

**THE EXPERIENCE OF HOMECOMING FOR U.K. ARMY RESERVISTS,
FOLLOWING PROLONGED MILITARY MOBILISATION: A MIXED
METHODS IPA & Q SORT STUDY**

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Abstract

Background. There is a move towards increased use of Reservists for all aspects of U.K. military operations. The dominant research focus looks for the link between increased military service and negative outcomes and has suggested that Reservists are especially prone to problems of adjustment on homecoming. Research in to the effects of homecoming on Reservists was found to be a neglected topic in the literature.

Research question. The aim of this research was to explore how members of the United Kingdom Army Reserve experience returning to civilian life (homecoming), following a period of prolonged military mobilization.

Method. A mixed methods approach was utilized. Firstly, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was conducted on six Reservists, in order to understand their personal experiences of homecoming. Q Methodology was then selected for the second phase, using the IPA themes as the primary source for the Q Set. A Q Sort was conducted with 20 Reservists, in order to deliver the shared subjective viewpoints pertaining to homecoming.

Results. Six themes emerged from the IPA phase, describing homecoming in terms of; activities, adjustment, culture, emotions, reflection and values. The Q Sort phase distilled the six themes into four homecoming factors: reflection on personal growth; adjustment, not stress; sense making and personal circumstances.

Conclusions. The experience of participating on military operations was generally found to be developmental, supporting the concept of post-traumatic growth. Minimal adjustment issues were reported on homecoming relating to experiences on operations. However, some participants reported partners and close family members could be adversely affected. Also, any homecoming issues were more as a consequence of other pre-existing factors.

Keywords

Reservists, Army, Armed Forces, military, mobilization, deployment, operations, adjustment, reintegration, stress, post-traumatic stress, resilience, post-traumatic growth, social identity, family, phenomenology, IPA, Q methodology, Q Sort.

Disclosure

At the time of conducting this study, the author was a serving member of the U.K. Army Reserve, researching independently and self-financing.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother, Doris Fairweather, who passed away during this study.

1. Introduction and Literature Review

This study explored United Kingdom (U.K.) Army Reservists' experiences of homecoming, following a period of prolonged military mobilised service. To introduce this study, the following chapter has been divided into four sections:

- 1.1. Defining U.K. Army Reservists and homecoming.
- 1.2. Importance of the U.K. Army Reserve and homecoming.
- 1.3. Key research on U.K. Army Reservists and homecoming.
- 1.4. Reasons for this research and the main study aim.

1.1. Defining U.K. Army Reservists and homecoming

1.1.1. Who are U.K. Army Reservists?

Reservists are part-time members of the Armed Forces, who can be called up for military service as required. U.K. Reserve Forces consist of at least six elements: (a) Royal Naval Reserve, (b) Royal Marine Reserve, (c) Royal Air Force Reserve, (d) Regular Reserve (former members of the Regular Forces, who have a reserve liability for a number of year); (e) the Medical Reserve, and (f) the Army Reserve (formally known as the Territorial Army). The Reserve Forces are subject to change, dependant on the needs of the U.K. Ministry of Defence (MOD), such as the newly formed Cyber Reserve (MOD, 2016a). This study concentrates on the largest element of the Reserve Forces; members of the Army Reserve (MOD, 2016b).

Reservists and Regulars can be viewed as different segments of the same military workforce, but with different terms of service and their own organizational dynamics. U.K. Reservists are on part-time contracts to the MOD, there to threaten to, or apply force on behalf of Her Majesty's Government (MOD, 2010a). Under the Reserve Forces Act 1996, there is no legal difference between a mobilized Reservist and a Regular soldier, sailor or airman, once the Reservist has been *called up* for operations. The procedure for being called up is termed *mobilization* (MOD, 2015a). Once mobilized, he¹ becomes a Regular member of the Armed Forces until the end of their mobilization contract. A contract can be for up to a year and if required, extended with consent of the

¹ When gender is specified, the masculine pronoun he is used for three reasons: (a) to avoid the he/she distraction; (b) all the participants studied in this research were male; and (c) at the time of writing, males in the U.K. military outnumber females 10 to 1 (Dempsey, 2017).

Reservist. The Defence Reform Act 2014 has clarified that Reservists can be mobilized for all the same military tasks as their Regular counterparts.

Since the end of *National Service*², all members of the U.K. Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve are volunteers. They join the military as a job or profession voluntarily, signing any one of a number of contracts of employment for a set period. Currently, the standard contract length for a Regular is a minimum of 4, up to 12 years, with potential extensions up to 30 years, based on the current needs and limitations set by the MOD. In contrast to Regulars, Reservists sign a contract for an initial engagement of 12 years, after which they are offered rolling re-engagements every 4 years. Reservist soldiers can serve up to the same age limits as Regulars; namely a maximum of 55 years for *enlisted* personnel and 60 years for *officers*³ respectively. A major difference is that Reservists can in effect resign at any time, without providing the one-year notice period a Regular has to offer. A Reservist would be expected to train with their unit a minimum of 27 days per year; many choose to do much more. Legally a Reservist can work as a soldier up to 207 days per year. Any more than this would require the individual to sign a different full-time employment contract, which usually lasts for 1 year at a time. In return for this commitment, Reservists receive the same rates of pay and pension as their Regulars peers pro-rata. They also receive 1 extra days pay per 10 days worked, in lieu of paid leave and are eligible for a raft of benefits and an annual training bonus (MOD, 2016c). Importantly, when mobilized for military service on operations, a Reservist is entitled to make a claim for an award to cover any shortfall between their military pay and what they would have been paid, if they had stayed in their civilian employment. This Reservist's Award is now generally capped at

² In recent U.K. history, conscription, or mass mobilization has existed for three periods. The first started 1916 during the First World War (WW1) and lasted to 1920. The second and third, or National Service started 1939 with the Second World War (WW2) and lasted to 1962, with a short break 1945 to 1948.

³ U.K. Army rank structure <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/our-people/ranks/>

£30,000 (MOD, 2016d). Of fundamental importance, under the Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985, and the Defence Reform Act 2014, Reservists receive employment protection should they be dismissed from their civilian employment as a consequence of their military service, in the form of an automatic claim for unfair dismissal at an Employment Tribunal.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, when involved in conflict, the U.K. Armed Forces have mainly participated in “wars of choice” (Milevski, 2011). During such conflict, the Regular is generally considered the archetypal soldier (Griffith, 2011a). However, Griffith argues that when western Armed Forces participate in major conflict involving a fight for existential survival (e.g. WW1 and WW2), the Reservist becomes the archetype. Reservists are a part-time sub-group within the military workforce. They are also analogous to members of a “gig” economy in the civilian workforce (Wilson, 2017), choosing to serve when they want. During the recent current phase of high intensity military operations, Reservists find themselves working in an organization run predominantly for and by Regulars. This leads to differing and often contradictory motivations than those of their Regular counterparts (Edmunds, Dawes, Higate, Jenkins & Woodward, 2016). In this context, Reservists are unique and require study because they are of more importance to the security of the nation than the current period of wars-of-choice would suggest (Ben-Dor et al., 2008; Dandeker, 1994; Fernandez, 2001).

1.1.2. What is homecoming?

For some researchers, homecoming can be defined as a period of time, when a person serving in the Armed Forces transitions from having an operational mind-set, back to a

non-operational or civilian way of experiencing their environment (Faulkner & McGaw, 1977). Some have considered this period to be only the weeks immediately post-deployment (MacManus et al., 2012). In contrast, Balgarnie (2008a) considers homecoming to be a period anything from a few days to a few months. Sherman, Larsen and Borden (2015), argued that homecoming should not be purely measured in terms of time. They examined a large cross section of research on homecoming and found differences in how soldiers experienced this period and concluded that it was better to view homecoming in terms of six domains: (a) mental health, (b) social/role functioning, (c) relationship/family life, (d) spirituality, (e) physical health, and (f) financial well-being. Each of these domains will have to be negotiated in order for the homecoming reintegration to be completely successful, with some domains taking more time than others to resolve, if ever. With all these different domains, there is no agreed definition of homecoming.

Homecoming could consist of a number of milestones, perhaps marked by observable events, both official and unofficial: (a) formal parades, where soldiers are awarded their service medals and possibly gallantry awards; (b) civic marches through their local town streets; (c) formal military dinners and presentations, with or without partners and family; (d) informal parties organised with friends and family; down to (e) the first meeting between a soldier and his partner, children and inner social circle (MOD, 2010b). This would be followed by a period of settling in and getting used to everyday living back at home, socially and at work. The returning soldier may experience unpleasant memories, which he may find difficult to talk about, or may not want to share even with his family and close friends (MOD, 2011). For the Regular soldier, normal work back in the U.K. is with those same work colleagues who he has just spent his operational tour with. For the Reservist, work and everyday life is now back with

colleagues and a social circle who have not shared in and probably have no concept of the life the Reservist has lived for the past 6 months or more (MOD, 2010b). Eventually, most soldiers would report the homecoming period was over and they were back to normal; but if questioned, they might find it difficult to say exactly when and what event if any signified this transition (Faulkner & McGraw, 1977).

Differing opinions and varying understanding of what homecoming has demonstrated the need for research of the phenomenon. Talking to the Reservists and understanding their experiences better could achieve this. Although subjective in nature, such information could help clarify theoretical speculations on what homecoming is, how it affects Reservists, as well as suggest improvements in homecoming policy and practice.

1.2. Importance of the U.K. Army Reserve and homecoming

1.2.1. Why is the U.K. Army Reserve important?

The Army Reserve is important because it is an integral part of the U.K.'s. strategic national defence (MOD, 2012; U.K. Committee of Public Accounts, 2007; U.K. Defence Committee, 2003; U.K. Government, 2010, 2015). Additionally, the Reserve Forces play a vital role in binding the professional establishment of the Regular Forces in the fabric of society, thereby ensuring continued support for the institutions of the military (Dandeker, Greenberg & Orme, 2011; Griffith, 2011a, Kostro, 2014; Summers, 1995). In contrast, there has been on-going criticism of the recent growth in the number of Reservists; while at the same time the number of Regulars has been reduced (BBC, 2014; Lusher, 2017). It has been argued that increased use of Reservists is not as cost effective as the MOD suggests in terms of providing a strategic reserve, especially when the cost to the wider economy of losing civilian workers to military service is factored in (Alcock, Greenhalgh, Taylor & Murphy 2015). Alongside the reduction in the scale of military operations post WW2, there has been a steady decline in the overall number of U.K. Armed Forces, with the relative proportion of Reservists declining to a greater extent (Summers, 2011).

