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

By

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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

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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

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