985:114). Change in one part of the system inevitably affects other parts over time and the system cannot be composed of parts dictated by some arbitrary norms (Kissane & Block, 2002:9).

In this study it means that if a police officer dies in the line of duty, it impacts on the spouse as a family member. Family crises often arise during the times of major life cycle transitions, death of a spouse being one of them. This can be particularly stressful times for the surviving spouse. If an injury or the loss occurs in one member, the equilibrium is disturbed. Nadeau (1998:1-2) refers to this as the *family-meaning making* that is due to the death of a family member, the *status quo* is upset. Existential questions, which are the search for meaning, are central to the grieving process. Efforts to make sense of the experience suggest an attempt to create order out of chaos they were experiencing and perhaps to gain some sense of control over the uncontrollable.

The loss of a loved one in the family does bring about a change but also not only a change, but also that kind of change that goes hand in glove with some kind of grief within the family set-up. Each transition requires the family to change, to reset principles and reorganise to meet the challenges of the new life stage (Mikesell, et al., 1995:91). When a member of the family dies, it creates a major

change, and that affects all parts of the system. Everyone in the group is immediately called to readjust his or her position because the image or the picture of the family as a whole is completely different. Roles, family income and expenditure (more so if the deceased was a bread-winner) need to be readjusted and redefined. A single parent is now expected to play a dual family role, that of the father and mother and *vice versa* depending on the family loss. A loss disrupts the structure of the family, as well as the roles within the family. When a member of the family has died, the fabric of the family has a hole in it, and it needs to be repaired, actually re woven by the remaining members of the family (Weizmann & Kamm, 1985:114). This means that the family has to adjust to changes and accept the *new look* of the family as an acknowledgement of the absence of a member.

According to Cook and Oltjenbruns (1989:v11), *understanding this process enable us to more effectively help families avoid negative outcomes as they adapt to the loss*. By building on existing strengths and traditions, families can use their experience with death to build closer bonds and enrich their family life.

According to Weizman and Kamm (1985:115), such adjustments and the acceptance of the *new look* of the family do carry with them some emotions and grief which needs support from the helping professions. Haley (1973), in his book, *Uncommon Therapy* on Milton Erikson's work, points out that measure transitions during a family's development can lead to increased stress and thus be a time when symptoms are most likely to appear in a family. Symptoms are seen as signals that the family has been *struck* and the family is having difficulty moving on to the next stage of development. Family therapy is the process by which normal family development can continue (Mikesell et al., 1995:92).

This means that it is imperative for mourning to be supported and continued until integration, so that the new form of family created by the death can be accommodated. (Weizman & Kamm, 1985:115).

Failure to do this may affect the smooth running of the family in continuing their lives. Since a family is not isolated in time, what has gone on in the past affects

the present and the future (Mikesell et al., 1995:92). If the issues of one stage are not resolved, it is more difficult for the issues of the later stages to be resolved. The failure to meet the challenges at an earlier stage will have repercussions throughout the family cycle. The unresolved issues of earlier stages in the life cycle make the challenges of the later stages more difficult to resolve. (Mikesell et al., 1995:100)

In this study, the focus is on the families of police officers who, in recent years, have been vulnerable to, and became victims of on-duty killings due to the nature of their work and subsequently experienced a breach in the family equilibrium.

3. THE NATURE OF THE WORK OF THE POLICE OFFICER

Considering police officers to be victims and to be vulnerable is seen as strange by some people within the community they serve in. The popular image of a police officer is seen by such people as strong, skilled, and invulnerable. However, in reality, police officers are human beings like any other, they have weaknesses, lack some skills, and are often vulnerable. According to Klyver (1987:3), 80% of the day-to-day routine of a street police officer is devoted to helping people with various problems. The bulk of the 80% consists of the four call areas as follows:

- Dispute management (family, landlord vs tenant, business).
- Victim management / citizen assistance.
- Handling mentally ill or suicidal individuals.
- Managing angry / hostile people.

It is apparent that the modern police officer is frequently called upon to be a *human problem solver*.

According to Dussich (2003:1) there are various groups of persons who experience higher levels of victimisation due to their higher levels of vulnerability. Examples thereof being persons who live in high violence areas like barrios, ghettos, or

shanty towns, or work in isolated all night convenience stores, or are lonely travellers on trains or busses, or belong to discriminated ethnic groups, or have a reduced ability to recognise and / or react to danger. Thus the nature of work done by police on a daily basis does make them vulnerable. The intent here is to discuss and indicate the nature of the work of the police and the risk thereof that makes them vulnerable. This will then lead us into the impact on their spouses.

The fact that the nature of work done by the police is risky, cannot be disputed. Police are themselves those heroes and heroines who are ever prepared to risk their own lives in order to save the life and the property of someone else. They are the kind of people who commit to a courageous action without considering the consequences thereof (Servamus, 2003:10). Police officers are that kind of people without whom the whole country could not survive.

The Provincial Commissioner of Gauteng, Perumal Naidoo, was once quoted by Servamus (2003:12) during his speech at the Emergency Hero of the Year Award on 20 August 2003, held at Caesar's Palace in Gauteng:

If we want development in our Country, we have to acknowledge and appreciate the people in the Emergency Services. How many men and woman in the Emergency Services have paid the ultimate price to ensure the safety of other South Africans? People who are working in the Emergency Services are exposed to danger daily in the course of their duties. Their families don't know when they greet these men or woman in the morning if they will return home that night. A job in the Emergency Service is a thankless Job.... Nobody in the Emergency Service will throw in the towel in the fight against criminals, although we might have to die in the fight.

These words further emphasise the toughness and the risk involved in the nature of the police work. Inspector Jocom Motsepe of Klipgat Police Station, who with his colleague Sgt. Mpolokeng, have gone through a raging fire to save the life of four children from a burning shack. He was quoted by Servamus (2003:13): *When I heard those children screaming and got the strong smell of petrol, I did not even think twice. The fact that by entering the shack I was at risk of being burnt to death*

did not even cross my mind. It was like a call from nature.... it all happened intuitively. This was a risk we were willing to take. Seeing the children alive and well right now is very rewarding to us.

Commenting on the nature of work of a Police Officer as *being the most risky one*, was the Deputy Minister of Safety, Susan Shabangu, quoted by the Daily Sun (3 September 2007) during the Memorial Service held in Pretoria on 2 September 2007. According to her, the service was a reminder of brutality against the cops. The number of police officers who were murdered in the previous financial year has increased by more than 13%. Out of the 108 officers killed in 2006/7, 49 died in the line of duty.

4. THE RISK INVOLVED

A study was undertaken between June 1993 and June 2002 in Milpark Hospital, a Level 1 Trauma Centre in Johannesburg, to investigate the problem of injury and death among SAPS personnel while on duty. It was discovered that sections of contemporary South African Society are characterised by high levels of crime and interpersonal conflict, leading to what has been described as a *malignant epidemic of trauma*. The causes of this trauma epidemic are complex, but the South African Police Services (SAPS) is in the front line with many deaths and injuries occurring among serving officers in recent years.

Following the high risk of the police officer's duty, the following results were recorded:

- One hundred and thirty four (134) SAPS personnel were admitted over a 9-year period.
- Seventy-six (76) were transported by ambulance, 39 by medical helicopter, 5 by police helicopter, 13 by squad car, and 1 by private vehicle.
- The majority were male (95%) and the median age was 31 years.

- One-hundred-and-thirty-two (132) were on duty and 2 were in transit to a place of duty when injured.
- Ninety-two (92) SAPS members (69%) were injured by firearms. Of this number 80 were shot by criminal suspects, 3 attempted suicide and sustained self-inflicted gunshot wounds, and 9 members were injured due to negligent discharges. 9 members were stabbed by criminal suspects, 31 (23%) were involved in motor vehicle accidents, 2 in motorbike accidents, 1 member was struck by a car while directing traffic, 3 members were injured by falls from height, 2 members were injured in helicopter crashes and 1 member required treatment for gas inhalation (Plani, Bowley & Goosen, 2003).

