

TITLE:

Exploring the challenges facing former combatants in post apartheid South Africa

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is, except where specified, my own work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Community and Counselling-Based Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Miss Sasha Naidoo

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
APLA	Azanian People's Liberation Army
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDEF	South African National Defence Force
SDU	Self-Defence Unit
SPU	Self-Protection Unit
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission

ABSTRACT

This study is based on in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with six former combatants residing in the Kathorus area, East of Gauteng. The main aim of this study was to explore the challenges facing former combatants after twelve years of democracy. The key findings in the study indicate that many former combatants have not defined their identities beyond the militarised masculine identity they identified with during the conflict on the East Rand and this has resulted in some negative social and psychological consequences for these former combatants. Challenges including stigmatisation from the communities in which they reside, unemployment, trauma, and betrayal also emerge from the findings. In conclusion, the many challenges that former combatants face twelve years into democracy highlight the faults and flaws in the demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration process that occurred post apartheid. Some key recommendations that can be made based from this study relate to processes of future demobilisation and social and economic reintegration.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Former combatants have been faced with many challenges prior to and post 1994. According to a survey conducted prior 1994 with Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) combatants, Cock (1993) discovered that the majority of the sample were living in poverty, unemployed and relying on their families for finance and accommodation. Problems uncovered by this survey are that many MK combatants suffered from personal problems such as stress, social and emotional difficulties. The quote below by one former combatant is a clear illustration of the stress that former combatants face.

"I have twice come close to committing suicide. I stopped because of my children but I am useless- to them and myself." (Motumi & McKenzie, 1998. p.196)

Prior to 1994, former combatants were preoccupied with their participation in the armed struggle. Their main concern was the aim of defeating the oppressive white government that ruled the majority of black people. Having regard to South Africa's past and the millions of lives that were sacrificed for a free and fair South Africa, the most distinctive characteristics that emerges is that of determination and drive. This can be traced back to the words of Nelson Mandela in the Rivonia Trial (1964) in which he expressed:

"I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." — (Nelson Mandela, 20 April 1964, Rivonia Trial)

Bearing in mind the sacrifices that many former combatants have made for this country, it is important to evaluate the ways in which demobilisation impacted upon their hopes for the future once the ANC came into power. The challenges facing former combatants after the processes of demobilisation were many. Many former combatants were not

successfully debriefed and reintegrated back into society. Many still find themselves in a position of unemployment and poverty (Mashike, 2000). Other former combatants find it difficult to abandon their predisposition toward a military mindset and resort to crime and violence in order to survive (Gear, 2002). Based on this, it is important to explore the challenges facing former combatants in a post apartheid South Africa.

Today many former combatants face economic, social and psychological challenges. It is evident that the process of demobilisation of former combatants was not as successful as it was meant to be. The inadequacy of the demobilisation process has led to disappointments for the former combatants. Since 1994, the majority of people living in poverty stricken areas in South Africa have been extremely discontent with the conditions they live in. Data released more recently by Statistics South Africa (2005) reveal that the unemployment rate among black African people is higher than among Indian/Asian, Coloured and White people by a significant margin. For example, in September 2005, the unemployment rate among black Africans was 31. 5% as against 22. 4% among coloured people, 15. 8% among Indians/Asians and 5. 1% among white people (Statistics South Africa, Labour Force Survey, September 2005)

Views regarding South African citizens' discontent are clearly portrayed in media reports on poor service delivery and the feeling of disillusionment around voting. "President Thabo Mbeki has vowed that the bucket toilet system currently used by 230 000 households will be eradicated by 2007; that all communities will get clean water and decent sanitation by 2010; and electricity by 2012. He has also promised to replace all shacks with houses by 2014" (Nullis, 2006). Although necessary, these are significant undertakings and any failure to fulfill them would no doubt cause further disillusionment.

Previous unfulfilled promises have created much tension and frustration among citizens in South Africa and news reports mention that the most dissatisfaction is expressed at the level of service delivery. "Nationwide, the number of households in shacks rose from 1.45 million to 1.84 million - a 26% increase, according to housing ministry figures since the country's first all-race elections in 1994. This was despite the government spending nearly R30 billion to build about 1.8 million new homes in just under 12 years in many

areas in Southern Africa especially at this time before the national elections.”
(News24.com, 2006)

It seems as though there are immense feelings of deception from the citizens of South Africa as they feel as though the government that they fought for has let them down. “We've always voted and we will this time as well,” said Nopasile’s 66-year-old mother. “But we've never seen any difference. There have just been promises, but no change” (News24.com, 2006). These feelings and challenges can also be examined in light of those former combatants who have been promised a better future and are yet to see these promises materialise.

This research seeks to examine challenges facing former combatants in a post democratic South Africa. This study also aims to raise awareness of the challenges that former combatants are facing with the hope that the South African government will take notice of these challenges and develop psychosocial interventions aimed at assisting and empowering former combatants through the process of reintegration into civilian life. Since the first democratic election in South Africa former combatants were faced with the task of having to reshape their identities and their lives in order to reintegrate themselves back into a civilian way of life. The study also hopes to gain insight into the ways former combatants have reshaped their lives and their identities as well as to explore the ways in which this reshaping has impacted on their psychological well being.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Former combatants

The concept of a former combatant is highly contested in the South African context. A former combatant or ex-combatant refers to a particular social category in South Africa who were actively involved in the conflict during apartheid. Former combatants “possess military skills and have, for significant periods of time, led a military life whether or not this includes combat experiences” (Gear, 2002, p.8). It is important to note that the militarized formations in South Africa were heterogeneous. Therefore, thinking about the conflicts in South Africa, there were many actors aside from the formal militarized formations [South African Defence Force (SADF); Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA)], namely the quasi-military structures such as the Self-Defence and Self-Protection Units, or the right-wing paramilitary formations (Gear, 2002).

This study focuses on the Self-Defence Unit (SDU) and the Self-Protection Unit (SPU) members who were directly involved in the conflict during early 1990. Many of these former combatants are residing in the East Rand, specifically in Thokoza, Katlehong and Zonke Zizwe.

2.2 History of violence on the East Rand:

Apartheid divided South Africans along racial lines and Black South Africans were constant targets of the repressive National Party (Gear, 2002). This racial division was emphasised by the laws that entrenched segregation as well as geographic boundaries that people of colour were allocated to. Black people were removed from their homes and forced to live in areas that were allocated for Black people to live in. Overcrowding and unacceptable sanitary facilities explain the unacceptable physical circumstances prevalent in these allocated areas.

The conflict on the East Rand flared up as a result of many factors. Tension between the hostel dwellers and township residents, the tension between the ANC and IFP aligned members as well competition within the taxi industry on the East Rand are a few factors which contributed to the conflict. The actual reason for the beginning of the conflict is still not known but some speculate that it started as a result of taxi violence and the competition within this industry (Du Toit, 1995; Graham, Mokwena & Segal, 2006). Another reason for the conflict is stated in Segal (1991) as an ethnic conflict that occurred between Zulu and Xhosa speaking people. In 1990, the ANC was unbanned and the tension between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party became more evident. The conflict began in Thokoza and escalated in Phola Park squatter camp, which also spread onto land adjoining Hostels 4 and 5. People residing in these camps were originally from Transkei and were supporters of the ANC/SACP alliance. IFP supporters, who were originally from Kwazulu-Natal inhabited the hostels (Foster, Haupt & de Beer, 2005). The squatter camp lacked infrastructure and therefore began utilising water and ablution services at the hostels. This weakened the already inadequate infrastructure of the hostels and increased the tension between the opposing parties (Du Toit, 1995).

It was from this point onward that the conflict progressed. Many people lost their lives during this time in South African history. The ANC marketed Self-Defence Units (SDU's) as a security measure within the communities on the East Rand. The IFP reacted to this by forming armed Self-Protection Units (SPU's). The conflict functioned around destroying the opposing party and the protection of "home turf" (Du Toit, 1995, p.72).

2.3 POST 1994- The coming of democracy

2.3.1 What is demobilisation and reintegration?

Demobilisation is the formal and planned process by which the number of active combatants are discharged from military command structures (Ball & van de Goor, 2006; UN, 2006). This process entails “the reduction in size of the regular military, paramilitary forces, as well as rebel groups (sometimes after their integration into new regular armed forces)” (Ball & van de Goor, 2006, p.1). In short, it is the process by which the military personnel leave the armed forces. The United Nations (2006, p.4) outlines two stages that

occur during demobilisation. The first encompasses “the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose”. The second stage is described as the “reinsertion” stage in which demobilised combatants are provided with support packages (UN, 2006, p.4).

Reintegration is “the process by which former soldiers make the transition from a military life to a civilian life, where the former combatants and their dependents achieve financial independence through involvement in paid employment or productive activities” (Ball & van de Goor, 2006, p.1). Reintegration is generally a long-term process, as it may take several years for former soldiers and their families to adapt to a civilian way of life. Reintegration occurs in three ways namely economic, social and political reintegration.

Economic integration is the process through which retired or demobilised soldiers secure a livelihood for themselves and their dependents through production or employment and is often difficult in areas where unemployment is relatively high, poor economic growth exists and the individuals in question lack the necessary marketable skills (Ball & van de Goor, 2006).

Political integration is “the process through which retired or demobilised soldiers participate in the political life of their communities” (Ball & van de Goor, 2006, p.1). Political integration has two components. Firstly, it refers to former soldiers assuming or being elected into leadership positions in their communities, such as local councils, school committees and neighbourhood watches. Secondly, it involves former soldiers participating in political processes in the communities, such as voting for local elections and making themselves available when consultation with community members is required (Ball & van de Goor, 2006).

Social integration is the process through which former soldiers and their dependents consider themselves to be part of, and are accepted by the communities in which they live and society at large (Ball & van de Goor, 2006). “The attitudes of communities towards

former soldiers is often influenced by the perceptions of the historical role these individuals played, and, in the event of a major armed conflict having taken place, the degree of general reconciliation in that society” (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.3).

The distinction between demobilisation and reintegration is that the former aims to reduce the size of the formal military structures during a country’s transition from conflict to peace whereas the latter aims to provide demobilised combatants with support during their transition from military personnel to civilian life.

2.4 The challenges of demobilisation and reintegration

In April 1994, South Africa hosted its first non-racial and democratic election. On the eve of the election, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) replaced the South African Defence Force (SADF). This involved unifying seven armed formations into one force (Scott, 2002). The transformation and amalgamation of the SADF into the SANDF was not met without any challenges.

The demobilization process entails the “significant reduction of people employed by the military and their reintegration into civilian life” (Gear, 2002; Motumi & McKenzie, 1998, p.182). These processes usually occur at the end of a conflict: disarmament agreements, evaluation of defence budgets, developing imperatives and changes in military technologies (Motumi & McKenzie, 1998). The demobilisation process usually entails a physical demobilisation of the combatant from the military with short-term financial assistance.

The process of integration refers to the “process in which armed forces and military traditions are merged into one defence force after the end of war” (Scott, 2002, p.17). Much of the literature describing this process of integration relates to the complexity of integration in the South African context in that the short term to long term process of replacing the SADF with a truly National Defence Force (SANDF) involved the integration of the “statutory” and “non-statutory” forces that had been at war for 37 years (Motumi & McKenzie, 1998; Mashike, 2000; Scott, 2002; Williams, 2005).

According to Scott (2002, p.21), the integration process was numerically unequal as the SADF members made up majority of the force whilst the members from the other forces were “assimilated and absorbed into the existing SADF rather than that a new structure being formed”. This process caused former combatants frustration and discontent and many of them reported feeling excluded and vulnerable (Gear, 2002; Motumi & McKenzie, 1998; Mashike, 2000; Scott, 2002; Williams, 2005).

The integration of the other forces into the SADF led to an increase of 102 600 members on the force in the years 1995 to 1996 (Scott, 2002; Williams, 2005). This number was below the expected projected amount of 138 000. The reason for this decline was the thousands of non-statutory force members whose names were not on the Certified Personnel Register. Many members voluntarily demobilised and by April 2000, the SANDF force numbers projected a figure of 82 258 demobilised force members, following this in March 2001 figures decreased to 78 823 force members (Scott, 2002; Williams, 2005).

It is evident the integration process was fraught with many problems and frustrations and this continues to be a pervasive problem to this day in South Africa where many ex-combatants are still searching for employment.

Based on the interviews with former combatants described by Gear (2002), it is evident that many former combatants feel that they have been betrayed by the ANC-led government. Former combatants also believed that their struggle had not borne the fruits they expected.

“We have worked hard for the ANC ... But now, what is surprising is that the very ANC takes those amalumpere [sell-outs, informers, askaris] who were killing people in the location, and gives them jobs. So... we meet them [and they are] driving cars of the movement [and] they look down at us [and] talk bad about us. [They say] that we worked for the ANC, but today it has left us outside. [MK/SDU]” (Gear, 2002, p.19)

The process of demobilisation did not ensure that all former combatants were reintegrated into the SANDF structure (Gear, 2002). Many former combatants were not reintegrated into the military as there were specific requirements such as being the correct age to be enrolled within the military (i.e. being too young or too old), "passing the tests that were conducted to measure a soldiers' potential" and "relevant school certificates" (Gear, 2002, p.23). Respondents complained that these processes as they were rife with inconsistencies, inefficiencies and corruption.

"You were supposed to see your results and say 'Okay'. I made the mistake here and there'... [But] you were told 'You failed, you failed'... You don't see your script and see where you failed. This surprised me... because of the things that were taking place. You were told that a person who has never been to school and you are told that he passed [the] potential test... Whilst I passes standard 8 someone with standard 2 passed [the test] and I am told that I failed, [even] whilst having a certain level of education." [MK/SDU] (Gear, 2002, p.23)

2.5 Militarisation

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the mindset of former combatants at the time of the demobilisation process in South Africa. Former combatants made sense of their role in the struggle through the military training they received as well as their determination to fight for liberation in South Africa (Gear, 2002).

Cock (1988) describes people who committed acts of violence during apartheid as individuals who have been socialised into conformity and unquestionable obedience to authority. The process of militarisation socialises individuals in this way. It provides an understanding of the mindset of combatants during conflict.

Shatan (1978, p.43) describes the rationale of the use of "authoritative sanctions for killing" within the Vietnam War system. These sanctions are based on two prerequisites for the creation of mass executioners namely, "the dehumanisation of victims and social permission for collective destructiveness" (Shatan, 1978, p.43). This is a strategy that can be found in the training process of most combatants within a war situation. This also

applies to the militarisation of the white as well as the black combatants in South Africa during the apartheid era (Cock, 1988; Cock & Nathan, 1989). The military served as a social institution in which social relationships were organised around war and took the shape of an armed force. The ideology of militarism was used to gain acceptance of organised state violence as a legitimate solution to conflict; and the militarisation was seen as a social process which involved the mobilization of resources for war at political, economic and ideological levels. Therefore militarisation can be linked to the idea expounded by Shatan (1978, p.43) relating to the "authoritative sanctions for killing".

It is therefore the understanding of the process of militarisation that will lend insight into some of the difficulties that former combatants faced once they were demobilised. The ways in which soldiers were trained for a war is important in understanding the ways in which a process such as demobilisation can impact on their cognition's and emotions in the post conflict situation. More importantly, it can also lend insight into the challenges that ex-combatants have faced twelve years after the first democratic elections.

The next concept that is important to consider is that of Post Traumatic Stress and the implications that this psychological disorder has on the ability of a former combatant to successfully reintegrate into their respective communities.

2.6 POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

2.6.1 The history of psychological trauma

2.6.1.1 The study of Hysteria

The history of psychological trauma within history can be evaluated from three studies. The first relates to the disorder known as hysteria which is dated during the late nineteenth century when "most physicians believed it to be a disease proper to women and originating in the uterus" (Herman, 1992, p.10). The study of hysteria concluded that "hysteria was a condition caused by psychological trauma" and it was in relation to "unbearable emotional reactions to traumatic events" which "produced an altered state of consciousness, which in turn induced the hysterical symptoms" (Herman, 1992, p.12).

2.6.1.2 The traumatic neuroses of war

This relates to the trauma that many soldiers experienced after the First World War. The increase in the number of psychiatric casualties after the First World War represented an estimate of 40 percent of the British battle casualties (Herman, 1992). Based on the constant exposure to the horrors of warfare (for example the constant witnessing of mutilation and death of fellow comrades), soldiers began exhibiting the disorder of hysteria. The symptoms experienced by these soldiers were firstly attributed to a physical cause namely “the concussive effects of exploding shells” and thus resulting in a nervous disorder termed shell shock” (Herman, 1992, p.20).

Later studies of “shell shock” found that soldiers who were not exposed to any physical trauma could also exhibit the symptoms of the shell shock syndrome and therefore it had to be acknowledged that the symptoms of shell shock were the result of psychological trauma (Herman, 1992, p.20).

It was only after the Vietnam War that the psychological trauma as a “lasting and inevitable legacy of war” was formally recognized and included in the American Psychiatric Association’s manual of mental disorders (Herman, 1992, p.28). It formed a new category called “Post-traumatic stress disorder” (Herman, 1992, p.28).

The history of psychological trauma in war has strong indications in terms of the possible psychological implications for many of the former combatants in the South African context. It is important to acknowledge this history in order to validate the psychological influences this research relates to.

2.6.1.3 The combat neurosis of the sex war

Once the concept of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was legitimated by combat veterans after 1980. It was recognized that the psychological syndrome of rape survivors, domestic battery and incest was the same as the syndrome seen in survivors of war (Herman, 1992). From this point onward it could be said that the hysteria women experience is the same as the combat neurosis that men experience. Accordingly “the traumas of one are

the traumas of the other” (Herman, 1992, p.32). Herman (1992) concludes that the hysteria that women experience is the same kind of trauma that men experience in combat.

2.6.2 What is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)?

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or "war trauma" (Cock, 1998) is the psychological consequence of participating, witnessing or experiencing war. To this day many South African former combatants, as well as former combatants throughout the world are suffering from PTSD (Cock, 1998). The consequences of Post Traumatic Stress are not only challenges for the former combatant but also for the community, family and friends that these combatants of war re-enter into.

"Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened" (National Institute of Mental Health, 2001). It is important to note that not every person exposed to a terrifying or life-threatening event develops the disorder. Some individuals experience symptoms for a short while after exposure to the traumatic event but symptoms do not persist for more than a few weeks to a month. On the other hand, there are individuals who do not develop the disorder after exposure to the event but develop the disorder many months or years later.

According to the DSM IV (Kaplan & Sadock, 1997, p.617), posttraumatic stress disorder is defined as "a set of typical symptoms that develop after a person sees, is involved in, or hears of an extreme traumatic stressor" (see appendix 1 for DSM-IV TR criteria for PTSD). There are three main symptom clusters in PTSD namely:

- (1) **Intrusive Symptoms** that are characterised by repeated, unwanted, uncontrollable thoughts of the trauma. For individuals with PTSD, the traumatic event remains a dominating psychological experience that evokes panic, terror, despair or grief. These emotions manifest themselves through nightmares, fantasies and thoughts about the event and are commonly known as flashbacks (National Center for PTSD, 2005). Furthermore, stimuli related to the traumatic event act as triggers which have the

power to evoke mental images, emotional responses and psychological reactions related to the trauma.