Since 1989, this trend in the fall on reliance on U.K. Reservists in proportion to Regulars has been reversed for two main reasons; one financial and the other capability based. Firstly, U.K. Regular Forces were at times surprised to find the relatively high proportion of Reservists used by western armies they considered comparable (United States, Canada and Australia) in the coalition wars since 1990 (George et al., 2003). The reliance on Reserve Forces in the United States (U.S.) has grown to such an extent that

approximately 40% of their forces eventually deployed in the Iraq War (2003-2011)⁴ were Reservists (Walsh, 2015). The MOD has worked towards matching these proportions, because Reservists are considered a cost effective way to maintain a force of trained manpower, ready to deploy at short notice and therefore of strategic importance in a world where the need for military interventions usually come at short notice and as surprises (MOD, 2015b). Secondly, George et al., (2003) also pointed out that the MOD assumes Reserve Forces will bring extra knowledge, skills and abilities to operations, which are hard for the Regular military to maintain in peacetime. It is now planned that by 2025 the U.K. will rely on a *Joint Force*, where the Army will consist of somewhere between 70,000 and 82,000 Regulars (U.K. Government, 2018) and up to 35,000 Reservists (U.K. Government, 2015). Reservists' experiences need to be analysed in order to improve recruitment and retention policies and procedures. Without more in depth understanding of the different circumstances and motivations of Reservists, it will be harder for the U.K. Government to meet and sustain their strategic manning levels (Andrews, 2006).

1.2.2. Why is homecoming important?

A large-scale analysis of six conflicts identified 10 post-combat syndromes that typified the conflicts (Jones et al., 2002). Their conclusion was that symptoms had not changed, but rather the way they had been reported by *Veterans*⁵ and interpreted by the medical profession had changed. Homecoming for the MOD is a formal process designed to *decompress* personnel, who have been in theatre and prepare them for life back at home. It is also supposed to be used as a screen to diagnose and report mental health problems

⁴ Iraq War (2003-11) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_War

⁵ Veteran is the term given to a member of the Armed Forces, Regular or Reserve, who has retired from military active duty (Savitsky, Illingworth & DuLaney, 2009).

(Hacker Hughes et al., 2008). However, the evidence that screening works is scant (Fertout et al. 2011). On homecoming, the MOD is most concerned with the potential that exposure to combat may lead to dangerous behaviour back in the U.K. (Trevillion et al., 2015). This fear has manifested itself in modern culture of the “Rambo” persona; prepared to turn to violence in order to resolve issues he has with everyday normal life and society in general (Morag, 2006).

The MOD appreciates that following an extended period of operational service overseas, Armed Forces personnel require a period of time to reintegrate in to their non-operational everyday environment. After completion of an operational tour, it is not considered unusual for all soldiers to experience something that has been called “homecoming let-down” or “post tour blues“ (MOD, 2011, p. 67). This could be described in terms such as; (a) feeling generally depressed, having low motivation or drive; (b) not being able to communicate with those who have not shared in the operational tour; and (c) being bored with everyday mundane routine, and wanting to make changes to one’s life, potentially leading to seeking out risky activities, in order to make up for the let-down of homecoming (Thandi et al., 2015). The military ascribes this to a difference between the soldier’s expectations and the reality of how life is back home. It is argued that tensions may arise at home, leading to negative behaviours, which may occur because the mind-set of the service person is out of sync with the mind-set of family and broader community left behind (MOD, 2010b, 2011). In the U.K. military deployment per se was not associated with increased rates of relationship breakdown (de Burgh, White, Fear & Iversen, 2011). However, for those that did experience negative relationship changes on homecoming, these experiences were not directly related to events experienced on operations. Rather, the biggest influences came

from pre-existing problems such as substance abuse issues and common mental disorders (Goodwin et al, 2014).

1.2.2.1. Mental health related outcomes of homecoming.

A key research finding in the U.K. is the role of alcohol in homecoming (Kings Centre for Military Health Research⁶ [KCMHR], 2010). Drinking is part of the social fabric of British military life and has become part of its culture (Jones & Fear, 2011). Jones & Fear noted that alcohol has often been credited with positive effects in terms of assisting with group bonding and helping soldiers cope with the aftermath of combat. However, patterns of behaviour associate with the military drinking culture persist for service personnel, once they have left the Armed Forces permanently and are seen as one cause why some former soldiers, or Veterans⁷ find it hard to transition to civilian life (Hatch et al., 2013). As part of the agenda for culture change throughout the civil service (Page, Pearson, Panchamia, Thomas & Traficante, 2014), the MOD have recently come to appreciate the scale of the problem and have introduced a number of initiatives to bring about a decline in the drinking culture and thereby hope to improve overall soldier well-being (Chorley, 2014).

Increased violence has also been associated with post-deployment mental health problems and alcohol misuse (Rona et al., 2015). The KCMHR (2010) group have reported that experiences of combat and trauma are significantly associated with violent behaviour following homecoming. This finding was found in 10 other studies, as part of a systematic review of 11 electronic databases (Trevillion et al., 2015). Some

⁶ KCMHR <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/kcmhr/index.aspx>

⁷ Veterans are considered to include all former members of the Regular Forces and Reservists who have served on operational tours.

researchers suggest that the main cause of violence on homecoming will be unresolved personal issues before deployment, which will not have gone away and may resurface and become the cause of confrontation, arguments and potentially violence (Rona et al., 2009). While other researchers have concluded that the increased violence stems from antisocial behaviour, whose roots stem in the past life of service personnel, before they joined the military and other socio-demographic variables, as much as from any personal experiences of military combat and the perception of risk of death while on deployment (MacManus et al., 2012).

The most used research term in the psychological literature relating to combat and its effect on soldiers is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (McNally, 2004). Research following the Vietnam War⁸ proliferated the idea that participating in a war will often cause psychological trauma. Since then PTSD has become the dominant paradigm in the conceptualization of psychological trauma (Scott, 1990, 1993) and the finding, preventing, or treating of PTSD have become the main focuses of research in to the issues associated with soldier's homecoming (Jones & Wessely, 2007). More recent research suggests that three decades after the traumatic event, many treatment-seeking U.S. Vietnam War Veterans continue to exhibit chronic symptoms of PTSD (Holowka, Marx, Kaloupek & Keane, 2012), which through duty-of-care, the U.S. Department of Defence (DOD) is responsible for. Similarly, the MOD is concerned that soldiers may bring back from the theatre of operations, symptoms of stress that were related to their operational tour, which may lead to PTSD and go on to manifest in negative behaviours, including potentially uncontrolled violence and reduced well-being (Jones, 2011). Other researchers have attempted to reveal different aspects of homecoming, including: (a) measuring the extent of mental health issues in the general military population (Wells et

⁸ Vietnam War 1955 to 1975 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_War

al., 2011), (b) PTSD in the Veteran community in particular (Hoge et al., 2008), and (c) research in to new approaches to diagnose and treat PTSD (Kozaric-Kovacic & Pivac, 2007). Larger longitudinal studies have begun to uncouple this research focus and have reported that PTSD may not be as prevalent as early reports suggest (Goodwin et al., 2014). This may be partly due to confounding combat related PTSD with other causes for the signs and symptoms reported, such as more common mental disorders.

Some researchers now believe the most prevalent mental health issues soldiers have are not PTSD, but Common Mental Disorders (CMDs) in the form of alcohol abuse and neurotic disorders (Iversen et al., 2009). Goodwin et al. (2015) conducted research for the MOD and concluded that factors that contribute to the prevalence of CMDs include childhood adversity and lower social class, which are inherent in the U.K. Armed Forces recruitment base (Andrews et al., 2006). They suggest that U.K. Armed Forces personnel screen for CMDs at approximately double the rate than those screened from the general population. This research concluded that generally, military personnel who presented mental health symptoms were considered some combination of being psychologically vulnerable to the normal stresses of operational life, being temperamentally less suited to military service, or having a pre-existing history of mental illness (Goodwin et al., 2015). When comparing U.K. with the U.S., it was found that U.S. military personnel had higher rates of CMDs (KCMHR, 2010). This report also concluded that U.K. military forces were on average older, of higher rank, contained fewer Reservists, had more experience of previous tours, shorter deployments⁹ and their tours entailed less risk than for U.S. Forces. These and other differences have since become the focus of some ongoing KCMHR studies.

⁹ 6 months in theatre for U.K. troops, compared to 12 months for U.S. troops.

Despite the prevalence of CMDs, long term large scale studies suggest that the actual scale of post traumatic harm is generally less than that measured in the general non military population (KCMHR, 2010; Goodwin, 2015), even for those soldiers who have had direct experience of combat (Sundin, 2010). Furthermore, much of the mental health issues found in military populations, can be traced back to issues prior to soldiers experiences of the military (Browne et al., 2007), or relating to other factors not associated directly with military service (Hatch, 2013). These findings have led some researchers to look for reasons why the recorded rate of psychological harm is relatively low (Gould, Greenberg & Hetherton, 2007). The KCMHR researchers, unable to find the large number of PTSD cases they were expecting following recent military operations (Macmanus, 2014), have looked at the role of stigma as a cause for the assumed under-reporting of mental health issues (Fertout, Jones, Keeling & Greenberg, 2015; Iversen et al., 2011; Sharp, 2015). Other researchers have taken a different approach altogether and looked for explanations using a completely different paradigm (Aslam, 2015); namely the potential positive outcomes of experiencing trauma (Tedeschi, Park & Calhoun, 1998).

1.2.2.2. Functional outcomes of positive homecoming experiences.

Wessely (2004) has argued that in researching the negative affects of traumatic events, there may be a tendency to forget that being upset is not necessary a mental health problem, but rather a normal reaction to the event, which should be embraced and supported with strong social support networks, in order to make sense of the event. He warns that care must be taken to avoid shifting from the language of courage, resilience and well-earned pride of the survivor, into a “culture of trauma” (Wessely, 2005, p. 461) using the language of victimhood. This line of thinking has lead some U.K.

researchers to look for evidence to support the hypothesis that participating in conflict may not necessarily be as deleterious to psychological well-being as had been previously thought (Hacker Hughes et al., 2005).

