

QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF BELIEFS AMONG AMONG DANISH VETERAN SOLDIERS RETURNED FROM INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

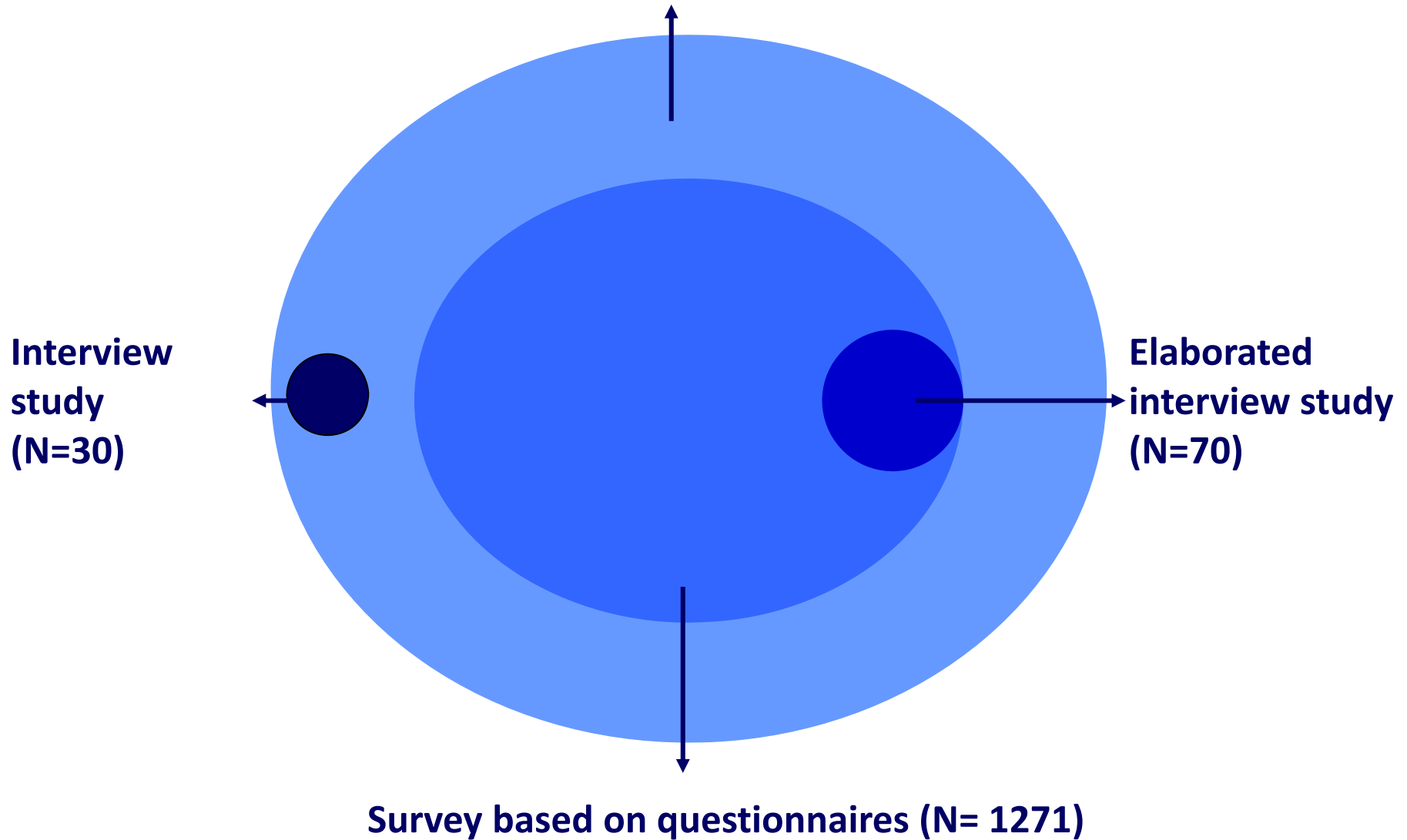
ESSSB14 TEL AVIV SEPTEMBER 3-6 2012



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Register-based research N= 25.000 (1990-2009)



