

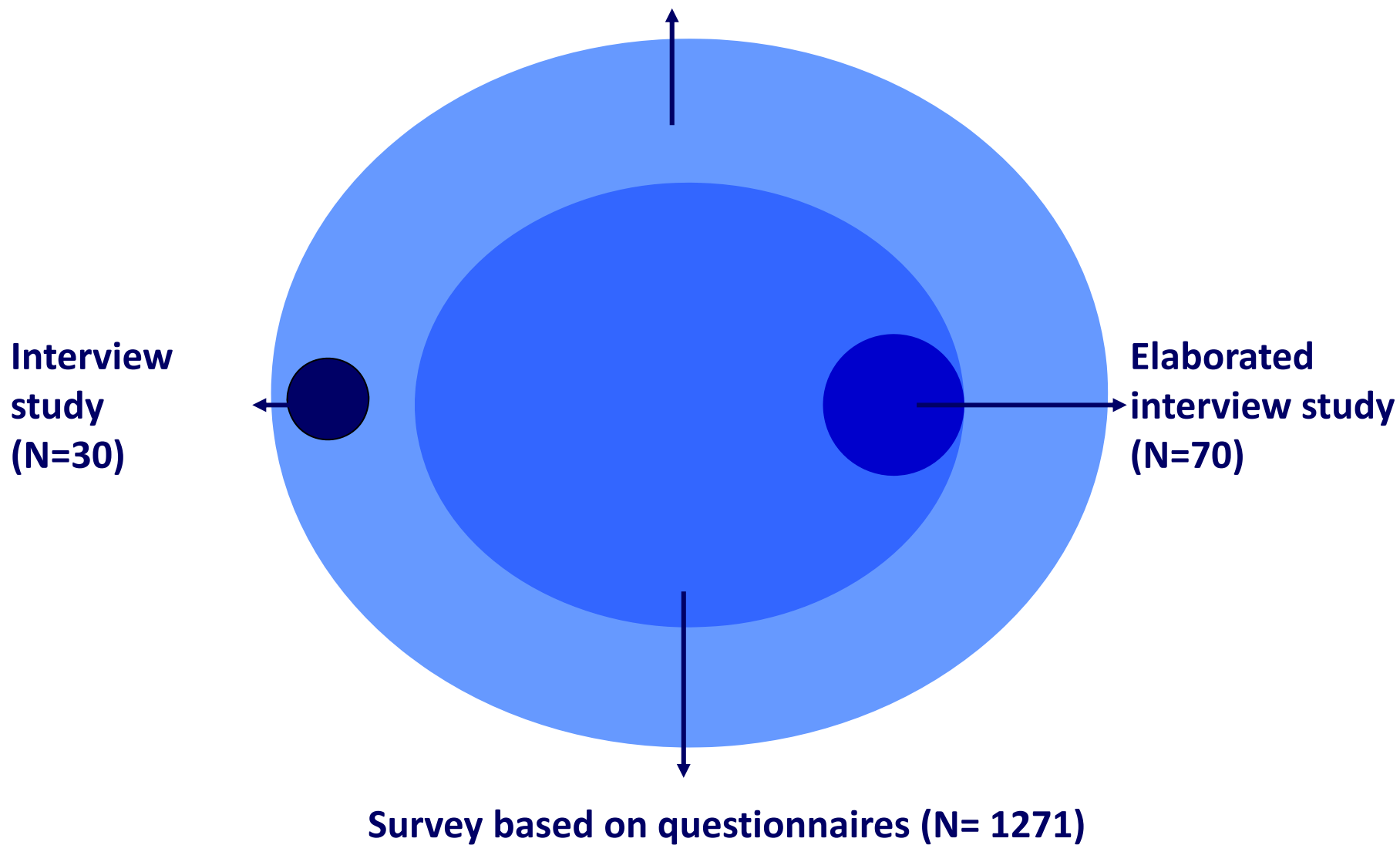
# PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR SUICIDAL IDEATION AND ATTEMPTED SUICIDE AMONG DANISH VETERAN SOLDIERS RETURNED FROM INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS



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





## Criteria of selection:

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



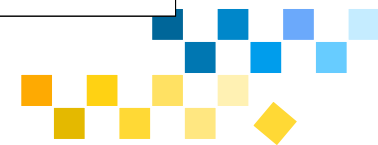
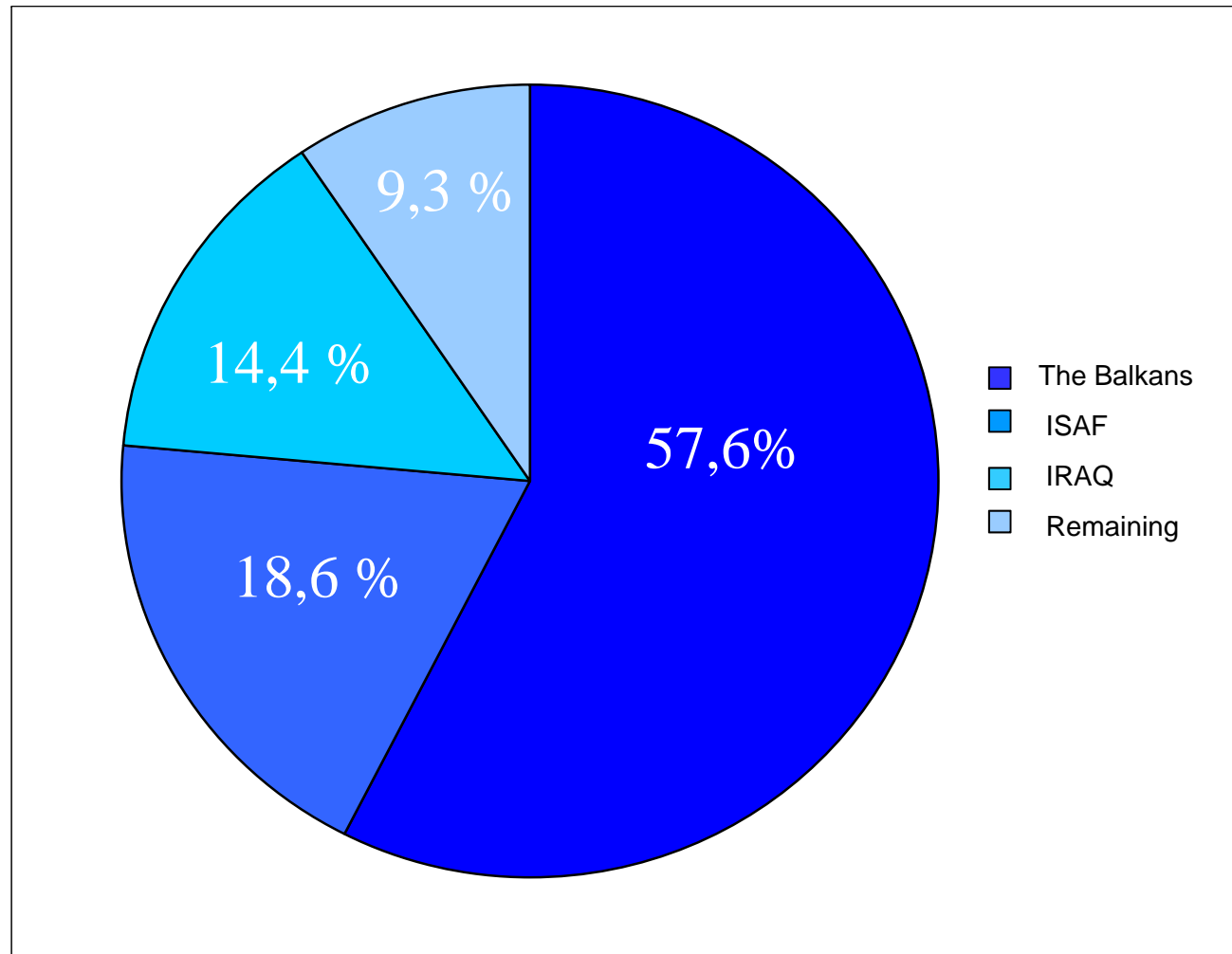
- **70,8 %** has been under fire personally
- **68,1 %** the camp has been under fire
- **42,2 %** has had suicidal ideation
- **11,1 %** has attempted suicide