Tedeschi and Calhoun (1995) have argued that some individuals struggling with traumatic events have reported subjective positive psychological change. They termed this phenomenon Post Traumatic Growth (PTG). Some researchers theorize this is a coping style, while others think of PTG as an outcome of coping with traumatic stress (Jeanne, Schafer & Moos, 1998). Zoellner & Maercker (2006) suggest PTG can be both a coping style and coping outcome. In order to develop the theory, researchers have argued that survivors of traumatic events who experience positive affects may be benefiting from significant changes in cognitive and emotional life (Powell, Rosner, Butolo, Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2003). Gallaway, Millikan and Bell (2011) reported that participating on operations, including direct experience of combat, had the potential to lead to personal growth. They suggested the important factor was that the more soldiers attributed meaning to their combat experiences, the better psychological adjustment they would have post-deployment. Specifically, *finding meaning in life* has been found to be associated with higher scores on positive changes, while unresolved *searching for meaning in life* has been associated with more negative changes (Linley & Joseph, 2011). PTG has also been linked to other areas of study including; resilience, hardiness, sense of coherence, stress inoculation and toughening; and that the ability to grow from traumatic experiences has been described as:

... truly transformative. Furthermore, it may be useful to see posttraumatic growth (PTG) as the antithesis of posttraumatic stress disorder, emphasizing that growth outcomes are reported even in the aftermath of the most traumatic

circumstances, and even though distress coexists with the growth. (Tedeschi, Park & Calhoun, 1998, p. 3)

Some have considered the focus from negative to positive affect associated with trauma a psychological paradigm shift (Aslam, 2015; Jones & Wessely, 2007). The move away from pathology towards positive subjective experience, more correctly sits within the field of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The concept of hardiness has been a goal of military training in the form of developing hardiness in soldiers, in order to provide them with resistance to combat stressors (Bartone, 1999; Dolan & Adler, 2006). Jennings, Aldwin, Levenson, Spiro & Mroczek (2006) reported on Veterans who had been exposed to combat and perceived that this exposure had led to greater wisdom in later life. While Iversen & Greenberg (2009) found evidence in the U.S. dating back to WW2 that for most people, military service had a positive effect on their life trajectory. One argument put forward to explain why the mental well-being of soldiers could improve during an operational deployment has been based on the strong bonds formed by men sharing the same dangers (Glass, 1974). This theory has received some support during different conflicts including the Vietnam War (Wessely & Jones, 2004) and the Iraq War (Hacker Hughes et al., 2005). Jones (2006a) came to the conclusion that these and any new post-combat syndromes should be viewed as an understandable pattern of normal responses to the stresses of war. Other research suggests that soldiers' experiences are socially constructed (Berger & Luckman, 1967) around ideas including: (a) motivation and courage (Wessely, 2006), (b) what is the morally correct thing for a man to do in the face of danger (Moran, 1945), (c) that war does not necessarily lead to negative reactions on homecoming (Wessely, 2004), and (d) have gone as far to suggest that direct exposure to combat can be a pleasurable experience (Jones, 2006b).

Bolton, Litz, Glenn, Orsillo and Roemer (2002) studied the restorative benefits to military personnel returning from operations, when family, community and society in general, positively participated in the soldiers' transition home. In contrast, Johnson et al. (1997) found that homecoming stress was the most significant factor in predicting current clinical mental health issues in treatment-seekers superseding combat exposure, childhood and civilian traumas and stressful life events. Such contrasting findings demonstrate that homecoming as a phenomena is important, because how service personnel experience homecoming, can effect the outcome of their long-term healthy reintegration back in to society (Harvey et al., 2011; Rutherford et al., 2013; Sherman, Larsen & Borden, 2015).

1.3 Key research on U.K. Army Reservists homecoming

1.3.1. Research on mental health issues.

The process of homecoming is important for the MOD because under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, it has a statutory duty of care towards all their service personnel (MOD 2015c). The MOD understands its duty of care towards Reservists' mental health, stem from the fact that military service may expose individuals to the stressors of operations; in particular combat (Fear, Sundin & Wessely, 2013). The worry being mitigated is that following completion of any period of active service, Reservists could be released back in to the civilian community from which they came with mental health issues caused by their military service. These issues could have negative knock on effects on the Reservists': (a) quality of life, (b) personal relationships, (c) their local community, and (d) work environment (Dandeker et al., 2011). This duty of care is now applied before, during and importantly for this study, after military operations, during homecoming and beyond, as Reservists transition back to normal civilian life (Kennedy, Whybrow, Jones, Sharpley & Greenberg, 2016).

Research into the health and well-being of Reservists is predominantly based on U.S. Forces (Browne et al., 2007; Iversen & Greenberg, 2009). The preeminent source of research into the U.K. Reserve Forces is the KCMHR (2010) programme. The first research to be published from this source that mentioned Reservists as distinct from Regulars was based on a large-scale (n=10,272) questionnaire, conducted on the cohort of personnel who served in Iraq in 2003 (Hotopf et al., 2006). This study had two key findings: (a) that Regulars who deployed on operations, had similar rates of mental and physical illness to the control group of soldiers that had not deployed, and (b) for most

of the five selected health outcomes used, there was a significant interaction between deployment and Reservist status. In other words, the effect of deployment was different and worse for Reservists compared to Regulars. These researchers suggested the reasons why Reservists might be effected more than Regulars, might include stressors: (a) related to civilian life left behind, (b) joining unfamiliar Regular units as individual augmentees, (c) not being properly trained for the role, and (d) potentially being exposed to wide public questioning of the war on their return. However, being exposed to combat and traumatic events was not considered a cause of the difference. It was the Hotopf et al., (2006) findings that set off a chain of research to try and understand the experience of Reservists, including the author's study.

The explanations for the differences reported between U.K. Regular and Reserve Forces started from the premise that the Hotopf et al. (2006) study results were accurate and conclusions drawn correct. Browne et al., (2007) were also part of the KCMHR programme and used the same participants and measures to consider whether a number of factors could account for the differences already reported by Hotopf et al. (2006). Browne concluded that for all outcomes, except PTSD symptoms, differences in: (a) demographic variables, (b) the perception of potentially traumatic exposure, and (c) unit cohesion, accounted for the differences in Reservists. They could not conclude why PTSD symptoms differed, but suggested that PTSD might have affected the experience of homecoming, or the environment on homecoming might have prolonged PTSD symptoms. Browne et al. (2007) used the concerns about the health of Reservists raised in the media as part justification for their research. Ironically, it was the publication of the previous research (Hotopf et al., 2006) that led to these media reports.

Iversen and Greenberg (2009) interpreted the results of the Hotopf et al. (2006) and Browne et al. (2007) studies. They put considerable importance on the compulsory mobilization of Reservists. They assumed being forced to go on operations was a major cause of stress. What these researchers were either not aware of, or failed to consider, was that the compulsory nature of the mobilization was only technical. Reservists were usually first asked whether they wanted to be mobilized. If they said yes, then they were “compulsorily” mobilized in order to afford them legal rights under the Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985. Iversen and Greenberg (2009) also assumed that Reservists were less exposed to combat and this may have been the cause of their reported higher levels of self-perceived risk to life. This assumption ignored the nature of how modern western military forces operate. Very few soldiers, Regular or Reserve, are actually in *Combat* roles. The majority are either in *Combat Support*, or *Combat Service Support* roles (MOD, 2010a). Most fighting during the research period occurred during a relatively short period of the invasion of Iraq (19 March – 30 April 2003) and was conducted using modern long-range weaponry. Once the nature of fighting had switched from general warfare during the invasion phase to counter-insurgency warfare, then anyone, in whatever role, could be called upon to fight, or be exposed to traumatic events.

Iversen and Greenberg (2009) had two conclusions that seem less contentious, namely: (a) Reservists were immediately dispersed on return to the U.K. and thus lost the military support networks they had developed and that can be very beneficial during homecoming adjustment (Westwood, McLean, Cave, Borgen & Slakov, 2010), and (b) Reservists returned to a wider civilian society that began to lose support for the war in Iraq (Edmunds, Dawes, Higate, Jenkins & Woodward, 2016). These conclusions speak more to the social context within which Reservist homecoming adjustment needs to

be understood. Despite the criticism of the KCMHR conclusions, their influence on policy has been considerable. The differences reported above quickly lead to organizational changes in the way Reservists were deployed and their homecoming experiences managed. The changes in policy and procedure have probably gone some of the way to resolving any initial differences found between Reservists and Regulars, without necessarily understanding the fundamental causes of the differences at that time (Dandeker et al., 2009).

1.3.2. Organizational factors.

The main government policy bringing about structural changes in the U.K. Armed Forces in recent times is the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) 2010 (U.K. Government, 2010). Since the end of the Cold War, with the subsequent planned decline in the number of Armed Forces including Reserves, the emerging theme has been that of making the Reserve Forces more useable and relevant to meet the changing character of military operations (MOD, 2012, 2013). This has formalised the new reliance on Reservists in defence. The SDSR was precipitated by the financial crisis of 2008 and the requirement to make all the Armed Forces more efficient; or deliver more effect for less expense (Chappell, 2010). The effects of these changes have begun to surface in the research. Large-scale U.K. studies initially designed to look in to the psychological affects of military operations on the well-being of Reservists, have begun to draw some conclusions based on more organisational factors (Dandeker et al., 2011). They argued that changes in the structure and role of the U.K. Reserve Forces have affected the way Reservists experience military operations and homecoming. In particular, the requirement for full formal integration with Regular Forces has lead to

better experiences both on operations and on homecoming and this has been as a consequence of making the Reserves more relevant and useable (Dandeker et al., 2009).

Research suggests that how well an operational tour is managed and led has a direct affect on homecoming (Jones et al., 2012). Jones reported that increased frequency of exposure to combat correlates with a small but significant increase in reported PTSD, but a much bigger inverse correlation on PTSD and all CMDs stems from greater levels of perceived leadership, high morale and stronger unit cohesion. A comprehensive review of the twentieth-century theories on combat motivation and breakdown revealed that the stronger the social bonds and group cohesion between soldiers, the more they were able to resist the stressors of warfare (Wessely, 2006). MacCoun (as cited in Wessely, 2006, p. 28) nuanced this theory by arguing that there is evidence to support a positive correlation between the groups' values and beliefs about the war being aligned with those of the military organisation and the state they are fighting for and the group's ability to resist the stressors of combat. Such ideas have influenced and are central to the application of leadership as taught in the U.K. military academy Sandhurst (Laurence, 2011). In summary, a soldier in a well-bonded and well-lead unit, with a clear sense of purpose, where the soldier believes in that purpose, reports better mental health on homecoming, whatever the level of combat stressors.