TABLE 1: Rank of injured SAPS members admitted to Milpark Hospital Johannesburg between June 1993 and June 2002

Rank of injured SAPS member	Number	%
Sergeant	74	55.2
Constable	18	13.4
Inspector	17	12.7
Captain	6	4.5
Reservist Constable	6	4.5
Detective Sergeant	3	2.2
Detective Constable	1	0.76
Detective Captain	1	0.76
Detective Inspector	1	0.76
Lieutenant	1	0.76
Clerk	1	0.76
Not recorded	5	3.7
TOTAL	134	100

Adapted from: Plani, Bowley and Goosen, 2003

Discussion: Table 1

The table above indicates that the majority of police members admitted were of lower ranks, i.e. 74 were sergeant, 18 Constables and 17 inspectors. This indicates that the lower the rank, the more vulnerable. These are the ranks that work on the ground and are actively involved in combating crime.

TABLE 2: Anatomical site of gunshot wounds in 80 SAPS members wounded by criminal suspects between June 1993 and June 2002

Anatomical site	Number of SAPS members with injuries at this site	%
Chest	32	24.6
Abdomen	24	18.5
Lower limbs	21	16.1
Upper limbs	16	12.3
Face	9	6.9
Buttocks/pelvis	8	6.2
Head	7	5.4
Neck	6	4.6
Spine	4	3.1
Back	2	1.5
Eye	1	0.8
TOTAL	130	100

Adapted from: Plani, Bowley and Goosen, 2003

Discussion: Table 2

According to the table above most of the police members shot by criminal suspects were shot in the chest, and abdomen. This further indicates the vulnerability of the police shot on duty and the high risks involved in the work of the police.

TABLE 3: Police murders countrywide from 1994 to 1998

Province	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Total
Gauteng	136	108	85	82	52	463
KZN	77	69	59	68	33	306
North West	4	9	13	8	5	39
N/ Province	0	8	6	9	2	25
Mpumalanga	6	11	6	15	4	42
Eastern Cape	17	12	20	36	12	97
Free State	8	10	14	11	3	46
Northern Cape	3	0	5	1	1	10
Western Cape	14	13	13	14	8	62
TOTAL	265	240	221	244	120	1090

Extract: Sowetan, 18 May 1999

Discussion: Table 3

From the above table, Gauteng reflects the highest figures for police murders – although the data had not been presented as percentages in order to compare between the different provinces. Remarkable is the fact that since the 1994 elections, the motives for killing police officers have shifted drastically from being politically motivated to those of a social nature, characterized by high levels of violent crime, the increasing number of illegal firearms in circulation and a general breakdown of respect for the law and its servants (SOWETAN, Tuesday, May 18, 1999).

The official SAPS Website lists a roll of honour of 127 SAPS members who lost their lives during 2001 alone - only those members whose inquests have been completed, are recorded. Death and injury to serving SAPS members is a major concern and this study is the first of its kind in South Africa to analyse injuries sustained by members of the SAPS during discharge of their duties. Students from the United States of America (USA) suggest that the rate with which law

enforcement officers are killed can be predicted by general homicide rate, the rate of justifiable homicide by police officers and by the degree of violence and social disintegration in a society.

In addition, police officers that have been injured on duty may express anxiety about returning to work as police officers, or may not be able to return at all due to psychological distress. The law enforcement department's response to the spouse of the injured or deceased personnel is also important. Appropriate department response to the death of a police officer has been shown to reduce post-traumatic stress scores in a bereaved spouse and studies from the USA indicate that good interaction between bereaved spouse and police support groups lower psychological distress more effectively than contact with other groups outside of policing. These findings suggest that police agencies and personnel may help the families of injured police officers and policy should be formulated to provide long-term contact and assistance.

As a matter of concern on the high level of risk involved in the nature of police work the South African Police Union (SAPU) voiced their concern as follows, the SAPU would like to call upon the SAPS management to make drastic changes to the working environment in the police in order for members to cope. We are making this plea in the wake of continued suicide and violent behaviour of police members. (SAPU UNION POST, 2003:6).

Servamus (July 2002:20) displayed a heading written in bold: **SAPD-LEDE SLAGOFFERS VAN MISDAAD: DIE EINDRESULTAAT** - where Bryan Rudolph was quoted saying:

I noted with amazement the controversy surrounding the issue of our constitution which allows criminals protection against being deported to face trial and possible death sentence to the USA. Somehow I seem to have missed the boat and failed to grasp the logic of the Government, in giving such a high priority to criminals' rights and their right to life. I still wait to hear somebody mention the human rights of a victim to life and protection. The concern and pussy-footing around murderers, rapists and hijackers is a

sign of a very sick country indeed. I hear that the police are no longer permitted to shoot at criminals who are (supposedly) unarmed. Watch how the death rate of our police officers increases...

Following this was a heading written in bold from the Union Post, SAPU (vol. 8 no. 9 Oct 2003:1): **COP KILLERS ARE LIKE A GRAVE THEMSELVES** - where the SAPU Provincial Chairperson, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Vincent Mdunge was quoted saying:

I am angry, our policemen and women are facing a death sentence on almost a daily basis...what has gone wrong that our members are slaughtered like sheep? These thugs who are responsible for the killing of our members can no longer be harboured in our society. I call upon all South Africans to expose these senseless scums.

Marking some very serious risks in the nature of the police work is, a very painful poem and a prayer, both written by unknown authors:

TEARS OF A COP UNDER PRESSURE

(SERVAMUS, July 2002:20)

I have been where you fear to go ...

I have seen what you fear to see...

I have done what you fear to do...

All these I have done for you

I am the one you lean upon

The one you cast your scorn upon

The one you bring your troubles to

All these people I've been for you

The one you ask to stand apart...

The one you feel should have heard...

The one you call the man in blue...

But I am human just like you

And through the years I've come to see....

That I'm not what you asked from me....

So take this badge and take this gun....

Will you take it? Will anyone?

And when you watch a person die....

And hear a battered baby cry....

Then so you think that you can be

All those things you ask from me....

EMERGENCY SERVICES PRAYER

(SERVAMUS, November 2003:13)

As I perform my duties Lord

Whatever be the call

Help to guide and keep me safe

From danger big or small

I want to serve and do my best, No

matter what the scene

I pledged to keep my skills refined,

My judgment quick and keen.

This calling to give of myself, most

do not understand.

But I stand ready all the time,

To help my fellow man.

To have the chance to help a child

Restore his laugh with glee.

A word of thanks I may not hear

But knowing is enough for me.

The praise of men is fine for some
But I feel truly blessed,

That you, Oh Lord have chosen me
To serve in Emergency Services

Both the prayer and the poem are written by unknown authors, but it is certain that they were written by someone with deeply felt pain and saddened by all that is happening to police officers on a daily basis and the risk they have to face.

Dussich (2003:2) sums it up adequately in saying that the nature of police work is known to be fraught with a wide range of dangerous situations. These include high speed automobile chases, high emotional and menacing domestic situations, the stress of dealing with people who are irrational due to alcohol, drugs or mental instability, and the unpredictable armed confrontations with criminals. These are also marked by insensitivity and unfortunate statements by some people who still believe that the participation of police in these high risk activities is taken for granted and being regarded as *part of their job*. It is further assumed that the police have been carefully selected for their greater resilience to cope with dangers and that they have received adequate training to ensure that their skills protect them from these occupational hazards.

From the above it is clear and certain that the nature of the work done by the police officers and the risk thereof does expose them to danger and make them vulnerable to on-duty killings. According to Collins (1988:345), grief concerns losses that come when a loved one or other meaningful person has died. As the deceased is himself / herself a meaningful person within the family, such deaths do carry with them some element of grief that affects and impacts on the survivors of the deceased.

5. THE IMPACT OF AN ON-DUTY POLICE KILLING ON THE SPOUSE OF THE DECEASED

In this section, the focus is on the individual response to loss. It examines the burden of grief borne by individuals, the expression of grief, and its impact on the lives of the survivors of the on-duty police killings. Even though patterns of response are mediated by cultural and social factors, individuals display reaction to loss in very different ways as stated by Collins (1988:344) that grief is universal. It is the method of handling grief that is unique and personal.