(2) **Symptoms of avoidance**, which include social withdrawal, emotional numbing and a sense of loss of pleasure. Symptoms of avoidance are used as strategies to defend against further exposure to trauma related stimuli. Behaviour in individuals with PTSD is modified in order to avoid any situation in which they perceive danger or confronting the trauma related stimulus. Some individuals may develop phobias or experience dissociation from trauma-based memories or feelings (Kaplan & Sadock, 1997 & National Center for PTSD, 2005).

(3) **Hyperarousal** is characterised by hypervigilance or an increased startle response in an individual. This symptom is commonly associated with panic and generalised anxiety disorders. When hypervigilance in PTSD sufferers becomes intense it may appear as paranoia. It is noted that this startle response has a "unique neurobiological substrate and may be the most pathognomonic PTSD symptom" (National Center for PTSD, 2005).

It is evident from the above description of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms that this could pose further challenges for former combatants in a post conflict society. The discussion that follows highlights some of the recovery models that relate to former combatants who have been a part of a system of conflict.

Smith (1986) discusses two processes that serve as modes of resolving the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress that individuals experience in a post conflict situation. Smith (1986, p.20) describes different conflict situations or "overwhelming events" such as the atomic blast at Hiroshima, concentration camps, and intensive combat in his chapter on "Sealing Over and Integration". The understanding that this chapter conveys is that once the conflict is over, the people who have been witnesses to or participants in that conflict need to return to their normal way of life but they return with much more than they

expected. Smith (1986, p.20) describes the use of "sealing over" and "integration" as the two modes drawn on in the process of resolution of post traumatic stress.

The "sealing over" is a process in which an overall purpose and meaning is given to the warfare- a collective meaning to justify the combatants participation in war and the atrocities they had to commit to achieve their countries purpose (Smith, 1986, p.21). This collective meaning is supposed to aid the person's integration back into society as well as to give personal meaning to the actions of the person within the warfare- a kind of justification of actions. Themes that emerge from this creation of collective meaning are "saving the world for democracy, protecting Jews from extermination, and preventing the Japanese takeover of the Pacific" (Smith, 1986, p.21). These themes fixed the backdrop of the justification or collective meaning value for World War I and II.

This sealing over process takes away from the individual experience. It does not fully explore the nature of the stress within the individual as well as how the individual is able to understand the impact of the conflict on their lives in a post conflict situation. This phase is seen as an adaptive phase and is a healthier option than the complete denial of the traumatic event as it requires less energy (Smith, 1986). This process is similar to the aims of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa, which aimed to provide meaning for all of those members in society who have suffered the effects of apartheid.

By not providing individual personal meaning of the traumatic event one is not able to integrate the event fully into ones life. According to Smith (1986, p.25) "integration requires accepting personal responsibility for their actions and recognising the good and the bad aspects of the experiences". The person is required to find personal meaning for his or her experience as well as for their individual actions.

In research conducted by Egendorf (1985, p.145) concerning Vietnam veterans in the post conflict situation, the primary psychological burden was often cited in interviews with the veterans. They had a sense of emptiness or "not knowing what you want out of

life". This is similar to research that has been conducted with former combatants in the South African context. Gear (2002) also found that many former combatants are experiencing psychological difficulties. For example, one of the respondents recounts the traumatic impact that the military training alone had on former combatants (Gear, 2002, p.94):

"Some are/were just suffering from the way the training dehumanised them. Some of my flashbacks I used to get, and my most vivid memories, were those memories of training. Some guys just couldn't handle losing control of their lives for two years, and quite a few committed suicide just for that reason...not that the SADF gave a damn for PTSD, and I'm sure that they knew about it at the time. ["AT"]"

Many other respondents in the interviews conducted by Gear (2002, p.93) emphasised the general lack of exposure to "western concepts" namely to "trauma and depression" as well as services offered to them within the psychological field:

It was not within our culture [to] say a person is traumatised. It is a western thing which we never knew. [Thokoza SDU]

Finally, Smith (1986, p.29) describes the last goal of the stress recovery process as "atonement". Atonement involves the two processes namely sealing over and integration. This goal requires the individual to understand the collective meaning of the event as well as acknowledge his or her personal actions and meanings to that event. Many former combatants have not reached these stages and mention that while it is not part of their belief systems, they can understand the effects because they live with the trauma of the past.

"It was not within our culture [to] say a person is traumatised. It is a western thing which we never knew. Most of the youth were being traumatised...but [we understood] 'traumatised'... [as] talking about deep, deep, deep trauma where you miss your mind, you don't know what you are doing. But [people] like us,...you can say we have effects on our mind which need to be counselled [so that] we can go to a normal stage. But we live with those kinds of things because

we are not yet being exposed to that. [Thokoza SDU]" Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (Gear, 2002, p.94)

Aldwin (1994, p.175) describes certain ways of coping with trauma with specific reference to Bruno Bettelheim, a psychologist who survived the Nazi concentration camps. Bettelheim (1994) described four stages in the concentration camp experience which are characteristics of coping with traumatic stress namely (1) the "initial shock" of being a prisoner, (2) transportation into the camp and "initiation", (3) process of "adapting" and (4) the "final adaptation" (Aldwin, 1994, p.175). This account by Bettelheim describes a remarkable process of coping in a traumatic situation.

Sense of meaning seems to be an important factor in recovering from stress as well as coping with stress as is evident in Aldwin (1994) and Smith (1986). Bettelheim (cited in Aldwin, 1994) describes a sense of spirituality as giving them some sense of freedom in the camp and this also helped maintain meaning for them as well as preserve their dignity as individuals. This process of developing spirituality was not a characteristic of all people in the camp and many people shifted meaning for their lives in order to survive. They adapted their beliefs to identify with the aggressor in order to cope with the situation.

The final adaptation is characterised as post liberation. Many people did not know how to react to their freedom. The ability to show emotion was difficult, returning to a normal life was difficult because many people adjusted to eating small meals and this impacted on their physical appearance. During the Holocaust, people in concentration camps had to survive on little or no food and this impacted on the way in which they adjusted their lives when they were free. Depending on the people's perceptions, personalities and histories of the Holocaust, life thereafter developed according to these differences (Aldwin, 1994).

2.6.3 Interventions

For successful resolution of stress one needs to reconstruct the meaning in one's life to incorporate these experiences. It is interesting to understand how this process could be carried out as smoothly as is described. With the knowledge that one has about post war stress it is difficult to imagine how people are able to successfully find personal meaning when all of their assumptions have been shattered.

Many former combatants on the East Rand have not participated in an appropriate psychological intervention up to 2005 except for the 125 youth leaders who participated in Ecotherapy which involved wilderness trails in the Drakensberg with the aim of bringing peace between members of the SDU's and SPU's (Barolsky, 2005).

Many other post-conflict rituals were performed in order to reintegrate former combatants back into the community. These rituals were "cleansing rituals" to "remove the harmful effects of violence from ex-combatants" (Gear, 2002, p.101). One ex-Thokoza respondent explained that after the SDU member participated in this ritual, there was a decline in the number of suicides amongst the former combatants (Gear, 2002, p.101).

"At one stage we had to do like a traditional ritual. Members of the SDU's had to be taken to a Sangoma or Inyanga... We were taken there to be cleansed with mutis and things like that and then there were some slaughterings that were done, people donated in the township [for the ritual]...Before that there were a lot of suicides...[and afterwards] the number went down, of people killing themselves."
[Thokoza SDU].

The abovementioned interventions and rituals highlight the need for ex-combatants to make meaning of their experiences within the conflict. Many ex-combatants who have not had an opportunity to do so continue to experience difficulties coping with their violent past and recreating a positive future. One respondent in Gear's (2001) study mentions how cleansing rituals are important to deal with violent experiences but also

mentions how the cleansing rituals are not effective on their own and require further intervention.

The following chapter outlines the research methods employed by the researcher in order to conduct the research into the challenges facing former combatants in a post apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research aims to explore the challenges that former combatants on the East Rand face in the democratic South Africa. These challenges are evaluated in relation to their involvement in the conflict on the East Rand; their experiences during and after the conflict; as well as the way in which their participation in the conflict has influenced their identities pre and post 1994.

3.1 METHODS

3.1.1 Sample

The sample consists of 6 former combatants who were involved in the conflict on the East Rand. Four of the participants reside in Thokoza and two reside in an informal settlement called Zonke Zizwe. These individuals were located through an organisation in Johannesburg which conducts research and provides psychological services to former combatants and refugees. One of the participants in the research was involved in a project with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV). It was through this participant that the researcher was able to get in touch with other participants interviewed in the research.

The 6 former combatants interviewed in this research were all male participants over the age of 25 years old. It is worth noting that all 6 participants were part of the ANC aligned Self-Defence Unit in the East Rand. All participants interviewed in this research are Xhosa speaking individuals.

This method of sampling represents non-probability sampling, a purposive approach in that the sample was accessed from the organisation that currently represent the needs of former combatants in South Africa (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This was the starting point for obtaining a sample and thereafter a snowballing technique emerged. This is another non-probability sampling technique that was used by the researcher once one of the participants from the CSV organisation permitted to participate in the research. This

method of sampling is commonly used in qualitative research. The snowballing technique helps the researcher to identify relevant participants, once identified they then provide the researcher with information on where other participants can be found (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003). This technique worked very well because the former combatants know one another.

3.1.2 Procedure

The researcher provided letters to the organization (namely the CSVr) seeking permission to conduct interviews with former combatants. The letters explain the nature of the study (Appendix 2). Once permission was obtained, the researcher provided the former combatants with information regarding the aim of the study (Appendix 3: Information Sheet). The former combatants were then given a consent form, for participation in the study as well as consent for the use of a recording device. (Appendix 4; Appendix 5; Appendix 14). Once the former combatants consented to participate in the study, the interview dates were arranged.

The initial participant was keen to assist the researcher in locating other participants who lived on the East Rand and the researcher met with this participant on two occasions on the East Rand to conduct the other five interviews. The other participants in the study were provided with the information sheets explaining the nature of the research as well as consent forms permitting to participate in the research as well as to be recorded during the interview. One of the participants was extremely hesitant to participate because of the sensitive nature of the questions to be asked. He did, however, participate in the interview once he was assured of confidentiality.

3.2 Data collection methods:

The research was predominantly qualitative, therefore indicating that the data be collected in the form of in-depth, semi-structured interviews (appendix 6). The data collection was conducted through individual interviews. The research aims to explore the challenges that former combatants face post 1994. This was explored through the use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews.

A semi-structured interview has characteristics of open-ended as well as closed-ended questions. The closed-ended questions allowed for more relevant and comparable responses whereas the open-ended questions allowed for fuller and deeper descriptions (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991).

The researcher conducted the interviews. The interviews were conducted in English and the lengths of the interviews varied from an hour to twenty minutes depending on how much information the participant was willing to disclose. Personal reflections of conducting the interviews with former combatants are provided in Chapter 6. The interviews were conducted on an individual basis and were recorded in order to ensure that the correct information was transcribed. Participants were provided with consent forms permitting the recording of the interviews. The recorded information is stored in a safe, secure place in order to maintain confidentiality.

3.2.1 Data analysis

The nature of the research is qualitative and this means that the data is in a non-numerical form and requires interpretation for discovering the underlying meanings and patterns that would emerge (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The content that was described in the interview was analysed using thematic content analysis. Content analysis involves the "objective, systematic strategy of decomposing messages and then evaluating and classifying their contents in order to reveal their specific characteristics" (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991).

Thematic content analysis was used in order to analyse and provide structure to the findings and it also insured the reliability of the findings. The themes were carefully defined and were also rated by the research supervisor supervising this research in order to determine the consistency of the challenges that emerged. The themes related are in line with the research question and aims.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS CHAPTER

The results of this research study are presented through the five principle themes that have emerged from the data analysis process as the participants recalled their experiences pre and post 1994. These five themes are Youth Action; Ethnic Conflict; Identity; Violence, Trauma and Attitude toward Interventions; and Social Consequences:

4.1 Youth action

This theme relates to youth involvement during the conflict in the townships on the East Rand. Most of the participants were involved in the conflict from an early age: one participant mentioned that he became involved in the conflict when he was at school. This theme is common in four of six participants interviewed.

“When I personally started. It started during the times I was still at school... Then I started being politically aware that I am oppressed because you know as a child you know nothing about that so I started being aware that oh no, my life is not like... when I used to come to town there are toilets for whites and toilets for blacks.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

“We were most of us were at school. We were not aware of most of the organisations till we realised that no other way, we’ll have to be involved with this. So I was a member of SRC during that time at school so since SRC we not on power, we become involved in the Junior ANC.” (Transcript 3, Participant **J**)

Participant **B** describes a time in his youth when he started becoming more politically aware. His decision to join the struggle against apartheid arose through this awareness of political oppression and discrimination he faced in public places such as segregated toilets for whites and blacks. This also served as a motivation for other youth in the country to join the struggle against apartheid. Other youth were directly affected by the violence in their communities. In this study, Participant **J** mentions how he became an

agent that would bring about change in his country. He describes pre-1994 as a time when he was avoiding being shot at, a time when he had to fight for his survival.

It seems that schools became a place where students were able to organise themselves to attempt to fight for their rights to education and freedom for all black people in South Africa. The Students Representative Council (SRC) in schools served to raise political consciousness amongst pupils to rise up against apartheid. The 1976 Soweto Uprising was an example of this as school-going youth took a stand against apartheid. This illustrates the pivotal role that schools played in the struggle against apartheid.

Another participant spoke about how the levels of violence in the townships deprived him of the opportunities to obtain an education.

“ It was bad for me because I couldn’t even go to school. They were shooting at us when we were using the taxis, they were shooting at us, yes man.”

(Transcript 6, Participant N)

One of the six participants interviewed managed to obtain a Matric qualification notwithstanding that he was active in the conflict that occurred in the East Rand. He spoke about completing his Matric while involved in establishing organisations during the attacks by the IFP. His narrative indicates that he was a leader during the time of conflict in the townships on the East Rand.

“We established an organisation, I founded it, we were underground, I can’t just say hey guys umm, so we have to come up with something that influence people in general so I have established the organisation called Executive Youth Management Forum because we started at school with SRC, it was difficult to mention the name because they said, that’s on the Xhosa’s and we’d be always under the attack. We called it Student Concern Group” “Look we, when I completed Matric, 97, we had to come up with another strategy, the movement for now, everybody at the time”. (Transcript 4, Participant A)

The need to fight against oppression, including participating in the conflict that occurred on the East Rand prior 1994 resulted in many youth disobeying their parents' wishes for them not to participate in political activities. The next section highlights aspects of the lack of authority parents had over the youth prior 1994.

4.1.1 Parental authority

The results also emphasised the breakdown of parental authority over the youth during the conflict. At the time, many youth lost one or both of their parents as a result of the struggle and this loss motivated them to become involved in the struggle. It is notable that during the conflict many parents had to live away from home for work or had died during the struggle. Two participants recall how they and their fellow youth disobeyed their parent's wishes.

“Then we began not to listen to parents because they would say don’t go out, don’t do that, we’d say mama if I don’t go out I’ll be betraying my people. They are out there, we need to go and fight. Then they were afraid that if we would die. We were prepared to die.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

It is evident that loyalty to the struggle against apartheid was an influence on youth involvement. The youth were prepared to die fighting for a cause that they believed in regardless of their parent's wishes not to participate in politics.

The history of violence on the East Rand is discussed in the following section. It is clear in the history that the youth did not have a choice but to defy their parents' authority in order to protect their communities.

4.2 The East Rand: An ethnic conflict

All participants speak about the conflict on the East Rand as being between the Inkatha Freedom Party Self-Protection Units (SPU) and African National Congress Self-Defence Units (SDU). All participants in the study formed part of the ANC SDU in the townships

on the East Rand. There are variations in each participant's recollection as to the reasons why the conflict erupted.

4.2.1 Defend or die

One participant speaks about what he perceived the conflict to be about. He mentioned that the IFP was resistant and was denying the ANC supporters the freedom that they fought so hard for. Participant B narrates that pre 1994, the majority of IFP supporters lived in the hostels and they posed a serious threat to other people living in the East Rand townships.

“The resistance from the IFP and now the IFP became a threat to us. It was like they were denying us the way to achieve our freedom that we so much fought for. We had to fight the IFP. That was that kind of conflict that was there in the township we were fighting in and out with the IFP people.”

(Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Many of the ANC supporters felt that the IFP did not have the aim of freedom for all on their agenda.

“You know when I was... actually I become involvement when I see my father's sister's dying, killing by IFP members, then...we were involved and we were helping those people, those who were against the ANC which is us the community. So I become involved when I see my younger brothers and sisters killed, dying like flies, like ... so I become involved so I was hurt by that so that's when I become involved.” (Transcript 3, Participant **J**)

Participant **J** became involved in the conflict because he was deeply affected by the number of people being killed by IFP members. The trauma of witnessing violent murders prompted him, and indeed many of the youth who decided to participate in the conflict, to take action aimed at preventing these violent killings.

Another participant narrates below how his involvement was sparked by the fear that the IFP supporters would take over their township by taking homes that did not belong to them. The fear for the safety of their community (particularly the children and elderly) prompted many youth to participate in the conflict.

“We were fighting the IFP, we struggle about from ‘94-‘96. So they wanted to take the houses from the people living there and that was the main reason for the fight. They killed the young guys you see and the grannies. They were fighting for the houses in the townships, because this people of the hostels they were moving from the hostels coming to the townships and wanted to take the houses from the people.” (Transcript 6, Participant N)

Participant A below recalls that when he was in the Eastern Cape, the focus of the conflict was “all liberation movements against whites”. However, when he returned to Zonke Zizwe, the focus of the conflict was “black against black”. The community members had to choose a side. The impression was that the Zulu-speaking people sided with the IFP and the Xhosa-speaking people sided with the ANC.

“Zonke Zizwe the main conflict... this was established by the Xhosas, it was mainly with ANC-PAC people. Now IFP got in, mainly Zulu speaking people, not all of them but majority. A lot of them from KwaZulu Natal, then they started this division to say we have zone 1 to 4, that belongs to IFP, because it’s the strong hold, Zulu speaking people are many. Zone 5 and 6 are Xhosa people umm Mathlakola as well. But the main battlefield was Zonke Zizwe zone 1 to 6 and it was really a bitter fight that time 93-94 because people were killed, taken their homes.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

The focus of the conflict had shifted from a fight for freedom from apartheid to a fight between the members of the “black” political parties.

4.2.2 Territorial gains

The structure of the homes and hostels may have contributed towards the division between the IFP and ANC. Participant A believes that the political differences between the ANC and IFP and the invasions of ANC member's homes by IFP members who lived in hostels exacerbated the conflict. It is possible that competition for territorial dominance could have contributed to the conflict.

Participant N below suggested that the main reason for the conflict was because the IFP members wanted to take the homes of people living in the community and therefore the ANC members needed to defend their homes and their communities against the IFP.

