

**TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED APPRAISAL TOOL
FOR THE THERAPEUTIC RECREATION STRESS MANAGEMENT
INTERVENTION MODEL FOR MILITARY STAFF IN A SOUTH AFRICAN
CONTEXT**

by

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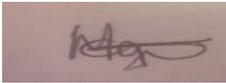
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis titled: “Towards the development of a standardized appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model for military staff in an South African context”, is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

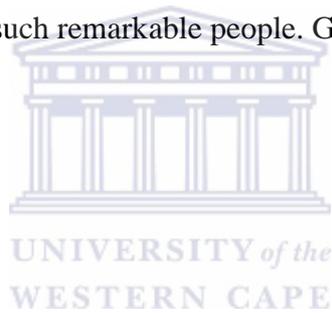
Marlin Cozett

Date: March 2016



DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife Colleen and my daughters Amber and Erin. Thank you for your love and continuous support and for believing in me. Amber and Erin you are my heroes for your acceptance, understanding and tolerating this household where everyone is constantly working. Colleen, you have witnessed every good and bad experience that came with this journey and kept me focused on my goal. Every day we all made the commitment to sacrifice and persevere to reach our dreams. Thank you for being my rock Colleen. You motivated, inspired, listened and understood what this meant to me. I am proud that you too are completing your studies. I know we are completing a remarkable phase in our lives that will be beneficial to our futures. I thank God every day that I am sharing my life with such remarkable people. God bless you all.



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Firstly, I would like to thank God for His continuous blessings and granting me the strength to complete the thesis.

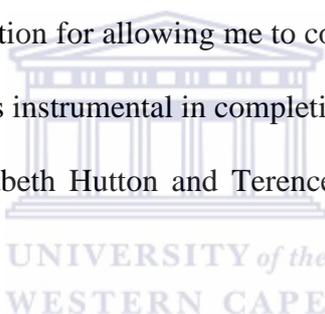
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It was challenging to balance a full time job while completing this thesis. Nevertheless, I met some remarkable people along the way who made this experience worthwhile.

Thank you also to the SANDF for the support during the data collection process. I am also highly indebted to the organization for allowing me to conduct my study. Thank you to the SANDF staff, your support was instrumental in completing this journey.

I appreciate my parents, Elizabeth Hutton and Terence Cozett, and my sisters for their support and encouragement.

Finally, to my wife Colleen and children, thank you for all the sacrifices, together we have made this dream come true.



ABBREVIATIONS

NBS Naval Base Simons town

SA South Africa

SAN South African Navy

SANDF South African National Defence Force

TRSMIM Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model



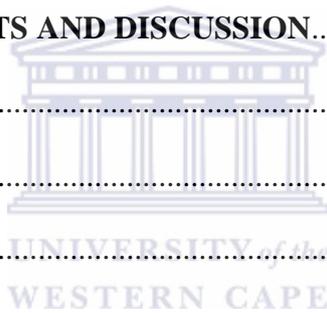
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ABSTRACT

The job demands of naval members are such that they experience high levels of stress. Stress is often introduced during military training so that real-world stress is more familiar and easy to mitigate. This is often referred to as “train how you fight”. In order to train a stressful task, a stressful environment is often created in the military. The aim of the study was to develop a standardised appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in the South African context. This study utilised a qualitative research design and followed a multi stage procedure in developing the appraisal tool while making use of the model of instrument development to achieve the aim. The model identified four stages of instrument development: Phase 1, preliminary phase; Phase 2, questionnaire development, Phase 3 pilot testing, Phase 4 Evaluation phase. For the purpose and scope of this study, the researcher focused on phases 1 and 2. Phase 1, the Preliminary phase focused on the translation of the study needs into variables, current literature, interviews and focus group discussions. Three focus groups comprised of eight participants per group and were purposefully selected from military naval staff. In addition, semi-structured interview guides were used for interviews conducted with key informants. Five senior officers and two psychologists from the Institute of Maritime Medicine (IMM) were interviewed. Data was analysed deductively due to the existence of pre-determined themes. In Phase 2, based on the data collected in phase 1, the researcher developed the appraisal tool. The appraisal tool was constructed within the scope of the theoretical framework focussing on the perceptions of naval staff on stress; previous and current leisure experiences; knowledge, skills, resources, behaviour; leisure-coping beliefs; and stress-coping strategies. The literature in the present study revealed that there were six pre-determined themes. The themes included: Theme 1 – Stressors in the military, Theme 2 –

support in the military, Theme 3- operational deployment of military members, Theme 4- Impact of stress on military families have been identified as theme four, Theme 5- leadership and Theme 6- sport and recreation in the military. Salient topics included the following: Stress assessment salient topics are personal stress, occupational stress, wellness and operational deployment. Leisure behaviour salient topics include social activities, passive activities, physical activities and outdoor activities. The findings in the study revealed that stress had an adverse effect on military readiness and the wellbeing of staff. This study reiterated the need for greater attention in the rendering of support services needed to military members and their families, preparing families for separation and improved communication between deployed soldiers and the home front. Job-induced separations affect not only the soldier and the spouse, but also their children. The role of the supervisor played a large part in how satisfied and committed the members were regarding their job. Sport and Recreation programs are vital to alleviate the symptoms of stress. The appraisal tool developed needs to be piloted and evaluated in order to recommend it for use in SANDF information systems.

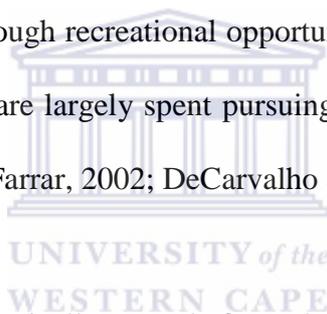
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT, AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The military can be a source of meaning and growth for people, building a sense of purpose, self-determination, belonging and meaning rather than leading to psychological suffering and feelings of alienation (Tasseron, 2001; Duxbury & Higgins, 2002; Rego & Cunha, 2008; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). Nevertheless, military work is regarded as society's most stressful occupation. Stress in the military is seen as multi-dimensional affecting a soldier mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually (Bartone, 2005; Bartone, 2006; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). Life in the Navy, as a subset of the military, requires the balance through enhancement of physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being (Yanovich, Hadid, Erlich, & Moran Heled, 2015). The primary function of the defence force is to maintain national security. Therefore, the military requires its members to serve in physically demanding conditions. The effectiveness of its operations depends on the mental toughness of the members (Sudan & Hackey, 2011; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). The defence force carry out operations and training under a variety of stressful circumstances. Although military readiness and preparedness are primarily related to competence in weapons handling, psychological and physiological factors do not play an inferior role (Yanovich et al., 2015). On the contrary it is the way in which the sailor meets the severest physical and mental demands that determines the extent of success or defeat (Du Bois, 1989; Gant, Neely, Villafana, Chun & Gharabli, 2008; Carter, Loew, Allen,

Osborne, Scott, Markman, 2015). Sport and recreation play important roles in a military setting. The opportunity to de-stress is given to military members in the form of sport and recreation. It is by engaging in sport and recreation that military members are focused towards the attainment of socially desirable attitudes, habits and values. The use of constructive sport and recreation activities provide a satisfying outlet for idleness and mischief. The South African Navy members participate in inter-unit and local league competitions which include 27 sporting codes such as, soccer, netball, body building, tennis and table tennis, cricket, road running, squash, rugby, volleyball badminton, judo, rock and surf angling, sailing, surfing, golf, canoeing, cycling, mountain biking, kick boxing, service and practical shooting, hiking and endurance walking, swimming, blackball pool and chess. Although recreational opportunities have not improved on board ships, members off duty time are largely spent pursuing hobbies, exchanging movies and sleeping (Schwerin, Glaser & Farrar, 2002; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015).



Deployment on board a ship typically extends from three to six months at a time during which the separation from family and loved ones can be rather stressful (Carter et al., 2015). When not deployed military member resides with their families in military settings where sport and recreation activities are practised (Young, 2013). They use these times to relax and to rejuvenate mentally and physically in order to be prepared for their next deployment. It is important to understand the working environment in which SAN members find themselves (Tasseron, 2001; Duxbury & Higgins, 2002; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). For the military to operate successfully, it must attain a high degree of reliability. Members depend and trust that each individual will follow through on what is expected of them and what they were trained to do. This high degree of conformity and precise training is critical in life and death situations. Hence, discipline in the military is a

fundamental aspect that must be respected in order to manoeuvre effectively. The rules are defined and administered to ensure consistency at every level (Department of Defence, 2004; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). Service in the SANDF is governed by the following ethical principles: service before self; obey and support lawful authority; and respect the dignity of all persons (Department of Defence, 2004; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). In such a context, military members must accept their responsibilities despite a decreased sense of autonomy and self-expression.

For Farish (2008) bureaucracy involves specialization, division of duties and assigning each worker within the organization a role based on their training. A bureaucratic structure is suitable in the military due to its strong culture and set traditions. Roles, customs and practices have become accepted into the ritual of military life. Precedence becomes the benchmark for how and why decisions are made. The SANDF maintains a margin of safety to be prepared for war, and this can lead to rigid situations that are difficult to change even when this type of behaviour is no longer appropriate. The organization can become rule bound making it difficult to be flexible in a variety of new situations that come with a changing world (“red tape”). Specific to the Navy and for purposes of this study, the researcher as a member of the SAN, observed that the work environment consisted of working aboard SA ships where they performed their sea trade in both local and international waters (Cozett, 2012). Extensive deployments are expected as part of the naval environment. Naval forces members conduct surveillance operations to protect the sovereignty of our coasts, and defend South African waters against illegal fishing and ecological damage (Cozett, 2012). Furthermore, the SANDF supports international initiatives for peace and humanitarian assistance. The unique naval working environment

differs from other military elements such as the SA Army, SA Air Force, and SA Medical Health Services.

1.2 Rationale

The primary function of armed forces is to maintain national security. Military and Naval arms of services requires its personnel to serve in physically challenging conditions. The effectiveness of its operations depends on the mental toughness of the members (Sudam & Hackey, 2011). Therefore, it is believed that naval personnel live on the margins of society. They are normally faced with stressful, cramped, stark, noisy, and dangerous conditions at sea (Schwerin, Glaser & Farrar, 2002; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015).

Sailors in the military work in physically demanding conditions with high stress levels caused by psychological, social and environmental factors influencing their day to day working conditions. Men and women still go to sea for the opportunity to see the world. Deployment on board ships typically extends for months at a time. The quick turnaround of many modern ships, spending only a matter of hours in port, limits naval personnel's free-time ashore. Restrictions on shore, coupled with reduced time in port by many ships translate into longer periods at sea. Cozett (2013) conducted a qualitative study with naval staff and found that most naval staff members reported that extended periods at sea and working with shipmates is something to get used to. Although recreational opportunities have not improved on board SA Navy ships, staff members' off duty's time is largely spend pursuing hobbies such as reading, watching movies, sleeping and being sea sick. These factors increase the likelihood of stress-related exposure for military personnel (Schwerin, Glaser & Farrar, 2002; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015).

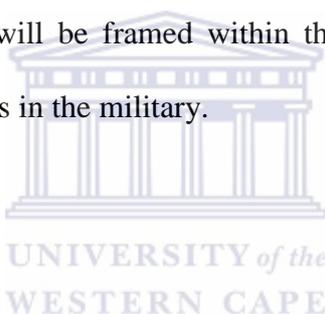
With the varied operational demands, it is crucial that the military develop, maintain and promote health and wellness of its members to sustain force readiness and increase force productivity (Patel, 1991). Well-being is linked to several aspects of health, including the psychological, spiritual, environmental, occupational, cultural and physical which are all components of force readiness. Demands from work may often affect home life and can contribute to stress-related behaviours for military members. Stressors can have a negative impact on physical and mental health of an individual and more specific a soldier. Therefore, the study hoped to identify these conditions within the sample and deemed this an opportunity to understand the research phenomenon. The need thus exist to develop an appropriate instrument to assess military staff's levels of stress and leisure involvement.

The rationale of this study is thus to develop a preliminary appraisal tool to determine the levels of stress of Naval staff and types of recreational activities they participate in that could be used during the assessment stage in the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model (TRSMIM) developed by Young (2013) as a means to reduce or manage stress in the military.

1.3 Problem Statement

The Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model (TRSMIM) was developed by Young (2013) as a possible way to provide soldiers of the Botswana Defence force the necessary skills and ability to cope with stress. The model incorporates the main aspects of traditional therapeutic recreation models (assess, plan, implement and evaluate) with the intervention being stress specific, making use of the wellness dimensions identified by Miller & Foster (2010). These dimensions include: physical, emotional, psychological, social, intellectual, spiritual, environmental, cultural, economic and climatic wellbeing as they relate to the military workplace.

No specific standardized appraisal or recreational therapy assessment tool exist to measure stress and leisure behaviour in African or South African military context. Stress appraisal tools as well as leisure appraisal tools that exists was based on international literature from European and American countries. Moreover, these internationally developed tools were not readily available and are costly to use. Smith (2011) stated that instrument development is to determine the distribution of a phenomenon procedure of choice when a need exist to develop an instrument because existing instruments are inadequate or not available. Therefore, the appraisal tool in this study will be unique in the sense that it will be the first appraisal tool developed measuring stress and leisure behaviour in a South African military context and will be framed within the TRSMIM model developed by Young (2013) to manages stress in the military.



1.4 Research questions

- What are the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment?
- What are the main questions of the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment?

1.5 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to develop a preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour.

1.6 Objectives of the study

For the purpose of this study, the objectives were:

- To explore and identify the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment.
- To identify the questions that should be included in the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study was unique in understanding stress management of military members working in a military setting. There are limited studies in the literature looking at participation in sport and recreation and the use of recreation to prevent stress in military settings, since this is an area of study with little or no data available on stress management of the South African military naval population. Thus, this study aimed to make a significant contribution to naval information systems. What makes this study distinctive is that it included stress management amongst naval members from both sexes. Furthermore, the study would be the only one of its kind in developing an appraisal tool for stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a South African context. The study conducted by Young (2013) focussed on the TRISSM model in an African context and did not focus on the development of an appraisal tool for stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour. Military members serving at sea are an untapped source of information. Results from the present study may be used by researchers in different African military settings to test the appropriateness of the newly developed tool.

1.8 Summary of research methods

A brief description of the methodological considerations is provided to give the reader a short overview of the research approach and methods that was adopted. A more detailed discussion on the research methodology are offered in Chapter 3. In order to understand military member's experiences of stress in work place, the researcher adopted a qualitative research method, which would best allow participants to articulate their experiences in their own words. Therefore a qualitative approach has been adopted.

The objective of instrument development in this current study was to translate the research needs into a set of questions that respondents were willing and able to answer. The process of instrument development as used by Farnick and Pierzchala (2012) was based on a multistage procedure (four phases: Phase 1, preliminary phase; Phase 2, questionnaire development). During the purpose and scope of this study, the researcher focussed on the first two phases using qualitative methods to gather data (Creswell, 2003). This study aimed to measure those stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour factors that should be included in an assessment tool for use in military environment. The data collection method used was focus group discussions. Data was analysed by categorising findings into generated themes making use of thematic analysis. Refer to Chapter 3 for a detailed description of the research methods used in this study.

1.9 Definitions and Terms

The topics related to the research revealed a number of concepts which needed to be clarified and included:

Therapeutic Recreation:

The term refers to the enhancement of leisure in order to maximize the individuals overall wellbeing, health or quality of life. It is carried out by engaging people in planned

recreation, developing written goals and targeting outcomes, while focusing on the person as a whole and the changes needed in his/her living environment (Daly & Kunstler, 2006).

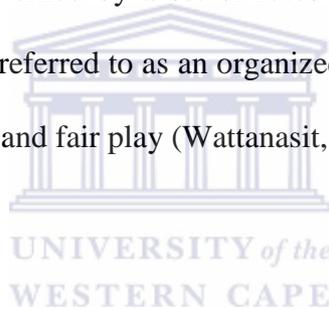
Coping Strategies:

According to Van Zyl, Surujal and Singh (2009: 75), “coping strategies are purposeful and contentious actions that are taken in response to events that threaten psychological harm.”

Coping strategies thus involve self-corrective behaviour as a way to reduce the impact of stressful events in one’s life (Beech, Burns, & Sheffield, 1982).

Sport:

Sport is an activity that is governed by a set of rules or customs and often engaged in competitively. It is commonly referred to as an organized, competitive and skilful physical activity requiring commitment and fair play (Wattanasit, 2009).



Stress:

Stress is frequently referred to as physiological, psychological, emotional and behavioural response of a person to a situation of physical or psychological tension, or to the internal and external demands which originate when a situation requires so much from a person that it becomes a threat or a challenge (Van der Merwe, 2004).

Stress Management:

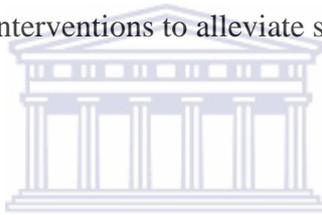
Lindon (2005) defines stress management as a strategy to reduce stress arousal or to cope completely with specific stressors (e.g. divorce, separation, high work load).

Questionnaire:

List of a research or survey questions asked to respondents, and designed to extract specific information. It serves four basic purposes: to (1) collect the appropriate data; (2) make data comparable and amenable to analysis; (3) minimize bias in formulating and; (4) asking questions (Wattanasit, 2009).

Appraisal tool:

In the context of this study the appraisal tool refers to assessing the individuals' level of stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour. Appraisal tools differ from questionnaires in that it is not developed for research purposes but to aid the therapist in assessing the individual in order to develop interventions to alleviate stress.

**Preliminary Appraisal tool:**

Preliminary means: to proceed or lead into the main part, or in preparation of something more important. For the purpose of this study, the appraisal tool developed would be the initial appraisal tool and might need further refinement before final implementation. It is therefore referred to as a preliminary appraisal tool.

1.10 Overview of Chapters

The layout of the thesis is given below. A brief summary of each chapter is provided.

Chapter One: Introduction

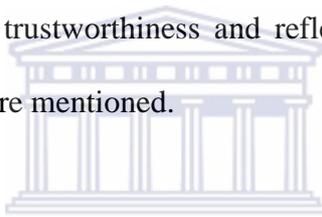
This chapter contextualises the importance of stress in the SA Navy by developing an appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model. This will be done by measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military members.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter 2 provides a literature review of current information about stress. This chapter addresses wellness and stress within a military context. It also investigates stress coping which is contextualised within a military setting. This chapter also contributes towards the theoretical framework of this investigation.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter Three describes the Research Methods used in this study. It outlines the research approach followed by an explanation of the methods of data collection including, selection of participants, the research setting, and an overview of the data collection setting which includes, procedures adopted, trustworthiness and reflexivity, a description of data and finally, ethical considerations are mentioned.



Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

Chapter Four is a presentation of results and findings of this research study in a qualitative thematic form. It discusses the participants' experiences and interpretations of stress management in the work place.

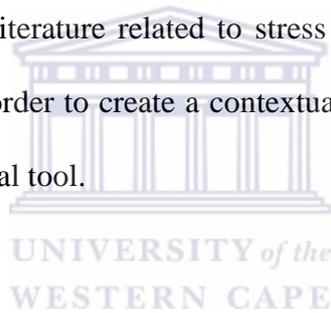
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

Finally, Chapter Five is the final chapter, represents the conclusion of this thesis in which the key findings of the study are highlighted and discussed to determine whether the goal and objectives of the study have been met. It concludes by offering recommendations and the way forward for the members of the military to manage stress.

1.11 Chapter Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to provide a better understanding of the military and naval services, the stress military personnel are exposed to; to formulate the rationale, problem statement, research questions, an aim, and objectives and to clarify the terminology used in this study. The researcher introduced and contextualized the topic under investigation that of stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment as a means to identify the questions that should be included in the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment. The scope of the study was therefore outlined and clarified.

The next chapter focuses on literature related to stress in the military, support, personal and occupational stressors in order to create a contextual framework to guide the study in the development of the appraisal tool.



CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW
STRESS IN THE MILITARY, IMPACT OF SPORT AND RECREATION IN MILITARY,
INSTRUMENTS MEASURING STRESS, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

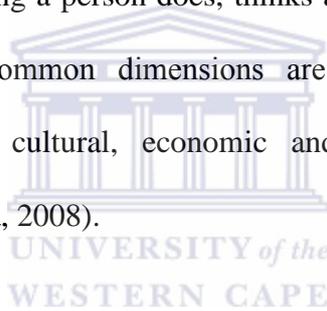
This chapter provides a literature review relating to the development of a preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in a South African context. According to Renwick (2009), a literature review in a dissertation intends to inform a planned study. The literature review for this study provided the framework for the data collection and for substantiating and interpreting the findings.

In this chapter the concept stress is reviewed which indicated that military readiness is an important factor in military forces. It also stated that military members are repeatedly exposed to life threatening situations. The nature of the job demands of military members is such that they experience high levels of stress. Failure to manage these stresses could have an effect on employee wellness and job satisfaction (Cohen, Kamarck & Mermelstein, 1983; Renwick, 2009; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). The chapter begins by discussing employee wellness and stress, emphasis was placed on the stress phenomenon and how it pertained to the military environment. A section pertaining to stress in the military, relating to military settings and exposure to stressful situations was discussed. A

third section discussed the impact of employee wellness, symptoms of stress, sport and recreation in the military which will provide the background of research and to lay the foundation of familiarity with the topic being researched.