This chapter describes responses in terms of, but not limited to physiologically and cognitively emotional, behaviour, sexual, and spiritual changes (Payne, Horn and Relf, 1999: 21). According to Weizman and Kamm (1985: 37), mourning is said to be a natural process and requires several components to expedite its course. One component is the permission to mourn, i.e. to be allowed to feel and express your emotions. It is important to have permission from yourself as well as others to express your feelings. It is also essential to cry, to give yourself permission to cry alone, and to be able to cry with others. It is also essential to talk about your feelings and talk about the deceased. According to Raphael (1984:184), man should not feel womanly, weak or shameful to cry.

When someone close to you dies, part of you dies with that person. When surviving spouses share their feelings following the death of a husband or wife, they usually speak of the extremely debilitating effects of feeling entirely alone and incomplete (Staudacher, 1987:53). In the community within which we live, there is a tendency by most mourners to fill and flood the home of the deceased prior to the funeral in support of the family and immediately thereafter they disappear into thin air and leave the spouse alone. Following the news of the death, those most intimately involved, the nearest family, make efforts to comfort and support the bereaved spouse. Family members, neighbours and friends all come to offer their condolences and practical assistance (Raphael, 1984:183). According to Staudacher (1987:53), the reality of death and the sense of loneliness after the

funeral of a loved one is strong and most spouses are heard saying, for example *the house isn't even a house without her / him; I can't look forward to her /him coming home... walking in; I am just getting through the days one at a time the best I can; we were married for thirty-eight years - it is like part of me is missing.* This is supported by Raphael (1984:184), but after the guests have departed, the confrontation with the dead person's absence is inevitably stated. The empty place at the table and the empty half of the bed strongly confront the family.

There is a feeling as if the whole world has come to a stand-still and one is not sure as to how to cope with life in general. The impact is dual, i.e. both physically and emotionally. After the death of a loved one, within the family, the spouse is most likely to experience a depressed mood, prolonged and excessive crying, and insomnia. As sadness, despair, and exhaustion prevail in daily life, she / he may also feel a futility which affects him / her physically and emotionally. (Staudacher 1987:54).

5.1. Grief

Grief is a normal individual feeling, and thoughts following a loss. It is the emotional, physical, mental, and even spiritual response human beings demonstrate when their dreams and plans for life take an unexpected turn (Rainone, 2001:1). According to Collins (1988:345), grief is a normal response to the loss of any significant person, object or opportunity. It is an experience of deprivation and anxiety that can show itself in one's behaviour, emotions, thinking, physiology, interpersonal relationships, and spirituality. In short, this means that whenever a part of life is lost or taken away, there can be grief.

According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:22), grief is not an illness or mental syndrome; it is a widely variable response that changes over time. People describe feelings of being torn apart or as if they have lost part of themselves. It is often described as physically *and* emotionally painful. When one has experienced loss of someone close to her / him, he or she is exposed to grief. According to Bowlby,

(as cited in Payne, Horn and Relf 1999:22), *loss of a loved person is one of the most intensely painful experiences any human being can suffer*. All people are exposed to grief pending the loss of a loved one. According to anthropological evidence there is no universal expression of loss, peoples' physical and psychological expressions vary.

5.2 *Physical response*

The absence of a familiar partner may be expressed through physical responses such as experiencing the loss of sleep or changes to the normal sleeping pattern. According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:22), bereaved people experience a range of problems that are sometimes labelled as *psychosomatic* complaints. These include aches and pains resulting from muscular tension, e.g. headaches, dizziness, neck stiffness, and back pain.

According to the *Presenters Guide: SAPS Suicide Prevention Awareness Programme* (2000:27), the person shows physical (bodily) changes such as loss or increase in appetite, weight changes, and change in sleeping patterns, always tired, loss of physical and mental energy, and terminal illness or chronic pain. This is also supported by Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:22) in their statement that there may be changes to eating pattern with appetite suppression or overeating such as *comfort eating* of sweet foods like biscuits and chocolate. Other gastro-intestinal changes may occur, e.g. nausea, vomiting, feelings of choking, perceptions of a lump in the throat, or abdominal fullness, constipation, or diarrhoea.

5.3 *Psychological response*

The fact that all people do express grief for their loss of someone close to them does not mean that there is a universal expression of grief. According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:23) there are many psychological responses to loss and bereavement. Rosenblatt (as cited in Payne, Horn and Relf, 1999:23) correctly

said that there are no universal emotional consequences of a death and all expressions of emotional and meaning ascribed to them are culturally defined.

According to Riches and Dawson (2000:2), social role, culture and deferring position in a relationship appear to affect individual responses. These ways change over time. Some appear to take longer than others to grieve. Some appear to begin to grieve much later than others. Some appear to grieve more deeply than others. According to Rainone (2001:1) when someone dies, our response to this loss is equal to our relationship with this person. The stronger the emotional bond, the more intense the grief reactions.

All these give an indicative list of the range of psychological responses whereby the commonest emotion expressed is sadness and depression encountered after loss. During such experiences, the bereaved people are unable to undertake normal everyday tasks, which may lead to feelings of worthlessness and suicide is contemplated or attempted. According to the *Presenters Guide: SAPS Suicide Prevention Awareness Programme* (2000:27), the person exhibits observable changes in his / her emotions or personality, self-dislike, e.g. *I hate myself; I'm no good* - feeling hopeless and helpless, feeling misunderstood and unappreciated, signs of severe depression, cries easily, communication that life is too painful or difficult, and loss of pleasure. Often the person is preoccupied (obsessed) with thoughts of death and exhibits the following signs:

- a specific plan for a suicide attempt;
- the means and the determination to carry out the act of suicide;
- suicide threat notes or repeated statements about his or her death;
- expressing thoughts regarding the death of a loved one by suicide, making final arrangement, giving away favourite possessions, writing a will, putting relationships in order, sudden apparent resolution of difficulties manifesting as calmness, indicating suicide as a solution.

Loss also triggers anxiety, anger, stress, and fear. Anxiety may be experienced alongside depression or alone. According to Parks, (as cited in Payne, Horn and Relf, 1999:23), anxiety is the most common response to bereavement.

Loss and bereavement often have profound consequences for people's lives and many adjustments are required. In times of stress, change can be construed as anxiety-provoking as new skills have to be learnt such as handling finances, or driving alone. Anger in the case of murder may be directed towards the perpetrators, while a suicide may leave survivors with feelings of guilt.

According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999:25), anger may also be directed towards the deceased for leaving the survivors alone to cope with, e.g. rearing young children, or running a family business. Anger may also be expressed more generally towards an *unfair God* with unanswerable questions such as: *Why did it happen to me?* There may be anger about feeling cheated of a shared future, such as a long awaited and eagerly anticipated retirement together.

According to Nadeau (1998:212), death of a loved one may also be viewed positively by the survivors. There is a notion of growth as a result of someone's death in that some start to rediscover themselves of what they are capable of doing on their own without depending on someone (the deceased).

Later, bereaved people may experience disturbances in concentration and lack of motivation, which makes it difficult to understand new information or engage in complex cognitive activities.

According to the *Presenter's Guide: SAPS Suicide Prevention Awareness Programme* (2000:27), the person exhibits observable changes in motivation and behaviour such as decreased work or academic performance, persistent lateness or unexplained absences from work or school, decreased social activity, isolation, withdrawal, apparent loss of involvement in interest and hobbies, aggression, moodiness, extreme tension, agitation, restlessness, lack of concentration,

preoccupation, self-abuse, physical mutilation or other self inflicted injury (hurting himself / herself), taking unnecessary risks, substance abuse, change in sexual behaviour, lowering of personal hygienic standards and neglect of appearance and lack of future plans.

According to Riches and Dawson (2000:4), even family relationships deteriorate after death; a sense of distance between family members develops. Parents may no longer be *there* for their siblings. The balance of care in the family may be disturbed and personal needs put on one side.

Suicide, as discussed in this study, should be put into context, i.e. the focus of this study is on suicide in response to an on-duty killing and not on merely death or suicide *per se*.

5.4 *Sexual response*

The basic reason for this lies more in a fantasy than in a concept, which some spouses experience in sexual behaviour after the loss of a loved one.

