SPOUSAL SUPPORT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT: A MODEL FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

By

CYNTHIA APILE PITSE

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PRETORIA

PROMOTER: DR F.M. TAUTE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my independent investigation and that all the sources have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

I hereby certify that this dissertation has not been accepted in substance for any other degree and it is not submitted concurrently for any other degree.

Signature

C.A. Pitse
Candidate
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the greatest men in my life: my late beloved father, Simon Steven “Motswalo” Komane, to my loving and supportive husband Tebogo Pitse and to my son Obakeng Pitse for being my critique and motivator throughout the course of my studies.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is dedicated with much love and appreciation to the following people who made the completion of this study possible:

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SUMMARY

Deployment and separation are indivisible components of military life. Separation of family members due to deployment is stressful and challenging. The importance of spousal resilience has been reflected by the nature of problems that have been experienced by the spouses at home while the member/members were on external military deployment.

Therefore, the model on social support services to the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) members’ spouses during external military deployment is not in place. Furthermore, the efficiency and effectiveness of spousal support services during external military deployment within the SANDF have not been scientifically evaluated. The design of a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members during external military deployment is therefore critical in ensuring that the members are mission-ready.

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To undertake an in-depth literature review that would conceptualise social support services to SANDF members’ spouses while on external military deployment.

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

- To inform the SANDF management about the results of the study on the need for social support services to SANDF members’ spouses during the members’ external military deployment.
To design a model for social support services to the SANDF members’ spouses while the member is on external military deployment as a prerequisite for combat readiness amongst the SANDF members.

The research approach that was used in this study is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A semi-structured interview schedule was used in soliciting information that aided in the design of a model for social support services to the spouses of SANDF members while members are on external military deployment. Interviews were conducted with the spouses of the members of the SANDF who are or have been involved in external military deployment. Social workers from each of the deploying units within the nine provinces of the RSA undertook interviews with the spouses of the SANDF members who are or have been involved in external military deployment whilst the researcher conducted interviews within the ninth province being Gauteng.

Self-constructed questionnaires were used as a quantitative data collection method to elicit information from the SANDF members who are or have been involved in external deployment, regarding the nature of social support services during the external military deployment of the member. Social workers who were deployed with those members assisted with the administration of questionnaires.

Following the guidelines provided in the findings and conclusions of the study, the model for social support services during external military deployment of the member was designed. The proposed model is the SANDF Unit Family Support Groups (SANDF UFSGs) model that will address all the challenges and issues that have been identified in this study. The formation of UFSG committees in all the deploying units in the SANDF in order to address deployment related issues and challenges is thus of great importance. Based on the abovementioned, the study was able to attain its goal and objectives.
KEY CONCEPTS

1. Model
2. Spouses
3. Support
4. Military deployment
5. Resilience
6. Empowerment
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page i
Declaration ii
Dedication iii
Acknowledgement iv
Summary vi

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION 1
1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION 8
1.3 PURPOSE, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY 12
1.3.1 Goal 14
1.3.2 Objectives 14

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 15
1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 17
1.6 PILOT STUDY 18
1.6.1 Pilot testing 18
1.6.2 Feasibility of study 19
1.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS 20
1.7.1 Protection from harm 20
1.7.2 Informed consent 21
1.7.3 Right to privacy/confidentiality/anonymity 22
1.7.4 Deception of respondents 23
1.7.5 Release or publication of findings 24
1.7.6 Debriefing of respondents 25
1.7.7 Cooperation with contributors 25
1.7.8 Action and competence of the researcher 26

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS 26
1.8.1 Model 26
1.8.2 Spouses 27
1.8.3 Support 28
1.8.4 Military deployment 29
1.8.5 Resilience 29
1.8.6 Empowerment 30

1.9 CONTENTS OF RESEARCH REPORT 31
1.10 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY 31
1.11 SUMMARY 34
CHAPTER TWO: SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION 36

2.2 DEPLOYMENT EFFECTS ON SPOUSES AND THE MEMBERS 39
2.2.1 Stage One: Anticipation of loss 40
2.2.2 Stage Two: Detachment and withdrawal 42
2.2.3 Stage Three: Emotional disorganization 43
2.2.4 Stage Four: Recovery and stabilization 45
2.2.5 Stage Five: Anticipation of homecoming 46
2.2.6 Stage Six: Renegotiation of marriage contract 47
2.2.7 Stage Seven: Reintegration and stabilization 49