2.2 Employee Wellness

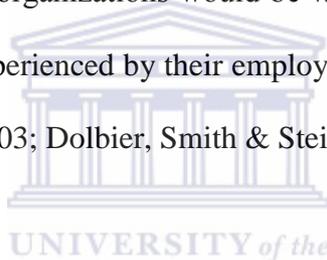
The experience of stress comes in different forms and affects each person differently and at different times. Bagne-Walsh (2008) and Miller and Foster (2010) investigated the term “wellness”. In this context, wellness was seen as a positive approach to living rather than the absence of illness (Adams, 2003; Bagne-Walsh, 2008; Watson, 2008; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). In essence wellness is the integration of body, mind and soul in addition to the appreciation of everything a person does, thinks and believes (Bagne-Walsh, 2008; Watson, 2008). It’s most common dimensions are physical, intellectual, spiritual, occupational, environmental, cultural, economic and climatic wellness (Corbin & Pangrazi, 2001; Rego & Cunha, 2008).



Employee wellness, through the implementation of wellness programs results in higher productivity (Corbin & Pangrazi, 2001; Rego & Cunha, 2008). Rego and Cunha (2008) stated that a good workplace is characterised by five dimensions: credibility, respect, fairness, pride and camaraderie. The dimension credibility in an organization refers to being trusted, believed in and admired due to your abilities, qualities and achievements. The term respected refers to being held in high regard. Dimensions such as pride, fairness and camaraderie are instilled in the naval ethos (Rego & Cunha, 2008). This implies that organisations can be a source of meaning and growth for people, building a sense of purpose, self-determination, impact, competence, belonging, meaning and enjoyment, rather than leading to psychological suffering and feelings of alienation (Watson, 2008). This forms the anchor for the health and psychological well-being of employees (Panelli &

Tipa, 2007; Watson, 2008; De Carvalho & Whealin, 2015, Watson, 2008). Thus the workplace climate is critical to reduce job stress, maintaining good health and well-being of employees (Corbin, & Pangrazi, 2001; Pfanz & Olge, 2006).

Employee wellness is the extent to which you can express values and gain personal satisfaction and enrichment from paid and non-paid work. Hettler (1980) and Anspaugh, Hamrick and Rosato (2004) defined employee wellness as the level of satisfaction and enrichment gained by one's work and the extent one's occupation allows for the expression of one's values. Hamrick and Rosato (2004) stated that employee wellness is one's attitude about work and the amount of personal satisfaction and enrichment one gains from one's work. Thus, organizations would be well advised to understand ways to lessen the stress and illness experienced by their employees through the implementation of wellness programs (Adams, 2003; Dolbier, Smith & Steinhardt, 2007).



The morale of employees is the starting point measuring employee wellness (Castro & Martins, 2010). Military training contributes to building the morale of the troops by focusing on team cohesion and providing support to the troops. The four basic dimensions of morale in the military are: confidence in commanders, confidence in equipment, unit cohesiveness and perceived legitimacy of the mission. Research indicates that investment in healthier workers, health promotion and wellness programs results in higher productivity and earnings for the organization and large reductions in health care expenditures and utilization (Castro & Martins, 2010).

Occupational stressors or job stressors are defined as occupational stress that is the interaction of work pressures and the characteristics of the worker and how the demand of work exceeds the ability of the worker to cope (Cooper & Straw, 1998). Recognising the

cause of such pressures and developing coping strategies can relieve a person of stress (Cooper & Straw, 1998; Spielberger, Vagg & Wasala, 2003). Many stressors in military environments overlap with those in civilian environments, whereas specific military stressors include sudden changes in roles and responsibilities, confusion regarding role identity, confusion regarding rules, restrictions and mission goals, and feelings of physical or psychological threat (Shimazu & Kosugi, 2003). Job stressors in the military environment, such as work pace, job demands, control, supervision, conditions, long working hours, and shift work, are comparable to many other workplace environments (Bogg & Cooper, 1995; Shimazu & Kosugi, 2003; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015).

Louw and Viviers (2010) stated that military work is society's most stressful occupation. Lubuc (1991) argues that when morale is high, stress casualties are low in the workplace. In this regard the military is a challenging environment and members need an outlet in the form of sport and recreation (Louw & Viviers, 2010). Job stress may directly influence an organisation resulting in low productivity and increased errors and accidents, a high labour turnover, increased absenteeism, increased medical cost or even injury (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Sieberhagen, Rothmann & Pienaar, 2009). Positive employee wellness could be promoted through good supervisory relationships, support, growth opportunities and adequate resources (Cooper, Dewe & O'Driscoll, 2001; Sieberhagen, et al., 2009). According to Bagne-Walsh (2008) these issues need to be addressed in order for soldiers to be productive.

2.3 Stress

Stress is defined as the physiological, psychological and behavioural response of an individual to emotional or physical threats, and includes either imagined or actual threats

(Higgins & Endler, 1995; Van der Merwe, 2004; Besser & Scheckelford, 2007; Carter et al., 2015). Stress could thus affect a person mentally or physically. In essence, stressors are generally subjective. The impact on the individual depends on how the event is interpreted as stressful and ability of the individual to cope. The term stress will be understood in this study as having a negative impact on the individual, unless otherwise specified.

Dolan (2007) and Luis Gaviria and Associates (2008) divided stress into eustress (positive stress) and distress (negative stress). Stress is not always bad. Eustress or good stress enhances an individual's physical or mental functioning. Eustress experiences include stressors such as an athlete's perceived stress before an event. It is the kind of stress needed in order to function properly. Therefore, efforts to treat stress are utilized to help return individuals to healthier states of functioning so that personal or job-related goals can be reached (Lee-Baggley, Preece & DeLongis, 2005; Carter et al., 2015).

Although stress is inevitable and often necessary for human survival, degrees and forms of appraised stress may have negative repercussions. Distress on the other hand is associated with high levels of stress which are heightened by an individual's vulnerability and resiliency both of which contain innate and environmentally mediated components. People who are more resilient tend to handle stress more productively and experience less personal distress when faced with difficult circumstances (Sarason & Sarason, 2005; Dolbier et al., 2007). Simulations of traumatic events during military training will prepare military members to be resilient (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

2.3.1 Symptoms of Stress

Symptoms of stress can be psychological, physical and behavioural. The symptoms of stress can be classified as follows: survival stress, environmental stress, work stress, internally generated stress, family stress and stress generated from social relationships. Work stress may be a significant occupational hazard in the military, affecting both the emotional and physical health of military members (Pflanz & Olge, 2006; DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015). For a military member these symptoms could incapacitate military members for future deployments (Pflanz & Olge, 2006). Therefore, identifying individual's stresses gives the opportunity to the organization for evaluating their situations and a chance to the commander to take preventive measures in advance.

2.3.2 Physical, Psychological and Behavioural symptoms of Stress

Physical symptoms of stress are related to cardiovascular diseases such as hypertension, heart attacks, strokes, gastrointestinal diseases such as ulcers, diarrhoea, respiratory diseases such as asthma and tuberculosis (Yanovich et al. 2015; Ramchand, Rudavsky & Grant, 2015). Behavioural symptoms of stress in the military include increased alcohol and drug use, poor nutrition, fatigue, aggression toward fellow workers and family members, accident proneness and interpersonal problems in general (Yanovich et al., 2015; Ramchand, Rudavsky & Grant, 2015). Military stresses is often described as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), however evidence exists that there is a strong relationship between PTSD and physical symptoms such as cardiovascular disease.

The military environments can be hazardous to the health of military members, in which stress can promote the onset of mental illness (Ramchand, Rudavsky & Grant, 2015). Psychological symptoms are emotional problems that occur under conditions of job stress.

Depressed moods, burnout and irritability can be given as examples of job stress. Psychological symptoms of stress are related to psychological disorders. Some of the recognised responses to stress in the military are referred to as anxiety, PTSD, adjustment disorder, substance abuse and personality disorders (Jones, Greenberg, Fear, Mcallister, Reid & Wessely, 2008)

2.3.3 Stress in the military

A definition for stress is derived from the work of Bartone (1998), who conducted extensive research in the military environment. Bartone (1998) refers to the importance of distinguishing between two very different meanings of the word stress. In the first instance, reference is made to stimuli in the environment (both physical and psychological), which impinge upon the organism, and secondly, to the physical and psychological response of the organism to such stressors. Bartone (1998) describes stress within the military context as originating from forces in the environment. Stress is not an environmental event, a situation, or a mental anxiety. It is a reaction to these forces. Nevertheless, a stressor, as Allen (1983) says, is the agent that triggers a stress response within the body. The stressor is the cause, and stress is the effect.

In a study of stress, Furnham (1997) found that employees perceived a clear contradiction regarding workplace stress in that the cause of stress is viewed to be organizational, whereas the outcomes and alleviation are the burden of the individual. Military history is littered with evidence of changing views as to why military members suffer psychological breakdowns on operations (Harrison, Sharpley & Greenberg, 1998; Ramchand et al., 2015). Prior to World War Two the prevailing opinion was that those personnel who suffered psychological injuries were inherently weak. The aim of commanders, medics,

chaplains, welfare services and finally mental health practitioners was to increase the resilience of individuals to stress and to quickly and effectively manage individuals once they have been seen to suffer from the effects of stress. Stress is subjective to every individual but is often patterned by one's social background, including gender, social class, and the availability of coping networks and resources (Carter et al., 2015). What one person may interpret as a very stressful event, another may not. Stress can be caused by many different events and experiences; some depending on the individual and some are shaped by social structure and environment. Stress can be a positive response by increasing alertness and stimulating senses (DeCarvalho & Whealin, 2015).

2.3.4 Cognitive Stressors

For military personnel, sources of stress may include domestic or work concerns, or stress can result directly from the consequences of deployment such as the discomfort of unfamiliar surroundings and combat (Lazarus & Folkman, 2002). If classical principles of formal organization are maintained, employees work in an environment in which, they have minimal control over their working lives, they are expected to be subordinate, passive and dependent, they work with a short-term perspective and people are treated more as infants than competent human beings (Lazarus & Folkman, 2002). The uncertainty of unfamiliar surroundings, coupled with boredom, ambiguity and feelings of senselessness increase the likelihood of cognitive stressors. The individual's cognitive ability and behavioural efforts are constantly changing. The ability of the individual to handle particular demands, whether internal or external are taxing and increase the likelihood of cognitive stressors (Lazarus & Folkman, 2002).

Cognition plays two important roles in the mediation process between person and situation. The first role concerns the appraisal of the situation and second, the choice and regulation of coping strategies. One's initial construal of a stressor is an indication of how serious the stress is and what is at stake. By far the most often used application of this cognitive approach to stress and coping is the so-called transactional model Lazarus and Folkman (2002). This model specifies that an individual's response to a stressor is a function of two sequentially linked cognitive processes: primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. In primary appraisal the stressor is construed as either a threat, as harmful, or as a challenge. Once this cognitive interpretation is determined, a secondary appraisal is made in which the individual decides if he or she has the coping resources to deal effectively with the stressor. Simply put, coping is an activity we do to seek and apply solutions to stressful situations or problems that emerge because of our stressors. Actually, the term "coping" is more associated with "reactive coping", because in general, we see coping as a response to a stressor. On the other hand, there's also what we call "proactive coping", wherein the coping response is aimed at preventing a possible encounter with a future stressor. While coping mechanisms are brought about by a person's conscious minds, it doesn't mean that all of them bring about positive coping; there are some types of coping mechanisms which are maladaptive. Other psychologists say that maladaptive coping is also synonymous to "non-coping", since a person who responds to a stressor using a coping mechanism but isn't able to positively ward off the stressor or solve the stressful situation hasn't coped with the stress at all.

The primary function of the military is to maintain national security. Military armed forces carry out missions and training under a variety of stressful circumstances. Military members are expected to perform their duties fully. Therefore, the training and preparation

of military personnel become so crucial. Allen (1983) states that personality makes people more prone or more resistant to stress. In the military sources of stress normally include inadequate staffing, long working hours, duty schedules which are in conflict with family-time, deployments, threat of military discipline, problems with supervisors and a wide variety of other job related issues (Pflanz & Olge, 2006; Ramchand, Rudavsky & Grant, 2015). There are many factors that research suggests which contributes to the stress, stressors may include: deployment, often moving to new locations and ambiguity, (Ramchand, Rudavsky & Grant, 2015). The military are constantly exposed to work related stress, such as length of deployment, boredom, divided loyalty, senselessness or exposure to adverse living conditions on board a ship (Hourani, Williams & Kress, (2006). One of most significant stressors in the military family is separation due to military deployments (Hourani, Williams & Kress, 2006). Employees who are under stress in work may cost a lot of money and time for the organization. Because it is an inevitable result of work, relationships and personal life, people are always subject to stress on and off the job, which may affect productivity, and job satisfaction.

2.3.5 Emotional Stressors

Exposure to stress has generally been associated with a wide range of negative outcomes, including decreased well-being and increased incidence of psychological disorders such as posttraumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and major depression (Compare, Zarbo, Shonin, Van Gordon & Marconi, 2014). However, some individuals do not develop psychological disorders even when exposed to high levels of stress. It appears, therefore, that when faced with the same stressor, certain individuals demonstrate impaired functionality, while others show remarkable resilience. Stressful events typically elicit significant emotional responses. Accordingly, emotional regulation capacity has been

proposed as a mediator of stress adjustment. According to this model, exposure to stressors leads to the dysregulation of emotions, which in turn elicits negative psychological and physiological health outcomes (Compare et al., 2014).

The manner in which individuals are able to manage personal experiences to conform adaptively to a given context appears to be important to mental health. In the course of training and in their work, military personnel are often required to spend considerable time under intense conditions with other people. Due to the performance demands and the intensity of the situations, the interactions between individuals may become charged with negative feelings of frustration, anger, as well as a sense of being without support. This can lead to feelings of helplessness, shame or guilt, loss of comrades, fear of making mistakes all of which can lead to stress. Military operations across the entire range of conflict expose military personnel to a multitude of such stressors. Historically, the extreme stressors of combat and all-out war have received great attention, while these days most of the military is involved in a number of peacekeeping, peace-making, humanitarian, and other kinds of operations. The bond and camaraderie experience is equivalent to that between mother and child. Therefore, when soldiers experience the loss of a comrade due to injury or death, they lose hope, feel helpless and feel a loss of control (Young, 2013). Emotions are bottled up with little time for remorse or to go through the mourning process. Soldiers experience survival guilt and shame for letting a comrade down. Soldiers commit acts of interpersonal violence that haunts them and it is a struggle to overcome trauma experienced.

2.3.6 Social Stressors

Stress in the military can also contribute to social adjustment problems, such as alcohol abuse and others (Deahl, Srinivasan, Jones, Thomas, Neblett & Jolly 2000; et al.). Deployment is very stressful and takes soldiers away from family and friends. Family and friends are often the social support in the soldier's lives (Young, 2013). Social support is a coping strategy that can vary from person to person depending on how much support is needed (Young, 2013). Soldiers experience feelings of isolation, loneliness, further escalated by poor communication and occupational stressors. A sense of group coherence is established among deployed servicemen.

According to Hourani, et al, (2006) a strong relationship was found between occupational stress and family stress. Although, soldiers are lonely they share experiences and a sense of group cohesion and camaraderie. Soldiers share available spaces and partake in occupational and recreational activities. The cramped, confined spaces and absence of personal space lead to additional stress (Nash & Baker, 2007; Saltzman, Lester, Beardslee, Layne, Woodward, & Nash, 2011). A lack of trust, a sense that fellow soldiers do not care, a lack of camaraderie lead to feelings of isolation and that seeking treatment may have an adverse effect on the soldier's career.

Socialization, a process whereby individuals become part of a group that ultimately confines their behaviour and prepares them for the types of roles they are expected to play in their careers and personal life. This socialization leads individuals to develop a preference for what is familiar and helps to explain the long standing traditions that are held in the military. Thus the importance of identifying the social risk factors, in addition to the individual's risk profile within the military, will help to increase wellness within the

military community. Stress is an everyday occurrence among military personnel and has been associated with a variety of mental health and job performance outcomes (Nash & Baker, 2007; Padden, Connors & Agazio, 2011). Although there are adverse relationships between stress and mental health, the majority of the research on the relationship between stress and mental disorder in the military has focused on the psychological effects of exposure to trauma and combat. Although they receive training designed to provide strategies for survival and resilience (Nash & Baker, 2007; Padden, Connors & Agazio, 2011), they are still exposed to stress in both their operational and non-operational capacities. In a military environment, members are repeatedly exposed to stressful and unpleasant traumatic life events which often produce mental and emotional stress (Bell, Bartone, Bartone, Schumm, & Gade, 1997; Philpot, 2006). For a soldier, this can be a career stopper, since it can be associated with cowardice or malingering. When the soldier has dedicated his or her life to the military with high expectations for the future, this could be psychologically crippling (Thompson, Prottas, 2005; Brotheridge & Lee, 2005; Philpot, 2006). Stressors in the military can be powerful and unrelenting, compared to stressors in civilian life (Grzywacz, Almeida & McDonald, 2002; Nash & Baker, 2007). They are also multidimensional, being categorized as both internal and external.

2.4 Coping with Stress

Military members are exposed to life stressors such as combat, long deployments away from home and family (Kelley, Hock, Bonney, Jarvis, Smith & Gaffney, 2001; Wheeler, & Stone, 2010; Allen, Rhoades, Stanley & Markman, 2011). Coping buffers the effects of overall stress levels on health, both depression and physical symptoms (Dolan, 2001). Failure to cope with work stress and/or the use of ineffective coping strategies was linked to more negative physical and psychosocial outcomes in a Canadian military sample (Day

& Livingstone, 2001). Understanding these stressors and their coping techniques is important for future treatment, management, and prevention. According to Nash and Baker (2007), coping is seen as the conscious effort to solve personal, interpersonal problems, and to minimize stress.

Stress is an inevitable feature of work and personal life, although it can be managed. Nash and Baker (2007) state that by eliminating or minimizing these stressors is an important way to manage stress. Research has shown that military members cope better in predicted stressful situations and when a traumatic event is simulated, military members are more likely to avoid dangers in similar future situations (Nash & Baker, 2007). This is due to the fact that unpredicted stressful situations have an influence on a person's personal safety in dangerous situations. Stress levels also decrease if the person is more informed about the situation, providing time to prepare him or herself. Stress levels can be lowered if a person has the power to manage the duration of the situation (Young, 2013). Military members training are designed to give strategies for survival and resilience. Training includes rehearsals and simulations of armed conflict, hostage-taking incidents, terrorist attacks, and mass casualties (Nash & Baker, 2007). Some organizations have low stress, whereas other organizations have high stress, which affect employees adversely. There are many factors associated with how people perceive stress. Perceptions differ from individual to individual. Personalities make individuals more prone or resistant to stress (Allen, 1983). It is important to bear in mind that individuals react differently to situations, depending on the nature of the event and the personality traits of the person (Smith, 2011). Although stress is an inevitable feature of work and personal life, it still can be managed.

Some organizations have low stress, whereas other organizations have high stress, which affect their employees adversely. Some precaution can be taken by organizations to eliminate or to reduce stress. For Schaubroeck and Merritt (1997), a lack of job control is the cause of poor individual coping with job stress. Effective coping has been linked with workplace performance and the use of coping can lead to adaptation of demanding and stressful situations (Connell & D'Augelli, 1990; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Dolbier, Smith and Steinhardt (2007) emphasized that not everyone exposed to potentially stressful situations becomes stressed or ill. An individual's dispositional characteristics of hardiness and coping style may influence an individual's experience of stress or illness. Hardiness was identified as a potential protective variable, or a measure of protection, among Army reserve personnel who were mobilized for the Persian Gulf War, (Peeters & Le Blanc, 2001; Bartone, 2005). The primary underlying mechanism in hardiness is resilience. This involves understanding how stressful experiences are interpreted or made sense of in the context of an individual's entire life and how the person can stay healthy, despite high levels of stress (Bartone, 2006). Hardiness can also be referred to as power of endurance, resoluteness (firmness), self-assurance, toughness, stamina, durability and robustness (forcefulness). It predicts better health and has a direct buffering effect on symptoms of stress, especially under high- or multiple-stress conditions, including job disruption and family separation. Both these factors are relevant to the situation of the SAN being constantly deployed or separated from their families. It further contributes to increased cohesion in military units after intensive training exercises, including being exposed to the experience of being a prisoner of war (Dolan, Huffman, Adler, Wright, Thomas & Castro, 2001; Bartone, 2006). Coping strategies implies involving self-corrective behaviours as a means to reduce the stressful impact of the events in one's life. Military members often depend on alcohol, social support, family and leadership to help them cope with stressors

in the military environment. Alcohol is deemed acceptable to relieve stress, but may lead to a substance abuse issue (Kowalski, 2000; Day & Livingstone, 2001) Dolan and Endler, (2008) hold that one should attempt to manage one's stress by engaging in adequate exercise, engaging fulfilling social or recreational activities.

Coping strategies are only to assist a person to control, or cope, with the symptoms of stress. It cannot take the stress away instead the source of stress which caused the problem in the first place needs to be identified (Leatz & Stolar, 1993). Coping strategies will also not reduce stress, but rather provide a person with enough energy to deal with the problem in order eventually to reduce stress. Coping strategies have been shown to act as buffers of the effects of stress on physical and psychological health, and the strategies used are often a reflection of the appraisal process (DeLongis, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1988; Williams, Wiebe, & Smith, 1992). Research has identified negative coping styles that can exacerbate the effects of stress on physical and psychological health (Day & Livingstone, 2001, Dolan, 2001). In the military context of a study on coping and health among Army personnel, it was found that the less experienced, lower ranking junior- enlisted soldiers reported higher levels of passive coping than Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and Officers. Passive coping use was associated with high family-related stress, lower psychological well-being, and more reported physical illness symptoms. Passive coping is deemed detrimental to health outcomes and is associated with increased pain, increased disability and depression (Day & Livingstone, 2001, Dolan, 2001).