African culture teaches us to understand that when a couple marry, or remarry, two people are joined to be one in everything, sex included. In many aspects these may well be true, but with some spouses, that ideal is often shattered by the death of a loved one. MacElveen-Hoehn (as cited in Payne, Horn and Relf, 1999:26), identified four sexual responses to the stimulus of sex as follows:

Withdrawal from sexual activity, with loss of libido and impotence in men or women who continue to engage in sexual behaviour with partners, but lack interest and desire. In support of this, Shapiro (1994:49) quoted the film *Dona Flor and Her two Husbands*, based on Jorge Amado's (1968) book. In that film a widow remarries while carrying on an affair with the ghost of her first husband. Raphael (1984:219) refers to this as fantasy relationship with the lost idealised partner where the bereaved continues a relationship

with the dead spouse. The bereaved may become attached to someone who is seen symbolically unconsciously, or actively as a replacement for the lost person.

There is a category characterised by no change in usual sexual activity and no noticeable impact on desire. This involves people who use sexual activity as a coping response to elicit comfort and solace. MacElveen Hoehn (as cited in Payne, Horn and Relf, 1999:26), argues that in this category, people sought the comfort of being held, and the pleasure of bodily contact was the important element, rather than the excitement of sexual arousal. This involves those people who find pleasure to the stimulus of death a source of compelling desire for sexual activity.

5.5 *Spiritual (religious) response*

According to Payne, Horn and Relf (1999: 27), death of a loved one may also lead to people experiencing the feeling of being let down and angry towards their religion or God, and a loss of faith may result if their church does not provide the anticipated help or support.

Spirituality is an important aspect of one's life. When death of a loved one strikes within a family, no numbers are available to determine if larger numbers of the bereaved turn to, or away from religion. There is no question that many people ask the question *why?* Perhaps out of feelings of bitterness or disillusionment. Some formally deeply religious people have even turned away because they believe God did not listen to or answer their prayers and pleas, hence the feeling of betrayal by a God whom they loved so much. In their sorrow, they will not allow to be comforted by believing in Him.

5.6 *Physical health response*

There is a widespread commonsensical notion that people can be so traumatised by the loss of their loved one that it can even change them forever, or can even lead to their premature death. There is evidence of increased deaths from heart disease, liver cirrhosis, suicide and other violent deaths, with less evidence for an increase in cancer deaths (Payne, Horn & Relf 1999:30).

According to Collins (1988:351), bereavement can be detrimental to your health. Several studies have shown that grief hinders the body's immune system so that viruses and other disease-causing organisms are more difficult to resist, especially during the first six months of mourning.

According to Schneiderman (1980:22), grief is the cause of death, even though it cannot be found on a death certificate. The death rate increases significantly during the first few years of widowhood and there are marked increases in congestive heart failures, high blood pressure, strokes, and cancer. There is ample evidence to show that intense or prolonged stress disrupts the body and can lead to numerous ailments, including some that are serious. In addition, stress can lead to exhaustion, weakness, headaches, indigestion, shortness of breath, loss of appetite and inability to sleep.

5.7 *Emotional response*

According to Staudacher (1987:54), incompleteness and loneliness are not the only feelings expressed by the surviving spouse, there are also some psychological responses following the death of a spouse that can be expressed as follows:

I feel as if I have lost my best friend.

This means that one has experienced the loss of a companion with whom he / she shared activities. The one who used to acknowledge and accept your activities is no longer with you. The one who shared the sense of humour, physical contact with you, and backed you up is no longer with you.

According to Riches and Dawson (2000:27) this is the psychological understanding of loss that has been strongly influenced by the theories of attachment and separation, i.e. the way one relates to his / her late spouse before his death and the way one respond after the death, is also likely to have a major impact on his or her own sense of security and consequent independence later in life. According to Raphael (1984:177) these losses have such great impact because of the intensity with which the relationships are held and the core themes they represent in the person's existence. The death of a spouse, or a partner of an adult pair-bond relationship, leads to a painful bereavement response. The marital pair has, in most instances, such closely interwoven lives that loss of one partner may cut across the very meaning of the other's existence.

I am angry.

Anger is one expression of stress that arises from a wide variety of feelings, beliefs and situations and may be directed towards:

- **The deceased:** Some husbands and wives are convinced that their spouses died purposefully, deliberately, and mercilessly leaving them in a state of loneliness, disarray and confusion.
- **Self:** For not loving and caring enough, for not having exposed the deceased to the best hospital or doctor, for not having children, for the uncontrollable attachment one had with the deceased that he / she entirely depended on the deceased and became completely vulnerable. According to Riches and Dawson (2000:5) this is the expression of fearing to venture into new patterns of change where new events require new stories, and

each member has to adapt their internal work model to fit altered circumstances.

- **Others:** Towards the employer for exposing one's spouse to dangerous situations (like in the Police Services), to the murderers /suspects in case or even the colleagues of the deceased for having failed to save or protect the deceased.

According to Violanti (1997:3) anger may also be directed towards the following:

- **Media coverage:** Extensive and graphic media coverage of the death of a loved one has an impact on the surviving spouse, as media coverage may appear to be insensitive to the matter. According to Harvey and Bahr (1980:11), certain responses towards what happened are made worse by the manner in which they are first reported by media personnel to the family. This is done mostly by journalists whose immediate needs are news-making and end up been biased and insensitive in their manner of reporting. A painful story is told of a woman whose husband died in the mine disaster and she found out things from the news long before mine officials told her and the family of the disaster (Harvey & Bahr, 1980:17). The press coverage of the disaster, as well as the added burden of a steady stream of news personnel added more stress and anxiety to her situation.
- **Criminal Justice System:** A slow, unresponsive criminal justice system. The kind of delay as well as the alleged unresponsive criminal justice, as perceived by the surviving spouse, has an impact on his / her life.
- **Death notification:** The manner, in which death notification was handled, by who, when, and how, has an impact on the family. Death notification is one aspect that must be handled with the outmost care and diligence, preferably by strictly professionals as this has a substantial and long lasting

effect on survivors' ability to deal with grief and to move forward with their lives. According to Harvey and Bahr (1980:11) it is in these messages and manner in which he /she is informed develops a more or less coherent mental picture of what happened to the person and who he / she felt and acted that will assist in reshaping the incident and redefining attitudes towards the disaster.

- **Funeral arrangements and proceedings:** Second to death notifications is the whole issue of funeral arrangements and proceedings thereof. According to Weizman and Kamm (1987: 29), the funeral is a ceremony to acknowledge the death and pay tribute to the loved ones. It is also a ritual, which supports the mourning process. At the time of death, a pattern of behaviour is set into motion for family and helpers. The deceased may have left directions for the funeral; this need to be considered in light of what would be supportive to and comforting for the bereaved. Any adjustment or modifications thereof need to be discussed with the family to meet their needs as well. This also has a substantial and long-lasting effect on survivors' ability to deal with their grief and move forward with their lives. According to Violanti (1997:4), it is not every Tom, Dick and Harry who can handle the above. These are too delicate issues that need to be handled with care, sensitivity and diligence. People need to be thoroughly trained in order to handle all these as these may have quite a substantial negative impact on the survivors of the deceased.
- **Departmental death benefits:** Often there is an immediate cut off between the family and the department after the funeral of the police officer, leaving the spouse alone and having to face the reality of death of a loved one alone. This is, according to the respondents, the period where the department is mostly needed by the surviving spouse in terms of guidelines pertaining to the policies and the payments that are due to her or him. This exercise needs to be taken very seriously by the department as it plays a significant role to the family in grief particularly more so to the spouse who is

left alone all by herself or himself. In the SAPS, when members die they are provided with the following death benefits: a coffin, a hearse, a family car, mortuary service, and graveside arrangement. However, in addition to the above, members dying on duty receive a death grant of R200 000, a lump sum compensation from the commissioner including monthly payments thereof. When a deceased member was contributing to the orphans and widows' fund, then his beneficiaries would qualify for support from the fund. Apart from these benefits, there is no policy nor any guidelines determining what should happen after the funeral. Secondly, there is a need for policies and procedures to be put in place as to how such should be handled.