Interview study (N=30)

Elaborated interview study (N=70)

Survey based on questionnaires (N= 1271)





Criteria of selection:

- has been under fire personally
- the camp has been under fire
- suicidal ideation
- attempted suicide

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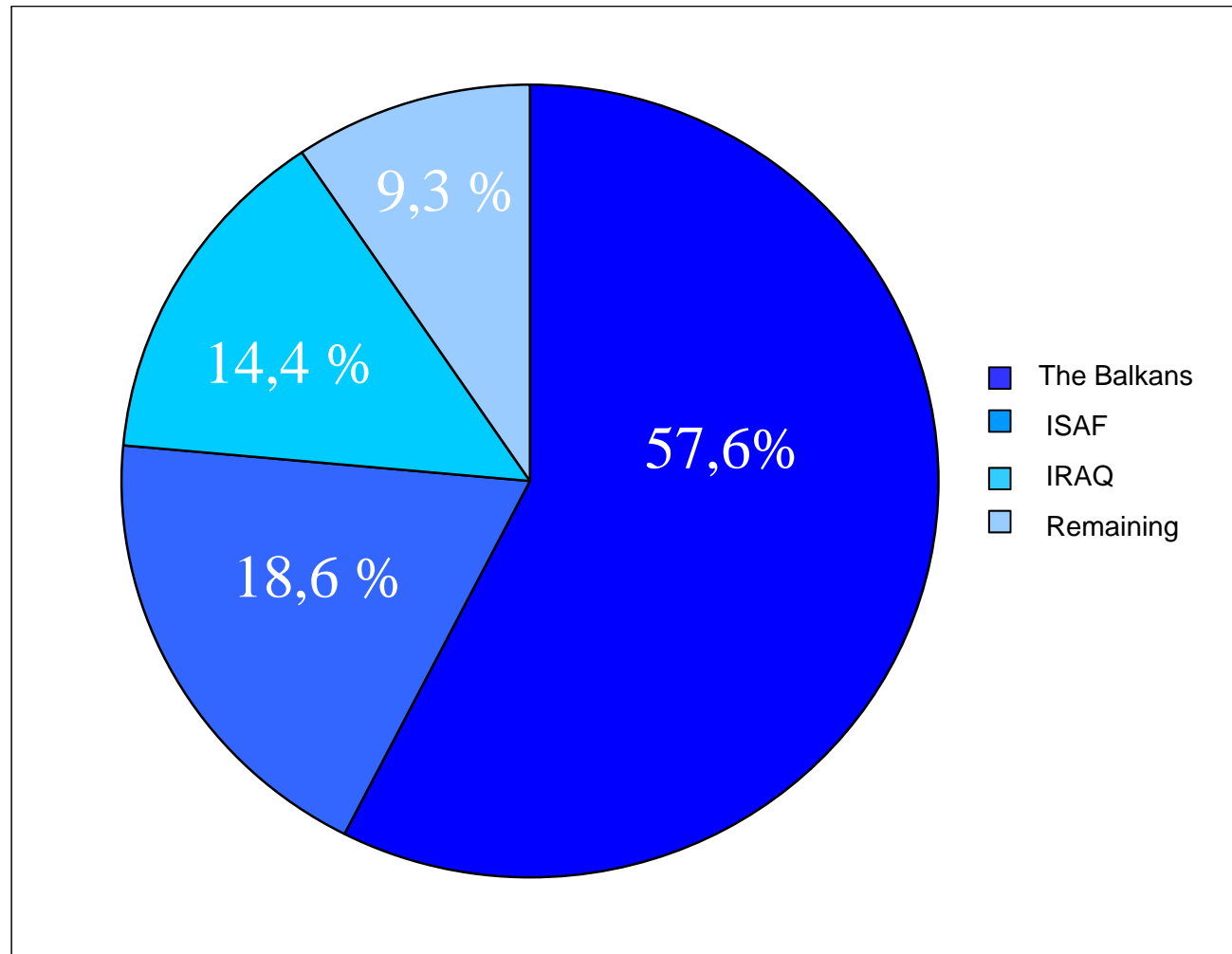
- **70,8 %** has been under fire personally
- **68,1 %** the camp has been under fire
- **42,2 %** has had suicidal ideation
- **11,1 %** has attempted suicide