“We were fighting the IFP, we struggle about from 94-96. So they wanted to take the houses from the people living there and that was the main reason for the fight.” (Transcript 6, Participant N)

4.2.3 Rallying support

Participant A recalled how people were subjected to violence and intimidation when going about their day-to-day activities, for example going to school or using. The IFP supporters were on guard and would shoot if they believed that people on a bus were returning from an ANC meeting. The conflict could have resulted as a means to rally more support from the community through violence and intimidation.

“After those things, there were things that were happening, ANC people ran away, then after people of ANC ran away, these people of IFP force people to take membership cards of the IFP. If we was not agreeing or taking any membership, they would write a letter and give you a letter there, when you read the letter that was written that if you don't want to take the card you must just quit the area. And then, if you don't, if you are stubborn, you don't want to leave, at night there would be things happening to you. They would come with AK47's if you are staying in a shack, they will shoot at this shack whether there is children inside or anything else, they would just shoot at this shack you understand,

Sometimes what was happening, sometimes they were taken by force, to the meeting by force, something's they are holding sticks and whips and you would go there even if you didn't want to go there. You would be beaten, so those are some of the things that was happening.” (Transcript 5, Participant **K**)

Another Participant mentions how ANC members fled a particular area in the township because of the extent of the violence. IFP members then took over the area and forced the few ANC members still residing there to take IFP membership cards in order to continue to live in that particular area. Those ANC members that did not do so were forced to leave, attacked or killed.

4.2.4 Language, dress and identification

Participant **A** narrates below how, during the conflict, it was important to always be aware of the language that you spoke as this was a key identifying factor of the political party that a person belonged to. If you spoke Zulu, you would generally be considered to be an IFP supporter. Similarly, if you spoke Xhosa, you were generally considered to be an ANC supporter. This view of the impact of language emerges from two of the participants' narratives of their involvement during the conflict.

“I'm a Sotho speaking person so when a Zulu person comes to me and say who are you, where are you coming from? You say, I'm a Sotho, and then umm, you will be accused to say you may be an ANC cos you side with Xhosa because you have to identify yourself. If you don't you have to wear a t-shirt of IFP, go to meetings, support whatever they say.” (Transcript 4, Participant **A**)

Defence strategies used by some of the SDU members and people living in the community would be to learn to speak a neutral language. Participant **K** mentions:

“If like, these Zulu guys, when they were moving around they would stop us and one of the Zulu guys would ask you in a Xhosa language then if he was effective in pronouncing in Xhosa or ask exactly any question in Xhosa then you wouldn't be

aware but you would be killed for that... Our way of defending ourselves was simply to talk Sesotho because it eh would keep them away because now it was the Zulu and Xhosas so for us to remain safe, you would rather talk this neutral language that was Sesotho.” (Transcript 5, Participant **K**)

It was also common for people to be unjustifiably identified as an IFP or ANC supporter by the way they dressed:

“we used to be beaten to wear jeans like that, wearing nice caps, all stars, you’ll be beaten to hell because you resemble ANC or something.”

(Transcript 4, Participant **A**)

The impact that the conflict on the East Rand had on youth prior 1994 leads to the next set of findings which highlight the importance of a militarised masculine identity.

4.3 Militarised masculinity

The themes that have emerged from participants recollection of their involvement in the conflict on the East Rand is that of a masculine identity that is shaped through their militant skills that were developed at the time. Prior 1994, a boy on the East Rand was expected to be tough. By killing a member of the IFP, a boy’s ‘manhood’ was proved to the community. Bravery, courageousness and fearlessness are traits associated with a militarised masculinity. The ability to use a gun and defy figures of authority for example the police also form part of this militarised masculinity.

Participant **Z** below indicates that his identity, prior 1994, was shaped by his bravery, courageousness and fearlessness during the time of conflict. He relates how he was able to survive many attacks that could have taken his life. He relates this back to how the community in which he lived looked upon his bravery.

“They know during the time of 86 I used to drive cars, stolen cars. Then I’ve got a bullet in my leg during that time. They shot me; we stole a white man’s car. That

white man was carrying a gun and shot me in my leg. That thing it makes me brave so that I can carry a bullet in my feet and then run away... the police they didn't caught me. In my area, the people when they know that I am there, they are safe.” (Transcript 1, Participant Z)

The next section discusses how ‘muti’ (traditional herbs) was used to further instil this compulsory militant identity.

4.3.1 Using “muti” (Traditional herb)

A finding in this research shows how youth in their training, prior 1994, were given a substance called “*Inteleze*”. This is a traditional medicine that was given to the youth who were involved in the conflict on the East Rand. Participant A speaks about this substance and its effects on a person’s ability to reason and rationalise through his or her actions. It has a numbing effect on a person’s emotions.

“But you look at it umm, there is some substance that we used to take, they call it Inteleze or something I don’t know whether you know it... Inteleze, when you took that thing you really become an animal a bit. Look I can kill you even without having a reason and its nothing really.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

This traditional medicine enabled youth to go out and kill and perform violent atrocities without feeling any remorse. It blunted the conscience and made it easier to fight. “*Inteleze*” turned a person into an animal, with no ability to feel any guilt or to be haunted by their moral and religious beliefs.

The next section focuses on the violence perpetrated and encountered by former combatants on the East Rand prior 1994. It also discusses the impact that the violence had on former combatant’s psychological well-being and their attitudes to attending interventions post 1994.

4.4 Violence; trauma and attitude toward interventions

4.4.1 Encountering violence

All participants relate their accounts of the levels of violence witnessed and its impact on their psychological well-being as well as the well-being of the communities in which they reside prior 1994. Involvement in the conflict opened up combatants to many violent encounters that almost led to their destruction. Participants speak about the loss of loved ones, the destruction of property, beatings and ways in which the community attempted to avoid the violent attacks on them.

Participant's **Z** narrates below his encounters with violence at the time of conflict prior to 1994:

"I saw ugly things, scary things especially I remember in B when they shoot five comrades. I was with that that time. And me I was shot in the stomach. They take me to the doctor, then they next day they come to me and tell me that all my friends, they are dead."... "Then I've got a bullet in my leg during that time. They shot me; we stole a white man's car. That white man was carrying a gun and shot me in my leg. That thing it makes me brave so that I can carry a bullet in my feet and then run away... the police they didn't caught me."

(Transcript 1, Participant **Z**)

These narratives tell a story of a man who was fearless but who also faced being killed twice and surviving both attempts on his life. It also leads to the idea that it was legitimate to steal cars, especially if it was a white man's car. This can be interpreted through understanding the position of black people during the time of apartheid and speaks about the immense anger and hatred that black people felt toward the white government that oppressed black people. It could also relate to a sense of entitlement that former combatants felt prior 1994.

Police brutality is another issue that can be mentioned here. Police were shooting at comrades who were actively participating in the struggle during the time. It must have

been a really painful experience for Participant **Z** to witness the killing of all of his friends. These experiences may have left many emotional scars in the lives of former combatants as they have managed to survive the violent attacks. The anger and hurt resides in them and must be affecting their lives to some extent post 1994.

“I’m a fortunate person because back in 1992, umm, there was this so called plot on me, then whether, it was during the time of this violence when it began then somebody from the family took me and said accompany me somewhere and the like and I was not aware of anything and then I was caught at night and I was beaten to death. You know all the people who came there and saw me there; everybody said B is dead, because it was like... I was beaten beyond recognition.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Participant **B** above thought that he would die as a result of the beating that he experienced but fortunately for him, his life was saved. Doctors indicated to him that his mind was “shaken a lot” and he says that he was almost “mentally out of order for good”. He explained that he was fortunate because the doctor found that “the blood didn’t touch the brain or anything else”. This indicates the severity of the violent conflict that occurred on the East Rand. It also points to the level of trauma that victims of the violence encountered. Combatants were also beaten severely by the police prior to 1994; torture was used as tool to gather information from the former combatant as well as a tool of intimidation by the police. These tools were also used by the police in hope of gaining confessions of political activity from former combatants.

Participant **B** is not very clear as to who was beating him up. It could have been by the police or by other fellow comrades who suspected him of being a spy or informer. Beatings by fellow comrades was not unusual at the time as they were very suspicious of certain comrades as spying on them in order to inform the police.

“Then there was this gun sounds, eh, we then went out, jumped the rail line and went to the other side. When we arrived there we found people who ran away

*from the area, with children, women. They arrived there and then they sat there. One of the guys, it was like there was something that was telling him that guys, lets move, lets go back then they denied and this guys said if you don't go and then this guy he said I'm going alone. After a while, it was early in the morning, maybe around 4AM, we left and we followed this guy, we reached his place and slept on the sofas in the house until the morning. In the morning we got the story that where we were staying at, where we ran at, people who were where they were sitting at the shack, there were people who came and said they shot them all at the shack. There we find that that guy who said let's go, he saved our lives. You understand.” (Transcript 5, Participant **K**)*

Participant **K** above tells a story about how his life was saved by a former comrade. He remembers this event because he has thought about it so many times. This relates to the inescapable situation that many found themselves in at the time prior 1994. People could not be sure that they were going to survive the evening because there were always attacks on people living in the township.

4.4.2 Witnessing violence

Themes that all participants speak about in relation to the levels of violence include witnessing other comrades being shot, the beatings of other combatants as well as members of the community, women and children were killed, and women were raped. They also recall their role in the violence and how they were shooting at IFP members in order to defend their communities and their freedom.

“They were resisting, we were shooting, they were shooting at us but our people were victims in most aspects because they were using taxis to town and the taxis were hijacked to {by} the hostels {dwellers}. Others were being raped others were being killed. Then we felt like we need to fight against these hostel dwellers.”

(Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Community members, especially the ANC supporters were targeted whilst continuing with their daily routine. Taxi's were shot at and hijacked in order to scare these supporters away from the township or to intimidate these supporters into supporting the IFP.

Participant A speaks about how clearly he could see the violence that took place around him. This direct witnessing and experience of violent attacks seems to be very clear in his mind. His statement also relates to the inescapability of the situation in which many township dwellers found themselves. They had nowhere to hide as their homes were not safe anymore and people had to fight for their survival.

“Look we used to see war during the daylight and AK47's were just flying around now you cannot just sit and hide yourself cos you'll be killed anyway.”

(Transcript 4, Participant A)

Women and children were easy targets and were attacked at night time when they were least prepared. The conflict escalated to a point in which people who lost their loved ones were not able to give them a proper burial and this resulted in many rotting corpses on the streets of the townships.

“Look that time it started this way, IFP will suspect somebody that is an ANC, they'll go to that house at night, they shoot and kill everything in there you know children's, everything. They just kill everybody. They will take your house, everything in it, so you'd be just dead and if they had to... most people didn't really get buried so people were just get rotten there.”

(Transcript 4, Participant A)

Township community members found alternative strategies to avoid the conflict and Participant A relates a story of how people would hide over night in the Kliprivier (Klip River) that ran along the township. This speaks of the desperation that many people felt at the time, a desperate need to survive and for their children to survive.

“we had guns, look umm, people were even scared to say, we attack those guys and they’ll shoot us and I used to tell you, I’ll kill you really. But it was the life, you have to tell someone look, I’m very well armed.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

Former combatant’s actions were shaped by their experiences prior 1994. Being victims of violence and witnessing violence within their communities prompted them to take action. The following section describes how participants in the study defended their communities during the conflict on the East Rand.

4.4.3 Defending through violence

Five of the six participants used weapons in order to defend themselves and their community prior to 1994. Participants mention how they had access to weapons and were able to shoot in order to defend. Many were angered by witnessing the violence inflicted on their loved ones and believed that they had to kill if they needed to.

“But after 1990, then I realize that no, if I can took out a baby and put it here and go back to that commitment that says don’t kill, don’t steal, don’t do this no no there is nothing that will change...I’ll rather kill you know to protect myself.” (Transcript 3, Participant J)

Participant J describes how his beliefs and actions were changed as a result of the violence that he experienced in the township. This narrative speaks about how he was able to disregard human life in order to protect himself from the violence in the township.

“There was one thing about me, well some of us, we were well protected, we had guns, look umm, people were even scared to say, we attack those guys and they’ll shoot us and I used to tell you, I’ll kill you really. But it was the life, you have to tell someone look, I’m very well armed or they will go to somebody else, especially people who hides themselves and they will be seen talking to an ANC aligned person then they’ll be attacked. Either beaten up, either being killed, so those were the incidents.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

Participant **A** describes how well armed the ANC members were and how they made their opposition aware that they were well armed. It seems as though many former combatants gained a sense of power through being so well armed. Weapons made them braver and feel a bit more in control of the situation. This also enabled them to kill when under attack.

The psychological consequences of witnessing and participating in conflict have left many former combatants with many traumatic memories post 1994. The following discussion highlights the extent of the psychological challenges that former combatants in this study face post 1994.

4.4.4 Traumatic memories

Through witnessing and engaging in the violent activities during the time of conflict in the East Rand prior 1994, all of the participants relate with a degree of difficulty the memories that haunt them to this day. They also speak about the level of trauma that the community still deals with post 1994. Their recollections indicate that these memories remain vivid and are painful to think about.

“The conflict... in the community... I can see even now, people even now, I can see others, they are still traumatized. Others they need to be taken to people need doctors, specialists who can help them.” (Transcript 1, Participant **Z**)

Participant **Z** above thinks back to the conflict and can relate this to what he can see happening in the community now. He links the witnessing and experiencing of violence to the trauma that many people within the community still face to this day. He understands that these people need specialised help in order to deal with their past memories.

“It affected them so bad that some are...haven’t reconciled today. Those who have seen their family members being shot right next to them or near them, they you know... how hard it is going to take them to say I have accepted and forgiven

them. You know it's always so much painful that I have lost my family, I have lost my children. There are those who have lost everything. So it's a life trauma... you know the person is always thinking... if mama was around, if daddy was still alive maybe I wouldn't be living like this maybe I wouldn't be at this stage maybe I wouldn't be staying in this shack maybe people wouldn't be cursing me like this."

(Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Participant **B** expresses above how the violence impacted on many people's psychological well being post 1994. He brings to the fore an important point about reconciliation. People cannot reconcile and forgive because they are always thinking about the people they have lost and how those people could have made a difference to their present lives had they not been killed. Many families were not able to bury their loved ones as they would have wanted to and many other township members do not know where the remains of their loved ones are. This is an aspect that makes the process of healing and reconciliation very difficult as many community members did not have closure. As a result of this lack of closure their grieving process will not be an easy one as they do not have the opportunity to give their loved ones a proper burial and were not able to perform the rituals necessary for their loved ones.

The following discussion focuses on interventions attended by former combatants in this study. It also illustrates the attitudes of former combatants to attending interventions post 1994.

4.4.5 Interventions post 1994

Two of the six participants mention being involved in interventions that were aimed at psychologically and socially empowering them. However, the other four participants have either not heard of any intervention being offered in the community or have not attended any of the interventions or simply believe that they can deal with their past memories in their own way. The way that most of the participants mention dealing with their traumatic memories relate to an avoidance of those memories. It is also evident that

their militant identities have impacted on the way in which they deal with internal emotional conflict.

4.4.5.1 Masculinity and its impact on attitudes toward interventions

When asked whether they had attended any psychological interventions post 1994, four of the participants indicated that they did not attend the interventions available to the community, as they were able to deal with their memories on their own.

“I don’t go to those places, even now I’m afraid to go to those particular places. It will bring many memories back. When I don’t bother, I actually put myself into an order that I must forget those things and I must go with something else.”
(Transcript 1, Participant **Z**)

This could indicate that this particular participant was either not aware of the services offered to the community or that he was feared that it would not be living up to the reputation that he has built in the community and that reputation being a fearless, brave and courageous combatant. It could also speak about his fear of dealing with all of the memories that he has repressed. He wishes to forget everything that has happened in the prior to 1994 as this could put him at risk of losing the identity that he has secured as a combatant. He fears the disintegration of this masculine identity post 1994.

“Even if sometimes, there was a time when they told us to go to counselling and others they did go for counselling so others they don’t go for counselling, cos there are those who say they believe on those on what they are asking them or what they are doing on them for counselling. But I belief on them, but now, since I’m strong enough, I believe I am fine. Ya.” (Transcript 3, Participant **J**)

Participant **J** above was aware of the services offered to the community but believes that he was “strong enough to cope with the memories that haunted him. Attending counselling and speaking about problems is perceived by former combatants as something that weak men attend. This goes against their militant masculine identities as

strong men do not cry or show any psychological weakness. They have a need to live up to the militarised identity that has become a part of who they are post 1994.

“So it means that especially for the community, when you talk about violence. The community becomes crazy, fear; you know it’s something wrong about that really.” (Transcript 3, Participant J)

This participant also speaks above about the levels of fear within the community when people speak about the past. This could indicate that many other community members have not sought any psychological assistance for their difficulties in dealing with the past conflict.

“Cos most of us when we are together with the guys that were helping one another to fight and those who were against... so most of us we talk one language. We say No man, even them too, they still say we don’t want that violence to start again and others they normally say, I’ve lost and who and who and who going to this violence so we don’t want to go back. We all talk one language that no no no, we don’t like that, we don’t want that violence to come back again. This is what we normally used to talk especially when we are together.”

(Transcript 3, Participant J)

Participant J above provides insight into the ways in which some of the former combatants including himself are able to deal with the memories that they have from their involvement in the conflict. He speaks about “one language” and how when a group of former combatants come together and talk about their past experiences they have a shared experience and a shared meaning and they are better able to express themselves with people they feel understand what they are saying and feeling.

4.4.5.2 Benefits of attending interventions

“I just attended some courses of doing trauma counselling, teaching people as I was attending these things. Then when they were teaching me it was like they

were counselling me. I got it in that way. I was taught how to counsel people.”
(Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Two participants recall being part of certain interventions put in place within the community as well as by MKVA (Umkhonto we Sizwe Veterans Association). This can indicate that not all former combatants view attending interventions as a sign of weakness or a disintegration of the militant masculinity. Participant **B** above recalls that he had not been directly involved in the intervention but was involved in courses on trauma counselling. He remarks that he benefited greatly from these courses as they allowed him to look into his own experiences and feelings at the time. This was also an empowering experience for him because it enabled him to reach out and assist many other people in the community.

“Umm but then we got counselling, you know the programs that they put in place, they gave us counselling to say look, you cannot be soldiers forever, you need to go to school, you need to rehabilitate yourself. So we got rehabilitated, some of us, some they didn’t. They still walk amongst us today.”
(Transcript 4, Participant **A**)

Participant **A** explains above how he was part of a rehabilitation program that was presented to former combatants by the MKVA. It is useful to keep in mind that this participant continues to be politically involved and has certain goals that he has set out for the future. He also highlights how many of those former combatants have not been through this rehabilitative process and continues to be militant post 1994.

4.6 Ritual cleansing post 1994

This finding is one that Participant **A** spoke about in relation to the tactics and strategies that were used prior 1994. He mentioned that combatants were given a substance known as Inteleze which when taken had an effect on the combatants ability to inhibit his conscience during the time of combat. He was the only participant who spoke about having to undergo a “ritual cleansing” ceremony in order to cleanse the system from the

substances that were ingested once the conflict was over. These substances were very powerful and if this ritual were not performed that person would not be mentally stable.