There is evidence that Reservists have no issue with being mobilized, when the threat to the U.K. is considered existential (French, 2001; Simkins, 2014). With the increased use of Reserves in "wars of choice" (Dandeker, et al., 2011, p. 348), citizens are now more likely to consider the consequences to their civilian lives, before committing to becoming Reservists and once Reservists, are going to be selective about the conflicts they mobilize for, based as much on moral grounds as anything else (Edmunds et al.,

2016). The U.K. Government had gone some way to address the reluctance of citizens to become Reservists, when there is no perceived existential threat to national survival, with the introduction of the Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985. This extrinsic approach to motivation has enshrined the right of Reservists to return to their civilian employment following their return from operations, setting up the policies and procedures to enable reclaiming their jobs and made it possible to claim compensation at Employment Tribunal, if the Reservist was not given back their job or discriminated against at work. What the U.K. Government has not necessarily always been able to manage is to account for Reservists' intrinsic motivators, such as ensuring the population's support for their decisions to enter in to conflict (Hiebert, 2003).

The area of employment is perhaps one of the clearest distinctions between Reservists and their Regular counterparts (Ashcroft, 2005; Iversen, Nikolaou et al., 2005; Robertson, 2013; Routon, 2014). Despite the legislative umbrella of the Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985 and the Defence Reform Act 2014, which attempt to protect the employment rights of Reservists, there is evidence that Reservists' military commitments to train, as well as to participate on operations, do not always go down well with their civilian employers and can lead to forms of discrimination (Alcock et al., 2015). They also report that employers remain unconvinced as to the benefits and viability of employing Reservists, especially for some types of business, where extended absence can be seen as detrimental. This finding is perhaps surprising in a society where since 1999 the concept of Statutory Maternal Leave as enshrined in the Maternity and Parental Leave, etc. Regulations 1999, entitles approximately half the country's workforce to take up to 52 weeks leave, each time they become pregnant (Kanner, 2007).

Harvey et al., (2011) found the main issues that cause homecoming anxiety for Reservists include: (a) the prospect of returning to civilian work and being disadvantaged at the workplace because of being away; (b) returning to no civilian work and the associated potential loss of earnings; and (c) the potential loss of close personal relationships built up with military comrades while on the operational tour. The U.S. Armed Forces have tried to foster both external belief in the value and professionalism of Reservists and internal self-belief in Reservists, in order to attract better quality recruits and engender greater support amongst the community from which they come (Griffith, 2009). Griffith also reported that having this strong congruent social identity is thought to have psychological benefits, in that it develops unit cohesion on operations and sense of purpose that has beneficial effects on how being away and homecoming are experienced. Specifically, the fostering of a *warrior ethos identity*, or *citizen-soldier* (Vest, 2013) is thought to contribute to developing resistance to the stressors of operations and homecoming (Griffith, 2011).

There is evidence in the U.S. for an inverse correlation between post deployment adjustment and financial well-being (Elbogen, Johnson, Wagner, Newton & Beckham, 2012). They reported that Veterans lacking money needed to meet basic needs were more likely to: (a) be arrested, (b) be homeless, (c) misuse alcohol and drugs, (d) demonstrate suicidal behaviour, or (e) engage in aggression. Conversely, Humensky, Jordan, Stroupe & Hynes (2013) reported those new Veterans in the current era with jobs, seem to be doing better than their non-veteran cohort. Routon (2014) suggested these results stemmed partly from recent improvements in the U.S. education and support systems and the greater up-take of the GI Bill¹⁰, which affords Veterans access to guaranteed and free further education (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016).

¹⁰ GI Bill U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

The same relationships between finance and Reservists well-being have been reported in the U.K., but not studied in as great detail (Browne, 2007).

In response to the key government funded research findings (KCMHR, 2010), the MOD has developed comprehensive policies to improve the experience of Reservists, including on mobilisation (MOD, 2015c) and during homecoming (MOD, 2010b).

Through this, Reservists have gained access to a number of services and benefits, including: (a) access to Defence Medical Services specialists; (b) inclusion in the formal military process of decompression, which prepares them for returning home; and (c) support from specialist agencies such as Combat Stress¹¹. The MOD has integrated the Reserves in to the occupational health provision offered to all Regular Forces (Fertout et al., 2011). Similarly, most western Armed Forces have, or are developing Post-Operational Stress Management (POSM) policies, which mandate that soldiers have to pass through a number of stages on homecoming before they can return to normal duties of a Regular soldier, or be released from Reserve mobilised service to become civilians. The U.K. follows the same three-stage POSM approach that consists of: (a) primary, (b) secondary and (c) tertiary prevention strategies (Fertout et al., 2011):

1. Primary prevention interventions fall in to two main types; decompression and psycho-educational interventions. Both interventions are activities aimed at preventing potentially negative behavioural consequences (Fertout et al., 2011). For the U.K. Armed Forces, during the most recent campaign in Afghanistan, decompression equated to 36 hours at a purpose built camp in Cyprus, before returning home and is treated as part of the operational tour, not an extension to it. At decompression, the Community Mental Health Nurse (CMHN) would

¹¹ Combat Stress <https://www.combatstress.org.uk>

deliver educational material on mental health matters and deal with any immediate mental health issues brought to their attention. The unit Padre also provided informal support. It is argued that this formal decompression can only serve a useful function if it is targeted appropriately, based on tour length, adequate funding and logistics. However, if unstructured and imposed without purpose, it could negatively affect morale (Hacker Hughes et al., 2008). Psycho-educational activities aimed to cover useful topics such as deployment stress, depression, PTSD, alcohol use, relationships and coping strategies, all designed to improve the experience of homecoming (Mulligan, Fear, Jones, Wessely & Greenberg, 2011).

2. Secondary prevention relates to post-deployment mental health screening (Fertout et al., 2011). The U.K. uses a short period of about four to five days in order to conduct normalisation activities, during which screening is supposed to take place. In the U.K. the distinct separation between primary and secondary prevention strategies have blurred, partly because of the lack of evidence to support the efficacy of screening (Rona, Hooper, French, Jones & Wessely, 2006). Another reason for the blurring in strategies is that if soldiers recognise symptoms in themselves, there are thought to be barriers to support seeking such as the stigma associated with mental illness (Iversen et al., 2011). More recently evidence is gathering that campaigns to reduce stigma towards mental health issues are beginning to work in the U.K. Armed Forces, leading to more take up of mental health support (Osorio, Jones, Fertout & Greenberg, 2013).
3. Tertiary prevention consists of three elements: (a) the treatment of established mental health problems, (b) the prevention of stigma and (c) the reduction in

barriers to care (Fertout et al., 2011). Treatment of mental health issues is conducted through the existing internal medical support systems of the U.K. Armed Forces, with referral on to the Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMH) within the National Health Service (NHS) (U.K. Army, 2016). Pinder (2010) points out that the majority of medical care for former service personnel in the U.K. has always been and continues to be met by the NHS. The NHS provision is supplemented by other organisations including charities such as Combat Stress, which also operates to provide specialist services (Dent-Brown et al., 2010). The other barriers to care include: (a) not knowing where to find help, (b) career concerns, (c) confidentiality, and (d) the desire not to relive traumatic experiences (Iversen et al., 2011).

Dandeker et al., (2009) have concluded that Reservists still find the transition from military to civilian life difficult and that alternating between the two environments often results in them feeling unsupported, misunderstood and poorly integrated. Dandeker et al. (2009) admit there were specific limitations in their work, which could account for the lack of evidence to support that policy changes were working. The largest of these was that data collection ended by 2009, which had probably not given enough time to allow for any policy changes to occur. They go on to suggest that the reasons why Reservists were leaving the U.K. Armed Forces had changed from being “unaccepted and underutilized”, to “poor military family welfare support” (Dandeker et al., 2009, p. 1). In other words, at the time of these studies, the U.K. Armed Forces policies seem to have successfully managed the internal changes of integration of Reservists on operations, but not yet managed to deal with the external issues around family related welfare needs.

Once Reservists have participated on a military operation, they become members of another group within the military. Like former members of the Regulars Forces, they become Veterans. The way Veterans are treated by the rest of society has a fundamental role in how homecoming is experienced. In seeking to understand the psychiatric lessons of the Vietnam War for Veteran's mental health, Wessely and Jones (2004) concluded that other factors: (a) organisational, (b) social, (c) economic, (d) military, and (e) political, mediate the psychology link between Veterans exposure to combat experiences and the onset of PTSD and other mental health problems. It is generally accepted that social resources play an important role in mitigating the onset of mental health issues (Haslam, Jetten, Postmes and Haslam, 2009). This finding has been repeated for Veterans entering the civilian community (Dent-Brown et al., 2010; Harvey et al., 2011; Hatch et al.; 2013). It has also been found to carry across internationally, including the U.S. (Demers, 2011; Johnson et al., 1997; Rutherford et al., 2013), Canada (Ray & Heaslip, 2011; Westwood, Mclean, Cave, Borgen & Slakov, 2010) and Israel (Horesh, Solomon, & Ein-Dor, 2013).

We are in an era of unprecedented research in to the effects of war on soldiers (KCMHR, 2010). Despite this the amount of research on U.K. Reservists is still very limited and predominantly by one institution. However, the influence of the KCMHR has been considerable and lead to changes in military mental health policy (Pinder, Fear, Wessely, Reid and Greenberg, 2010). They stated that following a 2005 review undertaken by the MOD, recommendations made have contributed to a comprehensive community-centric framework for mental health service delivery in the U.K. Armed Forces. These changes are said to follow best civilian practice, but are designed for use in, by and for the military. As U.K. Reserves transition to being fully integrated in to the rest of the Armed Forces (MOD, 2013), they are at a crossroads both militarily and in

terms of policies designed to alleviate issues unearthed by previous research. Much of the research presented here has demonstrated the issues and problems that can be associated with operational service, homecoming and adjustment back in to civilian life. With some notable exceptions (Dandeker et al., 2009; Harvey et al., 2012) relatively little evidence has so far been gathered to examine the efficacy of these changes. This suggests areas for specific future research. However, it must be remembered that in terms of absolute numbers, the evidence for negative effects of operations on Reservists leading to negative homecoming experiences remains relatively small (Hunt, Wessely, Jones, Rona & Greenberg, 2014; MacManus, Jones, Wessely, Fear, Jones & Greenberg, 2014).