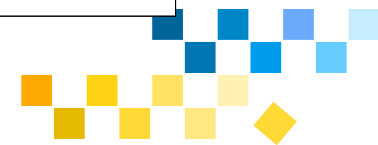
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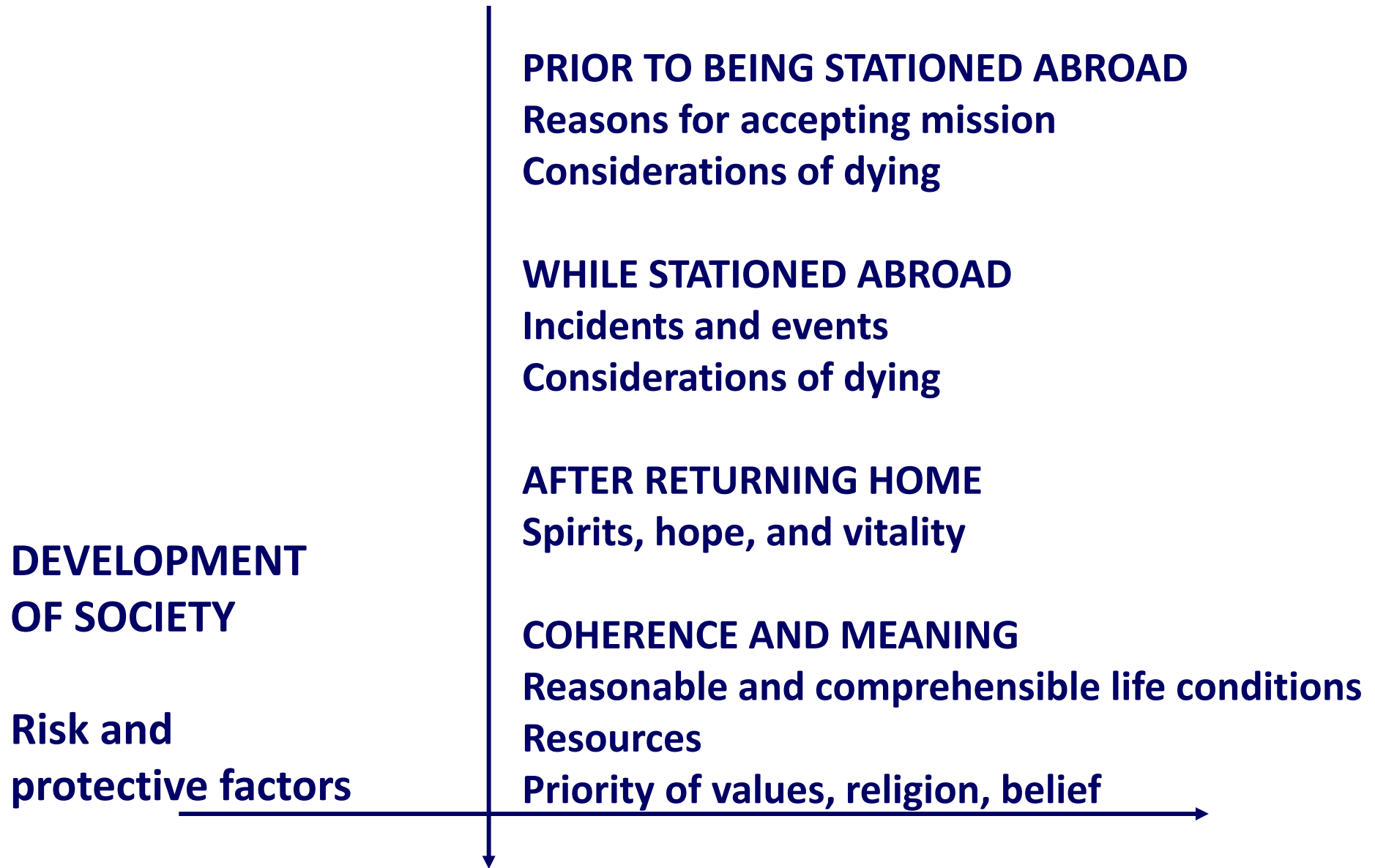
MISSIONS (N=118)