“I still have a friend who cannot deal with everyday life because he is not rehabilitated really, he is militant everyday, so those are the difficult moments because one, if you’ve been using this Inteleze thing you have to be cleansed whether you like it or not. If you don’t you’ll have a problem in life I mean you won’t be stable cos that’s what the whole thing.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

Participant A has been through a rehabilitation process post 1994, and has undergone the ritual cleansing that he believed he had to do for his own stability.

4.7 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

Only one participant speaks about the process that many victims of the violent conflict in the townships have undergone through the TRC. This process was an initiative put forth by the government in order to assist people who were victims and perpetrators of violent crimes heal.

“What the government can do today, eh look man, I don’t believe there is anything the government can do except those that appeared in the TRC. Some of us, we didn’t enjoy the process, we didn’t want that and we were true, look, it doesn’t yield any results for those people cos TRC is not like now. I’m telling you, maybe I’m also... I know I still hide other horrific things that I’ve seen at that time. It’s not right. But you look at that, it doesn’t yield any results. What did they get from this, they are still traumatic {traumatised}, they didn’t get paid for it, look, from my side, we once discussed it. We don’t feel; because somebody was killed we must be maybe compensated. It doesn’t bring back that person, it doesn’t.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

It is evident from Participant A’s perspective that he feels as though the TRC has not properly served those victims who suffered many losses. Participant A raises an

important point above that many people, including himself, still hide a lot of the traumatic memories that they have prior to 1994. It seems as though he believes that no benefit resulted from this process as people had to continue without those they lost during the conflict and there was no financial compensation to help them through the hardships that they face now that they have lost a breadwinner in the family.

The next section discusses the impact of the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration process that occurred post 1994.

4.8 Lack of proper reintegration and disarmament

Many of the participants have indicated that they do not have the necessary skills in order to obtain suitable and stable employment post 1994. The theme of a continued militancy within the communities is evident of the lack of proper structures to facilitate reintegration back into the community as well as the inadequate monitoring and implementation of disarmament program.

4.8.1 Conflict resolution skills

“See the most important thing that people need, they must come together sit down. Sort out their differences, that’s what they need.”

(Transcript 1, Participant **Z**)

Post 1994, Participant **Z** mention above how people living in the communities on the East Rand do not have the necessary skills to draw upon when they are faced with situations of conflict. This indicates that either these former combatants have not attended programs aimed at rehabilitation and reintegration or there have not been any of these programs available to them. This could also relate to that aspect of Masculinity and upholding the ‘Macho’ image. Based on their past training, it is evident that the best way to solve the conflict is through the use of violence. These old ways of dealing with conflict is still part of the way of life of many community members as well as former combatants who are still militant within their communities. It is clear based on the narrative above that

community members as well as former combatants need to learn of new ways to resolve the tensions they face.

4.8.2 Disarmament

It is evident that many of the former combatants within the communities on the East Rand have not returned all of their weapons to the South African government during the disarmament phase. Accounts from participants lead to a scenario which presents many former combatants keeping some weapons in order to protect themselves from the conflict that they believed not to have ended. Protection against the continued threat of the IFP within the townships on the East Rand.

“We went and we collected, police they say AK47’s, well we were armed, but you cannot show a gun to a student, we said to them, we are not fighting, we are sure that this belongs to the school- you stole it, now you are lucky we don’t bring the police.” (Transcript 4, Participant A)

Participant A above speaks about situations that occur post 1994, he mentions how a plan was put together to go and collect property that was stolen from a school in the area from one of the IFP supporters. The youth were mobilised, ANC and IFP aligned to go and reclaim the school property. They were armed with guns that were supposed to have been handed back to the government during the disarmament phase.

“So when then Premier said, bring back all the illegal guns and all that, so we said fine, ok, if I have five guns, I’ll take two and they left with three so in case that these guys come back cos they still have lots and lots of guns. We know and unfortunately doesn’t. Maybe they are scared of them, I don’t know.”
(Transcript 4, Participant A)

This brings to light the dangers of having former combatants still armed and still concerned about defeating the opposing party namely the IFP. Former combatants also

have the ability to influence the youth of today to perform acts which they could resolve in other ways.

“See many many comrades, when we meet, you know they’ll still tell you in a fresh way, how to use an AK. I say when did you use your AK, they tell you three weeks ago. Is that normal? So how many times do you? I mean why? We are no more fighting, they say no but my AK must always be oiled”.

(Transcript 4, Participant A)

The suspicions and fears of another attack on the township continues to be a concern for many community members living on the East Rand. They believe that IFP members still have many guns and therefore did not relinquish all of the weapons that they had as a result of this perceived threat. These fears and suspicions compel many former combatants to keep their guns working. Participant A understands that this is not normal behaviour in a post conflict situation but does believe that they need to be prepared in case of the re-emergence of conflict in the townships.

The challenges that former combatants face post 1994 are numerous and the following section discusses these challenges of employment, betrayal and stigmatisation to name a few.

4.9 Social consequences

The research findings point to a number of social consequences that arises as a result of being active in conflict since youth. Post 1994, the first consequence that arises is the lack of employment opportunities, the second consequence speaks about involvement in criminal activities, the third consequence relates to the communities response to those participants involved in the conflict, the fourth consequence relates to the breakdown in religious values, the fifth consequence includes the abuse of substances.

4.9.1 Political pawns

“After that they say to us that you are fired. What was that? I don’t know what was that. I still want to know, to talk about this guy, this one of Xolani Qwala. We still want to talk to Xolani Qwala; we still want to talk to Tumiga. We want a person who can help us, especially me. We still want to talk to them. We want to expose these things this is not fair. I can show you something here where I stay, there is a print out that I have got, last month neh, it was last month on the 8th. They say I’ve got now eight years, eight years ago that you are now no longer a policeman but no I’ve got print out and that print out say that even now, my status, I am still active, I’m still working, I’ve got eleven years. But I’m not earning nothing for that, I’m not getting any money but I’m not working but on that print out I’m still working.” (Transcript 3, Participant J)

Participant J above, speaks about how once the violence had subsided in the community, post 1994, he became a police reservist. He was involved in the disarmament process within the community in order to restore peace on the East Rand and speaks about how he had to disarm his “brothers”. It is worth noting here that many former combatants feel as though they were used as political pawns in order to restore peace and once this was established they were retrenched from the system. Participant J’s role and responsibility in that process of reintegration into the South African National Defence Force as well as the disarmament process added to his identity as a combatant and as an individual who continues to work toward a fair and just future. Participant J was “fired” from the police force and was not given a proper reason for his termination of service. He finds himself still seeking answers and it is clear that he is still holding onto hope even though he has been unemployed for eight years. Frustration and anger is also evident in his narrative in relation to this.

“I am a survivor. You know what, I’ve helped other person to make their dream to come true like, I’ve make ANC to rule this country South Africa but ANC there is nothing that they have done to me. So mamele, myself now, I don’t know who I am, what I know is this, I know my name, where I’m coming from, I really don’t

know right now cos you've told me to be like this. They've told me no, don't do this, do this. There is nothing that I do by myself, I don't know who I am right now, that's all that I can say to you, serious. I really don't know who I am. What I know is that I am a human being like you and like B but I really don't know who I am, where am I standing." (Transcript 3, Participant J)

This disintegration of his identity can without a doubt be extracted from his narrative. He mentioned later in the interview that he was a "churchgoer" and that he considered killing a "sin". He witnessed so many unjust killings during the time of conflict and this made him take a radical stance in order to protect himself and his community. He believes that this time in his life changed his identity a great deal.

Participant K, when asked about how he would describe his identity at present describes himself in relation to his life:

"My life is a bit tough, I have children, I have three children and I don't work and now I find that the life of a person cannot be good. Eish, I can't say anymore to you." (Transcript 5, Participant K)

The inability to fulfil his male role in his family is not a good aspect of his current identity as he is unable to support his three children and his mother. His narrative indicates that he is very bitter and angry about this. He finds this to be painful and he did not want to continue with the interview. This also corresponds with the following finding that is discussed below relating to unemployment.

Another participant defines himself:

"I want to live; I want to build myself up. I want to have a wife. I have fought for finding a house, the house will be out next year, that's why I want to take a wife and we are going to build my future. I want to live like that, like anybody they live here, they have got anything, money, whatever and a wife and a children. Go to school, to pay the school sure, I can't say anymore." (Transcript 6, Participant N)

Participant N would like to be a husband and a father who can provide a stable and secure environment for his family but it is difficult for him to achieve his ideal view of life as he only manages to secure part time employment. It seems as though unemployment is a major issue affecting many former combatants, as they continue to live in abject poverty and many are unable to support their families. The role of a woman is perceived as a way in which he will be able to bring his dreams to fruition.

4.9.2 Lack of employment opportunities

“My challenges are that since I came that side I didn’t work, I’ve got a baby. I think of doing many things so that ...to collect my reputation. So I think that’s a big challenge...not to work. Ya, because I’m the breadwinner at home. There’s nobody looking {after} my mother, my young sister, my younger brother and my kids.” (Transcript 1, Participant Z)

Participant Z above comments on his role within his family and mentions that he is the head of the household and as the head of the household he is depended upon to bring in an income for the family’s survival. He identifies himself as the breadwinner in his family and post 1994; his reputation is not what is used to be. His family depends on him for their survival and he is unable to secure stable employment because he does not have all the skills needed to secure formal employment. His future is not certain and this coupled with the expectations from his family poses a huge challenge for him.

“I commit myself to everything. You won’t believe that I have volunteered for eight years without getting a cent. Doing counselling at some school in Thokoza, helping the children, the drug addicts, those who were being sexually abused and the like. I was so much feeling that I should do something. But I was not getting paid my due. I was still struggling. When I arrived at home I had to see to it that what am I going to eat. Visit that family so as to get something to eat before I go home to sleep. You know, life was hard but the following day, I just had this belief

that everyday is a new day. Let me not take the grudges of yesterday and go along with them. No.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Another participant speaks above about his day-to-day involvement in activities that he finds rewarding but does not bring him an income. His narrative indicates that he has persevered through many years of not earning any money and this could be a frustration that he does not speak about.

“My old friends, some are down some are not living well but I always visit them, I always go to them, I always encourage them, I always...if I have to something to give them I do give them but I always want to motivate them to something for themselves because I don’t want to say I’ll do this for you because if you come and give them ten Rand they expect you tomorrow to come again with ten Rand and then you damage the person.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

“I give them ten Rand for the first time and I say what are you thinking to make your life better? Then if he doesn’t have any ideas then I say there are ideas that I can give you. I realise that you always sit here at home and do nothing, come lets do gardening for someone else then you’ll get something out of that and if I’m not there you will have to go and continue that job. So that is what I have been doing... I’ve been living on that.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Participant **B** also speaks about how he encourages his colleagues, former combatants to enhance their abilities to earn some money and not to rely on other people to support them. A sense of despondency emerges through this narrative even though Participant **B** mentions that he has volunteered for eight years with no pay. It cannot be easy to live a life that is not stable from day-to-day. Not knowing where your next meal will come from and not being certain that you can earn a few Rands in order to sustain your life for a day. This participant remains positive throughout his challenges but he faces those challenges on a daily basis, as he is not able to secure a stable income through his efforts.

“I don’t work; I am living by God, no other income. I don’t have any other income; I live by God. God gives me bread and sometimes I sleep when I have eaten.” (Transcript 5, Participant **K**)

“I’m talking about the job; I am having an idea of doing something. One day I went to Nedbank, I wanted Nedbank to help me find the bakkie, they asked me what am I going to do with the bakkie, I wanted to get the subcontract from any company that uses bakkies, then Nedbank said I must find the contract first. I must get a company that sets the contract and after finding it I must go back to them with the certificate. They would buy me the bakkie of X money that I want. So when I look, doesn’t mean that that will make my life.”

(Transcript 5, Participant **K**)

Two participants speak about plans to develop businesses of their own but also mention how a lack of proper understanding of business and resources prove difficult. Participant K relates how his strong faith in God helps him survive through the day. This illustrates the point that many former combatants rely on their faith in God to get through their days. Employment is a major challenge and even if they do have ideas of ways in which they can earn an income they do not have the relevant knowledge needed to successfully implement these plans.

“But the bigger problem now, it’s all about who’s who in the world. Look I got a contract to supply bricks for the low cost housing and people are saying ANC paid me you see. I don’t know if ANC paid me or because I have information, I’m not so sure but all I said was as long as I got good quality bricks, the standards are acceptable, the prices are...so it’s fine. But I’m not going to share my work with IFP for the sake of political peace, that I won’t do, I don’t care who says what.” (Transcript 4, Participant **A**)

This participant speaks about having the right contacts in order to secure contracts that will bring in an income. Not all people have these contacts and therefore many people

believe that if you are an ANC member you can get a job or a contract easily. Participant A speaks about his initiative that seems to have turned out more positively than the rest of the participants. This could be because he has a Matric qualification and the relevant knowledge relating to business. He is also aware of those IFP supporters who would like to be involved in this business but still believes that he would not do so even if it were for the sake of political peace. This is an important statement because it speaks about the deeply entrenched divisions that still exist amongst the ANC and IFP supporters post 1994.

“Others are staying at home, others are at work. I’m working in the temporary work in Joburg”. (Transcript 6, Participant N)

Participant N is one of the participants who are earning a small income from a part time job that he has in Johannesburg. He comments on how many are not working and are staying at home.

4.9.3 Criminal activities

It has emerged that the military training that participants have engaged in during their time as active agents in the conflict has provided a skill with which many former combatants use in order to improve their life circumstances now post 1994. These activities are illegal and indicate the lengths to which many former combatants will go in order to improve their financial status. Participants relate how many of their colleagues have engaged in criminal activities in order to survive.

“Sometimes I still take cars and go to rob these vans of money. But I still know that I’m going to break my cover because I fought for this government. These lots of heists, that’s not a good idea. I don’t think that’s a good idea to shake the government. Government should allow people to sit down with people and let people explain them their problems. And by heist, robbery, that’s not good.” (Transcript 1, Participant Z)

One participant relates above how he engages in criminal behaviour post 1994 in order to survive but he also mentions that many former combatants engage in these activities in order to “shake” the government. His narrative indicates a sense of entitlement that he has to steal in order to provide for himself and his family. He has fought for the government and has not benefited from his struggle. He thinks about some of his colleagues and recalls that some are currently serving in the army, others are unemployed and staying in the location, some of his colleagues are no longer alive and some are in prison serving life sentences for crimes that they have committed.

“Ya our new government now is busy now categorizing people now, if you are forty years old they say you are old. But if you go to the department and say give me the old age pension fund they say you are young. So you know there is this gap, people who are in the middle, we are lost; we are the lost generation in the middle. We are confused in the middle because we don’t know where we fall. When you go down to the other one they say no, you don’t belong to us you are too old. Ok you move, you go to those ordinary people at the ages of forty and the like, no they say no you are too young you understand. And then the government doesn’t have the category of saying that this is the group of the middle class we need to do this for the middle class and we are the ones who got the history of the end of violence or the end of all of this oppression and the like but now we are the ones who are being neglected.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**).

Participant **B** above relates the involvement of former combatants in criminal activities to the unavailability of jobs as well as to the fact that they are a “neglected” group in the population. This narrative signifies the frustrations that former combatants face when applying for jobs. They do not have the necessary qualifications but feel that they are entitled to be heard and acknowledged especially because they fought so hard for the liberation of black people in the country.

“But obviously your acts will be violent a bit because you have been involved in war and your only hope because you don’t have skills, you don’t like whites, you

are not going to be a domestic worker for that matter, you didn't fight for that."
(Transcript 4, Participant A)

Many participants speak about their skills and abilities as militant individuals. They were trained to use weapons from an early age and have used that training to protect and defend themselves for many years. When the conflict subsided, all combatants were required to hand in their weapons to the government. However, some retained their weapons. This theme of militant identity ties into the theme of disarmament, particularly the lack of proper disarmament of combatants post 1994.

Participant Z speaks below about how he is still able to draw on his militant skills in order to support his family. He admits to engaging in criminal activities, for example stealing cars and performing cash heists. He admits that he understands that it is not appropriate that he supports himself in this way and that he will probably be caught one day.

This is an obvious example of how former combatants use their military skills in order to not only survive, but advance their lives in the present day. Participant Z also suggests that their training is used in order to resolve other conflicts in their lives:

"And if you think, they have trained with AK, hand grenades, rocket launchers, everything. When they think to go there, they want to go out I try to discourage them. No, that is not the right way to shake the government. Because if you can be caught, you are gone." (Transcript 1, Participant Z)

"Yes, if they can caught these criminals they will see the training. Both political parties, PAC, ANC, Azania, Inkatha all of them." (Transcript 1, Participant Z)

The military training that ex-combatants received prior 1994 seems to be a method used by ex-combatants to send a message to the government. By performing cash heists and involving themselves in criminal activities, they believe that they will be able to send a

message to the government about their current socio-economic status in South Africa. It is used as a means to illustrate the frustrations that they experience post 1994.

4.9.4 Negative responses from the community

“She is discouraging me. Ya but me I know myself, I am a strong man, my mother want to turn me in a bad side you see. I’m focusing on my side.”

(Transcript 1, Participant **Z**)

Two of the six participants indicate that many former combatants receive a negative response from the community and family members at this point in their lives. Many are unemployed and therefore face stigmatisation from the youth and their close relatives as a result. Participant **Z** above comments on how his mother does not encourage and support his involvement in political and during the time of conflict because he has no stable employment. He remains positive and believes that he will be able to make his situation a more successful one. The narrative above indicates that many former combatants are now ridiculed for having participated in the struggle, as their efforts have proved fruitless. They do not have stable employment and are not able to provide for their families.

This identity is important to Participant **Z** as it gives him a purpose and people look up to him for protection and safety but at this point in his life, post 1994, he seems to fear that this is no longer how people perceive him. He speaks about how his mother perceives him. She feels as though his actions during the time of conflict were fruitless because of his current position namely his ability to obtain a stable income for the family. His mother compares him with the rich black politicians in South Africa and makes his current position amount to nothing. He has failed to reach the expectations that his family has had of him and has therefore disappointed them immensely. It is evident that he is fearful that his identity may be disintegrating at this time.

“Especially my mother, my mother sometimes she is pointing fingers at me. Look at your friends in the parliament, top positions, what about you? I say mother my

time will come. My reputation is still there even in my community, still. They respect me.” (Transcript 1, Participant **Z**)

4.9.5 Substance abuse

Two of the participants have mentioned that substance abuse is a major problem facing former combatants. Former combatants use substances to help them deal with their experiences of trauma.

“since I’m telling you about this guy, this guy in the wheel chair now. This guy, since he normally used to stay together here, under this shadow under this tree...this guy used to say to me...you know J, sometimes I want to go to buy beer or a cigarette but there is nothing I can do. I won’t go there by myself you know J, there is something that we have to do. Lets call the younger guy there and we’ll send him to buy what what for us. I know that hurts a lot.”