According to Dolan & Endler, (2008), there are four functions of coping with stress: prevention of a stressful situation, alteration of a stressful situation, changing the meaning of a situation, and management of the symptoms of stress. Major life events for which one

can plan, such as marriage, becoming a grandparent, or moving are often perceived as less stressful than other life events because one has a sense of control and can head off potentially stressful consequences of the event in advance (Dolan & Endler, 2008). Many times, stressors cannot be prevented, or eliminated, so another coping technique is to alter the meaning of the situation. This is done when the individual changes their perceptions, beliefs, and knowledge about the situation to make it less harmful and threatening (Dolan & Endler, 2008).

Soldiers who fight in a war zone appear to engage in health-compromising behaviours as a means of coping with the stress of combat. One study showed that 39% of military members from the current wars were identified as having “probable alcohol abuse” (Dolan & Endler, 2008). However, it is unclear if this is intended to be a form of coping or if it reflects some other socio-cultural norm such as constructing an identity as a soldier or as a masculine man. The military has many programs and resources for soldiers who are experiencing stress, especially stress related to combat. One of the most common programs is called resiliency training. The military has recognized the toll that recent and past wars have taken on soldiers mental functioning and are reacting by increasing awareness and teaching coping skills. Soldiers also have access to mental health counsellors, psychologist and chaplains at no cost to them. However, the military also recognized that soldiers often do not seek out these resources. According to the Medical Department of Behaviour Health, the reason soldiers do not seek help for mental issues are that having psychological problems could be seen as a weakness. Displays of emotion are often reacted to with a “suck it up” attitude. Soldiers feel getting help will negatively impact their careers. They also fear their commander has full access to their medical and mental health records. Also, the command climate often discourages getting help.

The military tries to focus on how to prevent combat stress from happening and teaching commanders the signs and symptoms of stress. The military, however, most of the time focus only on combat-related stress rather than every day or generalized stress (Dolan & Endler, 2008). Arguably, military member use more positive coping techniques such as physical activity and hobbies. The reason why military members use positive coping techniques is to alleviate stress. Soldiers are entitled to the same quality of life as the society which they protect. It takes more than hard work and training to keep them ready to fight and win. A balance needs to be kept between work and play, with leisure activities provided to revitalize them mentally and physically (Phillips, 2006). Lack of activity, in conjunction with loss of choice and control, can lead to isolation, loneliness, helplessness, and boredom, followed by withdrawal from the environment, instrumental passivity and depression (Dupuis, Smale & Wiersma, 2005). Therapeutic recreation services form an essential part of addressing a person's needs, taking into account the goal of protecting and promoting health (McGhee, Groff & Russoniello, 2005). Such recreation helps people to cope with physical or mental health problems or disability by promoting a personal sense of control and decision making. It could be defined as engaging people in planned recreation and similar experiences to improve functioning, health, well-being, and the quality of life, while focusing on the person as a whole and the changes needed in his or her living environment (Daly & Kunstler, 2006). Sport and recreation involves pleasurable and satisfying activities that are freely chosen and that motivate people to participate in them (Daly & Kunstler, 2006). Including such activities in treatment programs enhances a person's self-esteem, improves time management, prevents relapse and reduces the stress associated with recovery (Daly & Kunstler, 2006). Various models exist for therapeutic recreation such as Leisure Ability Model (LAM), Health Protection/ Health Promotion

Model (HP-HP), Optimizing Lifelong Health through TR Model (OCH-TR), Leisure and Well-being Model (LWM) and Leisure Spiritual Model. The most appropriate and practical model should be chosen, one which will serve as a guide in directing the types of activities and services that should be offered (Daly & Kunstler, 2006). Military members in the SAN have the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation activities, as the infrastructure is available to them in the form of programs and facilities. The importance of sport and recreation participation should thus be emphasized and promoted to these members, empowering them with the knowledge to enter into self-directed and self-managed programs.

2.5 The role of Sport and Recreation participation in the military

Sport and recreation in military settings mainly focuses on the promotion and maintenance of military efficiency and morale. It was believed that one could not send tired soldiers back into the line of duty, as they could be a danger to themselves and their entire unit (Rice, 1998). Military recreation programs are established as a source of readiness during deployment. Sport and recreation impacts virtually on all the dimensions of the human being and must therefore be applied as an integrated mechanism which constantly contributes to total wellbeing (also called wellness, or positive health) (Department of Defence instruction: SG NO 7/2000).

Total wellbeing is reached through striving for optimal quality of life in all aspects- social, mental, psychological, spiritual and physical. The main purpose of sport and recreation opportunities in the SANDF is to build character through rich, satisfying and creative outlets for individuals by focussing towards the attainment of socially desirable attitudes, habits and values. These programs were introduced as a way of providing soldiers with the

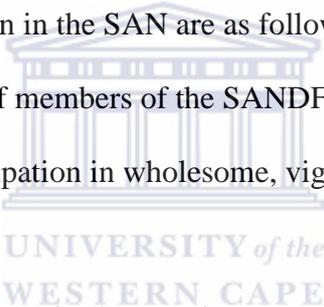
opportunity to relax and rejuvenate (Rice, 1998). Readiness is an important factor in military forces and is a function of the ability of a person to perform his or her duty (Lauder, Baker, Smith & Lincoln, 2000). It also implies that both the soldier and the unit are fully equipped and motivated to perform tasks. Sport and recreation are thus used as vehicles to create military readiness. In order to keep the soldier focused, a holistic approach should be taken (Rice, 1998). This includes being able to relax under stressful circumstances or attend to activities which can help with relaxation.

Sport and recreation serve as vehicles to achieve relaxation, as participation puts the personnel into another context. Decreased readiness, due to burn-out of both individuals and units, would be the result if these valuable sport and recreation activities were not provided (Phillips, 2006; Yanovich et al., 2015). Military members may have a very demanding schedule or may find themselves with a great deal of free time, depending on their location and duty station. When they have free time, they can take part in sport on either a recreational or a competitive basis (Lauder, et al., 2000). Sport and recreation programs are thus a major part of their daily lives (Mull, Bayles, Ross & Jamieson, 1997). Programs are the means through which sport and recreation benefits are made available to military personnel and their families.

Recreational programs such as the Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs introduced by the US Armed Services Division are offered to soldiers in these compounds (Rice, 1998). They provide support and leisure activities designed to enhance the quality of lives for service members (Phillips, 2006). The current study utilized the TR model and although the TR forms a vital component of treatment, with recreation as part of a planned intervention for improved physical, social, emotional and cognitive functions, there is very

little extant literature on TR programs in military settings, with evidence of only a few programs offered in the United States Army. Traditionally, the effect of leisure participation per se on stress and coping has not received as much research attention as the protective factors, described earlier, (Garmezy, 1987) in influencing stress resistant responses. Even though participation in leisure activities has been identified as providing a unique set of protective factors to help individuals cope with stressful situations (Caldwell, 2005), more research across the lifecycle is required to better understand the influence of leisure participation in enhancing a resilient response and promoting stress resistance in the face of adversity.

The role of Sport and Recreation in the SAN are as follow:

- 
- Ensure the well-being of members of the SANDF by developing a sound body and mind through the participation in wholesome, vigorous and creative recreational activities;
 - Ensure the creation of organised recreation opportunities for SANDF members in order to build character through rich, satisfying and creative leisure-living patterns focussed towards the attainment of socially desirable attitudes, habits and values;
 - To open new interests, which provide satisfying outlets for individual needs;
 - To develop through recreational associations of people a respect for the worth and dignity of individuals and faith in democratic action;
 - To develop skills in the arts of leisure-time living that raise the level of the refinement, culture and happiness of people;
 - To develop and strengthen social relationships within the family and military community through close group associations and activity participation;

- To strengthen the morale of the military community through expanding leisure-time interests and improving social living conditions;
- To develop military community stability by providing an environment that is conducive to wholesome family living and community life;

The objectives are reached by creating the following sport and recreation opportunities for sailors.

In the SAN Sport and Recreation programs include the following (Department of Defence instruction: SG NO 7/2000):

- Sport codes are offered to boost morale and esprit de corps.
- Wellness days and mass sport participation days are offered.
- Sports days are hosted to afford members the opportunity for participation.
- Recreation activities are practised to combat idleness and boredom.
- Recreation activities include choirs, board games, sport activities.
- Weekly Sport days on Wednesdays from 12:00- 16:00.
- Subsidized transport and accommodation on sport excursions local and internationally.
- Inter- unit, inter-force and inter-services sport days.

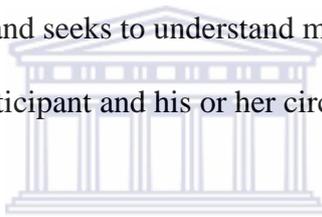
2.6 Standardised Instruments for use in TR Settings

Assessment is the cornerstone of the therapeutic recreation process. Its importance in establishing the helping relationship with participants and influencing the course of action cannot be overstated. Assessment begins the relationship-building process, provides baseline information for understanding outcomes from services, provides direction to the plan, ensures person-centered services, facilitates team collaboration, and meets

professional standards of practice (Anderson, 1998; Austin, 1998; Stumbo, 2002). Assessment is a systematic process for gathering specific information about an individual and his or her environment for the purpose of identifying aspirations and strengths and collaboratively making decisions about the individual's plans (Anderson, 1998).

The assessment process is as follows:

- is strengths-based and person-centered,
- is individualized, based on the participant's world view,
- focuses on well-being and quality of life through leisure,
- looks at the whole person in her or his environment (authentic and ecological),
- is based on the aspirations and goals of the participant,
- uses multiple methods and seeks to understand multiple variables
- always involves the participant and his or her circle of support.



The overriding objective of the instrument development is to translate the researcher's information needs into a set of specific questions that respondents are willing and able to answer. The process of instrument development is based on a multistage procedure, which includes the following: Preliminary phase: initial questions, reasons for creating the instrument, identification of patients or special groups to which the instrument is addressed, identification of needs, operationalization of variables, Questionnaire development: questions, scales, Pilot testing: assessment for feasibility, comprehension, ease of use, usefulness of the instrument, context of the Research, Evaluation: the validation process, including reliability (Long, 2008). Standardized instruments have been developed for use in various TR settings. The most commonly used instruments in TR settings according to Long (2008) are: 1) The Leisure Diagnostics Battery test was developed to measure the perceived freedom of leisure and leisure barriers using the

survey method and a five social constructs for perceived freedom (perceived competence, perceived control, needs, depth of involvement, playfulness) and three scores for leisure functioning (barriers, leisure preferences, knowledge of leisure opportunities). 2)The Leisure Competence Measure (LCM): the LCM was and measures current levels of functioning in eight leisure domains which are rated on a seven-point system, based on the observations of the TR specialist, to represent a continuum of independence of each domain (Long, 2008). These domains are: leisure awareness, leisure attitudes, leisure skills, community integration skills, community participation, cultural and social behaviour, interpersonal skills and social contact (Long, 2008).

Therapeutic recreation specialists form part of the treatment teams in settings where TR systems are utilized. These assessments could also be combined with other TR assessments to gather more comprehensive information. The TR services will then focus on the subjects patterns of activity pursuit, related to issues such as time awake, average time involved in activities, and preferred activities. After the different parties have captured the data on the computer, the computer generates guidelines for appropriate treatments and determines the cost of the proposed care (Long, 2008).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The aim of the theoretical framework is to apply the selected TR model and apply it in a military setting. Such models provide a conceptual basis for directing TR practices and ensure clarity in the application of the professional practice. They necessitate building knowledge through research on TR models to develop theory-based programming (Williams, 2008; Daly & Kunstler, 2006; Baldwin, Hutchinson & Magnuson, 2004; Austin, 1998). A model directs types of intervention programs and services that could be

offered and that are most appropriate to the client or participant in order to meet their needs and goals as well as the organization offering the service within a specific framework (Williams, 2008; Daly & Kunstler, 2006). It is important to explore various models. High quality TR services are organized and respond efficiently to the needs of the participants. The following models were explored:

2.7.1 Leisure Ability Model (LAM)

The Leisure Ability Model (LAM) was the first and primary TR model used for many years and has a strong leisure-orientation. This implies that the ultimate outcome is related to leisure behaviour, building on the existing body of knowledge of leisure to ensure that services improve independently and satisfy the participants' leisure functioning. With a more medical or therapy'- oriented model, the focus is on the improvement of functional behaviours as the desired outcome and is drawn from the medical, psychiatric, psychological and human development body of knowledge (Stumbo & Peterson, 1998). The ultimate outcome of this model is the development of a satisfying and appropriate leisure lifestyle (Ross & Aston-Sheaffer, 2009). The rationale for TR services, according to the Leisure Ability Model, is based on a logical set of assumptions concerned with typical adult leisure behaviour (Stumbo & Peterson, 2009; Stumbo & Peterson, 1998): Every human being needs, wants and deserves leisure, as it provides opportunities to try new behaviours, experiences, learn new skills, meet new people, deepen existing relationships, and develop a clearer sense of self. Many people experience barriers to full and satisfying leisure experiences. Individuals with disabilities, illnesses or crippling conditions may experience even more barriers to taking part in leisure than their non-disabled counterparts and may need additional help from TR specialists to overcome or reduce these barriers.

The LAM is used as a basis for service delivery to reduce the barriers to involvement in leisure and is based on the principle that, in order for the client to develop an appropriate leisure lifestyle, TR is provided along a continuum of three types of services. These are the provision of treatment (intervention), leisure education, and recreation participation services (Williams, 2008; Daly & Kunstler, 2006; Stumbo & Peterson, 1998). The Leisure Ability Model is not conducive to use as the sole model for the development of the intended objectives of this study.

2.7.2 Health Protection / Health Promotion model (HP-HP)

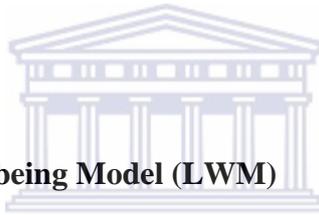
Therapeutic recreation plays a significant role in the healthcare industry as a treatment modality, making use of recreational activities as interventions and for the partial treatment of specific health problems. In the 1980s there was a shift towards health promotion and to reducing the costs of health care. This led to the Health Protection and Health Promotion Model, developed by Austin in 1997 and revisited by Austin in 2009 (Ross & Aston-Sheaffer, 2009; Daly & Kunstler, 2006; Austin, 1998). The main goal of this model was to assist people to recover from health threats, to assist with health protection, and to achieve as high a level of health as possible through the use of activity, recreation and leisure (Williams, 2008; Daly & Kunstler, 2006; Austin, 1998). The HP-HP model emerged from four major concepts/theories related to the humanistic perspective, to high-level wellness, to stabilization and self-actualization tendencies, and to health (Williams, 2008; Austin, 1998). According to Murphy (as cited by Austin, 1998: p. 110), those who believe in the *humanistic perspective* „seek to promote the capacity and ability of groups and individuals to make self-determined and responsible choices in light of their needs to grow, to explore new possibilities, and to realize their full potential“. Humanistic perspective provided a foundation for the *high level wellness* perspective. This follows a

holistic approach, dealing with health enhancement beyond traditional medicine. It helps individuals achieve as high a level of wellness. The health Promotion model was not used in this study because it did not link with the study objectives. Although the HP-HP model's outcome is optimal health, with recreation and leisure as a means towards this outcome, it is not conducive to use as the sole model for the development of the intended objectives of this study.

The HP-HP model differs from the LAM in that it focuses on optimal health as an outcome, rather than as a satisfying leisure lifestyle. However, it also shows similarities in having three service components offered along a continuum (prescriptive activity, recreation and leisure). It focuses on the protection and restoration of an individual's health and then on his or her potential to achieve optimal health in a favourable environment, an approach that is more in line with modern-day health care (Williams, 2008; Daly & Kunstler, 2006; Austin, 1998). Participants move along the continuum, aiming to reach higher levels of health and to enhance their feelings of self-efficacy. They feel more confident in their own ability to succeed and more in control of their lives as they progress on the illness-wellness continuum. The TR specialist's role is to guide them along the continuum so they attain increased levels of independence. In cases where the participant is totally reliant on help, the need for stability will be evident and a TR specialist will need to be prescribed in order to assist the subject. As the subject progresses along the continuum, the actualization tendency increases and the participant become more responsible for his/her own recreation experiences (Austin, 1998). The Health Protection /Health Promotion model is not conducive to use as the sole model for the development of the intended objectives of this study.

2.7.3 Optimizing Lifelong Health through TR model (OLH-TR)

As stated previously, TR services can contribute to health enhancement. The Optimizing Lifelong Health through Therapeutic Recreation Model (OLH-TR) is grounded in the developmental theory of human aging/adaptation of Baltes and Baltes (as cited by Wilhite *et al.*, 1999), and is further influenced by other TR models. The main purpose of this model is for people to achieve and maintain leisure lifestyles that enhance their health and well-being across their life course (Ross & Aston-Sheaffer, 2009). These members need to maintain their leisure lifestyles in order to enhance their health and well-being throughout their careers. The Optimizing Lifelong Health through Therapeutic Recreation Model is not conducive to use as the sole model for the development of the intended objectives of this study.



2.7.4 The Leisure and Well-being Model (LWM)

The Leisure and Well-being Model (LWM) is a contemporary service delivery model of TR, supporting the role of TR in adapting to well-being as a desired outcome of TR services. Service delivery models define how TR should be practiced and help practitioners in making decisions about services that are needed. It reinforces the value of TR to participants, their family members, and other health professionals. The LWM is embedded in the literature of psychology, human development, strength-based practice, and the leisure behaviour theory that enhances the sophistication and effectiveness of the professional practice and facilitation of program evaluation. It recognizes that the resolution of problems does not necessarily result in an increase of the personal growth which is central to the dimensions of well-being, but rather facilitates the development of the content and experiences that increase positive emotions and in the development of resources and capabilities in support of well-being. In a military context, the aim would be

to develop hardiness in order to build resilience and well-being. The Leisure and Well-being Model is not conducive to use as the sole model for the development of the intended objectives of this study.

2.7.5 Leisure-Spiritual Coping model

The focus on spirituality as a component of health, well-being and the quality of life is not new. It is one of the dimensions identified with wellness and is believed to play an important role in recovery from mental illnesses. When coupled with leisure, it can assist people to cope with stress, especially when they have been subjected to traumatic events such as war (Ross & Aston-Sheaffer, 2009; Drescher *et al.*, 2007). A relationship exists between leisure and spirituality. Spiritual well-being serves as a benefit for leisure participation, especially in natural settings, while leisure motivation, rather than the leisure activity itself, plays an important role in influencing and maintaining spiritual well-being (Heintzman & Mannell, 2003; Heintzman, 2002). According to Drescher *et al.* (2007), spirituality contributes to the development of personal values and beliefs in terms of the meaning and purpose of life. According to Heintzman and Mannell (2003), people use positive religious coping strategies (e.g. prayer, faith in God, or guidance from ministers/priests), or receive spiritual support from other church members or those sharing the same spiritual beliefs. Spirituality is embedded in the military tradition, in which soldiers are provided with various religious services.

The Leisure-Spiritual Coping Model, a fairly new TR model introduced by Heintzman in 2008, was developed around the belief that spirituality could play a vital role in recovery from mental illnesses, with the focus more on spiritual than on mental health. Heintzman (2008) conceptualized spiritual health, firstly as a component of holistic health and secondly as an integrated dimension of health, with optimal wellness dependent on

spiritual wellness as it interrelates with the other dimensions of wellness. This model was designed for TR specialists and leisure service providers to use when working with people who experienced stress, to help them to cope and deal with life challenges (Ross & Aston-Sheaffer, 2009; Heintzman, 2008). The Leisure-Spiritual Coping Model it is not conducive to use as the sole model for the development of the intended objectives of this study.

2.7.6 Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model (TRSMIM)

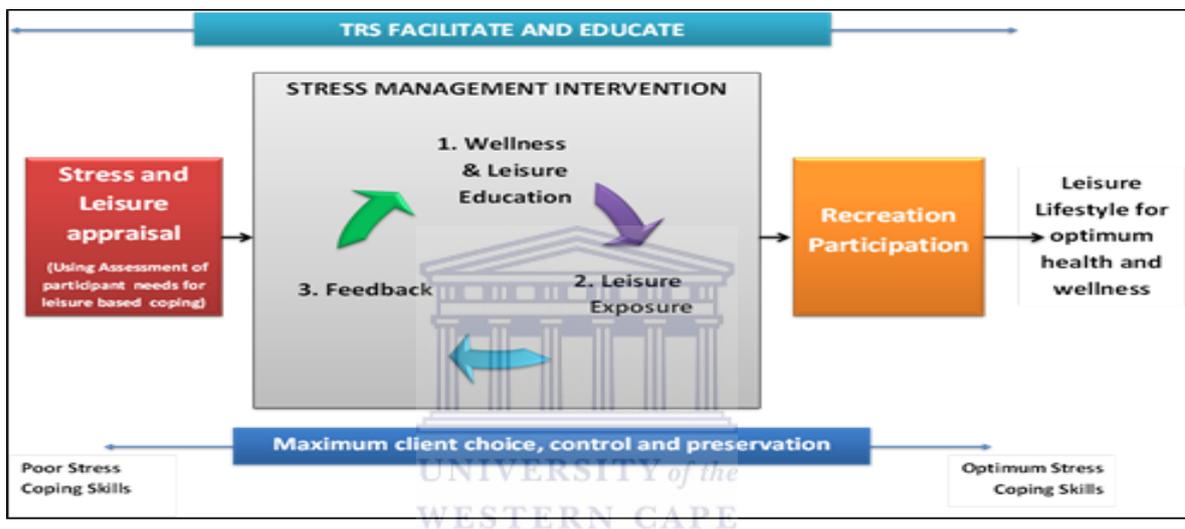


Figure 2.1: The Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model (Young, 2013: 323)

The study of Young (2013) looked at a possible therapeutic recreation intervention; one that could lead to stress reduction and contribute to psychological well-being. The study contributed to the development of a model (figure 2.1: pg. 42) addressed the main aspects of the Therapeutic Recreational models: assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation. This is referred to as the Therapeutic Recreation Process (figure 2.2: pg. 43).