2.3 RATIONALE BEHIND SPOUSAL SUPPORT DURING THE EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT OF THE MEMBER 51

2.4 THE NATURE OF SUPPORT SERVICES THAT CAN BE RENDERED TO THE SPOUSES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT OF THE MEMBER 55
2.4.1 Components of family support 57
2.4.1.1 Family preparation 57
2.4.1.2 Spousal support group programme 59
2.4.1.3 Social support system 63
2.4.1.4 Communication 66
2.4.1.5 Children and separation 68
2.4.1.6 Professional therapy 69
2.4.1.7 Family-supportive employer responses 71
2.4.1.8 Home coming 72

2.5 SUMMARY 74

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION 76

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH 76

3.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH 79
3.3.1 Problem analysis and project planning 82
3.3.2 Information gathering and synthesis 82
3.3.3 Design 83
3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.4.1 Data collection

3.5. UNIVERSE, POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

3.5.1 Universe

3.5.2 Population

3.5.3 Sample and boundary of sample

3.5.4 Sampling method

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

3.7 SUMMARY

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: QUALITATIVE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.2 Section A

4.2.1 Biographical information

4.2.1.1 Age of respondents

4.2.1.2 Gender of respondents

4.2.1.3 Years of experience in the marital relationship

4.2.1.4 Rank of the member

4.2.1.5 Spouses employment status

4.2.1.6 Residential area

4.2.1.7 Deployment period in the past twelve months

4.2.1.8 Country of deployment

4.3 SECTION B

4.3.1 Themes and sub-themes

4.3.1.1 Theme 1: Issues coupled to deployments

4.3.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Transport problems

4.3.1.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Financial problems

4.3.1.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Marital problems

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

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

4.3.1.1.6 Sub-theme 6: Maintenance

4.3.1.1.7 Sub-theme 7: Problems with children

4.3.1.1.8 Sub-theme 8: Interference by the in-laws

4.3.1.1.9 Sub-theme 9: Loneliness and emotional problems

4.3.1.2 Theme 2: Attitude towards deployment

4.3.1.3 Theme 3: Organisational military external deployment support

4.3.1.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Lack of support/assistance

4.3.1.4 Theme 4: Need for spousal support services

4.3.1.4.1 Sub-theme1: Before deployment

4.3.1.4.2 Sub-theme2: During deployment
CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: QUANTITATIVE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION
5.2 Section A: Biographical data
5.2.1 Gender
5.2.2 Age distribution
5.2.3 Relationship status
5.2.4 Years in the relationship
5.2.5 Occupational status of the spouse
5.2.6 Rank distribution of respondents
5.2.7 Period of employment in the SANDF
5.2.8 Period away on deployment in the last 12 months
5.2.9 Frequency Involvement in external military deployment
5.2.10 Country of deployment
5.2.11 Participation in the preparation for deployment programme
5.2.12 Spousal participation in the preparation for deployment programme

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

5.3.1 Finance related problems encountered whilst on external military deployment
5.3.2 Views on the joint financial account
5.3.3 Reliance on each other even during deployment
5.3.4 Social support system that would be approached in case of emergencies
5.3.5 Nature of communication with the spouse
5.3.6 Frequency of communication with the spouse whilst on deployment
5.3.7 Problems experienced in communicating with the spouse during deployment
5.3.8 Solutions to communication Problems
5.3.9 Members’ perception regarding whether or not Unit Commanders are concerned about the welfare of the spouse
5.3.10 Services that could have been offered to improve the situation of the spouse during deployment
5.3.11 Type of relaxation by members whilst deployed
5.3.12 Sexual relationship formation during deployment
5.4 Section C: Need for social support services

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

5.4.2 Ability to make the necessary arrangements in the time of notice

5.4.3 Type of services that would have helped in making the necessary arrangements

5.4.4 Deployment effects on the relationship

5.4.5 Family responsibilities that interfered with combat readiness

5.4.6 Rating of the importance different forms of assistance during deployment

5.4.7 Period when assistance was needed most

5.4.8 Emotions experienced at homecoming

5.4.9 Additional social assistance required after deployment

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

5.4.11 Feelings about external military deployment

5.4.12 Perception about the importance of provision of a standardized unit social support services to the spouses during external military deployment of the member