(Transcript 3, Participant **J**)

Participant **J** above relates a story about a former combatant, a friend of his who lost his legs due to his participation in the conflict. He relates how his colleague coped with this loss through his use of alcohol and cigarettes. Humiliation and feelings of inadequacy come through in this narrative and this also leads to the use of substances to numb those feelings. The inability to be independent because you are no longer able to provide for yourself or because you were badly hurt during the conflict are challenges that many former combatants are faced with post 1994.

“So some of my friends at my ages they are smoking and the like. Then I realised that if I would smoke then it would suck money out of me, because I get nothing. I tried, I wanted to experiment it, when I tried to smoke, I felt nothing sweet in that, then I just asked myself but why this?” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

It is worth noting that none of the participants interviewed have admitted to the use of substances in order to help them cope with their everyday life. Participant **B** mentioned

that he experimented with substances only to find that it did not meet any of his needs. He admitted to experimenting with drugs and this could have been because of a need to escape the challenges in terms of employment that he faces post 1994. It could also have been related to a way to escape the memories that he has of his time during the struggle. Based on this finding it can also be argued that not all former combatants use substances to help them deal with their past experiences of trauma. Participant **B** experimented with substances but stopped using them as it did not benefit him in any way.

“Because drunkards are better friends. You know if you are a drunkard you’ve got friends of drunkards, always giving you something... to drink more and they buy you. You don’t feel lonely; you don’t feel neglected if you are with them. So that is how others can’t leave drinking because if you say to a person leave drinking and go and stay at home.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

He also mentions how alcohol abuse has become a way of life for some of his former colleagues. Participant **B** describes how alcohol creates friendships in which those people drinking are able to the neglect and loneliness of their day-to-day lives.

Another participant speaks about other former combatants and their situations in their homes. He indicates that their families and members in the community now find them burdensome. It is clear that many former combatants have lost their identities as brave and courageous combatants and now live a life in which they are stigmatised and of no purpose to the community that they served during the conflict.

“Others are resorting to drinking alcohol they are just futureless now.”
(Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Former combatants turn to alcohol as a coping strategy. They face stigmatisation from community and family members, they have no skills that can allow them to find suitable employment opportunities and some feel lost in the new democracy. It can be deduced that these feelings of hopelessness and helplessness lead many former combatants to abuse alcohol in order to numb these feelings escape their thoughts as well as

stigmatisation from the community. The use of alcohol to numb these feelings and thoughts can be linked to the masculine identities they encompass and it is important for community members to see them as brave and strong men.

4.9.6 Religion

“Maybe as I am a Christian, a believer, then I believe that one day God will honour me, God will give me something. But surprisingly God was always with me. I was not working, I had nothing but I had everything to eat every night and I couldn’t understand how.” (Transcript 2, Participant **B**)

Many of the participants have commented on their religious values and beliefs before they engaged in the conflict. Two of the participants mention how their beliefs and values have helped them cope and survive to this day. Participant **B** speaks above about how his religious beliefs have allowed him to remain positive in thought and keep him strong and grounded.

“You know Sasha, before 1990, I was a churchgoer, I was a churchgoer and so I was even scared to kill a fly or something that is even small. I was scared to kill. By killing something is a sin, it’s a sin to kill. I was know that a human being is a human being, each and every human being in this world, or either you don’t have eye or whatever or you have got your own parents. There are those who loves you. But after 1990, then I realize that no, if I can took out a baby and put it here and go back to that commitment that says don’t kill, don’t steal, don’t do this no no there is nothing that will change...I’ll rather kill, you know to protect myself. So that changed my life a lot. 1980, 1970, I was better but it start from 1990 to go upward is when I realise that no no, I must do this. For sure, I have changed a lot.” (Transcript 3, Participant **J**)

Two of the six participants speak about how religious values broke down as a result of the conflict that they were engaged in at the time. Participant **J** above recalls his values before 1990 and mentions that his life has changed tremendously since then.

Participant **J** indicates above how his life had changed through witnessing loved ones being killed. Witnessing the senseless violence prior 1994 has changed his identity and his beliefs. He no longer goes to church as he probably feels some guilt around his actions prior 1994. He admits to killing in order to protect himself and this indicates that this could pose a problem in terms of his identity and his beliefs post 1994.

“Some of us you must understand, that’s why you don’t even go to church because the church was the worse place to go. They’ll go into the church, stop everybody who was praying and pick their people and kill them. So that’s the reality.” (Transcript 4, Participant **A**)

Participant **A** above relates back to the time of conflict and mentions that people were not safe attending church at the time. It is clear that religious institutions were not safe to attend prior 1994; people stopped attending church as a result of their fears of being attacked whilst praying. This fear could have halted many from attending church but it does not indicate that people stopped praying and worshipping during the time of conflict.

The next chapter provides a discussion of the themes that emerged from the research.

CHAPTER FIVE:

DISCUSSION CHAPTER

This chapter focuses on a discussion of the themes that have emerged from the research conducted into the challenges facing former combatants on the East Rand in a democratic South Africa. The themes discussed below include the role of Youth during the conflict; the Ethnic nature of the conflict on the East Rand; the Identity pre and post 1994 of former combatants; the violence and trauma that many former combatants witnessed as well as perpetrated during the time of conflict as well as their attitudes post 1994 to attending interventions that were set up for combatants at the time; the lack of demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration in this population as well as the social consequences that have arisen due to inadequate reintegration efforts post 1994. The role of the youth and their participation in the conflict will be discussed in the following section.

5.1 Youth involvement

The results discussed in the previous chapter highlight that most of the participants in this study made a conscious and informed decision to become a part of the struggle on the East Rand. This decision was made when these former combatants were in their youth (entering into adolescence). A few important aspects about youth will be highlighted in order to further enhance an understanding of youth's participation in the conflict. Firstly, it is worth noting the developmental age that participants are categorised under. *Adolescence* is that period which "lasts almost a decade, from about age 12 or 13 until late teens or early twenties" (Papalia & Olds, 1998, p.330). During adolescence many changes occur to the teenager's body but also to their minds. They think differently and this is characterised by an ability to use abstract reasoning as well as sophistication in moral judgements. This period is also exemplified by the ability of the teenager to plan realistically toward the future (Papalia & Olds, 1998).

Piaget's stage of formal operations and Kohlberg's levels and stages of moral development best describe these changes in thought and reasoning. The former theory put

forth by Piaget describes that an adolescent enters the highest level of cognitive development when they develop the ability to think abstractly and this is labeled the “formal operations” stage (Papalia & Olds, 1998, p.348). This stage implies that thinking is no longer limited to the ‘here and now’ but allows the adolescent to think in terms of ‘what might be’. Imagination of possibilities, hypothesis testing and the formation of theories becomes evident in adolescent thinking (Papalia & Olds, 1998).

The latter describes a theory put forth by Kohlberg, which sets out three levels of moral reasoning and is similar to Piaget’s theory. These three levels namely, Preconventional Morality (ages 4 to 10); Morality of Conventional Role Conformity (ages 10 to 13 or beyond) and Morality of autonomous moral principles (age 13, or not until young adulthood, or never). Level three namely (Morality of autonomous moral principles) “marks the attainment of true morality” and is typified by the persons acknowledgement of conflict between two socially accepted standards and the ability to decide between them (Papalia & Olds, 1998, p.354). This type of moral reasoning is internal and the individual is able to control his or her conduct by evaluating the standards observed as well as through the ability to reason through what is right and what is wrong. This is the stage that most adolescents enter into by the age of 13.

This information on cognitive and moral development leads to an explanation of some of the factors that led many Youth between the ages of 13 and 21 into the conflict. As some of the participants mentioned that they did not know much about the politics of the time but knew that the situation was not ideal for the Black people living in South Africa. They needed to take a stand for what they believed to be the right way forward. They were better able to understand the situations in which they found themselves and this provided a reason for involvement in the conflict.

This can be linked to the research undertaken by Straker (1992) on the psychological effects of violence amongst township youth. Participants in Straker’s (1992) study were the youth in the township of Leandra. Some of the interviews that are described in Straker’s (1992) book are similar to the findings of this particular research in that many

of the participants joined the struggle in Leandra in order to fight for their future freedom. The youth were taking the lead in the struggle against apartheid.

Interviews in Straker's (1992) book highlight the fact that many of the older people were not active in the struggle and the youth felt that talking was not getting their communities anywhere. In her research, Straker (1992) found that the youth were very resilient in the fight against apartheid. One interviewee named "Ricky" recalls that his commitment to fight was reinforced when his father was killed when he was fourteen years of age. Ricky's father was killed in a conflict with his white employers and this "reinforced a sense of the injustice of the circumstances governing the lives of blacks in South Africa" (Straker, 1992, p.23).

This conflict that Straker (1992) writes about took place at a different time in South Africa's history namely during the mid 1980's in Leandra, a township near Secunda in the East of Gauteng. It is evident that there are similar events that brought about a similar realisation to the youth of those times. The narrative of Participant N highlights a similar realisation after his father was killed.

The abovementioned changes in development during adolescence can explain how so many Youth were able to mobilise and defend the values and belief that they have come to realise. The narratives that emerged from this research indicate that the Youth knew that they were entitled to better life circumstances. The violence that erupted in the East Rand brought about a rationalisation for youth participation in order to protect their community as well as for their own freedom as black people living in South Africa. The loss of loved ones due to the violence is also seen as a factor that precipitated youth action in the conflict. Straker's (1992) findings also conclude that humiliation and degradation were also factors that led to youth participation in the conflict.

Another interview conducted by Straker (1992, p.66) relates to a youth named "Mathew" who was sixteen at the time of his father's death in 1984. His narrative highlights his feelings of bitterness and anger at the "discrepancies between conditions in the township

and the neighbouring white suburbs” (Straker, 1992, p66). It was when his father was killed that he reached a point that urged him to be a part of the struggle for freedom. He joined a youth organisation and eventually assumed a leadership position (Straker, 1992, p66).

These findings highlight the level of cognitive ability that many of the youth had achieved. Their understandings of what was right and wrong and their ability to reason through these provoked their participation in the conflict. It also points to the strong emotions that their circumstances aroused in them namely the anger and resentment.

Marks (2001, p.125) makes the point that youth who participated in the struggle for liberation believed that they were “defending the community in a physical sense” as well as “defending the morality of the township”. Participation in this way was aimed toward building unity and preserving the “good in the township” (Marks, 2001, p.125). This relates to the narratives of the former combatants (SDU’s) on the East Rand who participated in this research. Their participation was aimed at physically protecting their community against the perceived threat of the IFP as well as preserving the well being of the members living in the township.

Foster, Haupt and De Beer (2005, p.68) outline how “*Situationism*” explains behaviour in social settings. Based on evidence from social psychology and many years of studies and experiments it is concluded that “social situations exert considerable persuasive powers” in human behaviour (Foster, Haupt & De Beer, 2005, p.68). These findings purport that human beings tend to “go along with the prevailing and immediate situation” (Foster, Haupt & De Beer, 2005, p.68). The work of Solomon Asch (1952) (cited in Foster, Haupt & De Beer, 2005, p.69), concludes that “ordinary people evidenced considerable conformity to or compliance with others, even when others were palpably incorrect”.

Two processes are indicated in factors that promote this conformity. The first being “informational influence” and second, “normative influence”. The former process is

described by Foster, Haupt and De Beer (2005, p.69) as “situations in which people are persuaded by the information of others, particularly in situations where things are uncertain or unclear”. The latter is described by the authors as situations “in which people ‘go along’ with others to avoid ‘sticking out’” (Foster, Haupt and De Beer, 2005, p.69). Reasons for this ‘going along’ can be to avoid criticism from others or to gain approval from others.

Similarly Adam Smith a Sociological Theorist who wrote between 1723 and 1790 mentions how “each individual begins to discover how his or her behaviour is judged” through social interaction and how “we are able to become an object for ourselves as we learn to anticipate the possible praise or blame that we might expect for our intended behaviour” (Noble, 2000, p.21). Therefore the information and societal norms that people gather in similar situations influence their actions immensely as people seek approval and attempt to avoid shame and embarrassment.

The struggle for liberation in South Africa gradually developed from an awareness by the oppressed black people that violence and force was the only way to achieve freedom. This is a view that is explained by Fanon (1963) in Foster, Haupt & De Beer (2005, p.61). “The colonial masses gradually develop an awareness that ‘their liberation must, and can only be achieved by force’ (Foster, Haupt & De Beer, 2005, p.61). Fanon holds a positive view of this reactive violence which: “invests their characters with positive and creative qualities...it binds them together as a whole...part of a great organism of violence which has surged upwards in reaction to the settlers’ violence in the beginning.” (Foster, Haupt & De Beer, 2005, p.61) Fanon’s view brings to light the importance of the use of violence as a means of obtaining freedom from oppression. It creates a sense of fearlessness and a restoration of self-respect in oppressed individuals (Foster, Haupt & De Beer, 2005, p.73).

In light of these social psychological understandings, the participation of youth in the conflict on the East Rand could have resulted from the factors outlined above. The theories mentioned above provide some insight into individual actions of combatants in a

conflict situation. Many former combatants did not want to be criticised for not participating or even worse being accused of being a spy (*'impimpi'*) for the apartheid government. Peer pressure and school organisations could have also contributed to this 'going along'. Wessels (1997) comments on the situation in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Palestine and highlights that "peer pressure animates participation in political violence. Youths expect and encourage each other to take part in violent activities, and they attach great value to group loyalty. Having been arrested and tortured are regarded as badges of courage and commitment."

An alternative finding by Wessels (1997) highlights the forced recruitment of children into conflict. In countries such as "Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma/ Myanmar, El Salvador, Ethiopia, and Mozambique" children were forcibly removed from schools or their communities by "manpower-hungry militias" (Wessels, 1997). Wessels (1997) draws on conclusions from the Machel Study and asserts that forced abduction of children is commonly "a larger campaign to intimidate communities". It is clear that in situations of conflict, children are viewed as easy targets as well as easily intimidated individuals within communities. Children can easily be trained to obey when they fear for their lives. This is an alternative perspective of youth participation in conflict.

5.1.1 Parental authority

The results discussed in the previous chapter speak about a shift in responsibility from elders and parents in the communities on the East Rand to the youth. It is evident that many of the Youth on the East Rand were frustrated by the lack of action by their parents. Parents seemed to accept the oppression of black people and the youth realised that this was not the way to achieve freedom for all oppressed people living in South Africa at the time. On the East Rand, the shift from fighting the white oppressive government took place when the threat of the IFP was recognized (Marks, 2001). The situation of the youth at the time also speaks about absent father figures and parents leaving home in order to provide an income for their families in order to survive. These findings are similar to findings reported in the study conducted by Marks (2001) in Diepkloof and its youth. "Fourteen of the thirty youth came from 'broken' homes" (Marks, 2001, p.24).

A study conducted by Segal (1991) with Hostel Dwellers on the East Rand includes similar findings in terms of the reversal of roles. Segal (1991) reports that “during the interviews, it was the elders who expressed more considered and conservative opinions”. They were more ready to see themselves as mediators, voices of authority and rationality, and were less keen to rush onto the battlefield. “The elderly people are the people who stay behind and guard the hostel; thus being assigned to a more passive role in hostel politics” (Segal, 1991). This is indicative of the significant shift in the locus of control within the hostel communities. The elderly were no longer considered as authorities to obey.

Even though other participants have not mentioned this shift of control in their narratives is important to consider. Most of the participants became a part of the conflict in the townships when they were young. This is significant because it speaks about the lack of parental authority over the actions of the youth. The Youth in fact had power over older generations. This is also confirmed by some of Straker’s (1992) findings in her work with the youth of Leandra. Some of Straker’s (1992) findings include how many of the youth went against their parent’s values and beliefs. Participants in her study reveal that many of their parents were not actively involved in the conflict and that many of their parents knew that the conditions under which they lived was not acceptable.

One of the participants in Straker’s (1992) study drew support from his female colleagues, as he needed this support to “cope with his parents, both of whom did not look kindly on his activities. They were and still are resistant to his involvement, even at the level of attending funerals and meetings. He complains that his parents try to prevent him from participating in these activities as they fear for him, but their resistance has made his life very difficult” (Straker, 1992, p.49).

Similar findings were concluded in a study conducted in El Salvador concerning the long-term effects of children’s active participation in war (Dickson-Gomez, 2002). The findings of this study conclude that the children who participated in the war in El Salvador took the responsibility for their freedom as a result of parents’ inability to cope

with the trauma they experienced because of the violence in the area. It is noted that children assumed adult responsibilities for a number of reasons. Firstly, in order to protect their families, secondly, because parents and caretakers were unable to make effective decisions for their children as they were deeply traumatised by the violence they encountered and thirdly, in order to economically provide for their families since many children lost father figures at the time of conflict.

In an interview conducted post 1994 by Foster, Haupt and de Beer (2005, p.255) with a former SPU member, it emerged through his narrative there is currently a “gap” between the youth and the older generations in the community of Katlehong. The participant attributes this gap due to a lack of trust in the youth and a loss of respect for the older generation. This brings to light the fact that SPU members could have been faced with similar issues as the SDU’s interviewed in this research in terms of their involvement in the conflict and the dynamics between their youth and the elders in the community.

In both the South African and El Salvadorian situations (Dickson-Gomez, 2002; Foster, Haupt and de Beer, 2005), it is evident that youth assumed a sense of responsibility for their futures and their families. This role reversal did not come about easily as many youth were forced to abandon their adolescence and assume a more adult role when faced with conflict. Dickson-Gomez’s (2002) study illustrates that this was not an easy decision for the youth and that they did feel resentful of having to assume those kinds of responsibilities at very young ages. Youth in El Salvador as well as in South Africa chose to abandon their adolescence in order to protect their communities.

Assal and Farrell (1992) describe the selflessness of children in war and highlight that their participation is in large part due to the child’s identity which is bound to his or her family. A child’s fear of losing family in times of war is greater than the fear of losing their own lives. This description can be applied to the situation of Youth on the East Rand as it provides an explanation for the reasons why many of the participants in this study have undertaken to participate in the violent conflict at the time. Youth feared for

the survival of their families as well as their communities and therefore took action in order to allay their fears.

The next section will discuss how the impact of participation in the conflict impacted on the identity of the youth pre and post 1994.

5.2 Youth identity

Youth involvement in civil conflict as outlined by the results in the previous chapter indicates that the awareness and realisation of the moral dilemmas faced by youth pre 1994 had an impact on their identities as developing adolescents. The ongoing violence and repression by the apartheid government as well as the violence encountered in the townships urged youth to adapt their identities from adolescents to militants. The results point to a militarisation of identities for many of youth that chose to abandon their education in order to fight for the protection and preservation of their communities, as they knew it to be.

Understanding the psycho-social developmental changes that the youth were faced with during the time of the conflict more specifically to the former combatants interviewed in this research it is evident that most participants were in a phase in which Erikson describes as Identity versus Role Confusion (Meyer & Viljoen, 2002, p.201). Erik Erikson presents an ego psychological theory, which also forms part of the most important developments in post-Freudian psychoanalytical thinking. Erikson's theory claims that the development of the personality takes place in eight stages that range from birth to old age. These developmental stages are characterised by a developmental crises that Erikson claims arises from the "interaction between genetic development and social influences" (Meyer & Viljoen, 2002, p.193). Meyer and Viljoen (2002, p.193) describe that the "needs, possibilities, expectations and opportunities which emerge in each stage invariably demand a choice between possibilities" namely a developmental crises.