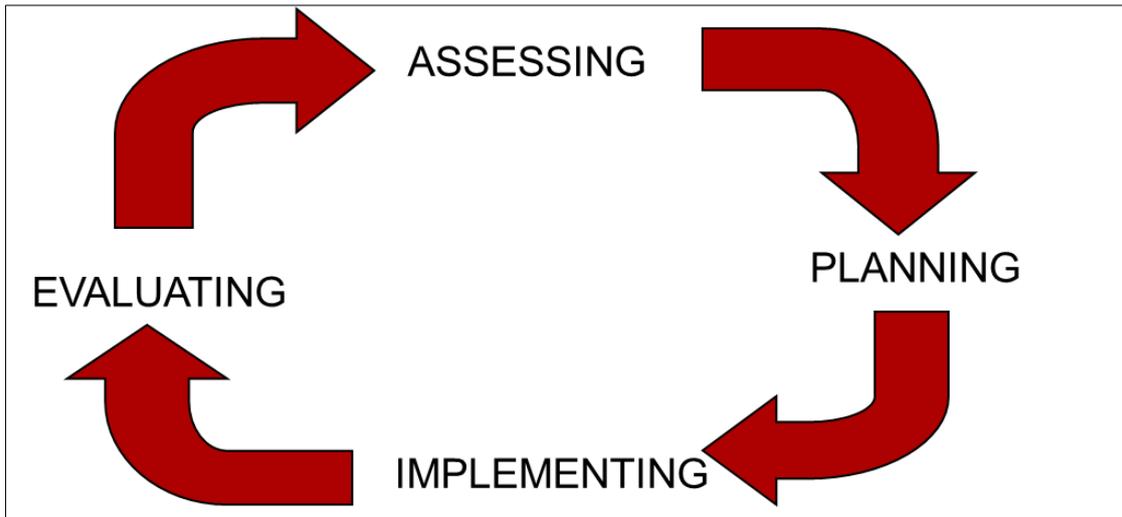
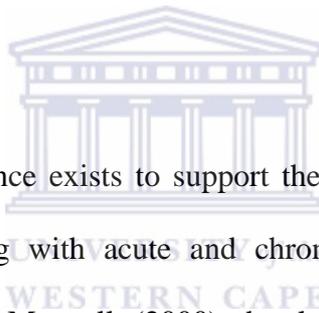


Figure 2.2: Cyclical nature of the Therapeutic Recreation process (Austin, 1998)

The Therapeutic Recreation process is a four-step cyclical process designed to assist the TR specialist in developing a purposeful intervention. The four steps are: Assessment, Planning, Implementing and Evaluating. These could be applied in any setting where recreation is used as a means of therapy to assist in achieving certain goals (Daly & Kunstler, 2006). The TR process is used to design programs and services in line with the objectives established for the participant (Daly & Kunstler, 2006). It establishes the individual's strengths, interests, goals and needs, in order to systematically develop and document an individualized support plan appropriate to the ability of the person (Long, 2008). Documentation is required for when any future treatment is needed. The TR process in an inclusive community-based recreation program will differ from the process in a physical rehabilitation or mental health setting. It is important that the TR professional have an understanding of the process and how to apply it in different settings or groups of participants (Long, 2008).

The intervention model of Young (2013) (figure 2.1: pg. 42) was however, stress specific, making use of the different wellness dimensions. The model suggests that making use of a Therapeutic Recreation specialist (TRS) which aims at assisting clients or military staff to

reach an optimal stress coping leisure lifestyle. The Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management (TRSMIM), could follow a multi-disciplinary approach, in facilitating treatment programs for the suffering of depression, stress addiction and or other mental and physical disabilities. Findings from Young's (2013) study did however indicate that military staff made use of physical activities for recreational purposes, mainly to the benefit of their own personnel well-being. Further findings showed that although soldiers participated in these activities, they had high levels of stress that was related to the military environment. Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Model will assist in assessing and identifying soldiers stress levels and leisure involvement while at the same time educating soldiers about health and well-being and the benefits of leisure as a stress coping mechanism.



A considerable body of evidence exists to support the contention that leisure can be an important resource for coping with acute and chronic life stressors (Iwasaki, 2001; Iwasaki, 2003). Iwasaki and Mannell (2000) developed a leisure-coping model that distinguished leisure coping beliefs from leisure coping strategies. Iwasaki (2001, 2003) determined that people's beliefs about their leisure contribute most significantly to the buffering effects of stress on psychological well-being. The model gives specific attention to individual differences in leisure influences in coping with stress as well the effects of different leisure activities and experiences in developing guidelines. Research indicates that leisure can be a stress-buffer in times of high perceived stress, leisure can reduce the negative effects of stress on people's mental or physical health (Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000). Iwasaki, Mannell, Smale and Butcher (2005) determined that leisure contributed to immediate health outcomes as well as mental and physical health in a sample of adults in high stress roles. Passive forms of leisure were important for helping people recuperate

from work-related stress despite the reduction of stressors associated with juggling multiple role responsibilities in adulthood (Iwasaki, 1998). It was believed that for example, regular participation in hobbies and crafts, visiting friends, and swimming were all associated with better psychological well-being and lower levels of stress. Hutchinson, Klieber & Bland, (2008) explained the role of leisure in coping with and adapting to negative life events. In addition to stress, Patel (1991) proposed that leisure can contribute to self-restoration following a negative life event. Another form of intervention which is proving to be effective is the inclusion of leisure-coping goals in recreation participation programs. It gives many opportunities to support leisure-based coping in which participants can experience a sense of solidarity in structured programs, facilitating meaningful connections (Hutchinson, Bland & Klieber, 2008). Hutchinson, Bland and Klieber (2008) noted that Iwasaki and Mannell developed the Leisure Coping Beliefs and Leisure Coping Strategies scales in 2002 to assess leisure-based coping, but that these scales have not been validated within therapeutic recreation settings. These tools are also not regularly available to use. Hutchinson, Bland and Klieber (2008) elaborated stating that standardised assessment tools should be guided by the following questions: ‘(1) How stressful do people perceive the event/ situation to be that brought them into TR services? , (2) How stressful do clients perceive leisure to be in the context of their current life situation?, (3) To what extent do clients perceive that leisure has helped them in the past or will currently help them cope with stress in their lives?, (4) How have clients used their leisure to cope with stress in the past?, (5) To what extent do clients feel they possess the personal or social resources to be able to use their leisure to cope with stress?’ (Hutchinson, Bland & Klieber, 2008: p.17). They developed a framework for assessing client needs for leisure based coping interventions. The framework is based on determining the perception on an individual of a situation perceived as stressful or not, the availability

of resources to manage the stressful situation and the perceptions of current and past leisure and leisure coping beliefs in order to develop a leisure-coping treatment for the individual. Leisure based coping is warranted within this framework if the individual perceive their current life circumstances as stressful (Hutchinson, Bland & Kleiber, 2008). (Figure 2.3: pg. 47) refers to the framework that was used to contextualise the appraisal tool being developed in this study.



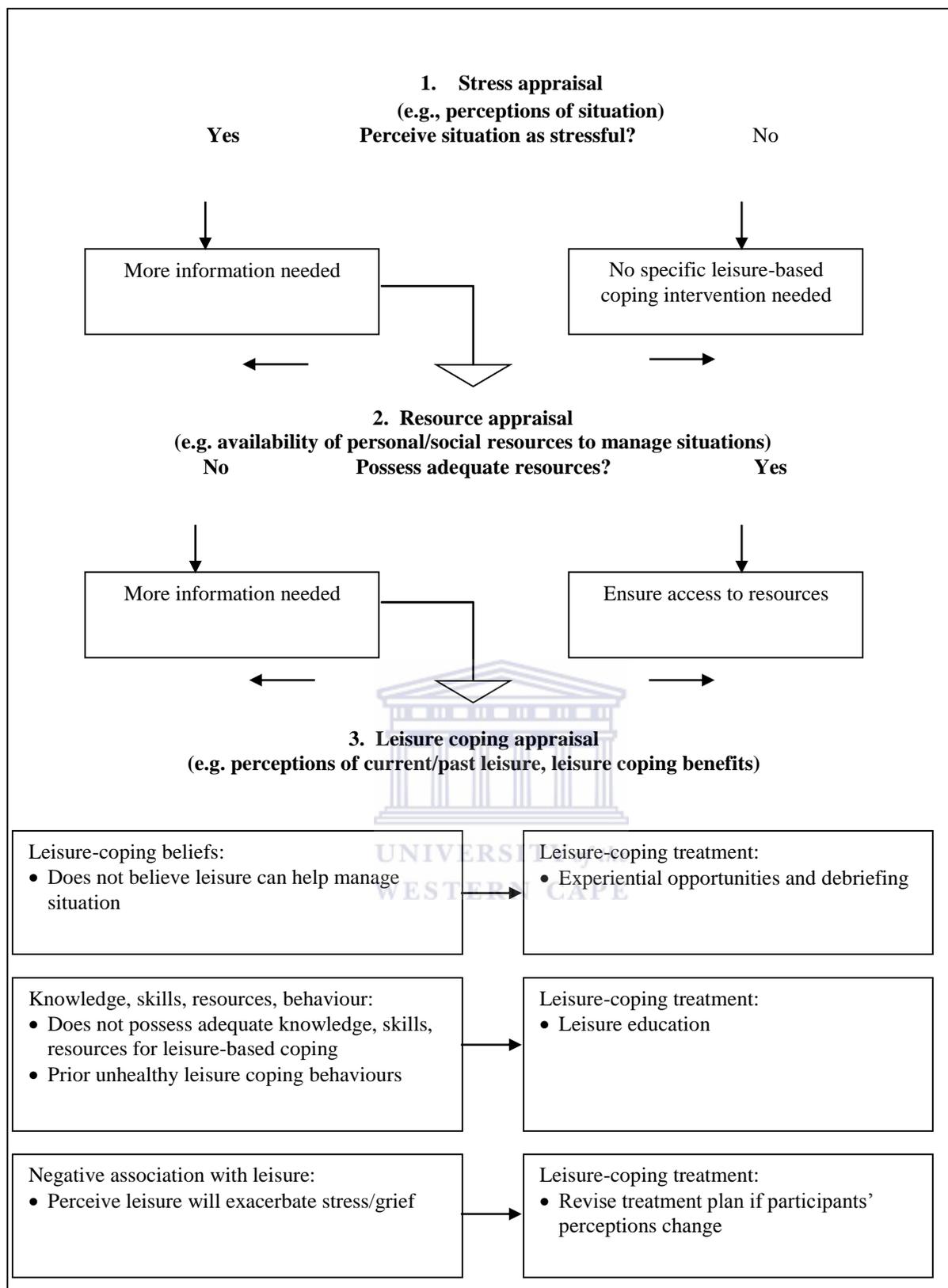
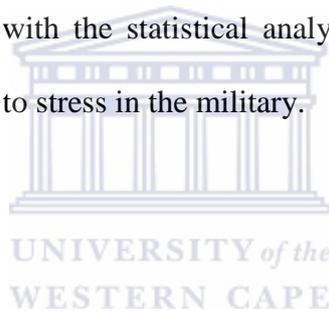


Figure 2.3: Assessing participants' needs for leisure-based coping interventions (Hutchinson, Bland & Kleiber, 2008)

2.8 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter aimed at providing a holistic view of employee wellness, stress and stress management in the military. Employees spend most of their time at work, and their wellness is important to their job satisfaction, productivity, health and psychological wellbeing. Stress is not always negative, since some level of stress is needed for normal functioning. Continuous exposure to stressful events can, however, cause physical or psychological damage. Stressors specific to the military environment were identified. It is necessary to eliminate or reduce such stressors to prevent the damage caused by stress.

This Chapter concludes the theoretical base for the study which is the foundation of this study, the next chapter deals with the statistical analyses and findings of the study by addressing the cause that leads to stress in the military.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2 the study was contextualized and provided a theoretical background in which the study was embedded. This chapter begins with an outline of the research approach adopted in this study. This is followed by an explanation of the methods of data collection which includes the selection of participants, description of the research setting, and an overview of the data collection setting which includes, procedures adopted. Thereafter, outlined and considerations around trustworthiness, reflexivity and a description of the data analysis is offered. Ethical considerations are also mentioned. The chapter concludes with a discussion of research design and methods, including methods most suitable for the SAN working environment.

3.2 Research Methodology

The focus of this study was to explore and identify the potential salient topics that needed to be addressed in the development of an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a South African military environment. In this study a qualitative approach was adopted. The intent of qualitative research was to understand particular social situations, events, roles and group interactions. Qualitative research enables the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual or place (Creswell, 2003). A qualitative approach allows a researcher to generate information with regard to perceptions and understandings that individuals have about their own experiences of a particular

phenomenon within any given context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Furthermore, qualitative research methods look to ascertain the underlying fundamental nature of the experiences of the participants and ultimately to inform the conclusions of any research (Creswell, 2003). A qualitative approach was therefore considered the most appropriate for this study as it provided the opportunity for military members to explain their experiences on stress management in a military setting in their own words.

3.3 Study Design

This study follows a pure exploratory qualitative design, exploring the phenomenon under investigation. This is done by means of a multi stage procedure. The study was executed through different phases in order to develop the appraisal tool making use of the model of instrument development to achieve the aim (Farnick & Pierzchala, 2012). The model identified four stages of instrument development: Phase 1, preliminary phase; Phase 2, questionnaire development, Phase 3, pilot testing and Phase 4, evaluation. For the purpose and scope of this study, the researcher focused only on Phase 1 and 2 Table 3.1 (pg.51) illustrated phase 1 and phase 2 of the multi-stage procedure utilised in the present study.

Table 3.1 Study design

Phases	Research questions	Selection of participants	Data collection method and setting	Research instrument	Analysis	Outcome
<p>Phase 1: Preliminary phase.</p> <p>Objective 1 To identify the questions that should be included in the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment.</p>	<p>What are the main questions of the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment?</p> <p>What are the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment?</p>	Purposive sampling	<p>Focus group discussions Naval staff (3 groups)</p> <p>Interviews with key informants</p>	Semi-structured interview guides	Thematic analysis	Identification of salient topics to develop assessment tool
<p>Phase 2: Appraisal tool development phase</p> <p>Objective 2 To explore and identify the potential salient topics needed to address in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment.</p>	<p>What are the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment?</p>		<p>Findings of phase 1</p> <p>Themes were stressors in the military, support in the military, operational deployment of military members, impact of stress on military families have been identified as theme four, leadership and sport and recreation in the military.</p>			Development of the Appraisal Tool



Table 3.1 (pg.51) described the multi stage procedure in two phases, research questions, selection of participants, data collection methods and setting, research instrument, analyses and outcomes. For the purpose and scope of this study, the researcher focused only on phases 1 and 2 to reach the study objectives.

The multi-stage procedure of Phase 1 included the research question for Phase 1 which was as follow: What are the main questions of the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment? Data was collected in this phase from three focus group discussions and interviews with five key informants using semi-structured interview guides. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify emerging themes. The identification of salient topics to develop the assessment tool was the final outcome of phase1.



Phase 2: was the developmental phase of the Appraisal tool. The research question of Phase 2 was as follow: What are the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment? Therefore, to determine the salient topics for the Appraisal tool, the findings from the literature review and the findings from Phase 1-Thematic Analysis was completed. Themes that were identified from an extensive literature review were as follows: Theme 1 – stressors in the military, Theme 2 – support in the military, Theme 3- operational deployment of military members, Theme 4- impact of stress on military families have been identified as theme four, Theme 5- leadership and Theme 6- sport and recreation in the military. The questions identified formed the bases on which the appraisal tool was developed.

3.4 Research Setting

Qualitative researchers use a naturalistic approach to inductively and holistically understand human experiences in terms of context-specific settings (Patton, 1990). Researchers are able to learn more through a naturalistic method of data collection (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this study the setting was defined as the Naval Headquarters in which the participants work. According to Creswell (1998) a data collection setting should be both convenient for the participants and guarantee them privacy and confidentiality. For this study, the most appropriate and natural setting for collecting data was the workplace. The wardroom of the participants on board the ship guaranteed the necessary privacy and confidentiality. For the purposes of this study the workplace needed to be clearly defined as a military environment where military activities is taking place on board a naval vessel.

3.5 Participant Recruitment and Selection

Research samples are a representation of a specific population (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Selecting the sample depends firstly on the aim of the procedure and secondly on the careful consideration of the parameters of the population, ensuring that the researcher is able to see the characteristics of the whole population (Leedy & Omrod, 2005). At the time of the research, the SAN consisted of approximately 7, 000 sailors (6000 permanent force members and 1000 reserve force members). The rank structure in the SAN is determined by various factors. Firstly, if the member is in possession of a University degree or National Diploma he or she is eligible to be selected after basic military training to become an officer. The highest level a member may progress to is an Admiral. SAN members not in possession of a University degree or National Diploma will become a non-commissioned officer, meaning that the highest level that members may be promoted to is a Warrant Officer. Promotion prospects from one rank to a higher rank in the SAN is

dependent on the following: availability of a vacant post, if the members served the minimum amount of time in the rank (3 years) or and if the members has done all his/her developmental and functional courses, if the member is due to be promoted, a promotion board will determine the suitability of the member to be promoted such as outstanding cases against the member, member conduct and contract renewal options. A SAN vessel has approximately 150 sailors on board. The researcher purposively selected 24 participants of a vessel that was docked to participate in focus group discussions. In addition to the focus group discussions, interviews were conducted with five senior officers and two psychologists from the Institute of Maritime Medicine (IMM). In both instances the purposive sampling technique was used which consisted of only SAN members in order to meet the selection criterion of the researcher (Gratton & Jones, 2004; De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005; Leedy & Omrod, 2005). The SAN and IMM are military settings, with security policies and procedures in place, and this determined when the participants could be made available for the research. Focus groups and interviews will be discussed further in the thesis under separate headings.

3.5.1 Profile characteristics of Focus Group participants

A sample comprising of 24 non-commissioned members was purposively selected, and all participants involved in the study was strictly from Naval Base Simon's Town. The military ranks levels spanned from Non-Commissioned Officers, Able Seamen through to Leading Seamen, Petty Officer, Chief Petty Officer and Warrant Officer. These are all the rank groups within the SAN. Participants ranged in ages from 22 to 56 years and included males and females. Due to the nature of the study both males and females was be selected to participate in the study. The following exclusion criteria applied in this study, namely; a) subjects classified as absent, b) those not signing a consent form are excluded from the

study. The following inclusion criteria applied to participants who gave and retained signed forms. Inclusion criteria were identified to be personnel in any sector employed by the navy aged 22 to 56 years. The study was not limited to any specific rank group or gender. The demographic characteristics of the present sample were as illustrated in Table 3.2, (pg.56).



Table 3.2 Profile characteristics of focus group participants

Pseudonems	Age	Designation	Work place	Number of years employed
Neo (f)	26	Officer	Ship	8 years
Thabiso	32	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	12 years
Barry	42	Warrant Officer	Shore Base	22 years
Amien	22	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	4 years
Carl	27	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	8 years
Ben	23	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	5 years
Lebogang (f)	24	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	4 years
Freddy	42	Warrant Officer	Ship	20 years
Gordon	56	Non-Commissioned Officer	Shore Base	32 years
Carriena (f)	31	Officer	Ship	11 years
Jim	43	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	15 years
Nagomza (f)	39	Warrant Officer	Ship	22 years
Leon	52	Senior Officer	Shore Base	32 years
Irene (f)	36	Officer	Ship	16 years
Neville	38	Non-Commissioned Officer	ship	18 years
Erin (f)	39	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	19 years
Keith	42	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	16 years
Zanelle (f)	38	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	18 years
Ashley	27	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	9 years
Bernard	46	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	26 years
Andrew	26	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	5 years
Ginger	44	Non-Commissioned Officer	Shore Base	24 years
Gavin	54	Warrant Officer	Shore Base	30 years
Rodney	52	Non-Commissioned Officer	Ship	32 years

3.5.2 Profile characteristics of Key Informants

Interviews were conducted with five senior officers and two psychologists from the Institute of Maritime Medicine (IMM). The five senior officers were selected from a

possible population of 150 senior officers, were invited to participate in this study's interviews

Candidates were purposefully selected from an updated SAN management information list. These candidates hold positions in the SAN ranging from Captain, Commander and Lieutenant Commander. They have held these ranks for more than ten years. The profile of the Key Informants is portrayed in Table 3.3, (p.57).

Pseudonyms	Age	Designation	Work place	Number of years employed
Leon	52	Senior Officer	Shore Base	32 years
Oscar	51	Senior Officer	Shore Base	30 years
Samual	45	Senior Officer	Shore Base	23years
Donald	56	Senior Officer	Shore Base	30 years
Kenny	58	Senior Officer	Shore Base	32 years
Marsha	46	Officer (psychologist)	2 Mil	20 years
David	42	Officer (psychologist)	2 Mil	16 years

Table 3.3 Profile characteristics of Key Informants

3.6 Research Instruments

Two methods of data collection was used, focus group discussions and semi-structured interview guide. The focus group discussions consisted of the following framework as specified (Appendix C) The interview guide using a semi-structured interview guides were used as a data-collection method and ensured a link between experiences of participants. Focus group discussions are deemed as an appropriate method of data-collection to develop an in-depth understanding and to put the data collected in context (Anderson &

Arsenault, 1998). According to Flick (2002) qualitative data-collection methods, like focus group discussions and interviews are useful because they allow the participants to express themselves in their own words, to have their voices heard and to offer personal views on interpretations, experiences and opinions.