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

5.5 SUMMARY

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.2 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

6.2.1 Goal

6.2.2 Objectives

6.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.6 SUMMARY
CHAPTER SEVEN: MODEL FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES TO SANDF MEMBERS’ SPOUSES DURING EXTERNAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION 223

7.2 STAGES OF MODEL DEVELOPMENT 225
7.2.1 PROBLEM ANALYSIS 225

7.2.2 SETTING OBJECTIVES FOR MODEL DEVELOPMENT (Stage 2) 227

7.2.3 CONSIDERING OPTIMAL APPROACHES AND MATERIALS (Stage 3) 228

7.2.4 DRAFTING AND DESIGNING(Stage 4) 234
7.2.4.1 Introduction 234
7.2.4.2 Design Questions 235
7.2.4.3 SANDF Units Family Support Groups (SANDF UFSGs) Model 237
7.2.4.3.1 Contents of the Model 237
7.2.4.3.2 Overview 238
7.2.4.3.3 Purpose of the SANDF UFSGs 238
7.2.4.3.4 SANDF UFSGs Governance 239
7.2.4.3.5 Multi-disciplinary Approach 240
7.2.4.3.6 Roles and responsibilities of key role players 241
7.2.4.3.7 Overview of the phases of deployment 244
7.2.4.3.8 Intervention programmes applicable to each phase 245

7.2.5 CONSULTING, EDITING, ASSESSING AND TAKING CORRECTIVE ACTION 249

7.4 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH 249
7.5 SUMMARY 250

REFERENCES 251
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Age of respondents</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Years of experience in the marital relationship</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rank of the member</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deployment period in the past twelve months</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Themes and sub themes</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Country of deployment</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rating of the importance of different forms of assistance during deployment</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 1</td>
<td>Phases of developmental research</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2</td>
<td>Gender of respondents</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 3</td>
<td>Residential area</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 4</td>
<td>Gender distribution of respondents</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 5</td>
<td>Age distribution of respondents</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 6</td>
<td>Relationship status of respondents</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 7</td>
<td>Years in the relationship</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 8</td>
<td>Occupational status of the spouse</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 9</td>
<td>Rank distribution of respondents</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 10</td>
<td>Period away on deployment in the last 12 months</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 11</td>
<td>Participation in the preparation for deployment programme</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 12</td>
<td>Spousal participation in the preparation for deployment programme</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 13</td>
<td>Views on the joint financial account</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 14</td>
<td>Reliance on each other even during deployment</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 15</td>
<td>Social support system that would be approached in case of emergencies</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 16</td>
<td>Nature of communication with the spouse</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 17</td>
<td>Frequency of communication with the spouse whilst on deployment</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 18</td>
<td>Problems experienced in communicating with the spouse during deployment</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 19</td>
<td>Solutions to communication problems</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 20</td>
<td>Members’ perceptions regarding whether or not Unit Commanders are concerned about the welfare of the spouse</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 21</td>
<td>Services that could have been offered to improve the situation of the spouse during deployment</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 22</td>
<td>Type of relaxation by members whilst deployed</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 23</td>
<td>Sexual relationship formation during deployment</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 24</td>
<td>Number of weeks in advance that the respondents received notice of deployment</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 25</td>
<td>Ability to make the necessary arrangements in the time of notice</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 26</td>
<td>Type of services that would have helped in making the necessary arrangements</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 27</td>
<td>Deployment effects on the relationship</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 28</td>
<td>Family responsibilities that interfered with combat readiness</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 29</td>
<td>Period when assistance was needed most</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 30</td>
<td>Emotions experienced with homecoming</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 31</td>
<td>Additional social assistance required after deployment</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 32</td>
<td>Whose responsibility is it to support the spouse of the deployed member?</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 33</td>
<td>Feelings about external military deployment</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 34: Perception regarding the importance of provision of standardized unit social support services to the spouses during external military deployment of the member

FIGURE 35: SANDF UFSGs Model on spousal support during external military deployment of the members
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF ATTACHMENTS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT A: Semi-structured interview schedule</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT B: Questionnaire</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT C: Letter of permission from the Department Defence Intelligence in the SANDF</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT D: Letter of permission from the Department of Social Work in the SANDF</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT E: Confirmation letters from the Editors</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT F: Informed Consent</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>