5.2.1 Identity versus role confusion

This stage in Erikson's theory is said to start "from the onset of puberty at around twelve, and ends with the beginning of early maturity which ranges between eighteen and twenty-five years of age depending on the culture and the duration of training required for the individuals profession" (Meyer & Viljoen, 2002, p.201). This stage is characterised by a "quest for self image" in that the adolescent is in search for his or her identity (Meyer & Viljoen, 2002, p.201).

Identity as defined in Meyer and Viljoen (2002, p.201) is "a complex concept which can be defined as people's images of themselves, including the feeling that a thread of continuity runs through their lives, and that their self-images and the views others have of them are essentially in agreement". Confusion in search for identity and for a social role can pose a threat to the development of an integrated identity and it is often the point when many adolescents seems to disagree with societal rules as well as with the people they are close to for example parents. The successful resolution of this identity crisis is what Erikson terms "reliability" or "fidelity" and these terms are considered as "certainty about one's own identity, "an accepting awareness of other possible identity choices", and "a capacity to for loyalty towards one's social role or roles (Meyer & Viljoen, 2002, p.202).

Based on the results in the previous chapter relating to the identities of former combatants, it can be noted that the participants in the study did not have the opportunity to fully explore their self-images. The collective action taken by the participants in the study indicates that they were faced with a crisis in their social environment and that they were able to foresee how this would impact on their future in the township. Their actions were focused on human rights for all black people living in South Africa and on defending their territory and community against the threat of the IFP.

It is evident that some of the participants, especially Participant J, did not find any continuity with the way in which he perceived his self-image before the conflict began to the present time, post 1994. The opportunity for reflection on self-image prior 1994 was

not a major factor for the former combatants interviewed in the research. Their individual identities were shaped by their collective action during the time of the conflict. They had a particular aim and vision for the future, which motivated their participation, and the violence that accompanied these aims left little room for and integrated sense of identity. Wessels (1997) makes a point on how ideology provides direction for adolescents who are still in the process of defining their identities. “In apartheid South Africa, black township youth [who were referred to as] the Young Lions- adopted an ideology of liberation, which gave meaning to the harsh realities of their existence and conferred a clear sense of identity and direction” (Wessels, 1997).

Post 1994, it is evident that the former combatants interviewed are still not certain of who they are as individuals. According to Erikson’s theory, some of the participants have not successfully resolved their identity crises and therefore do not have any certainty relating to their identities. The militant identity that participants integrated into their self-images pre 1994 is still very much a part of their identities post 1994. There is evidence in the results chapter that community members still identify participants interviewed by their role in the conflict. Gear (2002) reports that former combatants still find it difficult to develop new identities post 1994 as militant masculine identities are intractable.

Two of the six participants interviewed in the research seem to have integrated their militant identities into their present identities. These two participants have been involved in certain interventions that were aimed at rehabilitation of combatant’s post 1994. They are able to reflect on their self-images during the conflict as well as their image of self post 1994. Participant A continues to be politically active whilst trying to develop his business skills in order to further his opportunities in terms of earning an income for his survival. However, his narrative indicates that although he has re-evaluated his role in society, his militant identity is still very much a part of who he is post 1994.

5.2.2 A militarised masculine identity pre and post 1994

Goldstein (2001) describes the many factors that shape the militarisation of masculine identities in his book on “War and Gender”. Important factors that he brings up that

encourage the militarisation of masculinity are that of “culture and biology” (Goldstein, 2001, p.252). He quotes from Anthropologist Walter Goldschmidt that “with war as with all matters cultural, the society shapes natural human capacities and potentialities to its accepted purposes, reinforcing some and suppressing others... by systematically rewarding and punishing, by indoctrinating youth, creating role models to be emulated, and honouring those who perform well” (Goldstein, 2001, p.252). The South African situation brought forth participation of Youth in order to fight against the oppression of the white government. The 1976 Student Uprising in Soweto evidenced the importance of youth action and their willingness and resilience to fight for their freedom. This message along with the lost heroes of this struggle carried through to most of the youth in South Africa pre 1994. It is evident in the studies by Straker (1992) and Marks (2001) that youth were able to mobilise themselves in order to take their future into their own hands. The 1976 Soweto Student Uprising served as a very influential period and has had a great impact on the youth in townships thereafter.

The ability of the ANC aligned youth to come together can be explained through the use of a term known as collective consciousness as described by Bonner (1988) and as large group identities as described by Volkan (1997). Glaser (1998), in his explanation of masculinity, territoriality and the youth gangs of Soweto draws a connection between a developed sense of masculine identity and territory. His description of gangs and gang culture highlight many important factors of youth involvement in gangs and these factors relate to an assertion of masculinity; protection of territory or community; status and prestige as well as socio-economic circumstances and limited educational opportunities (Glaser, 1998). This finding links the similarities between gang identities and identities of members in the SDU's. Glaser's findings however do not include political motivation as an aspect for youth involvement in gangs during the period of 1970-1980.

Goldstein (2001) argues against the point on how biological potential is diverse but can be a factor of constraint. He views the role of biology in a different light and mentions, “culture constrains (channels, harnesses, limits) the diverse potentials of biology” (Goldstein, 2001, p.252). This is clear when evaluating the rigidity of cultural concepts of

masculine and feminine as opposed to biological gender. Cultures have the power to define appropriate masculine and feminine roles in society that limit and channel thinking about biology in these terms. The youth on the East Rand can be seen as strong, resilient, powerful and full of promise when thinking about youth participation in the conflict in South Africa prior to 1994.

Cock (1992), presents her findings from research conducted into women's role in military structures and militarisation. Cock's (1992) research findings can be linked to the argument that Goldstein (2001) puts forth in relation to the role of biology and cultural conceptions of masculinity and femininity. Cock's findings indicate the way in which combat training reinforces an image of manhood as it is based on aggression and dominance. A man's role in combat "affirms his role as protector and defender" (Cock, 2001, p.22) Maintaining the principle structure of patriarchy entails the exclusion of women from participation in combat roles thereby retaining the connection between feminine identity and anti-militarism (Cock, 1992, p.22).

Cock (1992) highlights the different experiences female combatants faced in SADF and MK armies. These findings indicate the inequalities that were prevalent in these two military wings in relation to women in the role as a combatant. Cock (1992, p.4) reports many similarities for example how both armies recruited female combatants but women were not allowed in combat roles and both armies were reluctant to promote females to leadership positions or positions of authority.

The masculine militant identity is reinforced by participation in combat; therefore military training is an important agent in this socialisation of men into a violent masculinity (Cock, 1992). Enloe (1983) describes that combat is an important aspect in the development of manhood and male superiority. Combat is said to be the true test of a man's masculinity. This view is also expounded by Goldstein (2001).

Xaba (2001) describes how comrades who fought in the struggle were identified as heroes and noticed for their bravery and courage under fire but once the struggle was over and their roles as militants was nullified post 1994. This identity dissipated and was

no longer desired and favourable looked upon in the new democracy. This shift in identity and the way in which it is perceived by the community and the state can be linked to Participant **Z**'s narrative on how he was perceived during the time of conflict on the East Rand when the conflict ceased and former combatants were no longer serving their communities they were perceived in a different light by their families and community members.

Xaba (2001, p.8) describes two types of masculinities namely “struggle masculinity” and “post-struggle masculinity”. Struggle masculinity is referred to as “masculinity, which became dominant among young, urban Africans during the days of the struggle against apartheid (in the 1980's)” (Xaba, 2001, p.108). This identity is characterised as being a socially constructed collective gender identity with the aim of opposing the apartheid system and political militancy (Xaba, 2001, p.109). This type of identity can be imputed to the participants of the conflict on the East Rand in that their identities were socially constructed and characterises collective gender action. Their aim was to protect their community as well as to protect the freedom that many former comrades had been fighting for.

Post-struggle masculinity refers to “masculinity, which seeks to supplant struggle masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa” (Xaba, 2001, p.109). This type of masculinity is characterised by a respect for “law and order”, “the restoration of public order”, “the resumption of paying for services”, “respect for state institutions”, “cooperation with police” and “fighting crime” (Xaba, 2001, p.109). The findings in the previous chapter highlight a different sense of post-struggle masculinity for participants in the research. This type of masculinity is seen as one which is continuously militant, a disregard for law and public order, and lack of faith in policing structures and un-cooperation with the government as they feel abandoned by the ANC government for whom they fought.

5.2.3 Continued militancy post conflict

Gear's (2002) findings lead to an understanding of the former combatants' identity post 1994 as an identity of exclusion. A militant militarised identity is no longer useful in times of peace and therefore becomes excluded. It is evident from Gear's (2002) key lessons into research concerning former combatants that an excluded identity does not just disappear but remains very much a part of those former combatants identity. This excluded identity presents many consequences for stability and peace within the country (Harris, 2005). This is a lesson that emerges in the results of this particular research.

Wessels' (1997) research provides similar findings to Gear (2005) and Harris (2005) and mentions that "a society that mobilizes and trains its young for war weaves violence into the fabric of life, increasing the likelihood that violence and war will be its future. Children who have been robbed of education and taught to kill often contribute to further militarization, lawlessness, and violence."

Themes that emerge with regard to the type of identity described by Gear (2002) are that of a sense of entitlement that many of the participants feel since their involvement in the conflict as well as the struggle against apartheid. Feelings of anger, resentment and frustration at the fact they have been neglected since democracy in South Africa and this has led to the consequence of a continued militancy among former combatants who have not learnt new skills in order to develop their self-images. Gear (2002, p.8) indicates that "military training – both during the earlier conflict and through the integration process itself can create a faultline for future violence".

5.2.4 Fear of identity disintegration

The shift in identity seems to have been met with fear once the conflict ceased. This emerges from the findings in the previous chapter. The skills and training and involvement in conflict brought many former combatants the reputation that they valued so much. This reputation proved their masculinity, their fearless bravery and courage, aspects that shapes the identity of young boys going into militancy. These qualities are admired and favourably looked upon during times of conflict but these qualities can be a

great source of disappointment and disillusionment for former combatants at the end of the conflict. This excluded identity in times of peace presents former combatants with many challenges which include “facing community stereotypes and prejudices about ‘ex-combatants’, loss of social status, difficulties in personal relationships, anger, depression, a loss of identity and purpose, loss of income and difficulties in finding employment, particularly beyond the private security sector, and feelings of abandonment and betrayal” (Harris, 2005).

Participant A also described how he underwent rehabilitation programmes offered by MKVA as well as a cleansing ritual. His narrative indicates that his identity is not completely militant and not completely civilian. This highlights the importance and power of the militant identity. There are some aspects of a militant identity, which do not fade away but become integrated into the identity that emerges post 1994. Participant A feels a need to remain militant to an extent, and this can be related to the suspicion of a continued threat by the IFP as well as the maintenance of the militant identity.

5.2.5 The role of substances in the perpetuation of militant identities post 1994

Substances that were used in order to enable the youth to participate in the violence seem to be a factor that adds to the problem of continued militancy within the East Rand. Participant A indicated that he was aware of former combatants who did not participate in the cleansing rituals. The outcome a continued use of substances indicates that there are many former combatants who are not able to deal with their experiences of trauma and therefore continue to live as militant individuals.

The use of substances that enable child soldiers to kill and especially in to kill people from their own communities is mentioned by Gomez (2002) and Ashby (2002) in their accounts of child soldiers in El Salvador and Sierra Leone. Guerrilla armies abducted these children from their communities and drugged them in order to remove any sense of conscience and moral reasoning. These abducted children were instructed to kill members from their own communities and some even admit to killing their parents whilst under the influence of drugs (Ashby, 2002). Even though drug use played an enormous factor in

their ability to kill their own families or community members, fear of the guerrilla armies and fear of death would also prompt their activities in these acts of violence. It is reported by Ashby (2002) that after child soldiers are reintegrated into their communities, the abuse of substances continue and their identities remain militant.

5.3 An ethnic conflict

Youth on the East Rand mobilised in order to protect their ideologies as well as to protect their territory. The ethnic component as defined below is important to understanding the conflict that occurred between the hostel dwellers and the township residents on the East Rand. Ethnicity seems to be a very strong mobilising factor in this instance. This is evident from the findings in the Results Chapter.

5.3.1 Ethnicity

It is useful to gain an understanding about ethnic groups. The word *ethnic* is derived from the Greek word *ethnos* which means company, people, or tribe (Volkan, 1997). George De Vos, an Anthropologist, describes an ethnic group as “those who hold in common a set of traditions not shared by the others with whom they are in contact” (Volkan, 1997, p.21). These traditions are further described by De Vos as “folk religious beliefs and practices, language, a sense of historical continuity, a common ancestry, place of origin, and a shared history” (Volkan, 1997, p.21). His understanding of ethnicity includes a sense of being unique and special and therefore a sense of distinction from the rest (Volkan, 1997, p 21). Another Anthropologist cited in the work of Volkan (1997, p.21) named Howard Stein defines ethnicity through understanding subjective criteria and describes “ethnicity as a mode of thought, not a category in nature”. Volkan (1997, p.21) describes that there are other theorists who describe ethnicity as through objective criteria such as “physical characteristics, cultural and social community” however this description does not “conform to the popular usage of the term ethnicity”.

Based on the above-mentioned description it becomes clear that the concept of ethnicity has been widely debated and continues to be dissected and re-evaluated by many theorists in the field of anthropology. Some anthropologists explored the objective criteria further

and purported that ethnic categorisation included physical characteristics such as “cranial dimensions and nasal profiles” (Volkan, 1997, p.21). This becomes problematic as it confuses the concepts of race and ethnicity. Segal (1991, p.121) discussed three broad trends on the ethnic component as a mobilising factor on the East Rand. The first trend relates to the “deep rooted tribal animosity” as described by the South African Media at the time as well as the right-wing movement (Segal, 1991, p.221). The second trend describes “ethnicity as a product of mere manipulation firstly by the colonial forces and then the South African state” and views conflict as a political tool rather than an ethnic one (Segal, 1991). The third trend described by Segal (1991, p.221) is one that “attempts to understand the role and tenacity of ethnic sentiments by taking account of their material basis, that is, the roots of such sentiments in a particular social formation”. This trend also includes aspects such as the manipulation of these ethnic identities “by the South African state through structures of control such as the Bantustans, ethnically divided mine compounds, etc” (Segal, 1991, p.221). Segal (1991, p.222) indicates that the combination of these forces namely the “materially-rooted ethnicity” and the “manipulation by the state for its own ends has fuelled the flames of ethnic conflict”.

5.3.2 Causes of conflict

In the 1990's the nature of these structures shifted, as did the nature of the conflict and the context in which violence manifested. These circumstances were particularly acute in the townships and informal settlements of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. In response to the massive upsurge in conflict, depicted both as ethnic and political, between Xhosa and Zulu, ANC and IFP, it was clear that the violence was largely random and indiscriminate, and designed to sow widespread fear and terror. This situation was exacerbated by the security forces, which, at best were seen as ignoring the plight of township residents, and at worst, as deliberately stoking the violence and directly participating in it. (Gear, 2002)

The ANC believed that the SADF and SAP (South African Police) were determined to destabilise communities during negotiations aimed at dismantling apartheid. This was also thought to be the case on the East Rand during the conflict. Claims made by the ANC since 1990 highlight their suspicion of the security forces within South Africa.

These forces were suspected to be acting as a covert “third force” which conducted various acts of terror such as “random attacks on train commuters which has involved 226 deaths in the past 20 months, assassinating ANC leaders, training and arming Inkatha members and fuelling violence between different African groups such as township residents and hostel inmates” (Cock, 1992, p.14). This is also highlighted in Barolsky’s (2005, p.39) findings, “massacres where gunmen opened fire on train and taxi commuters, people drinking in shebeens or sleeping in their beds became endemic. Violence against women, children and the elderly rose dramatically. Their homes were razed; they died in gun battles, botched assassination attempts or armed raids on townships, hostels and informal settlements.”

The narratives of participants in the study also lead to an understanding of how well armed and mobilised the IFP structures were within the communities on the East Rand. The escalation of violence and the vast number of community members being killed prompted youth to align against the IFP. The SDU’s whose main aim was defence had a strong presence on the East Rand and this was accompanied by a strong SPU presence, which was at the time termed “black on black” violence (Cock, 1992, p.14).

Segal (1991, p.190) highlights that certain newspapers at the time “uncovered concrete evidence” as to the state’s involvement with the IFP: “Both *The Weekly Mail* and *The New Nation* newspapers have recently uncovered concrete evidence which shows that the state has aided Inkatha in organising anti-ANC activities and suggest that the SADF has been directly involved in the train massacres. This evidence supports some of the conspiracy theories accusing the government and Inkatha of colluding in the violence” (Segal, 1991). Segal (1991) makes it clear that there were many perspectives on the causes for the conflict and therefore the IFP’s involvement with the state is only one of those perspectives.

Barolsky (2005) highlights some thoughts on the causes for the conflict on the East Rand and these findings corroborate the above-mentioned suspicions that are discussed in the previous paragraph. Taylor and Shaw (in Barolsky, 2005, p.39) argue that “until 1992,

the National Party (NP) government followed a dual strategy of negotiation and destabilisation, which it was hoped, would disorganise the ANC sufficiently to allow the NP, as the centre of an alliance of conservative parties, to win a democratic election.”

The progression of the conflict on the East Rand is described by Bonner and Nieftagodien (2001) in their research conducted with former SPU members and indicates that there were three distinct phases to the conflict which occurred from 1990 to 1994.

“The taxi war was confined mainly to Katlehong, although it spilled over into neighbouring Thokoza. The war between the Zulu and Xhosa embraced Thokoza and Katlehong alike, with its storm centre being sited mainly in Katlehong. The war between the IFP and ANC which doubled up to some extent as a war between the hostels and the townships, engulfed the entire Kathorus region and indeed swept far beyond.” (Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2001, p.134)

These three phases indicate the divisions in the communities of Thokoza and Katlehong and how ethnic and political identities merge to become a dividing force. It can therefore be assumed that the conflict that occurred on the East Rand did occur only because of ethnic lines but also because of political affiliations and access to resources available to members in the communities of Thokoza and Katlehong.

Barolsky (2005) describes how many people who were perceived to have associations with the IFP hostel residents or the IFP, or who spoke Zulu were targeted in Katlehong. “In Katlehong, a violent process of ‘ethnic cleansing’ was carried out against Zulu speakers living in the township. The majority of victims were shack dwellers whose families came from Natal. Most of these people were forced to flee to Kwesine and Buyafuthi hostels in May and July 1993 after their homes had been razed to the ground. Many people were targeted simply because of a perceived association with hostel residents, Zulu speakers or the IFP”.