The researcher formulated 10 questions to guide the discussions. The questions were developed after the researcher conducted an extensive literature review which exposed salient topics linked to stress in military settings. These salient topics were framed in terms of stress and leisure and included the following: Stress assessment salient topics are personal stress, occupational stress, wellness and operational deployment while leisure behaviour salient topics included social activities, passive activities, physical activities and outdoor activities. Focus groups were asked questions relating to their most pressing stresses, types of cultural stresses, stress experiences in the work environment and deployment, operational readiness, how stress affect the family, cultural determinants of how the family handles stress, the work-family conflict and how do you unwind. Some of the questions in the interview guide included were: What are the most pressing stressors of military life experienced by members and families respectively? What type of operational readiness is experienced prior to deployments? What type of stressors do you experience when on deployment? How does military culture affect family life? Explain the typical stressors or challenges you experienced in the operational environment? How do soldiers let off steam when frustrated at work? What do you and people in your unit do to relax, unwind, distress?

The interview guide in (Appendix D) was developed using the salient topics identified in the literature review and overlapping themes found in the interview guide. The interview guide was developed for key informants in the study which included five senior officers

and two psychologists. The guide for key informants consisted of questions relating defining stress, factors contributing to stress, health conditions caused by stress, risk factors relate to stress, prevention strategies and support measures in place in the SAN. The individual interview is an example of a qualitative method of data collection. This ensured that all the participants had a better understanding of the research outcomes (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Therefore, interview guides served as a parameter to obtain data relevant to the focus of this study, which was to develop a preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour. The topics needed to develop the appraisal tool were identified in the theoretical framework and other literature (Iwasaki, 2001). The topics included employee wellness, stress, stress coping, stress symptoms, types , leisure and the role of sport and recreations and were explored within a military context and investigated through a review of literature. The key informant's guide included typical questions such as: How would you define stress in the military work environment? What are the contributing factors that may lead to stress in the military work environment? In your opinion, what are the most successful coping mechanisms to deal with stress? To what extent do clients perceive that leisure has helped them in the past or will currently help them cope with stress in their lives? How have clients used their leisure to cope with stress in the past? And, to what extent do clients feel they possess the personal or social resources to be able to use their leisure to cope with stress?'

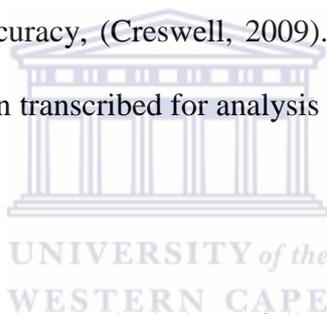
3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The data collecting procedure used in the present study was as follows: focus group discussions took place at the Naval Base Simon's Town in a venue secured and assessable for the participants. Participants were contacted via telephone. They were informed

verbally and in writing of the study that their participation is voluntary, that they would not be compromised should they not consent to participate in the study and that the interviews would be recorded. The participants were informed of the aims and objectives of the study, ethical criteria and what procedures would follow. Participants who gave consent were given an information sheet about the study (Appendix A). Written consent and focus group confidentiality binding forms was gained before commencing with the focus group discussions (Appendix B). Thereafter, participants were given a time-schedule to indicate where and when the focus group discussions would take place. The focus group discussions were conducted by the research supervisor and the researcher was an observer in the process. The research supervisor assisted as a facilitator with focus group discussions because of the researcher's direct involvement with the military. There were three focus group discussions, which each consisted of eight participants (n=24). A semi-structured interview guide was used for this purpose of focus group discussions (Appendix C). Focus group discussions lasted 60-90 minutes and were scheduled at a time when participants were not deployed.

Interviews were conducted with key informants. Key informants were purposefully selected and contacted telephonically to participate in the study. Interviews were scheduled at a convenient time when key informants were not deployed. The five senior officers and two psychologist gave consent to be interviewed (Appendix B). All the interviewees were informed that the sessions would be tape-recorded. Information sheets informed the key informants of the ethical requirements (Appendix A). Interviews were conducted at the respective work places of the key informants. The interview guide (Appendix D) was used during the interviews with key informants. In this study the interview method was adopted as this has been identified as one of the best methods of data-collection to develop a good

relationship between the researcher and the participant (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). According to Flick (2002) qualitative data collection methods, like interviews, are useful because they allow the participants to express themselves in their words, to have their voices heard and to offer personal views on interpretations, experiences, opinions and, for this study, experiences of gender bias, and ultimately to inform the conclusions of this research. In cases where participants' had difficulty formulating an answer to an open-ended question, the researcher offered clarification. The researcher used probes and follow-up questions when it was perceived that a response was either too brief or too broad (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Summary statements was made to ensure that the researcher understood what the participants were saying, and gave informants the opportunity to clarify their summaries for accuracy, (Creswell, 2009). The researcher probed further to gain information. Data was then transcribed for analysis purposes.



3.8 Data Analysis

The importance of qualitative data analysis is as follows: a) It serves as a paper trail to verify analysis; b) It makes associations of the themes clear to the reader; and c) It clearly demonstrates the process involved in the analysis (Donovan-Hall, 2004). Qualitative research is normally characterised using inductive analysis with concepts that derives from the data. However, this study made use of deductive data analysis that is acceptable when the structure of the analysis is operationalised on the bases of previous knowledge or theories providing general information on a topic and moves to more specific information generated through newly sampled data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Pre-determined themes were thus identified through the literature review and theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2. These themes included: Stress in the military, support in the military, operational deployment, impact on military families, leadership in the military and sport

and recreation programs in the military. Data were thus analysed through the lens of these themes to identify sub-themes and salient topics that should be included in the appraisal tool.

In this study, the data was tape recorded with the permission of the participants and each interview was then transcribed and examined by the researcher within the frame provided by the pre-determined themes. Transcripts were thoroughly read several times by the researcher to gain an understanding. Transcripts were analysed both during and after the data collection period. In accordance with the processes of thematic analyses, the researcher ensured that all extracted themes were coherent, consistent, and distinctive and verified this with the literature gathered compared to the original data collected. The text in this study was coded by placing words or phrases, which related to a specific idea or question. Similar or related ideas were grouped together in thematic categories. The thematic categories were then synthesized into a narrative summary. This narrative summary was aimed at reflecting the experiences of the participants. The researcher used these categories to identify any relationship between the data collected and then refer back to literature in order to build a valid argument.

Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were audio-typed and transcribed verbatim. Data was analysed deductively in this study using the theoretical framework. The themes in the theoretical framework was thus became this study's themes. Themes included: Theme 1 – Stressors in the military, Theme 2 – Support in the military, Theme 3- Operational Deployment of military members, Theme 4- Impact of stress on Military Families have been identified as theme four, Theme 5- leadership and Theme 6- sport and recreation in the military. Deductive content analysis is suitable when the structure of the analysis was embedded in the theoretical knowledge. Words from these theoretical

knowledge could be classified into smaller content categories (Donovan-Hall, 2004). In preparation data units of analysis (themes) were identified. A general sense was gained from data to get overall meaning after narratives were coded and organised.

3.9 Credibility and Trustworthiness

According to Patton (2002) the purpose of qualitative research is to express and explain a collection of distinctive personal experiences, unlike quantitative research. Consequently, the concept of reliability has to be understood differently in qualitative research. Various strategies for achieving trustworthiness exist including triangulation, member checking and peer examination. Similarly, Creswell (2003) offered a variety of procedures for data verification. He recommends that qualitative researchers adopt at least two of the eight procedures he offers. The eight procedures are as follows: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, rich thick description, external audits, negative case analysis, member checks, clarify researcher bias and peer review or debriefing. More specifically: a) Member checks: All the transcribed data was given back to the participants so that they could comment on accuracy of recording; b) Clarification of researcher bias: This ensured that the researcher, acknowledged the own past experiences, biases, interpretations and dilemmas as these could shape the findings of this study. To this end a reflective attitude was adopted by the researcher; c) Peer review or debriefing: The researcher's supervisor provided the opportunity to debrief, organise and gain perspective and clarity on any assumptions, expectations, biasness and dilemmas which the researcher might have about the participants' responses. Peer review and debriefing was another strategy adopted for data verification in this study. In this study the reviewer was also the supervisor who kept the researcher focused on the objectives of this study. This added to the reliability and trustworthiness of this study.

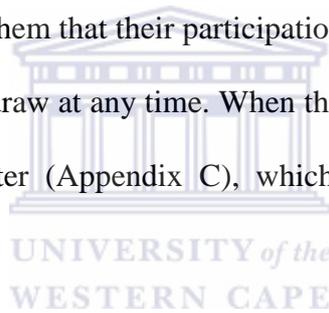
Credibility of research findings depends less on sample size than on the richness of the information gathered (Patton, 1990). More than that, it is about asking hard questions ‘about methods, meanings and interpretations’ (Creswell, 1998:202). This is what the researcher tried to accomplish in reporting on the findings in this study. According to Patton (2002), by reporting it makes visible the researcher’s awareness of the role she/he plays in the collection of data and the interpretation thereof. It also provides an opportunity for the researcher to acknowledge her/his own thoughts, interpretations and assumptions regarding the topic under discussion. Further to this, Patton (2002:65) said that “A credible, authoritative, authentic, and trustworthy voice engages the reader through a rich description, so that the reader joins the inquirer in the search for meaning”. This means that the researcher provided a context and possible ways of interpreting and giving meaning to the participants’ responses and experiences. In this way the researcher is not claiming to know, but is offering different perspectives as a result of her/his own experiences, interpretations and assumptions on the issues under discussion. It was important that the researcher clearly stated to the reader the conflict s/he was experiencing and substantiates meanings given to the data. This was useful in this study as it allowed the researcher to practice self-awareness, but also to remain as objective as possible throughout the reporting of the findings in this study.

Reflexivity played a role in a qualitative study of this nature. Self-reflexivity played a crucial role in contributing to the validity of the findings. In this study the researcher, tried to remain as objective as possible. The researcher remained aware that being subjective would essentially influence the findings of the study. Furthermore, the supervisor conducted the interviews as the researcher was aware of the impact of rank intimidation on participants. The interviewer (supervisor) facilitated and was in control of the interview

session and guided each participant in line with the focus of this study. Therefore, the researcher has practiced personal reflexivity.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethics was granted from Senate Research Committee at the University of the Western Cape and permission was granted at the Naval Base Simon's Town, Counter Intelligence department to conduct the study. The study was conducted according to ethical practices pertaining to the study of human subjects as specified by the University of the Western Cape. The participants were briefed on the aims and objectives of the study, the reason why they were selected, the importance of their participation and how valuable their input would be. It was explained to them that their participation in the project was on a voluntary basis and that they could withdraw at any time. When they agreed to participate, they were invited to sign a consent letter (Appendix C), which was issued to them before the interviews were conducted.



With the permission of the participants, interviews were audio-taped. All information was treated with the strictest confidentiality and the identity of participants was protected in so far as their names or personal information were not included in the reporting of the findings. Pseudonyms have therefore been used. Participants were given access to their transcribed information at their request and were allowed to amend or retract their transcripts, as well as offer additional information. All transcribed documents were kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's residence and are to be destroyed three years after the approval of the thesis. The transcribed interviews were kept confidential and no names were disclosed. Some participants may have been wary about disclosing personal information regarding their private experiences or perceptions; therefore, the researcher

adherence to strict confidentiality by excluding any identifiable information in the thesis composition. Finally due to the researcher's rank in the organization assurance had to be given to all participants that their identities and disclosed information would not be used against them in any way or form, but that the information would be utilised solely for research purposes to build on the body of existing knowledge.

3.11 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter outlined how a qualitative approach was appropriate to this study in capturing military member's perceptions and experiences to stress in the workplace. The research setting was described as was the method of data collection. The method of analysis and data verification was outlined. It also explained how the data was analysed using thematic analysis and transcripts were read and placed into narrative themes. The chapter covered aspects of validity and transferability and ethical considerations. The next chapter presents the results and findings which are presented in a qualitative thematic form. The discussion of the results is guided by the objective of the study which was to explore and identify the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment. The discussion was based on the participants' experiences and interpretations of stress in the military. In addition to this the findings of the military participants' experience in the workplace was offered.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

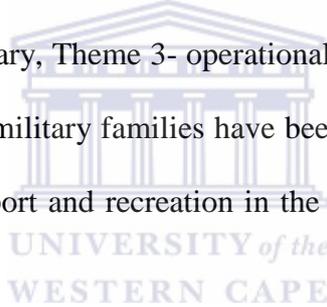
4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to develop a preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in an African context. It was argued that military members are often exposed to stressful situations and have a higher stress level due to the nature of their work. Pursuing a military career is challenging and it normally involves a lifestyle that includes recurrent transfers to new work environments and frequent separations from the family (Rego & Cunha, 2008; Bradford, Segal, Bell, Ender, Rohall & Nelson, 2007).

Data was collected by means of focus group discussions and interviews with key informants using semi-structured interview guides. The interview guides focused on whether the participants perceived stress differently in the workplace. Data was analysed deductively in this study using the theoretical framework. The themes in the theoretical framework thus became this study's themes. This chapter presents the findings of the study by means of thematic content analysis. The findings are presented by introducing the participants followed by reporting on the findings, introducing the themes and providing the discussion by comparing it to relevant literature. Then a brief summary of the responses relevant to that theme was offered. Thirdly, the responses of each participant for that theme were elaborated upon, and finally, literature was compared to the findings related to the themes. This pattern was repeated for each of the themes in turn.

Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the research participants and direct responses of participants were presented in italics.

The military can be a source of meaning and growth for people, building a sense of purpose, self-determination, impact, competence, belonging, meaning and enjoyment rather than leading to psychological suffering or feelings of alienation (Rego & Cunha, 2008). Nevertheless, military work is regarded as society's most stressful occupation (Louw & Viviers, 2010). Stress in the military is multi-dimensional, affecting a soldier mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually (Nash & Baker, 2007; Bartone, 2006, Bartone, 2005). The themes were introduced by providing the discussion and it was compared to relevant literature. The themes included: Theme 1 – stressors in the military, Theme 2 – support in the military, Theme 3- operational deployment of military members, Theme 4- impact of stress on military families have been identified as theme four, Theme 5- leadership and Theme 6- sport and recreation in the military. Each theme will now be discussed independently.



4.2 Stress in the military

The assessment of stress is based both on how a person experiences stress and how he or she perceives the stress (Patel, 1991; Schlebusch, 2000). In this study it was found that both personal and occupational stressors were the primary cause for military member's stress. For the purposes of this study, the theme stress in the military was used to explore the participants' experiences and interpretations of experiencing stress in their workplaces. The views, comments and suggestions of participants are compared to the literature.

4.2.1 Personal stressors

Military staff experience personal stress due to their work circumstances on top of their work stress (Young, 2013). Based on the findings of the study, personal stressors varied from financial management problems to physical, being deprived of information, uncertainty that can lead to rumours, adding to the stress levels of members and could enhance or lead to the onset of psychological problems. From Thabiso's experience: *"being in the military is not easy, but what else you can do somebody's got to put bread on the table"*. Barry stressed that, *"You are stressed out when you go to bed and you are still stressed when you wake up, its madness"*. Amien highlighted: *"At sea there are always a thousand of things to do and too little time to do them in."* Neo stressed that: *"Even if you catch up on sleep you are still on the wrong side of the day, on deployment you can never get enough sleep"*. Carl confirmed the experience and said that: *On ship you lucky if you get four hours sleep there so much things going on, if I don't keep busy I will fall asleep"*. Based on the focus groups discussions conducted most participants indicated that financial stress, emotional stress, problems with interpersonal relationships, death in the family, and illness at home contributed towards the stress of military members stress. Rodney highlighted that, *"I struggle to make ends meet, and my money just doesn't last"*. Keith stressed that, *"my interpersonal relationships with my family are suffering because I am never at a home, and I'm forever on standby?"* Leon confirmed this in highlighting, that once he was deployed outside the borders of SA when he heard his dad had a by-pass operation, *"What can you do, sometimes being away from your family for extended periods of time can take its toll"*. As Barry confirmed, *"one time, my sister fell very ill when the ship was in Durban for maintenance work, they did not allow me to fly home to pay my last respects"*. Personal stressors could distract both the soldier and their leaders from performing their work optimally (Dolan & Ender, 2008). Personal stressors that should

thus be considered for inclusion in the appraisal tool for naval staff are: financial stress, emotional stress, interpersonal relationships, death of family members and illness at home.

4.2.2 Occupational stressors

Many occupational stressors in the military environment, such as work pace, job demands, control, supervision, conditions, long working hours, and shift work, are comparable to many other workplace environments (Bogg & Cooper, 1995). Participants highlighted that occupational stress was caused by: lack of achieving personal goals, poor communication with superiors, family responsibilities beyond their work, marital problems and personal concerns, lack of job advancement, educational development, alcohol abuse and lack of interest to life. Though, family responsibilities, marital problems and personal concerns could be related back to personal stressors that affects their work performance. Based on the findings the stressors experienced by participants were also related to operational activities and working conditions. Leon stated, *“need I say more, I have been at this rank for the past 15 years, without even being considered for promotion”*. Lebogang confirmed: *“These long working hours and job demands is taking its toll on me, currently I am pulling duty every third day.”* Leon further indicated: *“Both my wife and I are in the military, this shift work is taking its toll on our family”*. Freddy highlighted the fact that: *“This constant job demands is never ending, I am considering quitting my job just to spend more time with my kids”*. Keith confirmed this by stating: *“Most of our stressors are from last minute stuff”*. Ben confirmed that: *“no matter how well I do it, it will never be good enough”*. Most stress comes from; as Keith puts it *“Poor planning on the leadership’s part and not thinking things through”*. Nagomza emphasized: *“Sometimes if you’re relaxed and you’re supposed to be serious, you can get in trouble for it”*. Most of the participants in this study felt that the margin of error in the military is “zero tolerance”,

allowing for inhumane treatment by supervisors in some cases. Various participants confirmed this status:

Ben noted: *“Sorry in the military does not exist, I suppose it’s because an error in judgement could lead to loss of life or the ship being sunk by the enemy”*.

Barry highlighted: *“The military is not for everyone, if you are not prepared to give up your individuality then you should not serve your country”*.

Carriena mentioned: *“The pressure is constant, it’s never ending”*.

Carl confirmed: *“Your supervisor can make or break you, these day’s I do what I am told and hopefully things will be okay”*.

Ashley agreed: *It’s tough in the navy most times you only have your supervisor with you for one to three years, when the new guy steps in you have to prove yourself from over again”*.

Gavin mentioned: *“There is nothing you can do, this is just the control your boss has over you”*.

Donald noted: *“They don’t care whether I do my job well or not; I’m going to be in trouble anyway.”*

This confirmed that unfair treatment by supervisors and verbal assaults by seniors was the order of the day and that the SAN is nothing different from other military forces around the world. The findings corroborate with previous findings indicating that although the military members are subject to occupational stressors, they do not allow it to impact their ability to do their work (Philot, 2006).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and acute stress disorder are the two most common psychological or operational stress disorders soldiers face (McLauchlin, 2006).

Being stigmatized revealing any of these mental conditions or revealing having personal and occupational problems cannot only be a career stopper but at times can also be associated with cowardice or malingering (Philot, 2006). This is confirmed by Ben indicating that: *“I’d rather keep to myself, as it is the norm on board ships that if your supervisor know or have something against you he/she makes it known to the ships company.”* Findings thus reiterate that military staff members who are troubled very seldom call for help and are rather encouraged to fall back on the strong drinking culture of the army (Philot, 2006).

Findings related to the interviews conducted with the panel of psychologist from the Institute of Maritime Medicine (IMM) stated that stress can be defined as the result of primary and secondary appraisals. As stated by Marsha, *“Stresses is viewed and managed in the military as a transactional understanding of the individual and their interactions with the environment”*. Therefore, stress is viewed as a direct result of the individuals’ appraisal of the situation and their resources to manage it. David, as a psychologist and a participant in the interviews, confirmed this by stating, *“That stress refers to acute distress or an impairment in functioning of socially, interpersonally and within the occupational environment which is experienced regularly within the military working environment”*. The two psychologist on the panel suggested the following impacted military members: communication, management styles, personal stressors and interpersonal difficulties at work, deployment opportunities, perceived or actual demands from the work environment, and perceived or actual lack of support and resources.

In the interviews both David and Marsha further highlighted that: “*stress could be of a mental and physical nature, which could have an impact on military member’s personal life and productivity*”.

The findings linked to occupational stressors should be viewed as important both for the individual and the manager (commanders). To minimize stress, it is necessary to identify stressors first. Stress is not the same for everybody, as each individual responds to stress differently (Tabasi, 2002). Occupational stressors are categorised into operational and non-operational stressors (Young, 2013). The findings of the study are in line with literature (Young, 2013; Bartone, 2006; Philpot, 2006) indicating the following operational stressors seem worthy to include in the appraisal tool: work place, job demands, control, supervision, long working hours and shift work. Other operational stressors evident from literature to include are: danger in the military work place and being responsible for the lives of others (Bartone, 2006; Philpot, 2006; Young, 2013). The inhumane treatment by supervisors (unfair treatment and verbal assaults) and stigmatization associated with revealing mental status affect how members manage their stress levels (Paton, 2007; Bartone, 2006). Because of this, military leaders and members have to incorporate stress management programs into their day to day routine of staff. According to research conducted stress must be imposed to make a stimulus, otherwise life may be dull and unmotivated (Bartone, 2006). Therefore, the SAN need to “*train the way they fight*”, to ensure that the staff is combat ready enabling them to operate in the combat environment in order for the experience to be less stressful.