1.4. Reasons for this research and the main study aim

1.4.1. Issues and gaps in the existing research.

The majority of published research in to the military in general and Reservists in particular is based on the U.S. military. This can be assumed when one considers the scale of the U.S. Armed Forces in comparison to other western militaries and their proportionately high reliance on Reserves (Gilliam, 2011), aligned to the general hegemony of U.S. based academic research (Altbach, 2007; Altbach & Knight, 2007). One notable exception is the relevant KCMHR research. Most research on the effects of military operations on soldiers has been conducted on groups of Regular Forces, which may or may not include data relating to Reservists and any inclusion of Reservist data may not always be made explicit (KCMHR, 2010). Given the integral role that Reservists now have in western military forces (Griffith, 2011c), this suggests that with the dominance of past research being U.S. and on Regular Forces, future research should redress this imbalance and focus more on Reservists. Diehle and Greenberg (2015) calculated that between 1991 and 2014 the total number of U.K. Reservists who served the Armed Forces was 253,406, with the number of Veteran Reservists for the same period being 226,136. Also they estimate that at least 28,149¹² of these have deployed on operations. These figures add weight to the argument for more work to fill the gaps in the existing research for moral, legal and financial reasons.

Like any public sector organization, the MOD operates under intense scrutiny via a vibrant free press (Cobain, 2018). As part of the requirement to do and be seen to do the right thing, legislation has mandated that the MOD have a duty of care towards all its

¹² Excluding figures for years 1991 to 1995 and the year 2006.

personnel (U.K. Defence Committee, 2016). Research in to the homecoming of Reservists is necessary for this duty to be exercised properly in line with modern day custom and practice. Policies and procedures based on evidence have to be developed and refined, in order to reasonably mitigate possible causes of negative outcomes, related both directly to operational service and also to the individual circumstances of each Reservist on homecoming (Brooks & Greenberg, 2017).

There have been considerable advances in the psychological support available for U.K. Armed Forces during the most recent phase of operations (Pinder et al., 2010). Initially research in to recent conflicts reported that Reservists were more likely to suffer mental health problems compared to their Regular counterparts (Browne et al., 2007). These findings were reported in the press and used for the political purpose of arguing against cuts to military expenditure on Regular Forces (BBC, 2014; Farmer, 2013; Lusher, 2017). Further research unpacked these findings and uncovered that the reasons for the difference were based more than anything on the different way Reservists were prepared for operations, organised in theatre and treated on homecoming. Policies and procedures were put in place to deal with these organizational issues, which it has been suggested have begun to show positive outcomes (Harvey et al., 2012). The initial findings were from research, which treated all Armed Forces personnel as a single homogenous group, with the same circumstances (Hotopf et al., 2006). Not until specific research was conducted on Reservists were some of the nuances revealed, which could then be separated out for policy development (Browne et al., 2007). With the growth in the reliance on Reserve Forces, more specific research needs to be conducted on Reservists as distinct subset of the Armed Forces, in order to get to better understandings, without the sidetracking of political agendas and inefficiencies of implementing policies that are not based on the best possible evidence.

Dandeker et al. (2009) argue one common weakness found in research data is that it is drawn from reports in to mental health problems and therefore is likely to have a bias towards negative perceptions and experiences. Accepting the medico-clinical paradigm, it is not unsurprising that the majority of recent research in to the military and the effects of war on homecoming have focused predominantly on searching for the clinical signs and symptoms of traumatic mental ill health (Jones, 2006a, 2011; Jones & Wessely, 2005, 2007). The majority of this war based traumatology shares the theory that participation in war, or any event which causes fear and stress, has the potential to lead to psychological trauma, which needs to be prevented, as well as treated (Figley, 2002). Wessely summarizes this when he states:

...contemporary psychological or psychiatric literature sees adversity as having inevitable and deleterious consequences, magnified in the setting of industrialized warfare and the modern industrial state. Breakdown in battle is a predictable consequence of overwhelming fear and anxiety, which because of either psychological conditioning and/or neurobiological changes (psychiatry continuing to be split between its brainless and mindless schools of thought), may become fixed as a chronic anxiety disorder that we currently label PTSD. (Wessely, 2006, p. 285)

The main assumption implied in this body of work is that going to war is more stressful than other areas of the soldier's life and that to varying degrees, this stress may be carried back home. This collective body of work is generally aimed at providing soldiers with coping mechanisms in order to deal with work-based stress (Castro, Hoge & Cox, 2006). In this case the work happens to be that of a soldier returning from

combat and therefore should be considered as much part of organizational psychology, as it is of clinical psychology.

The case for more research in to PTG is clear (Duan, Guo & Gan, 2015; Gallaway, Millikan & Bell, 2011; Linley & Joseph, 2011; Ramos & Leal, 2013). It supports the paradigm shift towards positive psychology (Aslam, 2015; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and is a counter-balance to the enormous weight of research in to PTSD. More specifically, there are good reasons to examine the relationship between PTG, Reservists and homecoming. It could simply be that PTG is far more prevalent than negative affect when returning from military operations (Tsai, El-Gabalawy, Sledge, Southwick & Pietrzak, 2015), but this has not been looked for during empirical research projects. Potentially it may be possible to use the positive mind-set necessary for PTG to exist as a framework for the development of therapeutic tools (Linley & Joseph, 2004), or even to develop the much sought after mental hardiness (Jones, Fear, Wessely, Thandi & Greenberg, 2018) through the application of PTG techniques (Nguyen, 2018).

Any military organization based in a modern western pluralist democracy requires the support of the general populace to exist (Forster, 2012). On homecoming, the support of family, friends and community in general is critical to mitigating the potential negative mental health issues associated with combat (Adler, Britt, Castro, McGurk & Bliese, 2011; Greden et al 2010) and normal transitioning back in to civilian life (Demers 2011; Rutherford, 2013). Researchers have suggested that although the prevailing attitudes in the society from which the soldiers come are key to how soldiers transition back in to society, more “qualitative assessment of key experiences” are required in order to

understand the importance of various components of the homecoming reception (Bolton et al., 2002, p. 249).

It is argued that the main issue now seems to be bringing all the different strands of research together in to one coherent strategy, based on evidence of efficacy (Murrison, 2010). Murrison has developed a list of recommendations for government that attempt to bring the different strands together, but at present, these have not been fully implemented and research is therefore required. Any new research in to Reservists' experiences of homecoming would de facto report on more current experiences and should provide evidence of efficacy needed in order to inform policy development and implementation.

1.4.2. Main study aim.

The main aim of this study is to report on how U.K. Army Reservists experience homecoming, following a prolonged period of mobilized service. Considering the research presented so far, it is relevant to note that Greenberg (2015) states that high-quality social support on homecoming is one of the key factors, which contributes to prevention and recovery of mental health issues. However, when it comes to support from outside the Armed Forces provided to soldiers, the lack of understanding by non-military of military culture, both in the general public and with professionals specifically there to provide help, might lessen the effectiveness of any support offered (Demers, 2011).

Shaw and Hector (2010) argued that clinicians without a military background, or at least a better understanding of military culture, are at a distinct disadvantage and that the use

of a phenomenological research methodology aids in developing this level of understanding (Aho, 2008). There is evidence that soldiers tell different stories to each other from the ones they tell researchers (Young, 1995)¹³. A conclusion that may be drawn from Shaw & Hector (2010) is that the use of an active member of the Army Reserve, who has shared the experiences of the research subjects, should provide a different and useful perspective. Dandeker et al., (2009) research in to retention in the U.K. Reserve Forces, showed how the results from small-scale qualitative research could be interpreted and made far more powerful, when combined in a mixed methods approach. The value of small scale mixed methods research in to Armed Forces has been found to also generalise across different nations (Wheeler & Torres Stone, 2010). With the growing reliance on Reserve Forces, an increased understanding of the Reservists' perspectives in the construction and execution of research, should lead on to better policy formulation and implementation, increases in recruitment and retention, as well as overall increased well-being.

¹³ The author had been a member of the U.K. Territorial Army and Army Reserve since 1985 to the time of writing this thesis.

2. Methodology

This chapter details the research methodology used, the philosophical grounding and how it guided data collection, analysis and the development of theory and is divided into five sections:

- 2.1. Discussion of author's epistemological position.
- 2.2. Discussion of mixed methods.
- 2.3. Identification of the appropriate research design.
- 2.4. Study plan.

2.1. Discussion of author's epistemological position

Willig (2001, p. 8) stated “not all research methods are compatible with all methodologies” and that a researcher's epistemological and methodological commitments may constrain which methods can be used. Steup (2016, p. 1) stated that, “defined narrowly, epistemology is the study of knowledge and justified belief. ... Understood more broadly, epistemology is about issues having to do with the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry”. Bryman (1984, p. 76) identified methodology to refer to an epistemological position and method or “technique” to refer to ways of gathering data. Methodology can then be seen as a discourse about the adequacy and appropriateness of a particular combination of research principles and procedures.

Bryman (1984) argued that in general, psychologists and therefore psychology has been split into two methodological camps: (a) quantitative, or (b) qualitative. These two camps can be traced back to the philosophy of thinkers such as Locke, Hume and Mills on the one side and Spinoza, Kant and Nietzsche on the other (Gergen, 1985, p. 269). For psychology, this discourse is rooted in two scientific traditions: (a) experimental efforts to verify (positivism) and its modern development of efforts to falsify (postpositivism) a priori hypotheses and report findings in terms of quantification (Guba & Lincoln, 1994); and (b) descriptive and hermeneutic methods of research credited in large part to Dilthey ([1894] 1977), aimed at understanding the totality of any given psychological phenomena (Todd, Nerlich, McKeown & Clarke, 2004, pp. 25-28). It has often been argued that those in the quantitative camp consider using qualitative techniques unscientific and those in the qualitative camp consider quantitative techniques provide little real understanding (Willig, 2001, p. 10). Quantitative

psychology is accused by the other side of being nomothetic¹⁴. It is argued this process reduces human existence down to constituent elements, which on their own have little intrinsic value and provide little real understanding. In other words this de-humanizes psychology (Stephenson, as cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p12). Simplistically stated, the debate has been whether one methodology is better than another (Todd, Nerlich, McKeown & Clarke, 2004).

Using the positivist-phenomenological divide as a framework, there were at least three distinct methodological questions the author had to ask in order to work out his epistemological position towards his research question (Morgan, 2007, p. 71): (a) whether inductive reasoning was preferable to deductive reasoning, (b) whether he should accept subjectivity verses whether he could and should strive for objectivity, and (c) whether contextual knowledge is of more value than generalizable knowledge.