- **Anger towards God:** Some direct their anger towards God for taking their beloved at such an early state or for not saving them from dying. In summary, the anger is directed either to oneself or to others. Chaplains within the service experience such reactions during the passing of death messages to families. Alice, aged 45, is quoted by Raphael (1984:177): *I was so angry I wanted to hit out at God and the whole world. I wanted to hurt everyone just like I'd been hurt. I wanted to destroy. He'd left me and I hated him for it.*

I feel guilty about something (or many things) I did!

Anger and guilt in this study are like the two sides of the same coin that exist together without any conflict - they operate side by side. One may feel guilty for not loving the deceased enough because the love was insufficient and inadequately expressed. One may feel guilty about not earning more, being disloyal, quick to criticise and being a poor listener. In some instances where the spouse is the beneficiary, some feel guilty and uncomfortable with any financial assets due to them resulting from their spouses' death. In summary the guilt arises from one of the two premises:

- that one would have made his / her spouse's life happier if he or she has done certain things; or
- if one had not done one thing, another thing would not have occurred, that is, if you had done or not done something your spouse would not have died.

Now I think about my own death more frequently.

This is the expression of not fearing death where people talk more of their own deaths with the wish to join their deceased spouses; because their spouses' lives ended against their will and they realise that their own lives can do the same. Statements about suicide or suicide risks are high here if care is not given to the survivors.

I feel very old.

The feeling of being old in this study has something to do with being down cast in society, i.e. expressing the feeling of having no valued place in society. One's life now seems to be at the mercy of somebody and is no longer autonomous.

I am afraid.

Loss always carries with itself some element of change, which will always bring about fear; change from the normal day-to-day living is risky and scary. During the very few months after the death of one's spouse, fear become very strong, e.g. people fear death itself; fear for loneliness; shopping alone; driving alone; sleeping in a house alone; fear for income and the raising of the children by yourself in the case where the children are still very young. The division of domestic labour between *fathering and mothering*, and widely different expectations of the roles of fathering and mothering can lead to contradictory responses to the laws and sometimes to conflicting ways of trying to make sense of it. Lonely single parents may be exposed to various ambivalent expectations arising from their attempt to fulfil both roles in the family (Riches and Dawson, 2000:48).

I worry about money.

Most of the difficult cases handled by the chaplains within the SAPS after the death of the member have been around financial issues. It has been the case even more so where the money was contested by the survivors in an extended family and the deceased left no will. This is correctly stated by Staudacher (1987:58) that more often than not, financial matters are not in order when a husband dies. Approximately fifty percent of the property owners in this country die without leaving behind a will.

Secondly, if the deceased spouse had been the financial planner and money manager, the surviving spouse may not be aware of the location, amount, and distribution of the resources.

Thirdly, even if financial matters have been attended to and all resources clearly delineated, they may be shockingly insufficient.

Fourthly, from the spouses' point of view, property may be inequitable or irrationally distributed among the survivors

Financial complications, or insufficient resources, caused in the main by delays of pay-outs after the death of a loved one (as is the case with some families of the deceased members) carry with them some element of anxiety, fear, shame, and anger to the surviving spouses.

According to Raphael (1984:194), a further complicating issue for the family (especially the older family) may be the division of property after death. The widow or widower may discover that the spouse died intestate, or left the property entailed or did not bequeath all as had been anticipated. Bitter resentment over such perceived inequities may alienate those from whom support is needed, as well as interfere with the bereavement by the intensity of emotion that becomes invested in

the sense of injustice. Even the informal distribution of treasured possessions amongst family members may be seen as having hurtful consequences. The bereaved spouse is likely to feel, because of the intimate bond shared that all such treasures are rightfully his. Bearing in mind that such objects may in ways symbolically represent the dead person, may be linking objects to him, the reasons they are so emotionally important becomes obvious.

I am going through an identity crisis.

This is one common ground impacted by a lot of fear, guilt, shame, and anger that is mostly neglected by some grief counsellors. This has to do with women who were married to celebrities and public figures, which in turn provided their self-esteem and gratification, which resulted in a positive identity in the eyes of the public.

The loss or the death of such a prominent figure has an impact on the identity of such a woman, who is a housewife or any other women who has not established a role outside her home. Such women later experience a problem and have a struggle with the loss of identity following the death of the spouse. They have to face new identities and new names such as (*Umfelokazi* in Zulu), meaning the one who has lost her partner. A widow is no longer a *couple*. She is a single individual who now reminds others that their own *coupleness* may be in jeopardy. A widow is a visual reminder that one half of a couple (who were former friends) is now missing. As a result of that, a widow may experience a new kind of loneliness, which comes from being excluded from dinner parties, bridge nights, tennis games, group camping trips, or senior citizens couples' functions. That is worst during weekends and nights that were once spent with other couples and are now spent alone. This causes loneliness because the person who used to be with others now feels different without her spouse and because of that she totally removes herself from her former friends.

Staudacher (1987:59) states a painful experience of a widow who said: *It's hard for me to be around people who both of us cared for. I see the person and I start to cry. I can't even go back to our family doctor. It's easier to go to someone who never knew Jim.* This means that surviving spouses often find it emotionally easier to interact with new people or those friends who did not know the deceased spouse.

I feel relieved after the death.

Due to the nature of the work that some police officers perform, some become ill and even ending up terminally ill. Some experience great distress, discomfort, or even pain, e.g. those working in the government mortuary.

Others are exposed and sustain injuries in the line of duty. These injuries reduce their lives to nothing more than existence. When these officers die, their spouses experience some kind of relief. Some similar cases, where the spouse feels relieved with spousal death, are those where the deceased spouse was abusive to the family, or the spouse who was suffering from a chronic addiction that made it impossible to have a quality relationship.

According to Weizman and Kamm (1983:115), mourning is the natural reaction to a death or other loss. The absence of mourning as it is in this instance, indicates a problem rather than a sign of adjustment because mourning is the natural reaction to a death or other loss.

6. BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING

Judging from the work done by the whole EAS within the organisation in the case of police on-duty killings, it seems there is a total lack of bereavement counselling for spouses of the deceased, which in itself could result in certain dynamics. This is supported by Shneidman (1980:214) when saying that there is currently much needed and overdue concern with widows and widowers, bereaved parents,

orphaned children, who have by and large been a rather neglected group. This section will cover to a certain point the strategies of bereavement counselling as indicated by Collins (1988: 42).

6.1 *Counselling and grief*

6.1.1 **Attributes of a good counsellor**

The relationship between the counsellor and the client is a very crucial one, if counselling is to be successful. The attributes of a good counsellor cannot be overlooked at any given rate. Although warmth, genuineness, and empathy are among the most frequently mentioned attributes of a good counsellor, there are other important characteristics:

- **Warmth:** This word according to Collins (1988:41), implies caring, respecting, or possessing a sincere, non-smothering concern for people, regardless of his or her actions or attitudes. Warmth calls for non-judgemental, respect, and the treatment of any person as a person of worth. According to Meiché (2007:1), a facilitator or therapist assisting in the process of grief is there to hold a space for healing and creating a safe place for feelings to be expressed and explored. This needs to be done in a non-judgemental way and in a way that honours the individual's inner process. The counsellor's warm, caring attitude must accompany him/her wherever he/she goes.
- **Genuineness:** Genuineness has something to do with reality, originality and not some kind of a fake attitude. The genuine counsellor is *for real*, an open, sincere person who avoids phoniness or playing of some superior role. Genuineness implies spontaneity without impulsiveness and honesty without insensitive confrontation. It means that the counsellor is deeply himself or herself not thinking or feeling one thing and saying something different. Rapport and trust should always accompany the counsellor.

According to Meiché (2007:1), in choosing a facilitator or therapist one needs to feel a sense of rapport and enough initial trust to allow for a consistent relationship in building further healing and wellness through this important transition.

- **Empathy:** This is the ability *to feel with* the client, but not taking his / her problems to be yours (counsellor). It is quite possible to help, even when we do not completely understand, but the counsellor who can empathise (especially near the beginning of counselling) is most likely to be effective as a people helper.