It is worthy to note that the findings from the interviews with key informants revealed that the following non-operational stressors impact members: such as poor planning, communication, management styles, personal stressors and interpersonal difficulties at

work, deployment opportunities, perceived or actual demands from the work environment. The important point is to note that stress differs from individual to individual. Well-managed stress makes people productive and makes life challenging (Carlisle, 2001). In conclusion to the theme stress in the military highlighted the need to ensure that there is enough support structures in place to combat stress. The salient topics to be included in the appraisal tool dealt with personal stress, occupational stress, wellness and operational deployment and covered 30 questions in the preliminary appraisal tool (Appendix E).

4.3 Support in the military

Literature on the buffering effect of support on health shows that there is a clear link between perceptions of support and positive outcomes such as enhancing one's sense of belonging and self-efficacy (Berkman, 1995). Thus support has been shown to be a useful and effective coping strategy (Berkman, 1995). Therefore, support has emerged as a theme in the present study. In the study military members felt that support appeared to be a source of stress rather than a buffer of the negative effects of stress. Members also felt a lack of trust towards their supervisors and fellow staff members. Lack of adequate support or limited access to the providers of support can lead to ineffective and negative types of coping, such as withdrawal and rumination (Nolen-Hoeksema & Davis, 1999). A lack of trust in the people from whom they sought support and in whom they could confide was one of the obstacles experienced in the study. A number of sailors reported a variety of experiences in which their trust and confidence was violated. Ashley felt that: *"Talking to a psychologist about something as straightforward as marital problems or difficulty adjusting is just not worth it."* Amien referred to an instance in which he confided personal information to his commander that violated his trust in that: *"He put my (personal) business out there! Now everyone else think it's a joke"*. Keith indicated the lack of trust

among staff by indicating, *“If I had a choice, I would not tell one person in my chain of command what goes on in my personal life.”* Thabiso reiterated these feelings stating that: *“They’ll use it against you. You tell them a personal problem, in five days everybody will know. You can’t trust anyone”*. Carl’s statement was corroborated with literature by Paton (2007) and Bartone, (2006), being scared of stigmatization of being weak when revealing any problems or mental illness: *“I’ve learned to keep to myself, in that way nobody can keep things against me”*. Keith also highlighted that: *“The only support you are going to get is from your fellow co-workers, you are not going to get support from your command structure, I love the Navy but officers don’t care about their men”*.

Amien’s statement confirmed that if the superior officer found out that one of his/her staff went to go see a psychologist due to stress it would have a negative effect on their careers. Lack of trust or camaraderie in the unit can also leave a sense that fellow soldiers do not care, and that seeking treatment would have an effect on the affected soldiers career in the military (Dolan & Ender, 2008). This study confirmed that stress could not be measured simply on the basis of perceptions and experiences, and that military staff should be thoroughly assessed to determine their stress levels and the causes thereof. In the military setting, support showed a positive relationship to military performance, in that unit cohesiveness and trust are higher among soldiers with adequate social support (Rego & Cunha, 2008). Military members who were seeking support with the intention of tapping into resources that could serve to buffer them from the negative effects of stress often found not only unhelpful social support but even punishing situations that led to further trouble or embarrassment. The paradox that emerges in the qualitative analysis of interview data indicated that coping while having obvious benefits for buffering the effects of stress also contributed towards additional stress and increased strain. The giver of the help may be well intentioned but can make matters worse, or the help could challenge the

recipient's self-esteem and sense of personal competence (Bolger, Zuckerman & Kessler, 2000). While this may not be a regular occurrence, it potentially sends a message to soldiers that finding someone to talk to is risky. Based on the evidence in this study, it is apparent that getting help may come at a high cost. The perception that support is available when it is needed may be comforting and can work to enhance self-reliant coping.

Although soldiers may feel lonely and isolated, they are still confined with a large number of their comrades and with military leaders from whom they can gain support. This is deemed positive as soldiers develop a sense of group coherence. Andrew confirmed, *"I am lucky in that way, my boss is very open-minded and understanding, compared to the boss before him."* Keith stated: *"that it is important to have a good supervisor that is backing you in this military environment."* Nash and Baker (2007) indicated that emotional support and care from other people could assist in coping with stress. Based on the findings support provided an avenue to release stress by talking about their situation with co-workers who understand the military environment and working in the SAN. Soldiers need to be able to take care of themselves, to develop satisfying relationships both with other soldiers and with their military leaders, both for support and to help them adapt to the military environment. In this study, however, the support given to military members had an opposite effect. This study claimed that having to share almost all the available spaces and equipment on board ships can be stressful for those who are not used to such cramped environments. Based on the interviews conducted most members who shared their personal and occupational stressors with a co-workers or leaders felt betrayed when personal information were divulged.

Based on the interviews conducted the following support structures were identified by the panel of psychologists: medical services, psychological services, social work services,

occupational therapy services, chaplaincy services and wellness (EAP) programs. According to David, these services are essential in ensuring there is various support structures for military members.

The findings in this study for support in the military were:

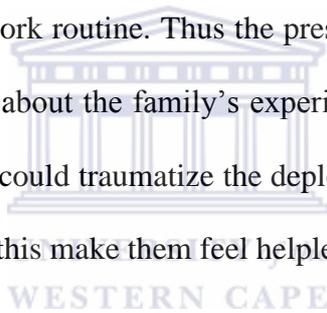
- a) Sailors do not always seek out others to talk to about stressors. Seeking social support is replaced with negative coping, such as seclusion and withdrawal:
- b) Support options are somewhat prohibitive in the military due to the fact that fraternisation is not allowed amongst the ranks.

Support refers to a sense of belonging, trusting others and helpfulness of others and has been associated with wellness (Bartone, 2006; Rego & Cunha, 2008). The concept of support in the military includes workplace support, sense of belonging and mutual trust. The study also found that rank structure inhibited the amount of support you get, as the unwritten rule was that ranks should not fraternize with each other. In conclusion to support the theme, social support seems to be an appropriate concept in the military where trust and teamwork are important in order to carry out mission objectives. In this study one of the challenges experienced with the military environment was shifting the culture to erase the stigma attached to having to ask for help and needing emotional support. It was therefore deduced that military members cope differently with stress. The findings related to the support theme formed the basis of stress-coping in the appraisal tool. The appraisal featured support questions in which participants would be able to answer questions related to support from family members, support from superiors, and support from colleagues and how to cope with personal stress.

4.4 Operational Deployment of Military Members

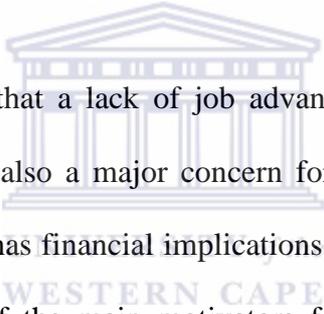
Operational deployment has been identified as a theme in the present study. Deployment was recognized as a workload stressor in the military, irrespective of the number of deployments, leaving a soldier feeling powerless, afflicted by long working hours and uncertainty as to the duration and location of the deployments (Bartone, 2006). Barry mentioned: *“Deployment is tough, just when you think you going home, they inform you there is no relief and your stay was extended.”* Carl confirmed that: *“deployment is just not for everyone, you must do it for the right reason otherwise it will eat you up.”* Rodney highlighted: *“On deployment we keep busy by doing lots of training exercises”*. Lebogang agreed: *“Most of our time is geared towards maintenance and more maintenance, there is little free time”*. Ben noted: *“I just got married a few months ago, being separated from my wife is something to get used to, being away for so long can be stressful and it is very difficult for my wife to adapt to the naval way of life”*. Neville agreed: *“They make you aware from earlier on that deployment might impair your promotion or your education”*. According to Maclean, (1999) soldiers are faced with real physical and emotional dangers and adverse experiences during deployments, which contribute to emotional stress. It was postulated in this study that deployment had an adverse effect on sailors, for example: long working hours, feelings of powerlessness, and ambiguity was some of the stressor experienced by military members. These stressors should be considered to be included in the assessment tool to determine if it is cause of military staff’s stress that needs to be attended to. The SAN continuously deploy in missions involving anti-piracy activities, disaster relief preparations and foreign peace-keeping (Maclean, 1999). Peacekeeping and peace-making roles may be more stressful than traditional combat roles because the range of traumatic stimuli is potentially more diverse (Murphy, 2010). Sailors often deploy to remote locations, far away from home, separated from their families, frequently without methods

for communicating. Modern communications technology enables easier contact between deployed personnel and their families and facilitates greater sharing of experiences. Barry highlighted that: *“Communication is not always possible, during my last deployment I only spoke to my wife once.”* As confirmed by Andrew, *“the reception is bad you are lucky if you can skype once a week.”* Keith noted that: *“As long as I can phone home or communicate with my wife, I’m good.”* Rodney reflected: *“I would say I handle my stress by talking with my wife, she understands what life is like in the military, especially on operational deployments.”* Ginger highlighted that: *“One always worries about your family while on deployment.”* This was reiterated by Keith. In some cases, worrying about one’s family normally complicates the overall perceived stress level and can distract sailors from their day to day work routine. Thus the present study found that the deployed member was always informed about the family’s experiences at home. If the family were struggling with social issues it could traumatize the deployed member who cannot assist to alleviate pressure at home and this make them feel helpless.



Modern military missions frequently involve long periods of “staying in one place,” often without significant work to do (Bartone, 2006). As the weeks and months tick by, soldiers start to get bored. This can be countered by providing more entertainment and sports activities for sailors. However, the real problem of boredom seems to result from lack of meaningful work or constructive activities in which to engage. Daily tasks often take on a repetitive dullness, with a sense that nothing important is being accomplished. On a psychological and social level, peacekeeping soldiers are confronted with long periods of separation from family and friends. Unexpected emotions such as fear, anger, and depression are common. Bartone, (2006) describes stress within the military context as originating from forces in the environment. These forces resulted into a response that

could impact negatively upon the individual. A conceptual model of the stressors inherent in deployments was developed by Lamerson and Kelloway (1996), which suggested that both occupational stresses (e.g. long working hours, ambiguity and powerlessness) as well as personal stressors (e.g. increased levels of marital, family and financial stress) play an important role in the development of stress that affect the relationship between exposure to the stressor and the subsequent experience of stress. The rationale behind this is that there may be stressors unique to the South African experience. Furthermore, in order to develop effective stress prevention programs, and to maintain morale and mental health amongst soldiers and their families, it is necessary to develop a good understanding of the nature and the type of stressors present in the various phases of deployment of the SANDF.



In this study it was reported that a lack of job advancement opportunities and loss of educational opportunities was also a major concern for deployed military members. As stated by being deployed also has financial implications in many instances one might find that financial gain was one of the main motivators for many sailors (Bartone, 1998). Ashley mentioned: *“One of the only reasons why we deploy is because the money is good.”* Freddy confirmed that *“I deploy, because this is the only means possible for me to buy my own house.”* Gordon agreed in that, *“What other institution is going to give you an opportunity to make so much money in a year.”* Ben and Ashley (both chefs) emphasized that the only reason they do this is for their families to have a better life. As Ben stated *“to give our families a push in life.”* In the study it was found that when military members were not informed of taxation and budget implications, financial gain was seen a stressor. Sailors have preconceived idea of how much money they would get during deployment. Nonetheless, after deductions such taxation the value of their total money could decrease and that might lead to stress.

The findings for deployment as a theme were:

- a) According to the findings, worrying about family members can affect the overall perceived stress level and can distract sailors from their work.
- b) Given the demands of the military environment, it was clear that the family not only played an important role in supporting the military member but also could be a source of stress.
- c. Money was seen as primary motivator for deployment.

In the present study it was found that co-worker support was particularly important during deployments when contact with family and friends outside of work were difficult to maintain due to the secrecy of deployments and technical challenges on board ships. The working environment on board ships was described more different than most other occupations making it hard for family and friends to understand what SAN members are going through. Deployment was thus seen as a military stressor. Findings revealed that sailors must have a complete and clear idea of the mission outcomes expected outcomes if they wish to have a solid motivation. The findings related to the theme operational deployment was covered in the developed appraisal tool. Questions related to operational deployment and stress will be used to assess how members deal with being deployed, the impact of being away from their families, how deployment delays promotion and education. Questions regarding the feelings of loneliness and boredom were included as themes that became evident as stress in the SAN.

4.5 Impact on Military Families

In a military context, “family” are people significant to the soldier that may serve as both a source of coping with stress and a source of continued stress (Bartone, 2006). Given the

military lifestyle demands and the positive association between family support, commitment, retention and active support from families appears to be essential for soldiers to cope (Bourg & Segal, 1999).

4.5.1 Military families as an informal social support structure

According to (Kazak, 1992) the family is traditionally a source of informal social support.

Bernard noted: *"I've been in the military for 12 years and my wife still can't get use to the military way of life."* Andrew agreed stating that: *"How do you tell your 5 year old, that daddy won't be there for your birthday."* Ben reflected that: *"I'm kind of stressed because my wife told me she's pregnant again."* Ben further highlighted: *I'm dealing with a lot right now with regards to family and work commitments."* *"Life in the navy can be tough on those families who do not have a strong support base"*, said Bernard. Gavin and Barry confirmed that it was difficult for young sailors to adapt being away from their families. Leon highlighted: *"Married sailors at any given time have marital problems because spouses cannot cope with deployment."*

Family members are one of the main sources of psychological and emotional support for many military members especially when they experience some sort of stress. Separations and long working hours are starting to catch up on some, especially on those sailors who are relatively new to ships life. When one parent is deployed, the remaining parent is likely to encounter separation strain, loneliness, role overload, role shifts, financial concerns, changes in community support, increased parenting demands, and frustration with the military bureaucracy (Vormbrock, 1993). It is widely believed that service members' career advancement can be adversely affected by the behaviour of their family members (Albano, 2002). For example, a member's inability to handle their family problems could be generalized to their ability to handle difficulties within their unit and bring into question

their work competence. In some cases, work demands often create more stress for the family. As stated by Gavin: *“If home is not your haven, then work will kill you, I don’t get to spend much time with my kids because I am always at work.”* Oscar agreed: *“If there’s conflict in the family it can get tough at work”* Neville confirmed: *“They say they’re “concerned” about the family, it’s more about getting the job done.”* Erin believed that: *“Without the support of my family all of this sacrifice will not be possible.”* Zanelle highlighted: *“If my family is looked after, I am able to suck up a lot.”* Jim echoed what Zanelle stated indicating that he copes better with work and stress when his family is sought after. Family stress can exacerbate work-related stresses. Unlike operational readiness, personal readiness is not measured in combat skill levels or the time needed to respond to a call out, but, for the most part, the degree to which an individual is psychologically prepared to deploy and/or conduct operations and to withstand the mental challenges associated with the operation, including separation from family and other support groups (Sharpe & English 2006). Based on the findings members felt that psychological readiness was more of an issue for family members than for themselves. However they felt that member readiness was directly tied to the welfare of the family. In the study it was found that the most important thing for military staff was that their families are safe and well taken care of in their absence.

The findings for military families are:

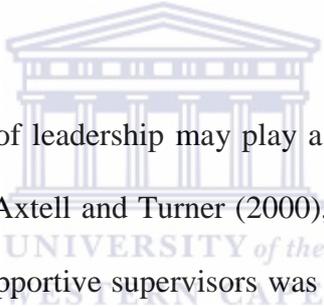
- a) Military families significantly contribute towards a staff members’ stress.
- b) Military families are the only means of support in buffering the effects of stress in the military.

This study found that support from the family was identified as an important part in dealing with stress. From the study it became clear that, most SAN members received social support from their family and friends, however it became evident that good

relationships with friends and family contributed towards wellbeing. The findings related to the theme ‘the impact on military families’ was dealt with in the appraisal tool by posing questions related to operational deployment and stress.

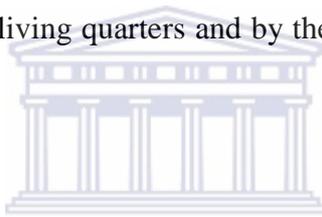
4.6 Leadership in the military

Interviews were conducted with five senior officers that led to the emergence of this theme. It was that in the leadership-theme emergence a “generation gap” reflected that when younger soldiers entered into the military they expected things to be easy, while when the more experienced leaders entered into the military they did it under different sets of expectations. Leadership is clearly demanding and complex in today’s military work environment.



In the workplace, perceptions of leadership may play a key role in the stress and coping process. According to Parker, Axtell and Turner (2000), the importance of job autonomy, communication quality, and supportive supervisors was deemed paramount in designing a safer workplace. Likewise, Bliese and Castro (2000) stressed the role of the supportive leadership in such a way that it buffered the effects of high workload. Furthermore, such support proved important at group level, where it influenced both unit functioning and individual well-being. Donald stated: *“This is the navy, if you can’t take the heat, get out!”* Leon agreed: *“Why must things be any different, when I joined it was tough, I’ll treat everybody accordingly”*. Oscar on the other hand believed: *“This is not a charity organisation, people’s lives are at stake”*. Kenny, a commander, commented: *“As a leader giving them time off and letting them unwind in their own ways is probably the best thing you can do for the ships company”*. Samuel highlighted: *“leadership comes with a price, it is a lonely road”*. This was emphasised by Oscar and Donald as well. Irene mentioned: *“You never know what way to act with them at certain times, sometimes you can be*

relaxed with them, and then there are times that you really have to be serious, and you never know when to do it". Leon noted: *"My men knows I'll give them time off when and where possible, but when the ship is sailing there are no compromises"*. Oscar reiterated: *"It not always easy, sometimes you have to make tough decisions, the men don't always understand that"*. Samuel on the other hand, believed as a Captain of a ship: *"My men don't always understand why we do what we do, but I suppose that's why I love the military I don't have to compromise"*. Kenny believed that: *"Being a leader you must be able to own up, it's all about the out-put"*. Many soldiers voiced the blame of their leadership for much of their stress, especially regarding workload and the apparent lack of predictability. Social relationships at work, particularly with colleagues and leaders, are aggravated by having to share living quarters and by the power military leaders have over subordinates' lives.

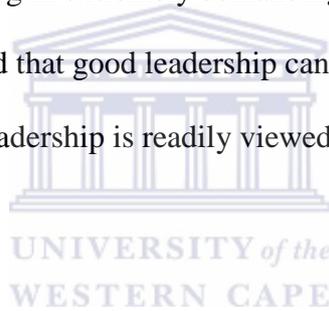


The study found that good leadership and work relationships with soldiers can prove to be beneficial to a soldiers' psychological well-being. Conversely, poor leadership is readily viewed by soldiers as a major source of stress. Some members had an understanding of the issues inherent in leading in an extremely demanding environment: The relationships between leaders and followers can have both direct and indirect influences on work unit performance and well-being (Campbell, 2009). Based on the research done in this study it became evident that leaders need to create a supportive environment where issues are taken seriously and kept confidential. Leaders need to ensure that soldiers feel connected and can actually spend time with close friends and family. Military leaders have a primary responsibility to look after the well-being of their soldiers and to motivate troops to engage in combat, in spite of all the grave dangers to their personal safety and the accompanying stress.

Juniors often looked up to their military leaders for moral and social support to help them cope with military stressors (Dolan & Endler, 2008). A leaders' greatest fear is of failing their troops and of the shame attending to such failures (Nash & Baker, 2007). It was found in the study that most military members blamed their leaders for their stress that in return puts a lot of pressure on the military leaders, causing stress in the leaders themselves. It was therefore assumed that the higher the rank of military staff, the more stress they would experience, given their increased responsibilities.

The findings for military leadership:

- a) Most sailors view leadership in a positive way and have an understanding of the issues inherent in leading in extremely demanding environments.
- b) The present study found that good leadership can prove beneficial to soldier well-being, whereas poor leadership is readily viewed by soldiers as a major source of stress.



It has been shown that lack of supervisor support negatively affects health among employees, particularly when employees perceive poor treatment from their supervisor, such as not paying attention to employee concerns and not treating employees in a fair manner (Dolan & Endler, 2008). The participants from the study felt that their supervisors held their fate of their military career in their hands and many felt that getting a "good" supervisor was the luck of the draw. This study found that good leadership can prove beneficial to military members' health and well-being. Leaders also need to ensure that members felt connected and can actually spend time with close friends and family. The findings related to the theme leadership were therefore covered in the appraisal tool.