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ANALYSIS MODEL



PRIOR TO BEING STATIONED ABROAD



To put training into practice
To make a difference



Considerations of dying (1/3)

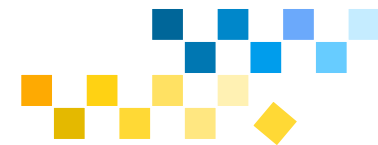
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While stationed abroad

**”We do not talk about
thoughts of dying
or suicidal ideation”**

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After returning home



Spirits, hope and vitality

Incidents become fate and life direction

To focus on the positive moments

To have a goal (another mission, children)

To take each day as it comes

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Coherence and meaning



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Reasonable and comprehensible life conditions/resources

- Support from family
- Authorization regarding missions
- Understanding from authorities
- Support to mental and/or physical ailments
- Society's accept
- That society needs you
- Courage to talk about death
- Witnesses to one's life

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Denmark's prioritisation 2000 Foreign prioritisation

- 1. Having a happy family life**
- 2. Being in good health**
- 3. Living in freedom**
- 4. Living in a country without war**
- 5. Having a high standard of living**
- 6. Living in a country without violence and corruption**
- 7. Receiving an education**
- 8. Having a job**
- 9. Be faithful to my religion**

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COHERENCE AND MEANING

Accordance between the soldier's top priorities and the life s/he leads

Priority of values

- 1. Having a happy family life**
- 2. Living in freedom**



Culture



- Values
- Symbols
- Habits
- Attitudes

Religion, belief

- Socialization
- Prayer
- Rituals
- Ethics
- Experiences
- Incidents
- Myths





Socialization (69,4%)


Ethical considerations (72,2 %)

Prayer (55,6 %)

Rituls (32%)

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A photograph of two soldiers in full combat gear, including helmets and vests, walking away from the camera in a field. The soldier on the left is wearing a black helmet and a dark camouflage uniform, holding a rifle. The soldier on the right is wearing a tan helmet and a tan camouflage uniform, with their hand on the shoulder of the soldier on the left. The background is a blurred field with some trees in the distance.

“Belief is necessary – you have to believe in something”

“I have always thanked someone when I’ve been abroad. I’ve looked towards heaven, and I don’t know if it’s God or Muhammad who’s up there, but I’ve given him my thanks.”

Experiences , incidents, feelings

- They are unspeakable
- They are closed for discussion for those who experienced them
- The incidents are momentary
- The incidents are uncontrollable

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Experience (72 %)

Incidents (64 %)

“After ceasing soldiering I have been in situations where - I must admit - I don’t have a reasonable or rational explanation for what happened. No matter how much I analyse, I must conclude that someone op there or out there has a hand in it somehow.”

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**What the soldiers have experienced is
irrevocable.**

To them it has become fate.

**It has interrupted their lives and made them
take a turn in an alternative direction**

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ETHICAL OBLIGATION TO PREVENT THAT OTHERS SUFFER FROM SUICIDAL IDEATION OR ATTEMPT TO OR COMMIT SUICIDE



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