Based on accounts from the participants in the study on their understanding of the conflict and the reasons they participated, it seems that they perceived that the IFP was

being coerced by the state to fight in the townships. Participant **B** makes the point that he believed that the IFP was determined to destabilise the communities on the East Rand and that this would act as an obstruction to the fight against apartheid. Therefore youth on the East Rand, especially those who were ANC aligned came together to defend their territory, eliminate the threat of the IFP and fight for freedom and equal opportunities for all black people in South Africa.

The narratives of participants in the study also indicate how language and dress played a major role in peoples perceptions of 'the other'. Participant **A** commented on how the way you dressed was an indicator of your ethnicity and political alignment. He also mentioned how people who spoke Xhosa learnt to speak Zulu in order to avoid conflict but this was not always successful.

A study by Connell (2001) titled "The men and the boys" argues that bodily practices from the society, ranging across dress, sport and sexuality, modify bodies. This study is consistent with a study conducted by Shefer & Mankayi (2007) which assesses the discourses on male (hetero)sexual practices in the South African military. An important finding in this study is that military uniform presents a sense of masculinity and therefore highlighting the link between dressing and identity. The research conducted with former combatants suggests that the way an individual dressed was an indicator of that individual's ethnicity and therefore political alignment to the ANC or the IFP.

5.4 Violence; trauma and attitude toward interventions

Previous research as well as the results from this particular research concludes that the violence on the East Rand was bloody and gruesome. This has resulted in many traumatic reactions and traumatic memories post 1994 for many of the former combatants who were perpetrators, who were victims and witnesses to all of the death and destruction.

It is important to understand how witnessing of violence and the perpetration of violence can have a psychological impact on former combatants post war. It is also important to understand the mindset of a combatant involved in conflict in order to fully understand the impact of their actions in times of peace.

The results of this study highlight the very violent nature of the conflict experienced by the participants in the study. Participants have stored in their memories horrific images and these images are accompanied by a lot of anger and resentment toward the situation they were apart of. Aside from experiencing violence many of the participants in the study were perpetrators of violence. The narratives, however, do not fully express their feelings in relation to their own actions. An interpretation of Participant **Z**'s narrative indicates that he had been a victim of many violent attacks some of which almost cost him his life. He also speaks about how his beliefs and identity influenced his actions prior to 1994. Many former combatants were both victims and perpetrators of violence. Examples of the violence perpetrated by former combatants include raping, abducting and torturing of others. Their violent actions can be seen as a justification of their ideological beliefs during the time of conflict.

Lamb terms this perpetration of violence as “exaggerated entitlement” in that a “quasi emotional state which marks the person as superior” is the dominant state driving the perpetrators of violence (Foster, 2000). An example of this is related to the “most gendered emotion in our culture” namely anger (Foster, 2000). Both women and men are emotional beings and therefore both are able to experience feelings of anger. Entitlement according to Lamb (Foster, 2000) “is that set of positionings which facilitates expression of anger and aggressiveness in boys from an early age and suppresses its expression among girls”. This has an influence on the ways in which men and women experience anger therefore men experience anger as “moral indignation” and women experience anger as “guilt-laden frustration and with less self- righteousness” (Lamb, 1990, p.54, cited in Foster, 2000).

In the case of Participant **Z**, his narratives indicate his sense of entitlement. Entitlement due to the oppression that he faced by the apartheid government, the social circumstances he lived in during apartheid and his anger due to these consequences in his life. His narratives indicate that he was angry at the apartheid government and therefore committed acts of violence against white people, for example stealing cars. This is known as the ‘comtsotsi phenomenon’ in which criminal acts of violence are perpetrated by

comrades. Notwithstanding that these acts put his life in danger he never ceased his involvement in the conflict. This could relate to his belief in a better life for himself as a black man as well as for all black people living in South Africa.

5.4.1 Symptoms of Trauma

5.4.1.1 War trauma

The literature on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder highlights a symptom of trauma as psychological numbing. Considering the training and militarised masculine identities that result from participating in a conflict, it can be noted that this is a response learnt during combat. Gear (2002, p.63) comments on this and indicates that “psychological numbing is not something which only emerges after the war, but also manifests during the war itself, effectively 'protecting' the soldier from facing the horrors of combat and the threat of death”. Most participants in this study have not further evaluated their militant masculine identities and rely on this psychological numbing post 1994 to keep from psychological disintegration. The literature review highlights findings from a study conducted by Everatt and Jennings (2006) with former MK and APLA members and indicates the levels of traumatic symptoms experienced by respondents in their study.

Participant **J** has commented on how it is difficult to talk to other people about their experiences during the conflict as it could make him appear weak and vulnerable. He does however mention that former combatants feel comfortable talking to each other as they have a better understanding of what the other is or was going through. This avoidance of talking about their experiences to people who have not been involved in the conflict could be because of the reception that many former combatants have received in the communities' post 1994. Gear (2002, p.64) comments that “the effects of dissociation in response to trauma resonate with the feelings typically experienced by former combatants in that it usually entails a sense of estrangement from others, as well as a lack of purpose”. Due to the stigmatisation of former combatants post 1994 as well as the communities perceptions of them as worthless and weak, many former combatants detach themselves from the community and this can create and/or exacerbate many other psychological difficulties for the former combatants.

Following the Vietnam War, various symptoms of trauma came to the attention of health workers in the field. As highlighted in the literature review, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder has commonly used to describe the various symptoms experienced by combatants. War has far reaching psychological consequences for combatants as well as for the communities in which militarisation has occurred (Gear, 2002). Grossman (1996, p.43) highlights the number of psychiatric casualties during war and it is indicated that “during World War II more than 800 000 men were classified (unfit for military service) due to psychiatric reasons”, the Arab-Israeli War, left “a third of Israeli casualties” unfit due to psychiatric reasons.

PTSD symptoms include the intrusion of distressing recollections (in nightmares, hallucinations and flashbacks), and a psychological numbing - an avoidance of anything associated with or resembling the traumatic event (Gear, 2002). Sufferers also experience hyper-arousal or hyper-vigilance, characterised by sleep disturbance, exaggerated startle responses, fear, concentration difficulties and increased aggressiveness. These symptoms are frequently accompanied by other disorders, most notably anxiety, depression and substance dependence (Hajiyiannis & Vienings, 1999). Substance abuse and depression, as well as higher rates of divorce, suicide, unemployment, and manifestations of violence are all problems that have plagued Vietnam's war veterans in the United States (Sandler, 1989).

Lieutenant Colonel David Grossman in his book “*On Killing*” (1996) describes the various techniques employed by the military in order to overcome the powerful reluctance that soldiers face when they are faced with killing. He also describes the effects of killing in a post conflict situation. His findings strongly correlate with some of the narratives in this research. In an interview conducted with an old veteran who after seventy years who broke down whilst describing a memory that he had safely locked away in his memory for all of those years. The participant related “we thought we had managed all right...kept the awful things out of our minds, but now I’m an old man and they come out from where I hid them. Every night” Grossman (1995 p.75) states that

“often you keep these things out of your mind when you are young and active, but they come back to haunt your nights in your old age”.

It is clear that these repressed memories have long term effects on those former veterans interviewed in the study by Grossman (1995) and this can be an indicator of what many of the former combatants on the East Rand may face in the future. Most of the participants say that they keep these memories locked away, which poses psychological difficulties in the future. James and Gilliland (2001, p.132) comment on the “mounting evidence [which] indicates that World War I and II veterans have manifested delayed onset or worsening of posttraumatic complaints as they have grown older”. It was found that “aging, with its subsequent loss of supports through death, increased health problems, declining physical and mental capabilities and economic hardships appear to put older veterans at increased risk (Aarts & op den Velde, 1996, pp. 359-374 in James & Gilliland, 2001, p.132).

Mashike and Makalobe (2003) in their study conducted with former MK and APLA members found that aging was also a factor that put former combatants at risk of experiencing psychological difficulties and concurs with the findings of James and Gilliland (2001). A 65 year old former combatant narrates the difficulties that he experiences many years after the conflict has ended:

“In 1987 we were moving from the west to the north of Angola when Savimbi’s bandits attacked our convoy. The sound of gunshots and grenade explosions ring in my mind to this day. I am old [65 years] and supposed to enjoy the last days of my life. However, I cannot even go out of the house once I hear the sound of a gunshot. Sometimes I become so nervous that I break things in my house. I feel like fighting but have no one to fight against. I generally feel irritable and angry. My children are now used to my behaviour. No one can cure my condition except death.” (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.21)

James and Gilliland (2001) also discuss the question of “pre-existing psychopathology” and whether this places some victims of violence at a greater risk of developing PTSD

symptoms after a traumatic event. Their findings conclude that “one of the hallmarks of PTSD is that it is often comorbid”; however there are no “absolute factors” which guarantee that one person is more likely to develop PTSD symptoms over the other (James & Gilliland, 2001, p.134). A person's susceptibility to PTSD must be seen as a function of several factors which James and Gilliland (2001) outline as genetic predisposition, ecological factors, constitution, personality makeup, past life experiences, state of mind, cultural artefacts, phase of maturational development at onset, spiritual beliefs, social support system before and after the trauma, and content and intensity of the event (Boman, 1986; De Vries, 1996; Furst, 1967; Green & Berlin, 1987; Kelman, 1945; Martini et al., 1990; Moses, 1987; Shalev, 1996).

With regards to the abovementioned factors it is evident that there are many factors at play that lead to susceptibility of PTSD. In relation to the former combatants who have participated in this study and the findings that have emerged it is clear that their ways of coping with the events that they have experienced and the factors that influence their lives will indicate whether they will or will not be affected by PTSD symptoms at a later stage in their lives. It is clear that most of them prefer avoiding these memories as they tend to create instability in their lives as well as in their minds.

“If the person can effectively integrate the trauma into conscious awareness and organise it as part of the past (as unpleasant as the event may be), then homeostasis returns, the problem is coped with, and the individual continues to travel life's rocky road. If the event is not effectively integrated and is submerged from awareness, then the probability is high that the initiating stressor will re-emerge in a variety of symptomatic forms months or years after the event.”

(James & Gilliland, 2001, pp. 129-130)

In light of the factors mentioned by James and Gilliland (2001), it emerges through the findings that many combatants post 1994 have been faced with a disintegration of family and community support. Prior to 1994, community and family members praised these former combatants for their bravery and courageousness, but now they are seen as weak

of no use to the community. They are stigmatised and ironically their militant masculine identities have been ridiculed and criticised post 1994.

Former combatant's participating in the research cite that they have not been able to develop a sense their personalities and identities post 1994. Some indicate that they have remained militant, some speak of the inescapability of the "former combatant" identity and some reveal their efforts to reintegrate into civilian life but have found the transition very difficult. As most of the former combatants interviewed participated in the conflict from a very young age, this could be a contributing factor to be proving difficult in terms of developing their identities beyond the former combatant status. It is ingrained in their make-up and with a very limited educational background this places a major constrain on their abilities to move beyond their current life circumstances.

The psychological difficulties as experienced by female former combatants as outlined in Mashike and Makalobe (2003) indicate that they were at greater risk post conflict. This highlights the impact of combat on female comrades. Aside from witnessing and experiencing excessive violence they were also victims of sexual assaults by the military commanders under whom they served (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003). The narrative of one of the former female combatants indicates the nature and extent of the sexual assault she experienced. It also highlights how many male 'comrades' in positions of authority abused their positions of power. Being a female combatant meant fighting for freedom but had the disadvantage of not being viewed as holding an equal position to male combatants.

"When I remember my first three years of exile I feel like crying because I had sexual intercourse with more than 20 MK commanders. I also saw this happening to other young female students who joined MK in the 1970s and 1980s. The female comrades were used as sex slaves but if a young male comrade was found having an affair with a female comrade, he was punished and in some cases killed. The killing would be justified by arguing that the comrade was an enemy agent. All these affect me now because every time I see those young girls who work in offices they bring back bad memories. I always think that they found their

jobs by exposing themselves to sexual abuse by those in authority.” (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.22)

5.6 Benefits of attending interventions

Treatment for former combatants post conflict have been characterised by talking through experiences and healing in this way but the notion of PTSD has been challenged in terms of understanding trauma in a Non-western society. For example, Straker’s (1991) findings with the youth in Leandra indicate that talking through experiences rarely heard of among black youth. Researchers in Mozambique highlight the value of traditional healing methods for former combatants and communities in which they are reintegrated into (Gear, 2002). Healing through “non-verbal symbolic procedures” seem to be more effective than talking through and externalizing events (Gear, 2002, p.70). It is clear that traditional rituals of “welcoming and cleansing” play an important role of successful reintegration into communities in Mozambique (Gear, 2002, p.70).

This is an aspect that has come through the narrative of Participant **A** in the study. He mentioned the importance of cleansing oneself post conflict in order to regain mental stability and cleanse the body from the substances that they were taking in order to prepare themselves for conflict. He believes that if one is not cleansed, one will not be able to live a stable life and the dangers of continuing violent actions post conflict is a consequence. This participant has gone through a cleansing ritual and believes that he is able to cope with the things that he has experienced in the past.

Similarly in Angola, traditional healing is essential in aiding child soldiers in the demobilisation and reintegration process (Wessels, 1997). The importance of purification rituals can play a major role in reintegrating and healing the spirits of many former child soldiers. It is believed in many Bantu cultures “that when one kills, one is haunted by the unavenged spirits of those who were killed. Spiritually contaminated, a former child soldier who has killed puts an entire community at risk if he re-enters without having been purified.” (Wessels, 1997)

Interventions in Non-Western societies need to take into consideration the traditions and cultural backgrounds of former combatants. Interventions need to be tailored accordingly in order to be effective in limiting the effects of trauma post conflict. Communities need to be consulted by health workers and should play an active role in the reintegration process of former combatants. Wessels (1997) research highlights how “many humanitarian assistance and development efforts overlook traditional healing methods, [and are] dismissed as unscientific”.

Two of six participants have been involved in rehabilitative initiative and the other four have either not heard of any interventions being offered in the area or have not attended as they believe that they do not need any interventions. As suggested in the findings chapter it is evident that the fear of a disintegration of the militant masculine identity plays a major role in former combatants attending interventions. The consequences of dealing with traumatic memories could result in the breakdown of this identity and former combatants wish to maintain their status as brave and courageous men and wish not to be shamed and embarrassed by their experiences. Some participants indicate that they feel more comfortable discussing their feelings and experiences with other combatants as they share one language and understand what the other is feeling and going through. This highlights an important aspect of expression of feelings of former male combatants which is highly gendered. It is important to some of the participants in the study that they conceal their weaknesses and fears from other members of the community who were not part of the conflict.

Two participants in the research spoke about attending interventions that were offered post 1994. Participant **B** spoke about how he attended counselling courses in order to add to his skills. He mentioned that through these courses he was able to understand some of the things that he was experiencing and how he learnt to heal himself through these courses.

Participant **A**, indicated that he attended rehabilitation programmes that were arranged by the MKVA. These programmes were aimed at empowering former combatants post 1994

with the necessary skills needed in order to adapt to civilian life. He also mentioned that he had undergone a ritual cleansing that he believes benefited him tremendously. He was the only participant interviewed who had mentioned an alternative method of rehabilitation.

5.6 Lack of proper reintegration

5.6.1 Reintegration

Reintegration into civilian life is essential for former combatants once conflict has ceased. Mashike and Makalobe (2003, p.3) indicate that “former soldiers may also have to make psychological adjustments, given the top-down command style approach of the military, which is often unsuitable for civilian life”. Based on the narratives that have emerged from the findings, it is evident that reintegration of former combatants back into their communities has not been a successful one. This is evident by the number of social and economic consequences that have emerged for former combatant’s post 1994. These findings are similar to findings by Cock (1993) in her research with former MK members and it highlights the same challenges that participants in this study have encountered. “The bulk of respondents were unemployed and experienced difficulties securing accommodation. Many were reliant on their families for support, which contributed to considerable levels of tension and frustration. These problems were compounded by the disorientation and alienation they experienced on arriving home.” (Cock, 1993, p.3)

The literature on reintegration and what it entails sets out three types of reintegration processes that have to occur in order for former combatants to be fully accepted back into their respective communities (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003; UN, 2006). Mashike and Makalobe (2003, p.3) describe these three as “economic; political and social reintegration”. The reintegration process is expected to be a long term process and does not assume that former combatants adapt to civilian life as soon as the conflict has ceased and they return back to their families. These three types of reintegration are fully discussed in the literature review chapter of this study.

5.6.2 Economic reintegration and former combatants living on the East Rand

Based on the narratives of former combatants, it can be deducted that economic reintegration of this population has not been entirely successful. Participants relate to their inability to secure employment in order to sustain their lives and the lives of their families. They have not been provided with initiatives that would ensure they further develop skills that would enable them to diversify their skills. They have a limited educational background with the exception of Participant A who has completed his secondary education and has obtained a Matric qualification. One of the participants in the study mentioned how he took the initiative to develop a business idea that he had but ultimately failed because of his limited knowledge on business and the appropriate channels that he needed to move through in order to make a success of his business ideas. “Economic integration is often difficult in areas where unemployment is relatively high, poor economic growth exists and the individuals in question lack the requisite marketable skills.” (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.3) Large scale armed conflicts usually have destructive consequences on economies which lead to the impoverishment of much of the population. An improvement of economic conditions does not automatically result at the end of armed conflicts. (UN, 2006)

One of the participants in the study highlights the situation that many former combatants face in light of impoverishment, lack of employment opportunities and minimal skills development. He admits that he has been involved in criminal activities in order to earn an income to support his family. He mentions how other former combatants that he knows also engage in criminal activities to earn an income. It emerges from his narrative that he, like many other former combatants, feels very angry and frustrated by the government they fought for. This anger and frustration has been avenged by former combatants committing violent acts such as performing cash heists in order to get the governments attention.

In light of all of the findings, it is evident that the living conditions for people residing on the East Rand have not improved since the ANC government has come into power. Prior to 1994, the conditions in which people lived on the East Rand can be described as

impoverished and lacking in resources. Not much has changed post 1994 and many former combatants' expectations of better living conditions have not been met. Therefore their lives have not improved significantly and they perceive their participation in the struggle as benefiting many other people aside from their own communities. In the study conducted by Mashike and Makalobe (2003, p.19), it is reported that "the majority of unemployed respondents indicated that they rely on financial and material support from family members and friends. Many said that they are supported by elderly parents or grandparents who work as domestic workers or labourers, or are pensioners".

5.6.3 Political integration of former combatants on the East Rand

Political integration involves "the process through which retired or demobilized soldiers participates in the political life of their communities" (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.3). Two factors indicate the extent to which political integration has been achieved. The first being "former soldiers assuming or being elected into leadership positions in their communities, such as local councils, school committees and neighbourhood watches". The second being the involvement of "former soldiers participating in political processes in the communities, such as voting for local elections and making themselves available when consultation with community members is required" (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.3).

One of the six participants in this study has politically integrated himself. He continues to be a part of ANC organizations and assumes leadership positions in many organizations. Many of the other participants acknowledge their role in obtaining a democratic South Africa but still comment on expectations that they had of the time post 1994.