4.7 Sport and Recreation programs in the military

Physical training, Sport and Recreation (PTSR) forms an integral part of the physical and psychological preparation and conditioning of members of the SANDF. Adequate physical condition and physical skills are necessary for soldiers to perform their main function, namely to defend and protect the RSA, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulations for the use of force (Department of Defence Instruction, 2004). In the military context, military members need to be combat-ready at all times, while still remaining normal and socially adaptive. The opportunity to de-stress is given to military members in the form of sport and recreation. It is by engaging in sport and recreation that military members are focused towards the attainment of socially desirable attitudes, habits and values. The SAN members participate in Wednesday afternoon Sport Parade which consists of Inter-Unit and Local League competitions. Currently there are 27 sporting codes in which members participate. It was deduced that sport and recreation activities offered to staff members were more competitive in nature. According to Trenberth (2005), a growing body of knowledge points to the importance of leisure as a way of coping with stress. Iwasaki (as quoted by Caldwell, 2005: 11) stated that, “leisure can be an important buffer against stress to maintain good health.” The role of leisure in coping with stress was found that leisure-related coping outcomes significantly predicted positive as well as long-term coping outcomes, leading to mental health and psychological well-being (Trenberth, 2005). Freddy stated: *“Sport and recreation is a privilege not a right”*. Ben believes: *“Sport is my life, I’m honest without it I don’t think I will be able to handle the stressors of the navy”*. Carriena confirmed: *“I do sport to have a balance, which other organisation give its employees time off to do sport?”* Donald agreed: *“Sport allows me to cope, things just get too much sometimes and it is my stress reliever”*. Rodney mentioned: *“Sport and*

recreation activities will ensure that members do not get involved in activities that could compromise military discipline". Irene: *"Sport is the only means to build 'esprit de core', among military members"*. As highlighted by Andrew and echoed by Ashley and Carl: *"Sport is the only outlet for me to relief stress, without it we won't be able to survive"*. Gavin noted: *" We don't do allot of sport and recreation in my department, but once a month I ensure that my staff get some time off to do a little bit of sport to alleviate some stress"*. Kenny who is an Officer Commanding indicated that: *"Sport and recreation in the SANDF is a command function, Officers Commanding must ensure that members engage in regular exercise to alleviate stress"*. Ginger postulated that: *"On deployment we still do the Wednesday afternoon sports parade, just to keep the ship's company busy"*. Neville confirmed: *"Providing sport on board a ship can be challenging, that is why we ensure that a Physical Training (PT) instructor deploys with us"*. Rodney reflected: *"sport is seen as a force multiplier, thereby instilling the warrior ethos in our members"*. Carl highlighted: *"on deployment we keep busy by arranging mass PT sessions on the upper deck"*. Leisure is used both as a measure of coping with stress and as part of the therapy. The study conducted by Iwasaki (2003) found that people often intentionally create a leisure space as a way of coping with stress, using it as a stress-coping technique to find balance in life. Prescribed leisure activities and other psychological programs can play a vital role in dealing with traumatic, stressful events (Carruthers & Hood, 2004). Leisure as an overall coping resource, building the capacity to experience pleasure in life and creating emotional health, thus ensuring optimal psychological functioning (Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Hutchinson, Bland & Kleiber, 2008). Enough evidence is found in the literature to support the inclusion of sport and leisure as a way of coping with stress, making it natural to include it as a goal in a therapeutic recreation program addressing stress and providing coping skills. It was found that military members mainly took part in sport and recreational

activities for their own personal health and wellbeing. Interactions in this study with staff members confirmed that sport and recreation programs formed a major part their lives, despite potential barriers preventing them from participating. It was also found that most sport programs were designed to help personnel stay fit, thereby contributing to combat readiness. According to Hayward (2009), sport and recreation is used as a vehicle to enhance the general sense of well-being among soldiers.

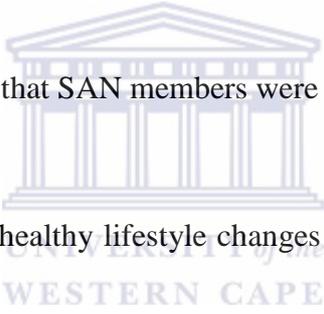
Based on the outcomes of the focus group discussion and the interviews conducted, it was believed that members engaged in sport or recreation activities in order to relieve stress. By living healthy lifestyles SAN members felt that may serve to protect themselves against stress. It was thus deduced that sport and recreation activities in the SAN were offered to the larger military community, promoting a mass participation culture. For example, Fleet and Inter Unit Sport Days allowed members the opportunity to rejuvenate mentally and physically. It confirmed that recreation programs in military must and should be aimed at providing varied programs of wholesome, constructive off-duty recreation and leisure opportunities that promote the mental, physical and social well-being of military staff (Temple & Ogilvie, 2006). Staff members engaged in these activities on a daily basis, indicating that they had regular access to activities and programs being offered (Mull et al., 1997). Most of the participants in this study were of the opinion that sport and recreation activities required some level of instruction and that no level of instruction would lead to members jumping ship. Members in the SAN participate in voluntarily sport and recreation programs. The objective of these programs is to develop a better understanding about sport and recreation, thus fostering a culture of lifelong participation. The military environment, either in operational or non-operational, cannot be changed and soldiers need to be able to adapt and learn to cope with the stressors in the environment to which they are subjected

to. It is therefore important that soldiers should be healthy and need to maintain this state of health throughout their military careers. Based on the researcher's personal experience and observation being part of the SAN, facilities and space on board ships were very limited and sport and recreation facilities were therefore not a major concern or interest in the workplace environment. The researcher postulated that the SAN do provide activities for staff members which contributed towards stress reduction. All SAN members (including the physical disabled) shall take responsibility for their own physical fitness and health by maintaining a lifestyle that promotes optimal health and physical readiness (Department of Defence Instruction, 2000).

The potential for sport and recreation interventions would be recommended to reduce stress in military staff. Based on this study, sport and recreation programs can thus play a unique role in the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of life of military members. Quality of life has thus become a focus for future research, receiving a significant amount of attention within the health and human service fields internationally (Janssen, 2004). It was also postulated that by engaging in structured activities enhanced the perceived quality of a sailor's life. The results confirmed that SAN members used sport and recreation activities to cope with stress. It was found that sedentary recreation activities, such as watching television or movies, listening to music and sleeping were more frequently used on board a ship than active recreation activities. According to David: *"is perceived as being individualistic, and "stated that he very seldom meet with patients complaining about stress caused by leisure activities"*. Marsha on the other hand believed: *"Patients see and experience the benefits of leisure as a coping mechanism through the use of various strategies"*. Both David and Marsha highlighted that this included: *"self-care, physical exercise, healthy eating habits and psychological services"*. Marsha also confirmed:

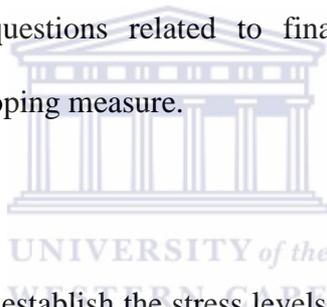
“Patients are counselled to further their leisure opportunities to improve their quality of life”. David suggested that: *“each individual’s needs and therapeutic goals are taken into consideration”*. Both Marsha and David confirmed that: *“formal exercise, family time, community involvement are described as beneficial by their patients”*. Marsha also felt that *“when patients in her care experiences extreme stress, it often overwhelms their ability to see their resources (personal and social) at their disposal”*. David agreed: *“Reconnecting patients to their resources often helped them to eventually overcome their perceived stress”*. Examples of accessed resources are medical resources, psychological services and physical wellness programs.

The findings on Sport and Recreation were:

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- a) The findings confirmed that SAN members were intrinsically motivated and are living healthy lifestyles.
 - b) Findings indicated that healthy lifestyle changes might lead to a decrease in stress levels.
 - c) Results confirmed that SAN members had the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation activities.
 - d) The results further confirmed that sport and recreation were offered to the larger military community, promoting a mass participation culture.

Based on supporting literature it confirmed that SAN members with lower stress levels were intrinsically motivated to participate in sport and recreation activities, and were satisfied with their physical activity lifestyle (Daly & Kunstler, 2006; Stumbo & Peterson, 1998). Frequent participation in sport and recreation activities fosters lifelong leisure and may contribute towards stress reduction (Miller, Schleien & Lausier, 2009; Daly &

Kunstler, 2006). In response to the above findings it was found that the respondents enjoyed both individual and team sport activities. In conclusion the results confirmed that sport and recreation programs formed a major part of SAN members' lives and that they engaged in these activities on a daily basis. Leisure and sport and recreation activities could be used to cope with stress. Therefore, it was included as a part of the appraisal tool. The Leisure behaviour assessment as a part of the appraisal tool assessed leisure behaviour and sport and recreation pursuits of participants and included questions focussed on social activities, passive activities, physical activities and outdoor activities. The following leisure determinants were assessed: leisure time, leisure satisfaction, leisure participation, barriers for participation, access to leisure opportunities, personal factors that affect leisure, health factors and questions related to financial factors that affect leisure behaviour, leisure as a stress coping measure.



4.8 Chapter Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to establish the stress levels SAN members were experiencing by exploring the kinds of coping strategies they could apply in solving their problems. Data related to factors effecting employee stress were analysed using Creswell's (2009) six stage process for analysing qualitative data. The data was reviewed, generating primary themes and interconnected subthemes. Literature on TR in military settings is not extensive and is mainly based on information from programs. Research is needed in the area of TR in military settings and specifically in the African context. Results revealed that SAN members' stress perceptions were mostly related to occupational and personal stressors. Support played a major role in elevating stress in the workplace. Deployment was experienced by military members as an occupational stressor and was a stressful experience for military staff. Stress in relation to sport and recreation participation

revealed that SAN members were intrinsically motivated to follow healthy lifestyles contributing to lower levels of stress.

The next and final chapter outlines the key findings for each theme and offered conclusions and recommendations with regard to stress in the workplace. To this end summaries and conclusions were drawn around each of the themes of this study. Recommendations will also be offered in relation to the findings of this study.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study was guided by the research aim which was to develop a preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model (Young, 2013), measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in a South African context. The objectives of the study was to explore and identify the potential salient topics that needed to be addressed as well as to identify the questions that should be included in the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment. The instrument development was supported by themes exposed in the intensive literature study conducted.

This research document consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 contextualised the importance of stress management by developing an appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model. This was done by measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff. Chapter 2 provided a literature review of current information about stress and provided a contextual framework in which this study is imbedded in support of the theoretical framework as highlighted in the chapter. This chapter addresses employee wellness and stress within a military context. It also investigates stress coping which is contextualised within a military setting. Chapter 3 provided an explanation of the research methodology and methods outlined in the study. Chapter 4 presented the research findings and collected data. Chapter 5 was the final

chapter, in which the conclusions of the study are highlighted, to determine whether the goal and objectives of the study was met. The study concluded by offering recommendations and the way forward for the members of the SAN to manage stress. The final chapter provides a summary of the findings of the study and also provided recommendations and implications for future research. Moreover, major themes of the study are discussed. This chapter addressed implications for employee stress interventions and organisational development.

In order to achieve the goal of the study, the following objectives were identified:

1. To explore and identify the potential salient topics that need to be addressed in an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment.
2. To identify the questions that should be included in the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment.
3. To explore how navy staff understand and interpret the concepts and questions as it is related to stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in military context.

5.2 Summarizing and concluding the essential themes of the study

The summary of the findings which follows was presented within the framework of themes in order for the reader to get a coherent picture of the experiences of the participants with regard to stress management within the military environment. The SAN continuously deploy in missions involving anti-piracy activities, disaster relief preparations and foreign peace-keeping. These activities can be stressful for sailors, resulting in operational and non-operational stressors. Conclusions of the findings and results are presented in the following paragraphs as it relates to each theme.

Stressors in the military were categorized into personal and occupational stressors as causes of military members' stress. Thus the military need to ensure that there is enough support structures in place to combat stress. The findings revealed that personal and operational events may cause and can affect a member's wellness and could psychologically impact the employee negatively. Personal stressors include physical danger; long periods; being in the public eye; and being responsible for the lives of others, emotional stress, problems with interpersonal relationships, death in the family, and illness at home. Furthermore, results revealed that financial problems, lack of sleep, extended duties or long working hours; intolerant supervisors, using undermining, abusive or vulgar language; bullying; lack psychological support in the workplace; missing loved ones; deployments or transfers; not being rewarded or promoted affected members. Thus, it was found that personal life stressors outside the SAN have a spill over effect on the performance of staff. Therefore, the personal stressors identified were useful in the development of the appraisal tool in this study. The personal stressors were used to focus on specific sources of stress questions in the tool.

Occupational stress were categorised into operational and non-operational as they relate to the military environment. Results revealed that operational and non-operational events could cause stress and affect member's wellness by impacting on their psychological and personal wellness. Results indicate that SAN members experienced stress related to social, financial and emotional conditions. Moreover, occupational stressors are linked to an inability to achieve occupational goals, delays with promotions, poor communication, and unfair treatment. Lastly confusion with mission objectives and a lack of support from co-workers and leaders are findings that were exposed in this study. Occupational stressors can lead to negative coping strategies such as alcohol abuse and withdrawal in interaction.

In response to the theme, stress should be viewed as important both for the individual and manager (commanders). To minimize stress, it is necessary to identify stressors first. Stress is not the same for everybody, as each individual responds to stress differently (Tabasi, 2002). Because of this, military leaders and members have to incorporate stress management programs into the day to day routine of staff. According to research conducted by Paton (2007) and Bartone (2006), stress must be imposed to make a stimulus, otherwise life may be dull and unmotivated. The important point here is how much stress will have to be imposed, because stress level differs from individual to individual. Well-managed stress makes people productive and makes life challenging (Carlisle, 2001). The empirical findings in the study provided an understanding of stress in the SAN. Therefore, the occupational stressors identified were useful in the development of the appraisal tool.

Support is the sense of belonging, trusting others and helpfulness of others and has been associated with wellness (Carlisle, 2001). The findings related to support in the military indicated that support can be both positive and negative. Social and emotional support enhances a sense of belonging and self-efficiency which are skill that are useful in dealing with stress. Members who shared their personal and occupational information with a co-workers or leaders felt betrayed because the intended support person discounted the seriousness of the problem or publicly aired the situation. Therefore, the findings for support suggest that SAN members could not rely on leaders and co-workers due to a lack of trust. The findings however revealed that support came from family and friends to assist members with coping. Sailors do not always seek out others to talk to about stressors and to seeking social support is replaced with negative coping, such as seclusion, alcohol abuse and withdrawal. Interaction by support from co-workers as a coping strategy is somewhat prohibited in the military due to the fact that fraternisation is not allowed amongst the

ranks. Social support in the military is vital as trust and teamwork are important to carry out mission objectives. Therefore, support identified in the results of the theme was useful in the development of the appraisal tool in this study. Support as a coping measure was used in the stress assessment in the appraisal tool.

Operational Deployment is recognized as a military stressor. The number of times a SAN member deploys affects how stress during deployment is perceived. The current findings enhance our understanding of deployment as a military stressor and add to the body of literature. The findings suggest during deployment education and promotion stagnates. It was postulated in this study that deployment had an adverse effect on sailors and that in example long working hours, feelings of powerlessness, and ambiguity was some of the stressors experienced by military members. The findings for deployment as a theme were that factors such as worrying about family members can affect staff and can distract sailors from their work. The demands of the military environment highlighted in this study that the family not only played an important role in supporting the military member but also could be a source of stress. Findings revealed that co-workers support was important during deployments when contact with family and friends outside of work were difficult. Ships as a working environment were described more different than most other occupations making it hard for family and friends to understand what SAN members are going through. The findings related to the theme operational deployment was covered in the developed appraisal tool. Questions related to operational deployment and stress was assessed, how members deal with being deployed, the impact of being away from their families, how deployment delays promotion and education. Lastly questions regarding the feelings of loneliness and boredom were included. Therefore, operational deployment

identified as a theme was useful in the development of the appraisal tool in this study. Operational deployment thus has a spill-over affect that impact on the family.

The impact of stress on military families has proven to impact SAN members negatively. The findings in the study revealed that the social support from their family or friends help members to cope and good relationships with friends and family ~~are~~ contributed towards well-being. Relationship problems such as marital status, being separated, divorced and/or widowed has adverse affected military families. The findings for military families revealed that military families significantly contribute towards a staff members stress. The families were also indicated as a positive means of support in buffering the effects of stress in the military to deal with stress. SAN members indicated that they receive social support from their family and friends. The findings related to the theme impact on military families were dealt with in the appraisal tool. It was useful to determine the factors that impacted on military families while the principle members were deployed. Relationship problems such as marital status, being separated, divorced and/or widowed has adverse affected military families were useful to include in the personal stress assessment in the appraisal tool.

The findings related to military leadership indicated that sailors view leadership in a positive way and have an understanding of the issues inherent in leading in extremely demanding environments. Leadership can prove beneficial to soldiers' well-being, whereas poor leadership is readily viewed by soldiers as a major source of stress. Results has shown that the lack of supervisor support negatively affects health among employees, particularly when employees. An increase in rank designation leads to an increase in stress levels, therefore, the higher the rank, the more pressure and responsibility leaders have to endure. The participants from the study felt that their supervisors held their fate of their

military career in their hands and that good leadership can prove beneficial to their wellbeing. Moreover, positive leadership lead to a positive working environment. The findings related to the theme leadership were useful in developing the appraisal tool. Questions related to leadership focussed on leadership support from leaders in stressful times, unfair treatment from leaders, bullying and work environment that may cause stress.

The findings related to Sport and Recreation indicated that SAN members are intrinsically motivated and are living healthy lifestyles. The fact that SAN members get the opportunity to participate in 27 sport codes as part of individual and team sport leads a sense of protection for soldiers and lead to a reduction in stress (Daily & Kustler, 2006). Findings indicated that healthy lifestyle changes might lead to a decrease in stress levels. Sport and recreation does seem to be important to SAN members and can foster a lifelong reduction in stress (Daily & Kustler, 2006). Therefore, results confirmed that SAN members had the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation activities and that sport and recreation were offered to the larger military community, promoting a mass participation culture. Sport and recreation programs play a vital role in the quality of life of military members. SAN members also made use of positive stress coping strategies such as regular exercise and other forms of recreation activities i.e. watching movies, listening to music and playing board games on board ships to cope with stress.

The Leisure behaviour assessment as a part of the appraisal tool assessed leisure behaviour and sport and recreation pursuits of participants. The leisure behaviour as a coping strategy focused on social activities, passive activities, physical activities and outdoor activities. These leisure pursuits was valuable in assessing: leisure time, leisure satisfaction, leisure participation, barriers for participation, access to leisure opportunities, personal factors that

affect leisure, health factors and questions related to financial factors that affect leisure behaviour, leisure as a stress coping measure.

5.3 Limitations to the current study

This study gathered valuable information on the stress levels of SAN military by measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour. The limitations experienced by the researcher as it relates to the study are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The following limitations were identified:

- The process to gain approval from the Military to conduct the study was time consuming. The delay in getting the approval led to the delay in collecting the data.
- The limited research available on the South African and African military and the scarcity of recent studies conducted was a challenge because most of the literature was out-dated.
- The data collected depended on the recall ability and honesty of the participants.
- The accessibility and availability of ships personnel as participants was challenging due to deployments. The challenges experienced with recruitment of participants delayed the data collection procedure.
- Focus group discussions were a unique experience for participants and due to the researcher's rank in the organization, it was deemed necessary to procure the research supervisor as the interviewer.
- Participants only included the SANDF and not neighbouring countries. In the following paragraphs recommendations are presented based on findings and conclusions on the study.

In the following paragraphs recommendations are presented based upon findings and conclusions on the study.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

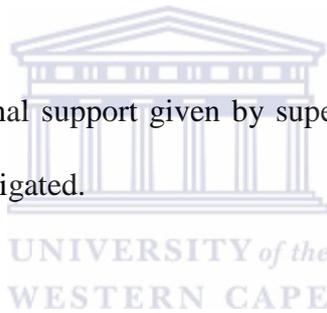
The following recommendations are for future research. The data in this study was collected using a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is often a superior method of gathering an in-depth understanding of human behaviour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The study had a qualitative design; therefore, future research opportunities may make use of a mixed method approach which would include a larger quantitative sample.

- The use of the purposive sampling method included males and females of various rank groups and could be explored in the following manner: research investigations using females only or males only, exploring non-commissioned officers as a sample or officers may be used in future opportunities.
- This study could be repeated with new recruits only to compare results with the findings of the current study.
- Sport and recreation interests change with new members recruited into the SAN. The needs analyses/assessment should be conducted at least every three to five years to determine the sport and recreation interests, needs and changing programs accordingly. A needs assessment could be conducted to assess the leisure, sport and recreation interest that would be appropriate in the SAN in future.
- Military stressors identified in this study and addressed in the literature only refer to operational, non-operational stressors and personal life stressors that originate outside and inside the military environment and the spill-over effect on performance of military staff. Future recommendations are that each stressor could be dealt with individually and addressed extensively. Further investigation in

exploring stress in the military and the effect of outside stressors influencing military performance is recommended.

- Literature supporting these findings are limited and should be further explored to determine the possible causes for the difference in stress responses in relation to age and military rank
- Deployment as a military stressor should be further investigated, as the findings indicated differences in soldiers stress experiences and stress coping abilities.
- More research is suggested to explore the reasons for soldiers experiencing stress differently during their first deployment compared to when they have been deployed more than once. Furthermore, stress coping abilities need to be investigated further.
- The social and emotional support given by supervisors in a military environment should be further investigated.



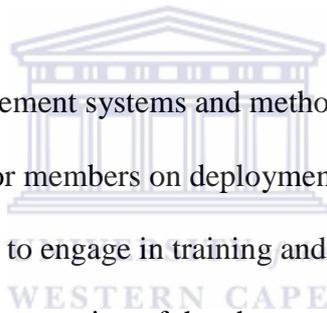
5.5 Recommendations for Practise

The following recommendations are being made on the basis of the findings with regard to the perception on stress management in the military:

Sport and recreation activities as interventions to reduce stress should be emphasised during deployment. The SAN members have regular access to activities and programs. Leadership should, therefore, remind soldiers frequently on the importance and benefits of sport and recreation participation and promote participation to take place frequently throughout the year.

- Sport and Recreation and physical activities should be emphasized through workshops educating SAN members from all ranks on leisure and well-being.