2.1.1. Inductive vs. deductive decision.

The literature review demonstrated that of the few studies that specifically included research in to Reservist's homecoming, they nearly all followed what has been referred as the quantitative research tradition (Browne et al., 2007; Dandeker et al., 2009; Edmunds et al, 2016; Harvey et al, 2011, 2012; Hotopf et al., 2006; Kennedy et al., 2016). These studies had two main methodological approaches: (a) either, they relied heavily on survey questionnaires in order to maintain "objectivity, replicability and causality" (Bryman, 1984, p. 77), or (b) they used statistics gathered from secondary sources in order to discuss important policy implications. Todd, Nerlich, McKeown and

¹⁴ Nomothetic is based on Kant's (1724-1804) notion of the effort to derive laws that explain types or categories of objective phenomena, in general.

Clarke (2004) argued that since the 1960s, a growing proportion of psychologists, especially those studying social phenomena, had become dissatisfied with the product of purely quantitative methods and the hypothetico-deductivism espoused by Popper (Musgrave, 2011). The author found himself joining the camp of dissatisfied psychologists, because of his difficulty in relating to the Reservists being described. His personal experience and anecdotally that of the Reservists he knew, seemed to be more complicated, deeper and richer than that described.

Only one study in to U.K. Reservists used a mixed-methods design and included interviews, with the one question relating to intention to remain in the Armed Forces, following an operational tour (Dandeker et al., 2009). In particular, the author was dissatisfied with both the quantity of research on U.K. Reservists and the conclusions drawn; which were having an effect on policy, through the dominate influence of the KCMHR programme. Therefore the author began the process of exploring different ways to unpack the experience of homecoming, in order to provide greater depth and richer detail to this social phenomenon and provide a different perspective on the developing received wisdom around Reservists. Clearly this was a rejection of purely deductive reasoning, in favour of looking for a more inductive approach. With that in mind, it is important to note that methodologies that are more inductive aim at providing good grounds for their conclusions, not absolute validity and are best evaluated in terms of the degree of probability of their conclusions (Audi, 2005, p. 166-7).

2.1.2. Subjective vs. objective decision.

The main body of research in to Reservists homecoming stems from a tradition based in the dominant medico-clinical model and is looking for evidence to support the theory

that participating in military operations is likely to increase the potential for psychological harm (Jones, Hyams & Wessely, 2003; Jones & Wessely, 2007; Wessely, 2006). KCMHR sponsored research has spent considerable time and resources looking for psychological trauma in Reserve Forces on homecoming (Harvey et al. 2012). The overall conclusion from all this research was that Reservists suffer less PTSD than can be found in the general public, even after direct exposure to combat (Goodwin et al. 2014). The same group of researchers have gone on to look for reasons why they cannot find the expected signs and symptoms of trauma, by considering the role stigma plays in hiding them (Jones, Keeling, Thandi & Greenberg, 2015). Willig (2001, p. 5) described two phenomena associated with any dominant group, that could explain why researchers continue along one line, when the evidence for that research is not forthcoming: (a) that the close community of scientists in this domain test their own theories in a circular fashion, making it “difficult, if not impossible” for the outsider or novice to contribute to knowledge generation; and (b) scientists who are attached to a theory, do not necessarily reject it if the evidence does not support the theory, but rather assume the research has gone wrong in some way.

In order to understand the phenomenon why researchers might be blinkered in comprehending the phenomenon they are researching, developments in philosophy of social constructionism (Burr, 1995) and studies in linguistics (Chomsky, 1975) have lead to the concept that scientists create knowledge as much as discover it knowledge. The way that scientific philosophy has dealt with social constructionism is hermeneutic, in that scientists’ observations are relative to the observer and open to interpretation (Dilthey, 1977). Ratner (2002) points out that subjectivity enters all research, in the form the choice of topic, formulation of hypotheses, selection of methodologies and interpretation of data. He goes on to argue that despite this, subjectivity can enable a

researcher to accurately comprehend the world, as it exists in itself. The process of reflection on what impedes objective comprehension is the key to overcoming any bias brought about by subjectivity. The key procedure to do this is “a qualitative hermeneutic interpretation of life expressions” (Ranter, 2002, p. 3). The author supported the concept that all knowledge has a subjectivity and was happy to use research techniques based on phenomenological hermeneutics (Aho, 2008) that have generally been accepted to counter the lack of objectivism critique (Popper, ([1959] 2002).

2.1.3. Contextual vs generalizable decision.

Demers (2011) argued that the effectiveness of any support offered by professionals or the general public to the military, might be lessened due to their lack of understanding of military culture. It is important therefore for researchers to understand or appreciate the context in which homecoming exists. Heidegger ([1977] 2011) argued that any person always exists within a context, being part of a meaningful world; his *Dasein*, or being there. Humans can only be understood in context and vice versa, the world can only be understood as a function of our involvement with it. Dreyfuss (as cited in Larkin, Watt & Clifton, 2006, pp.106-7) captures Heidegger’s complex ontological position in the statement “what is real is not dependent on us, but the exact meaning and nature of reality is” and described Heidegger as a minimal hermeneutic realist. By definition, Heidegger’s context is the historical, social and cultural factors missing from positivist research, where conclusions gathered from research in to all soldiers is generalised and applied to Army Reservists.

In summary, the author concluded that as a starting point for this study: (a) a methodology that relied on inductive reasoning would provide something additional to

all the previous research that had relied on more deductive reasoning; (b) that the phenomenon under investigation was not only a subjective experience of U.K. Army Reservists, but the interpretative process used by the author would also be a subjective process, mediated by the application of hermeneutics, in order to give it meaning; and (c) that an understanding of context was essential to enable any conclusions drawn to become practical recommendations. In order to justify what methodology would then be most appropriate for any subsequent phase of this research, it is next appropriate to discuss the decision to use mixed methods.

2.2. Discussion of mixed methods

2.2.1. Defining mixed methods.

The rationale for mixing both kinds of data quantitative and qualitative within one study, is grounded in the concept that neither approach on its own is sufficient to capture the trends and detail the situation (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). The discourse in mixing methods is the extent to which using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is simply about how methods are used, or more deeply, raises issues about the nature of the research methodology supporting each method (Morgan, 2007). It is commonplace in published research to see method and methodology as synonyms for each other (Vann and Cole, 2004, p. 152). Multi-methodological research could mean anything from mixing different methods, to using different methodological approaches. Equally, mixed methods research can be as simple as using a number of methods to collect data, which may be either quantitative or qualitative, but not necessarily one of each.

Heidegger united the concepts of hermeneutics with phenomenology (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009. pp. 16-18). Heidegger's contribution enabled the methodological debate to broaden to epistemological questions over positivism and phenomenology (Danziger, 1990). Danziger states the focus for positivist research has been an attempt to find overarching, universal laws to social behaviour. Phenomenology, by contrast, emphasis is on empirically making accurate descriptions of social reality in terms of the experience of the persons involved, regardless of whether they fit a grand theory or explanation. This divide has often been broadened such that: (a) research based in the positivist tradition emphasizes a deductive, objective, generalising approach; (b) while

phenomenological methodology emphasizes an inductive, subjective, contextual approach (Todd, Nerlich & McKeown, 2004). These two approaches have tended to lend themselves to favour either quantitative or qualitative methods, respectively (Bryman, 1984). Despite the debate between quantitative and qualitative methods, there has been a long and distinct tradition in social sciences for research strategies that use multiple methods (Campbell & Fiske, 1959), which Webb, Campbell, Schwartz & Sechrest (1966) extended to become clearly defined as a measurement and construct validation technique in its own right.

Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007, p. 119-121) have listed nineteen different definitions of mixed methods research that range from pure quantitative to pure qualitative on a continuum. They conclude by defining mixed methods research as “an intellectual and practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007, p. 129). Todd, Nerlich & McKeown (2004) argue that as long as methods have different strengths and weaknesses and compliment each other, researching the same topic using two methods will provide a more accurate picture of the topic. Bryman (1984) has criticized this justification for mixed methods on social constructionist grounds, arguing that if there is no one view of the topic, then using mixed methods only creates different competing views. It would be logical to argue that in some respects all research on any phenomenon is mixed. This is because it would be rare if not impossible, to find any researcher starting with a completely blank piece of paper, with no prior knowledge or opinion on the subject matter. It is argued that most research projects start, or have some element where the researcher reviews the literature and current research paradigm and builds their research question and design based on this review of previous methodologies, methods and results (Morgan, 2007). Morgan went on to state that practically, when researchers actually design research,

collect or analyse data, they work abductively, moving back and forth between theory and data and it is in this process that starts the process of triangulation (Morgan, 2007, p. 70-71).

2.2.2. Centrality of triangulation.

Denzin (1978, p. 291) simply defines triangulation as the “combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” and outlined four types of triangulation: (a) data, (b) investigator, (c) theory, and (d) methodological. He also distinguished between *within-methods* triangulation, referring to multiple quantitative or qualitative approaches, and *between-methods* triangulation, involving the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches and argued that within-methods had limited value, as it relied upon only one paradigm. Denzin went on to argue that between-method triangulation was recommended for mixed methods research, as any inherent bias in data, investigators, or method would be cancelled out. He also argued that the three outcomes of triangulation could be: (a) convergence, (b) inconsistency, and (c) contradiction and whatever outcome prevailed, the researcher would be able to construct a superior explanation of the observed phenomena (Denzin, 1978). Jick (1979) stated that mixed methods research has been variously labelled “convergent methodology”, “convergent validation”, and “triangulation” (p. 602). These various notions share the concept that quantitative and qualitative methods should be viewed as complimentary, rather than rivals, as the strengths in one method could be used to overcome the weaknesses in another (Jick, 1979). Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) went further and argued that alongside the existing quantitative and qualitative research traditions, mixed methods research is in the process of becoming a new third methodology, or major research paradigm.

2.2.3. Pragmatic methodology.

Despite the obvious advantage of triangulation, it has been suggested that those who advocate for it have failed to indicate in sufficient detail how triangulation should be achieved, through detailed description of mixed methods data collection and interpretation (Jick, 1979, p. 602). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) have responded to this challenge by presenting a framework for designing and conducting mixed methods research and suggesting pragmatism as the philosophical partner that overcomes many of the criticisms directed at mixed methods. Morgan (2007) goes on to explain the methodological implications for research of adopting pragmatism, using Kuhn's ([1962] 2012) concept of *paradigm shifts* as the mechanism by which advances in scientific knowledge are as much revolutionary, as they are evolutionary. Morgan argued that there are four versions of paradigms as: (a) worldview, (b) epistemological stances, (c) shared beliefs in a particular research field, and (d) model examples how to conduct research. He goes on to argue that the renewal in the interest and use of qualitative research from 1980 through to 2000 was as a result of actions of dedicated advocates of qualitative methodology, who were dissatisfied with the failed predictions of the existing first, or positivist paradigm (Morgan, 2007, pp. 51-57).