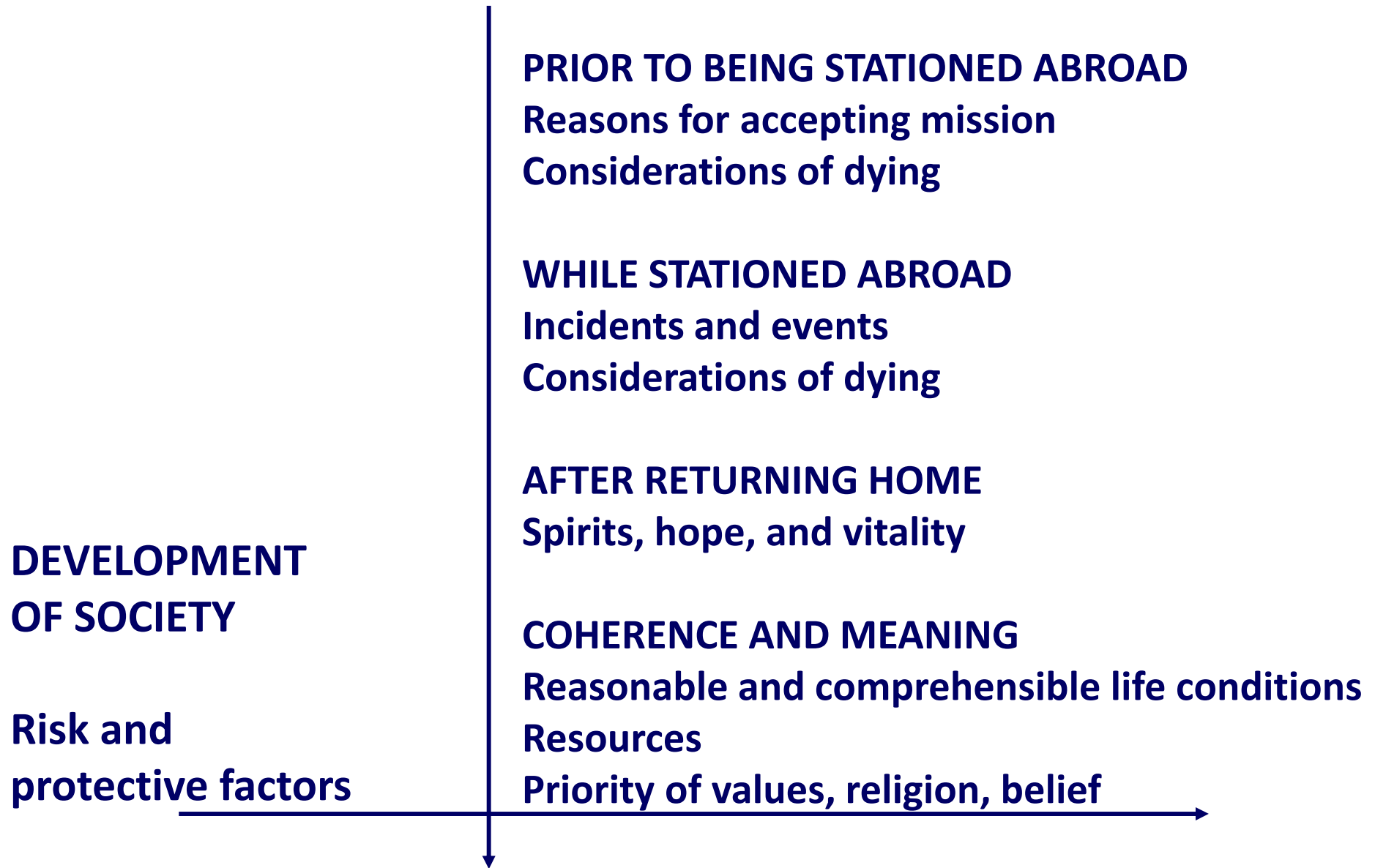
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## MISSIONS (N=118)



# ANALYSIS MODEL



## PRIOR TO BEING STATIONED ABROAD



To put training into practice  
To make a difference

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Considerations of dying (1/3)





**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 hands clasped behind their back. The background is a blurred field with some greenery and a fence 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



**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 up 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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