- The value of sport and recreation and leisure experiences as a coping strategy should be used to improve their mental and physical health. The implementation of education workshops on leisure and well-being should foster a culture of mass participation. Programs on sport and social activities need to be implemented in order to keep members motivated.
- The implementation of a support system at the home unit to assist members on deployment. Morale-boosting programs in the form of sport and recreation needs to be implemented.
- Buddy systems to support family members while the principle member is deployed. Deployment orientation mentorship to assist new arrivals to cope with day to day stressors.
- The SAN needs to implement systems and methods to better the communication with family members for members on deployment.
- The SAN member need to engage in training and learn coping skills as part of basic military training . Implementation of the above-mentioned systems and programs will enhance the quality of life and overall well-being of military members.



5.6 Specific Recommendations

A preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in African context is recommended as a way forward. The aim of recreation therapy stress and leisure appraisal tool (Appendix E) was for use in different military contexts. Therefore, the information gathered from the findings from the focus groups and findings from the key informant's interviews were included in the development of the appraisal tool along with the use of the literature from various military context. . The six pre-determined

themes identified in the theoretical framework of the study formed the basis of the appraisal tool. Therefore, the appraisal tool included the following framework: demographic questions were included in first part to gather information about the participants, questions on the themes focussed on stress assessment, leisure behaviour, stress coping and barriers to participation. The stress assessment in the appraisal tool dealt with personal stress, occupational stress, wellness and operational deployment. The leisure behaviour assessment focussed on social activities, passive activities, physical activities and outdoor activities. The appraisal of stress coping was measured by assessing support and the barriers to participation. The appraisal tool (Appendix E) combined the findings of the focus groups, key informants and literature while staying focussed on the pre-determined themes identified in the theoretical framework.

Both the literature and the findings of this study contributed to the development of the appraisal tool that used the Therapeutic Recreation Models (TRSMIM) as a theoretical framework. The findings in the study highlighted the need to assist soldiers in coping with stress. This goes beyond the training they receive that assist them in preparing for military stressors and developing military readiness.

The aim of the study was to develop an appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour. The main aims of this appraisal tool will be:

- To assess the soldiers stress,
- To assess stress coping, both in their personal lives and in the military,
- The assess soldiers leisure involvement and leisure behaviour.

Hutchinson, Bland and Kleiber (2008) noted that Iwasaki and Mannell developed the Leisure Coping Beliefs and Leisure Coping Strategies scales in 2002 to assess leisure-

based coping. Individual assessments of the stress levels, military members should be conducted in collaboration with a military psychologist to detect levels of stress and the causes of stress. Soldiers need to be assessed in terms of: their stress levels, their coping strategies and the effectiveness, their knowledge of leisure and behaviour, their leisure ability and functionality, their current leisure interests and participation.

The appraisal tool developed in this study was illustrated in Appendix E, (pg, 125). The participants' demographic information is gathered in the first section by asking them questions relating to: name, surname, rank, mustering, age, gender and years in the service. This is a requirement of a therapeutic recreation assessment tool as it serves as an individual assessment in order to develop a personalised intervention for the client. These assessments are kept confidential. The appraisal tool focused on a stress assessment (Part 1), stress coping assessment and a leisure behaviour assessment (Part 2).

The stress assessment in the appraisal tool consisted of four sections which included personal stress, occupational stress, wellness and operational deployment and was highlighted in 30 questions in the assessment. Personal stress in the appraisal tool was measured by asking questions such as: "Every person experience some kind of stress in their daily life. Over the past 5 years, to what extend have you experienced the following events as stressful? Rate your experience by assigning a number between 1 (zero stress) to 10 (highly stressed) for each of the following questions. Personal stress questions included: personal responsibility, financial management problems, relationship problems, death in the family, and illness at home. The personal stress scale may also be used to create an awareness of one's personal stress levels. Occupational stress was measured by asking questions such as: "Every person experience some kind of stress in their daily life. Over

the past 5 years, to what extent have you experienced the following events as stressful? Rate your experience by assigning a number between 1 (zero stress) to 10 (highly stressed) for each of the following questions. You may use 1 or 10 or any number in between to answer.” Questions included were: inability to achieve personal goals at work, workload/responsibilities, meeting deadlines, staying in control of your temper at work, long working hours, pulling duties after hours’, conflict with colleagues’, poor working conditions, bullying, lack of support, delays or not getting promoted”. The basis for including these questions was that it was exposed in the findings of the theme stress. The stressors related to occupational stress was exposed in the literature framework.

Wellness was measured in the appraisal tool by asking questions related to experiences such as: insomnia/sleeplessness, burned out, bullying, intolerant supervises using /abusive/vulgar language. Participants must rate their experience on by assigning a number between 1 (zero stress) to 10 (highly stressed) for each of the following questions. The reasoning for using these questions was that it was exposed as part of the theoretical framework.

Operational deployment was measured in the appraisal tool by posing questions relating to: loneliness when away from your loved ones, very little off time, extended periods away from home, lack of educational development, not being rewarded or promoted. Participants must rate their experience on by assigning a number between 1 (zero stress) to 10 (highly stressed) for each of the following questions. The rationale or reasoning for using these operational deployment questions was that the stressors were found to be relevant to the findings in the theme operational deployment. The operational deployment scale may be used to create an awareness of one’s stress levels while on deployment.

The appraisal tool can be used to measure stress levels and to ascertain the reasons why certain stressors are more prevalent in military environments. If participants indicated a rating from 5-10, they were asked to motivate their reasons. These reasons may provide valuable data regarding stress in the military. Furthermore, participants must answer (Yes/No) to indicate their stress experience. The causes of stress are measured and participants must indicate if the stress is caused by physical, psychological or behavioural symptoms. Stress coping was categorized into socially acceptable and anti-social behaviour. Thereafter, participants must identify their leisure pursuits in order to reduce stress.

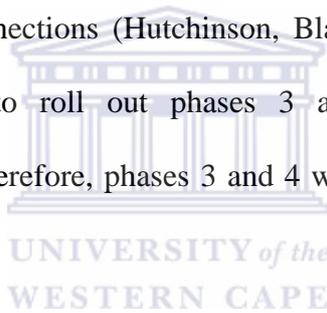
The leisure behaviour assessment (Part 2) included social activities, passive activities, physical activities and outdoor activities. The leisure pursuit's questions measured leisure time, leisure satisfaction, leisure participation, barriers for participation, access to leisure opportunities, personal factors that affect leisure, health factors and questions related to financial factors that affect leisure behaviour, leisure as a stress coping strategy. Participants must list their top three social, passive, physical and outdoor activities based on their leisure preferences and participation trends and select an appropriate option of how often they engage in leisure pursuits i.e. daily, weekly, monthly etc. The rationale for including questions related to leisure, sport and recreation activities was that it could be used to cope with stress. Therefore, it was included as a part of the appraisal tool.

The appraisal tool could be used in the context of the military setting, therapeutic Recreation specialist will serve as a facilitator along the continuum, aiming to assist the client or military staff member to reach an optimal stress-coping leisure lifestyle. Moreover specific disciplines could be included with therapeutic groups offering

individualized treatment, delivered by occupational therapists, recreation therapists, social workers, rehabilitation nurses, rehabilitation technicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, exercise scientists, etc. The appraisal tool attempted to include stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour to create awareness of one's own stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour experiences. Findings from this study indicated that military staff members did make use of physical activities for recreational purposes, mainly for the benefit of their own personal health and wellbeing, for leisure and relaxation, and to cope with stress. Furthermore, leisure and recreational activities are offered on a regular basis in the SAN. The appraisal tool would also be valuable in measuring sedentary recreational activities and stress coping measures. The findings further showed that, although these soldiers participated in these activities, they had high levels of stress related to the military environment, as well as personal life stressors originating beyond the military environment. The use of recreational activities as an intervention to reduce stress was therefore suggested as an alternative measure. Therefore the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model (Young, 2013) could be used for this purpose, as it include all the wellness dimensions as factors in reducing stress.

The population for this appraisal tool would be SANDF soldiers or any other military environment in which soldiers have been subjected both to stress (operational and non-operational stressors) and to personal stressors that might hinder them from performing their military duties. The setting for the appraisal tool would be in the context of an organizational setting, more specifically a military setting, and focusing on employee wellness.

Education could be an important recommendation in developing the stress coping skills of the SANDF members in the following manner: health and wellbeing workshops, stress and stress management seminars, discussions of coping activities to deal with stress workshops on the power of positive thinking, financial management workshops , time management workshops and awareness campaigns run once a year for the whole military to refresh their memories and to remind them of the importance of dealing with their stress levels. Leisure education would be used to develop an awareness of leisure and its benefits. Leisure education is subdivided into four components: leisure awareness, social skills, leisure activity skills and leisure resources. These offer many opportunities to support leisure-based coping, with participants experiencing a sense of solidarity in structured programs that facilitate meaningful connections (Hutchinson, Bland & Kleiber, 2008). The final recommendation would be to roll out phases 3 and 4 in order to validate the appropriateness of the tool Therefore, phases 3 and 4 would be recommended for further research.



5.7 Conclusion

This study explored the development of a preliminary appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in South African context. The potential salient topics was identified to be address and develop the appraisal tool measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour in a military environment and identify the questions that was included in the appraisal tool. Employee wellness, stress, stress coping, stress symptoms, types and the role of sport and recreations were explored within a military context and investigated through an extensive review of literature. Stress was found to have an adverse effect on military readiness and wellbeing of staff. The study attempted to explore the use

of sport and recreation activities and leisure in military settings as a means to reduce and manage stress. A theoretical framework was established with regards to the use of therapeutic recreation models and the use thereof in the military context. Findings of the study were used to develop an appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model measuring stress, stress coping and leisure behaviour of military staff in African context.

The results of the study were summarized and discussed. Recommendations, implications and limitations of this study, as well as suggestions for future research, were provided. This study reiterated the need for greater attention in rendering of support services needed to military members and their families, preparing families for separation and improved communication between deployed soldiers and the home front. The SANDF needs to apply doctrine, in line with plans for each operation to manage these stressors. This study has shown that job-induced separations affect not only the soldier and the spouse, but also their children. The role of the supervisor played a large part in how satisfied and committed the members were regarding their job. Adaptive coping strategies are suggested for dealing with the unique military environments are recommended. Sport and Recreation programs are vital to alleviate the symptoms of stress. The appraisal tool developed would be recommended for use in SANDF information systems and must be used with caution until such a time as it is proofed succesful in a military context.

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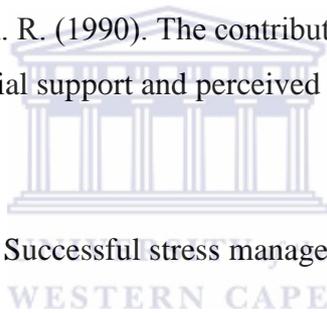
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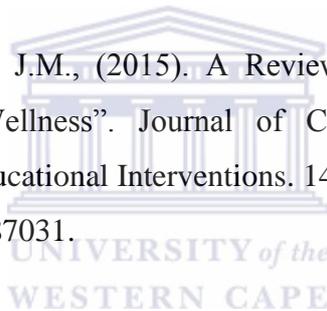
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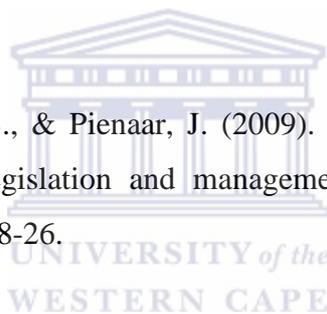
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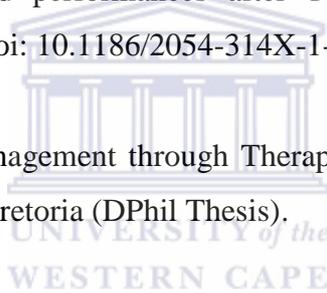
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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet



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Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
 Tel: +27 21-959 2350, Fax: 27 21-959 3688
 E-mail: colleencozettconsulting@hotmail.com

Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: Towards the development of a standardized appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model for military staff in an South African context

Dear Participant,

Kindly accept my sincere thanks for taking the time to read about the study. My name is Marlin Cozett and I am a Masters student at the University of the Western Cape. Dr. M. Young is a Lecturer at the University of the Western Cape and he is helping me finish my research project so I can graduate. If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor whose details are at the end of this letter.

What is the study about?

This is a research project conducted by Marlin Cozett at the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to be a part of the study..

What will I be asked to do if I participate?

You will be asked to fill in two questionnaires asking questions about how often you participate in physical activities and which activities and what influences you to participate. All the steps will be explained clearly to you and your teacher. I will be present if you have any questions.

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?

All your personal information will be kept private. To further protect your confidentiality, only the researcher will have access to your information. I will collect the questionnaires personally and will be responsible for ensuring their storage in a locked and secure place. Your participation in this research will be completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate in this study or if participation is stopped at any time, you will not be penalised.

What are the risks of this research?

There are no known risks with participating in this research project. You will only be writing on the questionnaire forms. Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact the study coordinator.

Study Coordinators Names: Dr. M. Young

University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Belville 7535, Tel: (021) 959265

Appendix B: Participants Consent Form



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Participants Consent Form

Title of Research Project: Towards the development of an standardized appraisal tool for the Therapeutic Recreation Stress Management Intervention Model for military staff in an South African context

The study has been described to me in language that I understand and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand that my child's identity will not be disclosed and that he/ she may withdraw from the study without giving a reason at any time and this will not negatively affect him/ her in any way.

Participant's nameParticipant's signature

Date.....

Parent's name/Guardian.....Parent's signature.....

Date.....

Witness name..... Signature of witness.....

Date.....

Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact the study coordinator:

Study Coordinator's Name: Dr. M. Young
University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17, Belville 7535

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Appendix C: Interview Guide for Focus Group Discussions



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TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN STANDARDIZED APPRAISAL TOOL

FOR THE THERAPEUTIC RECREATION STRESS MANAGEMENT

INTERVENTION MODEL FOR MILITARY STAFF IN A SOUTH AFRICAN

CONTEXT

1. What are the most pressing stressors of military life experienced by members and families respectively?
2. What type of cultural stressors do you experience when on operational deployment?
3. What type of stressors do you experience from the physical environment during operations?
4. What type of operational readiness is experienced prior to deployments?
5. What type of stressors do you experience when on deployment?
6. How does military culture affect family life?
7. How does culture determine how military families handle military family stressors?
8. How does work-family conflict relate to service members' well-being?

9. Explain the typical stressors or challenges you experienced in the operational environment?
10. How do soldiers let off steam when frustrated at work?
11. Are people in your unit drinking/smoking more? Getting into trouble?
12. What role does the work schedule play in how much soldiers drink/smoke?
13. What do you and people in your unit do to relax, unwind, distress?



Appendix D: Interview guide for Key Informants

1. How would you define stress in the military work environment?
2. What are the contributing factors that may lead to stress in the military work environment?
3. How may work related stress impact on the personal life of staff?
4. Which health conditions have been linked to prolonged exposure to stressful situation in the military environment?
5. What are other risks linked to prolonged exposures to extreme stressful situations in the military?
6. In your opinion, what are the most successful coping mechanisms to deal with stress?
7. Can stress be prevented?
8. What are the support structures available at present to assist military members?
9. Are Stress Management programs funded and useful in the military environment?
10. What are the components of an effective Stress Management program?
11. How stressful do people perceive the event/ situation to be that brought them into Therapeutic Recreation services?
12. How stressful do clients perceive leisure to be in the context of their current life situation?
13. To what extent do clients perceive that leisure has helped them in the past or will currently help them cope with stress in their lives?
14. How have clients used their leisure to cope with stress in the past?
15. To what extent do clients feel they possess the personal or social resources to be able to use their leisure to cope with stress?'

Appendix E:

RECREATION THERAPY STRESS AND LEISURE APPRAISAL TOOL

Date of assessment: _____ Recreation Therapist: _____

Background information:

SURNAME:	
NAME:	
DATE OF BIRTH:	
IDENTITY NUMBER:	
AGE:	
GENDER:	
RANK:	
FORCE NUMBER:	
MUSTRING:	
ARMS OF SERVICE:	
JOB DESCRIPTION:	
YEARS IN SERVICE:	

STRESS ASSESSMENT:

Every person experience some kind of stress in their daily life. Over the past 5 years, to what extend have you experienced the following events as stressful?

Rate your experience by assigning a number between 1 (zero stress) to 10 (highly stressed) for each of the following questions. You may use 1 or 10 or any number in between to answer. **(This assessment is not meant to replace a clinical assessment).**

PART: 1

STRESS ASSESSMENT

- A - PERSONAL STRESS
- B - OCCUPATIONAL STRESS
- C - WELLNESS
- D - OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENT

PART: 2

LEISURE BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT

- A - SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
- B - PASSIVE ACTIVITIES
- C - PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES
- D - OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

PART: 1

STRESS ASSESSMENT:

A. Personal stress:		Rating (1-10)
A1	Personal responsibilities at home	
A2	Financial management problems	
A3	Relationship problems	
A4	Death of a loved one	
A5	Physical danger	
A6	Personal illness of family members'	
B. Occupational stress:		
B7	Inability to achieve personal goals at work	
B8	Workload/ responsibilities	
B9	Meeting deadlines	
B10	Staying in control of your temper at work	
B11	Long working hours	
B12	Pulling duties after hours	
B13	Unfair treatment by manager/commander	
B14	Conflict with colleagues	
B15	Poor working conditions	
B16	Bullying	
B17	Lack of support	
B18	Delays or not getting promoted	
C. Wellness:		
C19	Poor self esteem	
C20	Insomnia/sleeplessness	
C21	Burned out	
C22	Bouts of lows or sadness	
C23	Bullying	
C24	Intolerant supervisors using /abusive/vulgar language	
C25	Alcohol abuse	
D. Operational deployment:		
D26	Loneliness when away from your loved ones	
D27	Boredom	
D28	Extended periods away from home	
D29	Lack of educational development	
D30	Not being rewarded or promoted	

Please answer the following questions regarding stress coping abilities:

Personal support:

	Yes	No
Do you feel that your family supports you in stressful times?		
Do you feel that your superiors supports you in stressful times?		
Do you feel that you are able to speak to someone when you feel stressed?		
If yes, please specify the person/s you would most likely talk to: _____ _____ _____		
Do you feel that you will be victimised in the work environment if you acknowledge that you feel stressed?		
If yes, please provide the reason therefore: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____		



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Stress coping behaviour:

Please state how you cope with your stress:

	Yes	No
Do you make use of aggressive behaviour to deal with stress?		
Do you resort to the use of alcohol or drugs when feeling stressed?		
Do you resort in any other type of anti-social behaviour (i.e. gambling, prostitution, etc.) to cope with stress? If yes, please specify: _____ _____		
Do you make use of positive leisure options (physical exercise, church, board games, reading, watching TV or listen to music, etc) to relieve you from stress?		

PART: 2

LEISURE BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT:

The following questions aim to determine your leisure behaviour and preferences: social, physical, passive and outdoor activities: Answer based on what you really do.

Section 1: Leisure preferences and participation trends

A. Social Activities:

The following are examples of social activities: church group activities, clubs and team sport activities.

Please list the 3 social activities that you most often participate in.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

How often do you do each of these social activities? *Select only one option per activity* (✓).

Activity	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a month	Once every few months
activity a)					
activity b)					
activity c)					

B. Passive Activities:

The following are examples of passive activities: watching television, listening to music, reading, computer activities.

Please list the 3 passive activities that you most often participate in.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

How often do you do each of these passive activities? *Select only one option per activity* (✓).

Activity	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a month	Once every few months
activity a)					
activity b)					
activity c)					

C. Physical Activities:

The following are examples of physical activities: running, walking, swimming, soccer, rugby.

Please list the 3 physical activities that you most often participate in.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

How often do you do each of these physical activities? *Select only one option per activity* (✓).

Activity	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a month	Once every few months
activity a)					
activity b)					
activity c)					

D. Outdoor Activities:

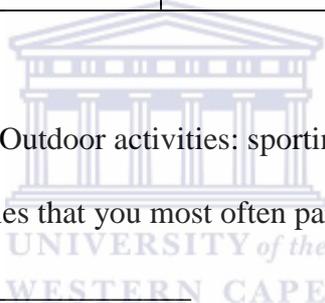
The following are examples of Outdoor activities: sporting events, concerts, fishing and gardening.

Please list the 3 outdoor activities that you most often participate in.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

How often do you do each of these outdoor activities? *Select only one option per activity* (✓).

Activity	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a month	Once every few months
activity a)					
activity b)					
activity c)					



List activities in which you are not currently participating in but would like to experience someday.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Section 2: Barriers to participation

Select the barriers listed below that are most likely to keep you from participating in an activity.

Activity unavailable near my place of residence	
Activity unavailable in the workplace	
Activity unavailable during deployment	
Lack of child care when I have time to participate in the activity	
Lack of transportation	
Inconvenient hours	
Poor program management	
Lack of program information	
No companion	
Personal safety concerns	
Lack of money	
Personal health reasons	
I'm uncomfortable with other users	
Personal physical condition that needs special consideration	
No assistance for physical condition (should you have a physical condition that needs special assistance, i.e. a disability)	
Other (please specify):	
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	
4. _____	
5. _____	

Section 3: Leisure behaviour

	Yes	No	Not sure	N/a
1. Do you feel that leisure time is important?				
2. Are you satisfied with your current leisure lifestyle?				
3. Do you like to participate in activities on a regular basis?				
4. Do you consider yourself a social person?				
5. Do you consider yourself a person who prefers being alone?				
6. Do you enjoy new challenges?				
7. Do you consider yourself a confident person?				

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT: *(For the use of the therapist only)*



SIGNATURE (Therapist): _____

Date: _____