In order to advance the use and status of qualitative research goals, an alternative or second paradigm based on the philosophy of knowledge has emerged, applying the three concepts of: (a) ontology, (b) epistemology, and (c) methodology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) in order to provide a form of scientific validity. Morgan (2007, p. 57) termed this shift to qualitative methodology as mainstream as a second, or *metaphysical paradigm*. He argued the top down primacy of the three concepts has been the cause of

the quantitative / qualitative divide, which in turn has necessitated the debate in to the legitimacy of using mixed methods. However, Morgan (2007, p. 60-66) also argued that in turn, the methodological paradigm has become exhausted, as three anomalies have begun to surface: (a) how to define paradigms; (b) whether those paradigms were incommensurate, or able to share data, or understand each other across paradigm boundaries; and (c) the extent to which metaphysical assumptions guide social sciences

Morgan (2007, p. 69) argued that the third, or pragmatic paradigm places methodology at the centre; in contrast to the metaphysical paradigm, which places epistemology at the centre; or the positivist paradigm, which places method at the centre. Morgan uses the three key issues in social science research methodology of: (a) connection to theory and data, (b) relationship to research process, and (c) inference from data, to demonstrate the difference between the three paradigms discussed. Firstly, the pragmatic paradigm is connected to theory and data through *abductive reasoning*, moving back and forth between and quantitative deduction and qualitative induction. Secondly, the quantitative objective and qualitative subjective dichotomy between the researcher and the research process are considered artificial. These are replaced with *intersubjectivity*, which overcomes the metaphysical paradigm's issues based around incommensurability. Therefore it is argued that there is no problem with asserting both that there is a "real world" and that individuals have their own interpretation of that reality. Thirdly, the distinction between quantitative generalizability and qualitative context-dependency are rejected. In their place, the important question that must be considered is the extent to which learning from one specific setting can be applied in other circumstances (Morgan, 2007, p. 72).

Morgan (2007) argues that the pragmatic methodological paradigm alleviates the problems associated with the multi-methodologies and moves the debate towards the technical questions about combining methods and (Yvonne Feilzer, 2009). This study design uses a framework, aligned to inductive reasoning, phenomenology and contextualism. The author was motivated to conduct this research in order to provide future researchers with a broader perspective about the effects of operations on UK Reservists and how these affect homecoming. Hence a pragmatic approach seemed to offer more in the way it could connect data to theory, enable the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods together and be applied in other circumstances involving Reservists. To conclude, Dewey (as cited by Yardely & Bishop, 2008, p. 355) stated that knowledge should be seen as intrinsically linked to intentions and actions, and takes meaning from the evaluation of effects. This argument is congruent with the pragmatic methodology and is therefore used as the justification why a mixed methods study should be evaluated by the extent to which it is found to be persuasive and useful.

2.3. Identification of the appropriate research design

2.3.1. Methodological design.

In the search for choosing the appropriate way to study the research question, the author took the stance towards applying methodology to research; not as “research-methods-as-recipes”, but rather “research-process-as-adventure” (Willig, 2001, p. 2). Building on that, it is argued that when putting together a mixed methods design, three methodological considerations have to be considered: (a) priority, (b) implementation, and (c) integration (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006, p. 4).

2.3.1.1. Priority.

Priority refers to which approach, quantitative or qualitative, the researcher gives more weight or attention too throughout data-collection and analysis and is the first step in triangulation (Morse, 1991). The aim of this research was to explore a social phenomenon from the subjective experience of the participants; to understand what it is like to experience the particular condition of homecoming for Army Reservists and how they make sense of it. It was therefore not concerned with cause-effect relationships, but rather with meaning. There were no variables decided by the author before the research process began, rather the participants were required to attribute the points of interest. This is important because preconceived variables would lead to the imposition of the author’s meanings and interfere with identification of the participants’ own ways of making sense of homecoming. One motivation behind the research question was partly to act as a balance to the predominately quantitative nature of the research already carried out in this field. The research question wanted to look at the social

world of the Army Reservists through their eyes, which is more appropriate for qualitative methodology (Bryman, 1984). Therefore the author chose to prioritise the qualitative aspects of the study.

2.3.1.2. *Implementation.*

Implementation refers to whether the quantitative or qualitative data collection and analysis are conducted concurrently, or sequentially. A sequential design was selected for three inter-related reasons. Firstly, a mixed method design was selected because the author wanted to benefit from the strengths associated from the pragmatic methodology (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 18). Secondly, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 20) also argue that only sequential research design is truly a “mixed-method” and concurrent design they term “mixed-model”. They provided an eight step model for the design of mixed methods research which was followed in this study: (1) determining the research question, (2) determining whether mixed design is appropriate, (3) selecting either a mixed method or mixed model research design, (4) collecting data, (5) analysing data, (6) interpreting data, (7) legitimating data, and (8) drawing conclusions (if warranted) and writing the final report (p. 21). Thirdly, the nature of the research question being exploratory, meant that the first phase data had to be analysed in order to be able to create the tool to conduct the second phase.

2.3.1.3. *Integration.*

Integration refers to the stage or stages in the research process where the mixing, or integration of the two methods occurs (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005). This research was integrated at two stages: (a) at the intermediate stage, when

the results of the IPA phase of the study were used to inform and create the data collection step in the Q Sort phase; and (b) integration occurred when the results of both phases were discussed in the conclusion to the entire study.

2.3.2. Selecting Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

In selecting the most appropriate method for the first phase, that met the aim of this research, a number of different qualitative approaches were reviewed. Qualitative research methodologies in psychology share an empirical approach, which gathers data, analyses that data and draws conclusions (Willig & Stanton-Rogers, 2008). Qualitative methodologies have a number of different intellectual orientations, which have developed different methods in order to study that orientation, based on epistemological positions such as phenomenology and constructivism. Although there are many methods, there are primarily four main approaches: (a) grounded theory, (b) discourse analysis, (c) narrative analysis, and (d) phenomenology (Smith et al., 2009, p.43).

- Grounded theory uses data to develop theoretical explanations of phenomenon. The explanations are refined by successive rounds of data collection and analysis, which can lead to a high level conceptual account of the phenomena of interest (Charmaz & Kenwood, 2008). It was not selected for this study because the author thought the supporting body of research into the homecoming of Army Reservists was not yet developed enough for a high explanatory level of analysis.
- Discourse analysis is a general term for a number of approaches to analyse written, vocal, sign language or other communicative events (Smith et al., 2009).

The research interest can range from interaction to power, from a social constructionist epistemological position. This may appeal to researchers interested in how people make use of cultural resources and how language functions in specific contexts (Wiggins & Potter, 2008). Foucauldian discourse analysis explores the regulatory and constructive function of language and practices and can be useful if the research focus is a deconstructive critique of the topic (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). It was not selected, because the study was not aimed at uncovering the function of language in the homecoming of Army Reservists.

- Narrative Psychology might use an interview in a joint process, where the participant and the researcher share in the construction of meaning and the focus is on how narrative relates to sensemaking. Despite its roots in social constructionist and phenomenological perspectives, the researcher took Hiles & Cermak's (2008) position that this method was thought not as well rooted in a philosophical tradition, distinctive and as clearly set out as the method finally chosen.
- Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to the study of experience (Smith et al., 2009, p. 11). Some forms of phenomenology are more descriptive and others are more interpretive. Although there is no univocal definition of phenomenology, the philosophical strands associated with it have been characterised as; careful, unprejudiced exploration of human experience.

The research aimed at exploring and understanding the subjective lived experience U.K. Army Reservists on homecoming, focusing on personal meaning and sense-making in

the particular context of homecoming. IPA was selected as the approach to be used in the first study, because it is consistent with the epistemological position of the research question, being: (a) inductive, (b) subjective, and (c) contextual. The question has a number of facets including: (a) being open, not closed; (b) exploratory, not explanatory; and (c) does not impose a priori theoretical constructs upon the target phenomena. Smith et al. (2009) consider these facets are seen as key to selecting IPA as a particular phenomenological method. This is why IPA proved useful for this research.

2.3.2.1. Benefits and limitations of IPA.

The implication of social constructionism for IPA in particular is that it is not possible to remove ourselves, thoughts, or our meaning systems from the world in order to find out how the world really is. This position has been termed *active intellectual construction* (Larkin, Watts & Clinton et al., 2006, p. 107). IPA is concerned with understanding the person-in-context and exploring the person's relatedness to or involvement in the world. The epistemological position taken when using IPA is that we learn about particular persons-in-context and about how something has been understood. This approach has been termed *contextualist* (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 110). The theoretical framework produced gives voice to the insider's perspective, but through interpretation may transcend or exceed, the participants' own ability to conceptualize and express themselves.

IPA is said to be epistemologically flexible and can engage with other forms of knowledge (Larkin, et al., 2006). The epistemological position of IPA has developed from Husserl's assertion (as cited in Larkin, et al., 2006. p. 105) that the only certain or objective knowledge humans have, has to be obtained through the processes of

consciousness, or thinking about the phenomenon (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008). Heidegger's belief was that we only really think about the meaning of things around us, when we experience something out of the ordinary, or a problem occurs (as cited in Larkin et al., 2006, p. 106). The author took the position that military operations and homecoming are out of the ordinary phenomena from which we can learn. Practically, IPA required the author to describe and understand two related aspects of Reservists' account of homecoming: (a) the key objects of their concern during and about homecoming, and (b) the experiential claims Reservists' make about homecoming (Smith et al., 2009).

The benefits of IPA are based in the three philosophical elements that underpin it (Smith et al., 2009):

- Phenomenology benefits IPA by providing a systematic and attentive way to reflect on everyday lived experience, which can be either first order activity, or second order mental and affective responses to that activity – such as remembering, regretting and desiring (Smith et al., 2009, p. 33).
- Hermeneutics benefits IPA through the application of the central methodological tool of the hermeneutic circle. Hermeneutics uses the theory of interpretation (Gadamer, 2008). The principle of hermeneutics is that to understand any given part requires looking at the whole thing and to understand the whole, requires looking at the constituent parts. The hermeneutic circle is the process of repeated interpretation and checking, until the details of the events under review and their overall interpretation are fully harmonized. In this way the researcher attempts to deal with the charges of relativism and subjectivity inherent in phenomenology (Dilthey, [1894] 1977). Essentially, hermeneutics requires the

researcher to cultivate the ability to understand things from somebody else's point of view and to appreciate the cultural and social forces that may have influenced their outlook. This calls for the cultivation of reflexivity.