6.1.2 Strengthening the caregiver

The fact that counsellors are also human beings, who are exposed to pain and grief as well, cannot be disputed. It is good that counsellors should look after themselves to avoid burn-outs. Three things that a counsellor should do in order to avoid burn-outs:

- The counsellor should know his / her limitations and avoid overworking him / herself. The counsellor should also consider some time away and take off time when the need arises.
- The counsellor should avoid suppressing his /her grief, but permit herself / himself a chance to grieve, admit sadness after someone has died.
- Counsellors should expose themselves to debriefing after certain incidents, i.e. reaching out to get support and help from others. Caregivers are reluctant to ask for help, but we all need support that comes both from God and from our fellow human beings.

The above is what is likely lacking or being ignored by many counsellors during their counselling sessions, hence estrangements in some counselling.

6.2 *Process of bereavement counselling*

According to Collins (1988:15) the counsellor's choice is not between counselling or not counselling, but between counselling in a disciplined and skilled way and counselling in an undisciplined and unskilled way. Secondly, the counsellor is not alone in his / her task in assisting the grieved; there are also widely available sources of help among family members, friends, ministers and physicians.

Meiché (2007:2) identified the following steps in bereavement counselling. Below are the highlights built on the very same steps that could be used by EAS personnel for bereavement counselling:

6.2.1 Help the person to actualise the loss

The counsellor should be present and be available when the reality of death strikes after the funeral and when the person is left to face life alone. This is the time when the house begins to feel empty, the bed becomes too big and survivors feel a sort of invisible blanket between the world and themselves. This is the time when someone is mostly needed to be around. The presence of people is so important at this time, even if they are not talking to the bereaved but to one another. Availability before and after the funeral is very crucial, phone calls, SMS messages, etc. can add value. The department, the colleagues and Police Chaplain are no exceptions to this; they should be the first line of support in times of bereavement.

6.2.2 Help the person to identify, and express feelings of anger, guilty, fear, anxiety, sorrow

The tendency by some mourners to bottle up their feelings in bereavement is quite imminent. Grief is painful to all people. According to Mitsch and Brookside (1993:52), the bereaved need not conjure up tears, or stuff them down in an effort to be stoic. They need to accept their grieving as natural process. This is an important key to healthy grieving. One should give herself / himself permission to

freely feel and express one's emotions. Counsellors in bereavement counselling should assist the bereaved to express emotions freely, to face their frustrations openly, and to admit and discuss their confusions and problems.

6.2.3 Work with the survivor to learn to live without the deceased / situation/ job/ status / income

Grief always comes to one when he or she has lost the loved one or something very dear or valuable to them. In most instances people stop to enjoy life as they choose existence over life. According to Schiff (1977:1), life must go on despite what has happened. According to Collins (1988:360), all this is possible through the assistance of a highly skilful person, whose task is not to fill up the deep whole caused by grief, but to create a bridge over it so that the bereaved could stand on it and reach out to others.

6.2.4 Help the survivor with avoiding withdrawal

Withdrawal is the state where people prefer to be alone and believe that *talking does not help, weeping does not change things, talking about him / her will just make me sad*. According to Mitsch and Brookside (1993:105), none of those statements is true. Talking does change things. Weeping does help. Talking about our sorrow does not increase our sorrow but purges our sorrow.

According to Collins (1988:96), loneliness and withdrawal can be grouped into five categories of need:

- Social
- Developmental
- Psychological

- Situational
- Spiritual

These needs need to be addresses and appear more often in people who have low self-esteem, inability to communicate, a self-defeating attitude, lack of control, hostility, and fear. According to Schiff (1977:10) the counsellor should assist the bereaved to be able to talk freely about the disease rather than practice withdrawal.

6.2.5 Give time to grief and its expression

According to Collins (1988:345), grief is a normal response to the loss of any significant person, object, or opportunity. Grief is an experience of deprivation and anxiety that can show itself in one's behaviour, emotions, thinking, psychology, interpersonal relationships and spirituality. Grief arises because something or someone of value has been lost and the griever is faced with the emptiness and difficult task of re-adjusting.

The effects of grief are physical effects, emotional-cognitive effects, social effects, pathological effects. The counsellor in bereavement counselling should encourage discussions, making it known that expressing feelings is good and acceptable behaviour, should be a careful listener, try not to push, help the griever makes his or her own decisions and discourage making major decisions (such as the sale of a house, or a move to another state) at least until a few months have passed, provide practical help like transport where necessary, feeling and completion of certain documents, encourage expressions of feeling and attitude, help counselling understand the grief process and encourage talk about the future.

6.2.6 Assess normal and pathological behaviour / related patterns

According to Collins (1988:352), *pathological* grief reactions occur when grief is denied, delayed, never-ending, or distorted. There are intense fear, guilt, helplessness, withdrawal, and other evidences of pathology. This most often occurs when the death has been sudden or unexpected; the mourning has been sudden or unexpected; the mourner has been excessively dependent on the deceased; there was an ambivalent relationship (love mixed with hatred) between the mourner and the lost one; there was unfinished business between the mourner and the deceased (such as siblings who hadn't talked for years, family conflicts that hadn't been resolved, confessions that hadn't been made, or love that hadn't been expressed); the cause of death was violent, accidental, or suicidal; and / or the loss left the mourner with new and difficult challenges such as raising children alone or making business decisions. When grief is pathological the survivor may show one or more of the following behaviour:

- unwilling to talk about the deceased and feeling of sadness when the deceased's name is mentioned;
- open or subtle threats of self-destruction;
- anti-social behaviour;
- excessive hostility, moodiness, or guilt;
- excessive drinking or drug abuse;
- withdrawal and refusal to interact with others;
- refusal to change the deceased person's room or to dispose of his or her clothing and other possessions; and
- resistance to offers of counselling or other help.

The counsellor's role in this regard is the same as in grief counselling.

6.2.7 Allow for individual behaviour in terms of grieving

Each person is unique and behaviour in response to grief will also be unique and should be treated as such. Counsellors should allow for individual behaviour and

assist the client as an individual but not to be identified with the other as that, according to Collins (1988:173), can create tension, frustration, rebellion and persisting power struggle.

6.2.8 Support

Support in time of grief has something to do with assisting the person in discovering the sources of his / her anxiety and learn how to cope. All this calls for calmness, supportiveness, as well as patience of the counsellor. This is the time when the counselee needs to feel the caring support of a warm relationship with an understanding counsellor. According to Collins (1988:88) support should be more action than intellectual conversation. Counsellors should try to avoid intellectual talk that may sound reassuring but does nothing to help people plan and take direct specific action in dealing with anxiety.

Support is more crucial and important where the circumstances of death were sudden, unexpected, unusual or violent, such as suicide, murder, or the accidental death of a spouse or a child. Support should be provided right from the beginning, i.e. from the time when the death message was communicated to the spouse by the chaplain, throughout the grieving period, and even beyond the funeral.

According to Collins (1988:358), a death message must be communicated gently, somewhat gradually, and if possible, in a location private enough to permit the free expression of emotion. Give the survivor time to respond, to ask questions, and to be surrounded by two or three friends who provide continuity with regard to the initial support phase. Support should be provided in counselling and all other practical and personal needs, such as assistance in completing certain legal documents, assist in recovering the claims and all other benefits that are due to the survivor, should be addressed.

6.2.9 Explore defences and coping mechanisms

The following are some of the coping mechanisms that will assist the mourners in dealing with their grief and establish strategies to cope after the death of a loved one:

Forget about the past. The mourners should be encouraged to move away from the past and dwell in the present, even with all its pains and heartbreak. The past becomes the mirror of the present.

Turn around the life style. Jeremia 31:13 talks about turning sorrow into joy, mourning into gladness.

Forgive. There is a need to urge the survivors to forgive themselves. Often the battle is within the survivors as they think how they failed the deceased and how they failed to resolve their differences with them while they were still with them. Sometimes it is about how they failed to express their feelings to them. According to Mitsch and Brookside (1993: 97), question such as these are common: *Was there something I could have or should have said to make things better between us?* and *Why didn't I say 'I love you' more often?*, etc.

Take a break. One coping mechanism is to take a break from the stressful situation. Our emotional health depends as much on knowing when to take a break as it does on knowing when to grieve (Mitsch & Brookside, 1993:144).