5.6.4 Social integration of former combatants on the East Rand

"Social integration is the process through which former soldiers and their dependents consider themselves to be part of, and are accepted by the communities in which they live and society at large. The attitudes of communities towards former soldiers is often influenced by the perceptions of the historical role these individuals played, and, in the

event of a major armed conflict having taken place, the degree of general reconciliation in that society.” (Mashike & Makalobe, 2003, p.3)

Former combatants on the East Rand have encountered great difficulty in the social environments post 1994. Perceptions of community members of these former combatants seemed to shift. One participant indicates that he was perceived as a hero in his community but once the conflict ceased and he was not able to support his family, people’s perception about him began to change. His family constantly reminded him of his failure post 1994 and kept highlighting how many other people had obtained positions in the government but he has nothing.

Other participants mention how many former combatants are now viewed as a nuisance in their communities as they are at home most of the time and of no use to the community as they do not have the necessary skills or motivation to secure employment. They are now viewed as lazy and weak. The consequence of this stigmatisation has led many former combatants to abuse alcohol in order to numb their pain as well as to escape the ridicule they face in their families and the community. This is consistent with findings in this study. Many families had expectations of a better life post 1994. They expected former combatants to return home with money and with positions of power within the government, but now they bare the burden of having to support these former combatants who have no skills to enter into the labour market. The UN (2006, p.35) reports that “ex-combatants often return to extremely difficult social environments, where they might be seen as additional burdens to the community, rather than assets”.

The consequence of substance abuse is consistent with findings in the results chapter and indicates that many former combatants rely on alcohol or tobacco to numb the reality of their current life situations. Bearing the burden of the painful memories that many former combatants have from their past experiences as well as the human hostility they face in their communities, it is clear that there is a strain on the former combatants mental and physical health. Grossman (1995, p.77) comments on this and mentions that people “desperately [want] to be liked, loved, and in control of [their] lives; and intentional,

overt, assaults [on our] self-image, our sense of control, our sense of the world as a meaningful and comprehensible place” places former combatants at greater risk of experiencing mental and physical difficulties returning from conflict

A further consequence that results from inadequate reintegration is a continued militancy for many former combatants as well as challenges faced in the social environments. With inadequate conflict resolution skills, it is evident that the communities and the former combatants on the East Rand resort to violence when faced with problems. Participant **Z** commented on his thoughts relating to violence and pointed to conflict resolution skills as an option going forward. The literature suggests that domestic violence is a clear indicator of a lack of conflict resolution skills coupled with inability to cope with psychological difficulties experienced post conflict. Gear (2002) and Grossman (1996) have illustrated this point. Post Traumatic Stress as well as stresses of reintegration is seen to exacerbate tensions within the domestic environment (Gear, 2002).

CHAPTER SIX:

RESEARCHER'S REFLECTIONS

This section provides insight into my experience as a researcher on the topic of former combatants. The decision to conduct research into the narratives of former combatants on the East Rand post apartheid was strongly influenced by my curiosity on the lives of former combatants in a post conflict situation. I have a significant interest in the area of Post Traumatic Stress and previously conducted my honours research into the types of interventions that healthcare workers utilize when treating children who have been exposed to traumatic events. I have also benefited from training that I have received from the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in Johannesburg. During my training at CSVR, I learnt about the many programs and initiatives that the Centre implemented, especially in relation to former combatants and refugees. This is something that sparked my interest and being an Indian female, this was an area of research that I could benefit from greatly.

Embarking on the research, I had many ideas about what it was that I wanted to learn from this particular sample and thought that an exploration of narratives was the best way to gain a wealth of information. Once the research proposal was approved I made an effort to learn more about the sample as well as the area in which the conflict took place from 1990 to 1994. The literature that I was able to access provided a wealth of information in relation to the sample as well as the area concerned (East Rand). My research supervisor provided me with valuable guidance and directed me toward a visit to Thokoza and Katlehong.

I decided to access my sample before doing so and approached CSVR in this respect. I was fortunate to be directed toward one of the participants in my research who was willing to take me on a tour of his home town. I had many reservations about this, as I was an Indian female going into a black township. I have only been terribly concerned about this aspect of my identity once before and that was whilst conducting community projects in completion of certain aspects of my master's degree in the township of Alexandra, north of Johannesburg. My fears related to trusting the participant in my study

as well as safety and security within an area of Johannesburg which I knew very little about.

I decided to make more contact with this particular participant in order to gain some insight into the places we would be visiting as well as voicing my concerns of safety. The participant was very good at assuring me that he was very well known in the area and that he would not take me into places he knew would not be very safe to enter into. Trusting this, I embarked on my first visit to Thokoza. This experience highlighted my own understanding of the living conditions of people in these townships. I was amazed at how the communities in the townships lived with so many memories of the past conflict. At every corner, the participant would relate stories about how people were shot or beaten. The surrounding structures have been rebuilt and now have new meaning for the residents of the townships but the memories are still very much alive in their minds.

After visiting the townships and speaking with some of the residents I felt more at ease going in a second time. From that point on I was certain that this research was going to provide me with an invaluable learning experience. Soon thereafter, I began conducting interviews with former combatants who lived in the townships. Many of the interviews were conducted at some of the former combatant's homes. Some of the former combatants in my study were reluctant to participate as they felt that they were not going to benefit much from being a part of the study.

This follows into my next reflection which relates to some concerns which I initially did not anticipate. Language was a huge limitation in this research as I am English speaking and can also understand Afrikaans. This placed me at a great disadvantage in the interviewing process as I was attempting to draw out narratives. Participants related in both English and Xhosa and these interviews were recorded and then transcribed with a translator. I believe that the language barrier prevented me from gaining more information in terms of their narratives and in future will be cognisant of this limiting factor when conducting research with a sample whose first language is not English.

My next reflection relates to the avoidance of traumatic memories that most of the participants did not speak about. This could have been due to the language barriers and ways of expressing what they wanted to say as it is evident that certain African languages do not have a range of emotional terms to describe feelings. It could have also been in relation to the fact that I was an outsider, a female and of a different race to that of the participants. The difficulty in discussing traumatic memories with a complete stranger as well as with a female could have been a factor that limited the findings in this study. All of the participants in the study were male and as mentioned in the interviews, some participants highlighted that they felt more comfortable relating to other former combatants as they shared the same experience. This avoidance could have also related to the identities as former black male combatants. Speaking about their memories could have opened them up to stigmatisation or labelling. Being a former combatant and drawing on aspects of their identities as 'macho' men could have been a reason for the avoidance as they would not want to be viewed as weak men.

This is a new learning experience for me and highlights the importance of understanding the different cultural backgrounds of the people I interact with in research or in a therapeutic setting. It is important to note that all of the participants were, however, interested in the type of work that I was conducting and wanted very much to be informed as to the outcomes of this research. I made a note of addresses of participants in order to provide them with a summary of the research outcomes once the research was complete.

This experience has provided many lessons as well as many crucial factors that relate to former combatants post conflict. It is easy to think about the numerous programs and projects that one can implement in these types of settings but it is clear that not every former combatant will benefit. One participant spoke about traditional ritual cleansings that formed part of the rehabilitation process but it would have been useful to include this as a possible question in the research to assess the outcomes. I have realised the importance of performing such rituals as similarly in my culture similar rituals are performed in order to strengthen and heal the spirit. This would be worth considering for

future research into alternative healing methods as well as understanding the similarities and differences within my culture as well as other black cultures.

If I were to conduct this research again, I would definitely try to draw out a larger sample. The six participants in the study were sufficient for this research, but clearly not enough to provide substantial evidence that can infer to the population of former combatants living on the East Rand.

The interviews conducted with the former combatants, as well as my visit to the East Rand has enlightened my understanding of the circumstances that many former combatants face post apartheid. The opportunity to conduct such research has sparked further interest in this area of research as it can be understood by so many theoretical view points as highlighted in the discussion chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings extracted from the narratives of former combatants on the East Rand, it is understandable that former combatants have not progressed much in terms of economic, individual and social growth since 1994. Understanding that all of the combatants in the study participated in the conflict from a youth, it has emerged that they have not further defined their identities post 1994. Some participants are very confused about who they are in the democratic South Africa. Some have integrated their militant masculine identities from the past into their civilian identity at present and other participants remain militant. Ultimately it can be concluded that the militant masculine identity of a combatant has deep roots within these former combatants. Many have not adapted these identities due to the limited opportunities that they speak about in relation to employment and skill development and this leads to a question of future stability and security in South Africa as many former combatants are using their militant skills to commit crimes which are a source of income for them.

One aspect that threatens this militant masculine identity is lack of employment in order to support themselves as well as their families and community. They were once thought of as 'heroes' but now are burdens to their families and community in which they live. Family members have belittled them and criticised their role in the conflict as post 1994 brought no benefits for many former combatants. They are now excluded and stigmatised.

The anger and the frustration that many former combatants speak about relates to the present government for which they fought to come into power. Many former combatants are still searching for meaning and would like to be remembered for their role in the conflict. The expectations of many combatants in conflict prior to 1994 were that living conditions would improve and that they would be well taken care of by the ANC government. These expectations were not met and many are disillusioned because they

fought to make life better for all black South Africans and now there are only a few who have benefited from this process.

The findings highlight that ethnicity is still very much a concern in the townships on the East Rand and this is followed by paranoia that the IFP will attack again in order to gain control over their territory. Most of the former combatants are still very much aware that there could be future clashes and they wish for that not to happen as their memories of the conflict between 1990 and 1994 are still fresh in their minds.

Many former combatants still have weapons from the time of the conflict on the East Rand. This poses questions about the demobilisation and disarmament processes that occurred during 1994. This is another factor that could render the future of South Africa unstable. It is evident that there has been no resolution between the ANC and IFP members on the East Rand and this is a cause for great concern as many still have weapons to spark another conflict.

The psychological implications for former combatant's post 1994 have been assessed to some degree in this study but further exploration is needed in terms of appropriate interventions that are in line with the former combatants' cultural belief systems. Living in the same environment in which much of the conflict occurred cannot be easy for many former combatants to deal with as they relive traumatic memories as they move through the townships.

Recommendations

Future demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration efforts can learn a great deal from the South African experience as it highlights some of the flaws that were inherent in the process put forth in South Africa. It is a very important process that can lead to great benefits for former combatants if applied appropriately. In light of the findings, conflict resolution strategies can assist many former combatants residing on the East Rand. It is evident that this is a much needed skill for former combatants in order to resolve conflict more amicably other than resorting to violence.

Community participation needs to be ensured for the success of future reintegration programs namely combined efforts of individuals, families and communities. This would allow for a more participatory approach during the planning and decision-making stages of reintegration programs.

Former combatants need to be armed with skills that they can use as civilians in post conflict situations. Access to educational opportunities should be granted to these combatants in order to further their knowledge and skills. Community members should also be sensitised to the needs of former combatants' post 1994 in order to offer more assistance and support. More attention should be paid to the needs and expectations of former combatants by the government.

A more people-centred approach should be referred to. This approach recognises that there will be differences in support required by both sexes and those of differing ages and physical ability (UN, 2006). More appropriate interventions are required in terms of rehabilitation for former combatants. Efforts must take into consideration the traditional and cultural methods and more community members should be involved in this process in order to assist the reintegration of former combatants back into their respective communities. "Designing culturally relevant and appropriate reintegration activities for each group, and offering specifically designed health and psychosocial services, as well as training and support for micro enterprises, will break down violent structures that exclude certain social groups and ensure the sustainability of the reintegration program." (UN, 2006, p.7)

Economic reintegration can only be successful if the reintegration support provides or encourages viable forms of economic activity and is socially productive. All interventions must be sustainable to ensure that ex-combatants do not turn to violence to earn a living (UN, 2006). The UN (2006) illustrates the importance of ongoing labour market analyses and indicates that an early assessment of the opportunities and services available to former combatants is vital during the design and planning of reintegration programs. This analysis needs to be updated regularly and should include "culturally appropriate

professions for men and women of varying age-groups, recognizing how conflict may have changed cultural norms about gender-appropriate work” (UN, 2006, p 27). The labour market analysis should be shared with national authorities, local and international non-governmental organisations as well as UN agencies involved in the reintegration process.

In terms of economic reintegration, education, training and skills development needs to be seen as a tool for reintegration to take place. Five of the six participants in this study have not had the opportunity to complete their basic education and are now placed at a disadvantage in terms of employment opportunities. Adult literacy classes, adult education, and technical and vocational training are important in terms of providing skills to adults and former combatants (UN, 2006). Employment creation in the public sector, in existing businesses as well as micro-enterprise and small business start-ups should also be considered as options for economic reintegration.

Limitations

The first limitation that should be noted is that the sample of the study was only representative of the ANC-aligned Self-Defence members in the East Rand. Therefore this research provides challenges and perspective from the SDU members and do not include challenges and perspectives from the IFP-aligned Self Protection members.

The second limitation relates to the language in which the interviews were conducted and the languages spoken by the participants. All of the participants were able to understand the questions directed to them but it is evident from the findings that they were not able to fully express themselves in English. It would have been beneficial to the research to make use of an interpreter during the interview process in order to enrich the data obtained.

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APPENDICES

Appendix: 1

DSM-IV-TR criteria for PTSD

A. The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following have been present:

1. The person has experienced, witnessed, or been confronted with an event or events that involve actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of oneself or others.
2. The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. Note: in children, it may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behaviour.

B. The traumatic event is persistently re-experienced in at least one of the following ways:

1. Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts, or perceptions. Note: in young children, repetitive play may occur in which themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed.
2. Recurrent distressing dreams of the event. Note: in children, there may be frightening dreams without recognizable content
3. Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur upon awakening or when intoxicated). Note: in children, trauma-specific re-enactment may occur.
4. Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.
5. Physiologic reactivity upon exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (not present before the trauma), as indicated by at least three of the following:

1. Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma
2. Efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma
3. Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma
4. Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities
5. Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others
6. Restricted range of affect (e.g., unable to have loving feelings)
7. Sense of foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage, children, or a normal life span)

D. Persistent symptoms of increasing arousal (not present before the trauma), indicated by at least two of the following:

1. Difficulty falling or staying asleep
2. Irritability or outbursts of anger
3. Difficulty concentrating
4. Hyper-vigilance
5. Exaggerated startle response

E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in B, C, and D) is more than one month.

F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

Specify if: **Acute:** if duration of symptoms is less than three months

Chronic: if duration of symptoms is three months or more

Specify if: **Without delay onset:** onset of symptoms at least six months after the stressor

Appendix 2: Information Sheet (Organisation)



My name is Sasha Naidoo, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Masters degree in Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My area of focus is on the exploration of meanings that former combatants from South Africa have created for themselves in a post democratic society. It is important to understand the impact that the new democracy has had on the ways in which former combatants have reshaped their lives and identities. The research aims at exploring challenges that former combatants have faced and in light of this hopes to raise awareness of the importance of well-informed demobilisation and reintegration processes. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

It is my understanding that your organisation is involved in many projects concerning former combatants and your assistance in informing my sample would be appreciated.

Participation in this research will entail the completion of a semi-structured in-depth interview which would be conducted by the researcher at time and place that is convenient for you. The types of questions that the interview consists of focus on your role as a former combatant; the psychological impact that the trauma of violence has had on your life; the types of interventions that you have received in order to counter any psychological effects; the challenges and needs of the former combatant in 2006 as well as your perception on how these needs can be met.

The length of the interview will take approximately one hour. Interviews will be recorded in order to ensure accuracy and participation is voluntary. All of responses will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify respondents will be included in the

research report. The interview material will only be seen and heard by my supervisor and myself. Respondents are also free to withdraw from the study at any point if they are feeling uncomfortable.

This research will contribute to the body of knowledge relating to the experiences of the ex-combatants who have been part of the conflict in South Africa during apartheid.

Kind Regards

Sasha Naidoo (Researcher)

Malose Langa (Supervisor)

Appendix 3: Information Sheet (Participant)



My name is Sasha Naidoo, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Masters degree at the University of the Witwatersrand. My area of focus is on the exploration of meanings that former combatants from South Africa have created for themselves post democracy. It is important to understand the impact that the new democracy has had on the meanings that former combatants create in their lives now that they no longer participate in any political conflict. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

Participation in this research will entail the completion of a semi-structured in-depth interview which would be conducted by the researcher at time and place that is convenient for you. The types of questions that the interview consists of focus on your role as a former combatant; the psychological impact that the trauma of violence has had on your life; the types of interventions that you have received in order to counter any psychological effects; the challenges and needs of the former combatant in 2006 as well as your perception on how these needs can be met.

The length of the interview will take approximately one hour. With your permission this interview will be recorded in order to ensure accuracy. Participation is voluntary. All of your responses will be kept confidential, and no information that could identify you would be included in the research report. The interview material will only be seen and heard by my supervisor and myself. You may choose not to answer any questions you feel uncomfortable answering and you may withdraw from the study at any point.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute to the body of knowledge relating to the experiences of the ex-combatants who have been part of the conflict in South Africa during apartheid.

Kind Regards

Sasha Naidoo (Researcher)

Malose Langa (Supervisor)

Appendix 4: Consent Form (Interview)



CONSENT FORM (Interview)

This study involves an exploration of the meanings that former combatants in South Africa have created in the new democratic South Africa. One of the risks of participating in the study is that the participant might experience difficulties whilst participating in the interview process. If there is a need to provide further counselling to alleviate these effects arrangements will be made to provide this service to the participants.

This study will be beneficial to you in the sense that it will allow you to reflect on your experiences as a combatant and the ways in which this has impacted on the meanings that you have created in your life at present.

I _____ consent to being interviewed by Sasha Naidoo for her study on the exploration of the meanings that former combatants create post democracy.

I understand that:

- Participation in this interview is voluntary.
- That I may refuse to answer any questions I would prefer not to.
- I may withdraw from the study at any time.
- No information that may identify me will be included in the research report, and my responses will remain confidential.

Signed _____

Appendix 5: Consent Form (Recording)



CONSENT FORM (Recording)

The researcher requires the use of a device in order to collect the data from the interviews that are going to be conducted. The information collected on the audiotapes will only be accessed by the researcher and the research supervisor. The information will be transcribed and audiotapes will then be destroyed.

You are free to participate in the study and object to the use of a recorder. If you do agree to the use of a recorder, you may at any point object to the use of the device. All information on the audiotapes is strictly confidential and no names or identifying information will be revealed.

I _____ consent to the use of a recorder during the interview with Sasha Naidoo for her study on the exploration of the meanings that former combatants create post democracy.

I understand that:

- The tapes and transcripts will not be seen or heard by any other person other than the researcher and the research supervisor.
- All tape recordings will be destroyed after the research is complete.
- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report.

Signed: _____

Appendix 6: Interview Schedule

1. When were the Self Defence Units (SDU) formed and why?
2. Can you please tell me about your involvement in the activities of the SDU's?
What role did you play?
3. How did the war affect you psychologically?
4. How did the war affect other community members?
5. How did you deal with the trauma of violence in the area?
6. Did you receive trauma counselling?
7. Where are the former SDU members today?
8. What are the challenges or problems facing the former SDU members?
9. What are the current needs that ex-SDU members have?
10. How can these needs be addressed?

Appendix 7: Figure: DDR + R (Ball & van de Goor, 2006, p 2)