Say goodbye. Saying goodbye to the former life with our loved ones and move on into the new life. Until we have closure, we will never be able to move on in our lives. There will always be part of us that is *back there* in the past. We hold our emotions in suspended animation awaiting our loved one's return. We hold on to a thread of hope that we will wake up one morning and he or she will be there, waiting for us. While our goodbye is dreadfully painful, it allows us to move past our pain into health.

Buy something that shows life. Buying paintings, posters, or animals that you love so much can also help as a coping mechanism.

Surround yourself with friends and family members: They love you and care for you - not all the time - but more often to keep yourself from isolation.

Eat healthy food.

Get enough rest.

Join a gym and exercise more often.

Assess for a referral if there is absence, deterrence, or prolonged grieving.

Despite one's best efforts, there may be times when a counselee requires the help of a more specialised counsellor, such as a psychiatrist, a social worker, or a clinical psychologist. Counselees should not be deprived such opportunities.

It is also crucial that when such referrals are made to specialists, discussions are first entered into with the counselee so that he or she understands why another counsellor is suggested.

The above are some of the coping mechanisms that should be made available to people who are experiencing a stressful situation for the normalisation of life after grief. Such coping mechanisms are not established at once and instantaneously, but it is a long process.

7. CONCLUSION

Bereavement counselling is very crucial and needs to be handled professionally and with care. The counsellor needs to be good and of good standing with the client. He/ she must be respectable and understand the client in his/ her situation very well without judging him/her. This will in turn assist the client to express his/her emotions without fear.

The fact that the counsellors are also human beings cannot be disputed. That is, counsellors need to recognise and accept that they also need to look after themselves by exposing themselves to debriefing and relaxation.

Counsellors should be available and make their services available to clients at any given time. That is, in terms of death they should be available even after the funeral in order to help the client to re-adjust and normalise the situation. This could be achieved through practical support. The death of a loved one or the loss of anything dear and close to one is always accompanied by grief. Support could also be in assisting the clients with some coping mechanisms that will assist them to deal with their grief after the death of a loved one. Referral is also significant and should be practised more often by counsellors but with permission from the client.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Conclusions and recommendations in this study are given as a result of a suitable research design for the study, *phenomenology*, which enables the researcher to understand and interpret the impact that the subject (spouses of the on-duty police killings in this case) had experienced, resulting from the phenomenon of on-duty police killings.

Secondly, through the research methodology, a semi-structured one-to-one interview with twelve spouses with similar circumstances, results were drawn from the collected data on the on-duty police killings that took place between 2004 and 2006 in the Gauteng Province. The participants were engaged through a set of pre-determined questions on the interview schedule, and the data was analysed, supported, challenged, and interpreted through relevant and appropriate literature.

Thus, reflecting back on the objectives of this study, as well as the research question: *What is the impact of on-duty killings on spouses of deceased members of the South African Police Services?*, the researcher has, through this empirical study, succeeded in establishing the main areas of concern and the needs of the spouses.

Based on this empirical study on the impact of the on-duty police killings, expectations and results thereof, it is clear that the department does not appear to be formally responding, through the EAS, towards the needs and expectations of the spouses of police officers who died in the line of duty. The researcher strongly recommends that the following be considered to mitigate the impact of on duty police killings on spouses.

2. FORMAL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

2.1 *Conclusions*

There are no formal procedures and policies that guide EAS personnel on assisting the spouses of the on-duty police killings, which is very critical in times of loss of a loved one, as each chaplain is doing things in his/her own way. According to Constant (1993:5), police agencies must recognise the situation and develop clear, open and well-defined responses for deaths of its members. In distressing times, after the death of the officer, it is difficult for the department leaders and officers to prepare an orderly, a caring protocol for death; hence a lot of unfinished stories of assistance is experienced by the spouses.

2.2 *Recommendations*

Standard form: The EAS should develop a standard form for gathering and transmitting information to the bereaved family when delivering a death message. The form should gather certain basic information that will assist the family to receive the real facts and handle legal and practical matters. The form should address the following questions:

- What has happened?
 - Where?
 - When?
 - Who was involved and how?
 - Particulars of the investigation officer, location of the body, conditions of the body?
 - Are there arrests and charges?
 - Who is the contact person in terms of assistance.
-
- **A standardised work protocol:** The departmental EAS needs to develop a standardised work protocol handling aftercare and courtesy visitations by EAS which should address the following:

When such visitation should be undertaken?

Why?

What to do and what not to do?

How? Where? Who to be visited?

Such a work protocol should be accompanied by a standardised form for capturing information on the assistance rendered, follow-up visitations and outstanding matters to be addressed by who and when.

The form should contain the particulars of the survivor, date and the duration of the visit, a space for signature of the survivor and the particulars of a person rendering the assistance.

- **Induction programme and policy for training:** The EAS must develop an induction programme and policy for training all the EAS personnel on handling all matters pertaining to quality service delivery in terms of an employee from the beginning to the end.

3. DEATH NOTIFICATION

3.1 Conclusion

Though there is satisfaction amongst those that were informed of the death of their beloved by a Police Chaplain, there is no standard framework, known to all on who is authorised to pass the message to make sure that families do not get messages through the wrong channels, e.g. media, but also to ensure they get it timely.

3.2 Recommendation

Death notifications should be handled timely and strictly by professional people. Chaplains should be accessible and they alone should be the ones to deliver the death notification to the family. This is essential for compassionate notification of law. However, there is also a need for chaplains to have courtesy visits to the

members' families when nothing serious had happened to avoid being labelled as angels of death by families.

4. FUNERAL SERVICES

4.1 *Conclusion*

Bereaved families get solace when they see that the department has done all in its power to give the bereaved a dignified send off. The attendance of police officers at funerals and the support that ordinary police give were appreciated. The department should strengthen this positive aspect.

4.2 *Recommendations*

The creation of **funeral committees** and a post of a **Family Assistance Officer** would add value to this process. The Funeral Committee should comprise of a member from each section, a union member and the Family Assistance Officer. This could be chaired by a Police Chaplain. The funeral committee and the Family Assistance Officer should work closely together and take care of practical and personal needs in terms of death and other crises. These should be created in all stations and/or units.

5. AFTER-FUNERAL SERVICE

5.1 *Conclusion*

The study indicates that after-funeral services are not provided to families of officers who died on duty. If in existence, it is very limited and uncoordinated and thus its impact is not felt. There is an immediate and abrupt cut-off of services and spouses are left alone not knowing where to go for assistance.

5.2 Recommendation

- Develop a standard for **post-funeral visits** to the spouses of the on-duty killed police officers. That applies to both high ranking and supervisors who should schedule visits to spouses for at least two years after the officer's death.
- The commissioner or his / her designate should write a **condolence letter** to the spouse. Such a letter should reach the spouse within a period of not more than a month after the death of the officer. This letter should be in the language of the recipient.
- **A memorial stone should be erected** at the provincial Head Office where names of all officers who died on duty should be written. A commemoration service should be held annually and spouses should be invited on such days to witness their spouses being honoured.
- The department should keep spouses of officers killed on duty informed about the **criminal justices processes** and the outcomes thereof.

6. RENDERING COUNSELLING SERVICES TO SPOUSES

6.1 Conclusion

The issue of counselling the spouses after the death of a loved one is a very important one. It is evident that there is no counselling provided to the bereaved spouses, hence during the interviews some respondents, whose spouses died more than two years ago, broke down in tears while sharing their experiences with the researcher. The little amount of counselling provided is done at the wrong time and at the wrong place, i.e. during the time when the spouse is still in shock

6.2 *Recommendation*

Render services: Psychological services, social workers, grief counsellors, as well as trauma counsellors (short and long term) should be available to spouses of the deceased officers.

7. PAYMENTS OF GRANTS, PENSIONS BENEFITS AND OTHER FORMS OF COMPENSATION

7.1 *Conclusion*

The delay in payments of grants, pension benefits, and other forms of compensation is also a challenge. Some spouses have been waiting for more than a year for what is due to them. Some delays are caused by the factors contributed by the deceased where there is no will and where the payments are to be contested by the spouse and other external people, such as the parents of the deceased, children and other partners outside the marriage.

From the department's side, assistance in this regard is not properly coordinated; hence the filling out of proper documentation is a problem. All of these have a negative impact on the survivors of the on-duty police killings and contribute towards making life unbearable.

7.2 *Recommendations*

- Position of a **Family Assistance Officer:** This person should act as a liaison officer with the spouses of the deceased to ensure that their practical and personal needs in terms of death and other crises are met.

- **Information seminars:** Hold informational seminars at least twice a year for the EAS and spouses of all the police officers on which support services are available to law enforcement personnel following the death of a spouse.
- **Information seminars:** Present such seminars to all law enforcement personnel on the significance of a will and the drawing up of a will.
- **Update policies:** Existing policies should be continually updated, to reflect current benefits, procedures, and legal factors.
- **Programmes:** Design and offer programmes that would develop and assist employees to disclose, be trustworthy, truthful, and faithful to their spouses and to avoid secrets and things that could be problematic to the survivors. Secondly, employees should be encouraged to draw up a will and deposit it at a credible institution. Such a document needs to be revisited after marriage or divorce.

8. EMOTIONAL AND TANGIBLE SUPPORT

8.1 *Conclusion*

Emotional, as well as tangible support through the entire process of grieving is essential. According to Constant (1993:5) a family support group is indispensable to a person at this stage. The police family fills the void by becoming a surrogate family. The police *family* is considered crucial at this stage and needs to be available for the spouses during the ordeal and afterwards.

8.2 *Recommendation*

According to the study, support by police agencies to the spouses of the deceased is a crucial one in helping them deal with distress and trauma. This support must occur at the police organisation and particularly at senior officer level, the EAS as well as on individual level.

A **widow / widowers' club** should be established and should at least meet once a year. This club should focus on supporting, caring, and advising spouses to deal with an array of emotional issues. It must provide an opportunity for spouses to engage into interactive dialogue and provide opportunities for participants to ask questions, discuss specific issues, and share their experiences with others.

9. MEDIA COVERAGE

9.1 *Conclusion*

Extensive media coverage of the death of a loved one has an impact on the surviving spouse and even more so in such cases where media coverage had appeared to be insensitive about the whole matter. Such coverage impacts negatively on the surviving spouse in that life becomes unbearable to cope with.

9.2 *Recommendation*

Provide **media support** for spouses of the killed police officers, who choose to deal with the media. A public relations officer could be assigned to be present during media contacts and interviews.

10. CONCLUSION TO THE COMPLETE STUDY

According to the research, the goal of the study was to explore and conduct a scientific enquiry on the impact of the on-duty killings on the spouses of the deceased. The objectives were:

- to explore and describe, through literature study, the impact of on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased;
- to explore the practical factors – following the death of a member – that may have an impact on the spouses of the deceased within the Gauteng Province;

- to explore the exact needs of the spouses of the members killed on-duty within the Gauteng Province; and
- to make recommendations for the EAS within the Gauteng Province in handling the impact of the police killings on spouses of the deceased.

All these objectives were, according to Cresswell (1998:99), put into more specific terms in a research question, i.e. *what is the impact of on-duty killings in the SAPS on spouses of deceased members?*

In conclusion, reflecting on the goals and objectives, as well as the research question of the study, one could state that despite the limitations of the study mentioned above, the researcher has achieved all of the objectives as stated and the research question has been answered.

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ANNEXURES

Enq: Supt Rev S Moyane
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Ref: 04724135

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25 April 2006

The Provincial Commissioner
South African Police Service
Gauteng Province

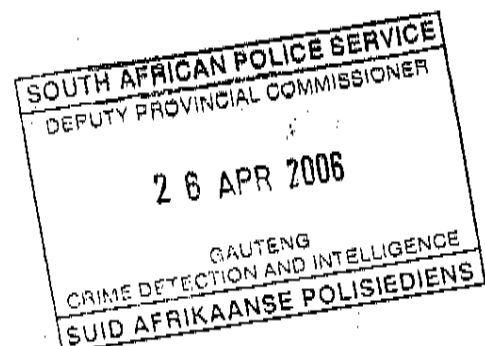
**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE
SAPS AS PART OF MY STUDIES TOWARDS A MASTER'S DEGREE:
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME- UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

1. I have been registered for the course Master's Degree: Employee Assistance Programme with the University of Pretoria.
2. I have completed all coursework towards this qualification and still needs to do a Dissertation to complete the degree.
3. For 2006, I am registered for the Dissertation with the title: **The impact of on duty killings on spouses of deceased members of the South African Police Service.** Senate has approved the title.
4. I hereby request permission to conduct my research within the SAPS. This would entail access to information documents in terms of on duty killings of members, interviews and conducting surveys with members or families of the deceased members.
5. Kind regards

Supt (Rev) S Moyane
UP Student no: 20017228

APPROVED/ ~~NOT APPROVED~~


Provincial Commissioner
P. N. Mkhabela
Deputy Provincial Commissioner
Crime Detection & Intelligence: Gauteng





INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Participant's name:

Date:.....

Ref. Prof L S Terblanche
Tel. 012 420-3292
Fax. 012 420-2093
Email: lourie.terblanche@up.ac.za

Principal Investigator: **Supt. (Rev) S Moyane**

INFORMED CONSENT

1. CONSENT:

I hereby give consent to participate in the research study as detailed below:

TITLE OF STUDY:

The impact of on-duty killings in the South African Police Services (SAPS) on spouses of the deceased members.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The purpose of the study is to explore and describe the impact of on-duty police killings on the spouses of the deceased members of the SAPS.

3. PROCEDURES:

I will be exposed to a situation where a one-to-one interview will take place between the researcher and myself. I will be asked questions by the researcher pertaining the on-duty death of my spouse as well as the impact that I have experienced as a result of that. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. Such an interview will be scheduled at my convenience.

4. RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:

There will be no known risks and discomforts associated with this research. However, I may experience stress and /or trauma during the interview session since the subject under discussion is sensitive and as a result may have an emotional effect on me. I will be given an option

not to answer questions that are sensitive and emotional and a debriefer from the SAPS will be made available for me if such a need arises.

5. BENEFITS:

I was made to understand that there are no known direct medical benefits to me for participating in this study. However, the results of the study may assist the SAPS organization as well as Employee Assistance Services Personnel to gain a better understanding of the impact experienced by the spouses as a result of their spouses who died in the line of duty.

6. PARTICIPANTS RIGHTS:

Since the study will be on voluntary participation, I am at liberty to withdraw from the investigation at any given time without victimization or prospect of payment afterwards.

7. FINANCIAL COMPENSATION:

There will be no financial reimbursement since the study is based on mere voluntary participation. There will also be no travelling reimbursement since the study will be conducted at my place. If we agree on an alternative place, transport will be provided by the researcher.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY:

In order to record accurately what I say during the interview, a tape recorder will be used for the purpose. The tape will be listened to only by the researcher as well as the authorized members of the research team at a place conducive for such action. I understand that the results of the interview will be kept confidential unless I ask that they be released. The results of this study may be published in professional journals or presented at professional conferences, but my records or identity will not be revealed unless by law. I also take note that data may be stored up to 15 years and may be used for future research.

9. If I have questions of concern, I may call Supt (Rev) S Moyane at 011 2747476 during office hours or at 011 9692105 or 0824132836 after hours.

I understand my rights as a researcher subject, and I voluntarily consent to participate in this study, I understand what the study is about and how and why it is being done. I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

Subject's signature.....Date:.....

Signature of Investigator..... Date:.....

Signature of the Supervisor:..... Date:.....

Utmost confidentiality is guaranteed.

**Employee Assistance
Programme**

SPOUSES

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

An interview schedule for gathering information about the support and programmes offered to spouses of officers that are killed on the line of duty.

- 1. Please describe to me what the impact of the death of your spouse was on you and your family.**
- 2. Please comment on services rendered by the SAPS after your spouse was killed on duty.**
- 3. ‘What can the SAPS do to improve on services to spouses of police officers being killed on duty?’**



Counterpoint

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2007-11-29

Certificate

This certificate confirms that

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edited the following thesis:

**The impact of on duty killings on the spouses of deceased members
of the South African Police Services (SAPS)**

for

Master of Social Science (Employee Assistance Programme)

University of Pretoria (2007)

Student: S Moyane