- Ideography benefits IPA in that it is concerned with the particular, both in terms of depth of analysis and in terms of understanding how a particular phenomenon has been understood from the perspective of a particular group, in a particular context. (Smith, et al. 2009, p. 29). In this study, the particular was the lived experience of the Reservists.

The limitations of IPA are based on a number of factors (Smith et al., 2009). Resources required to conduct the research are a practical issue that has to be met. It takes considerable time to collect and analyse the data (Larkin & Thompson, 2011, p. 101). Also the researcher has to possess, or cultivate personal skills and characteristics in order to get through the process (Smith, 2004, p. 51). It is estimated that it can take up to two months per interview for a full time researcher to go through all the steps of IPA method. Budgeting for and freeing up enough time is an issue that has to be managed. Additionally, in conducting this work, the IPA researcher has to cultivate underlying qualities of open-mindedness, flexibility, patience, empathy and the willingness to enter in to and respond to, the participant's world (Smith et al., 2009, p. 54-5).

Another issue with IPA is that it uses purposeful homogeneous sampling, which can be considered a negative aspect by other research designs (Smith et al., 2009, p. 49). In this research, all the participants came from the same military unit and had shared operational tours together. For IPA, making the group as uniform makes it possible to

examine in detail psychological variability within the group, by analysing the patterns of convergence and divergence.

In IPA, there is no right answer with regard to sample size (Smith et al., 2009, p. 51). Too large a sample and a researcher risks being overwhelmed by the amount of data generated. The primary concern should be on quality of data, not quantity of participants. Smith et al. (2009) advises that as a rough guide, a professional doctorate thesis of between four to ten interviews is about right. This study used the data from six participants. This is in line with other IPA studies published in peer-reviewed journals: (a) six participants (Lavie & Willig, 2005), (b) six participants (Messenger et al., 2012), and (c) eight participants (Murphy et al., 2014).

The ethical issues around asking participants to talk about issues that may be problematic for them, brings up the requirements of avoidance of harm and informed consent (Smith et al., 2009, p. 53-54). These were dealt with by providing the participants with prior explanation of the research question, both in direct conversation with the author and written form. Anonymity was assured through use of data that was held close by the author and only published in anonymized form. Safety issues were covered by providing clear avenues for participants to access psychological support and the right to withdraw at any time (Appendix C).

The aim of IPA is to understand the target phenomenon from the participant's perspective. One major issue with an IPA phase is the likely consequences of preconceptions. The researcher endeavoured to overcome this by following clear methodological guidelines (Smith et al., 2009, p. 42-3). At the research design phase, this was achieved through the use of discussions and pilot interviews with other

Reservists, who were not the final participants. During the data gathering stage, a reflexive frame of mind was cultivated, that coupled with the use of the interview schedule, enabling the participants to speak openly and expansively. During the analysis phase, the use of the hermeneutic circle as an underpinning philosophy minimised the researcher's subjective point of view. In general, the cultivation of a more open-minded view towards the phenomenon was aided by widening the researcher's knowledge on the subject, through literature review.

Other limitations in IPA are based around issues of gaining access to a homogeneous sample, gaining trust of the participants and committing to the whole process. The author, being a Reservist, had experienced the same phenomenon and was a trusted member of the participant group. From this insider's position he was able to deal with a number of issues associated with IPA method (Smith et al., 2009, p. 42). He was able to easily negotiate access to a homogeneous sample, for which the research question was meaningful. His personal relationships developed a level of trust with the participants, which enabled them to open up and speak more freely about the phenomenon. Finally, the researcher was committed to changing the wider community's understanding of Reservist's homecoming. This provided the required level of motivation needed to commit the time-consuming and labour-intensive resources that have been sited as a hindrance to good IPA and the requirement to care about the research phenomenon (Smith et al. 2009).

2.3.3. Selecting Q Methodology (Q Sort).

Q methodology was selected to build on the IPA study, in order to provide an analysis of the points of view of U.K. Reservists towards homecoming, by strengthening

conceptual categorization of themes interpreted from the IPA data. How the author arrived at Q methodology, was by exploring William Stephenson's work on subject / object dualism (James, [1912] 2012). Q methodology enables the exploration of the subjective experience of homecoming for a group of U.K. Army Reservists. Stephenson (as cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 31) stated that if you ask participants questions about something, their subjective responses should be treated as factual. In Q methodology, *subjectivity* is understood to be the sum of behavioral activity that constitutes a person's current point of view. Q Sort is the method used for data collection in Q methodology, in order to capture the subjective responses to a topic (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

In the Q Sort we are looking for the participants to impose their own meanings onto the items through the sorting process. As Q Sort encourages participation, some items may be noticeably more provocative than those in an ordinary scale or measure. The items, which can take any form, are thought of as suggestions, rather than statements with determinant meaning. Meanings are imposed by the participants in their interpretation of the sort, rather than beforehand by the designer. It is this that separates out the Q Sort "method of impression" from most R methodological techniques "method of expression" (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 64).

Social constructionism developed out of mounting criticism of positivist-empiricism (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). It is "principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live" (Gergan, 1985, p. 266). Knowledge of the world is mediated by social, cultural and historical factors and with other people is a jointly constructed understanding of reality. This has lead to many fundamental

concepts in psychology becoming severed from the ontological base in the head of the individuals, to one based in constituents of social processes (Gergan, 1985, p. 271). In Q methodology, social constructionism is used to provide the explanation for the collective shared viewpoints, as the cumulative products of the innumerable selections made by the group to create Dewey's social facts (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 43). How these subjective viewpoints are measured is supplied by Peirce's theory of abduction (as cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 39). Abduction observes phenomena in pursuit of an explanation and new insights. Observations are treated as signs of other things, or clues to some potential explanation. This requires the researcher to generate and explore a series of likely hypotheses, which do not need to be derived from higher pre-existing theories. It is better the hypotheses are not derived from higher theories, because abduction is a logic designed for discovery and theory generation. Any hypothesis merely has to be an explanation of how ordinary circumstances are, or even an intuitive guess (Haig, 2008a, 2008b).

The aim of the second study was to find the social viewpoints of a group of U.K. Army Reservists towards the subject of homecoming from military operations. A series of shared subjective viewpoints or perspectives, pertaining to the topic would be of interest in these times of increased use of Reservists, in order to address some of the research gaps and limitations mentioned in other studies (Alcock et al., 2014; Dandeker et al., 2009; Harvey et al., 2011). Revealing these viewpoints should be used to inform policy and increase the well-being of military personal. Q methodology is a clearly structured, systematic and increasingly used methodology designed to explore the distinct subjective perspectives that exist within a group (Watts & Stenner, 2012) and used increasingly across disciplines (Newman & Ramlo, 2010; Ramlo & Newman, 2011a; Webler, Danielson & Tuler, 2009).

2.3.3.1. *Benefits and limitations of Q Sort.*

Q methodology is able to turn everyday discourse about a phenomenon into a useable research tool. The discourse about a specific topic is referred to as a *concourse*. A concourse is ordinary conversation, commentary and discourse about everyday life and includes all communication about a specific topic (Brown, 1993, 1996). There exists a concourse for every concept, every declarative statement, every wish and every object in nature, when viewed subjectively. Stephenson (as cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 33) stated that a concourse is said to represent the individual's cultural heritage and is considered common knowledge. Methodologically, a concourse is the overall population of statements used to describe the phenomenon under consideration, from which the final Q Sort was created (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 34).

Collecting opinion statements, which participants organised, imposes their own meaning onto items (Stenner, 2009). This increases the reliability of data, reducing problems of missing data, undecided responses, or limited response sets (Watts & Stenner, 2012). On the other hand one of the main limitations is that the Q Sorting process is that it extremely time-consuming (McKeown & Thomas, 2013, p. 34). Both the method and instructions also need to be explained extensively to participants, because they are generally unfamiliar with it. Validity can therefore be affected if the participant's lack of comprehension leads to misrepresentation (Dennis, 1986, p. 6).

Data gathered in the form of Q Sorts is analysed using the data reduction method of factor analysis to discern existing patterns of thought (Brown, 1993, 1996). Factor analysis is a methodological extension of abduction (Haig, 2008a) used to calculate the

degree of association (correlation) between the whole point of view of each participant towards an object. Factor analysis reduces the many association's captured, down to underlying or latent factors and thereby accounting for the correlations. It is a methodology designed to explore correlations between persons, or whole aspects of a person. In this way, Q methodology can be used to uncover and explore highly complex concepts and subject matters around a particular topic, from a group's point of view (Herrington & Coogan, 2011).

Q methodology offers an innovative approach to qualitative analysis of the associations, feelings, opinions and ideas of participants, by strengthening conceptual categorization through the quantification of patterned subjectivities, using Q Sorts (Shemmings, 2006, p. 147). Q Sort makes it possible to conduct a direct and holistic comparison of any two persons, which is measurable in terms of *psychological significance* to them (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 15). When this is repeated for groups of people (or for one individual repeatedly), it is possible to distil the associations, feelings, opinions and ideas in to underlying latent factors, which might otherwise not have been obvious. In this way, Q Sort can be used to greatly simplify, or reduce the explanation of the many perspectives, viewpoints, or attitudes of a group of people about a particular topic (or for one person on a number of topics).

In summary, the choice to conduct both qualitative Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and the qualiquantative Q methodology was taken in order to gain the benefits of a mixed methodology. The methodological differences between the two methods were considered great enough to class this research as between-methods (Denzin, 1989). The author was interested in the participants supplying their own meaning to the phenomenon of homecoming. Q Sort made it possible to measure the significance of the

IPA themes and distil them in to underlying latent factors, which might otherwise not have been obvious. In this way, the Q Sort transformed what was at first potentially surprising or unique experiences of Army Reservists in context, into potentially more useful commonplace explanation of a general phenomenon (Shank, 1998).

2.4. Study plan

In phase one, the aim of IPA research was to focus on the participants' experiences of homecoming. The interview questions originally came from the author, following his review of the literature. Once the gaps in the literature were established and the research question developed, the author used his 25 years experience of being in the Army Reserves and participating on a number of operational tours, both before and during the early stages of this Study, to develop the refine the plan (Figure 1).

The IPA interview schedule consisted of simple, open and expansive questions, designed to give participants the space to describe homecoming in their own words (Smith, et al., 2009, p. 59-62) and at the same time encourage the participants to enter into a dialogue with the author (Aho, 2008). The questions were provisionally developed opportunistically in conversation with members of the Army Reserve, personally known to the author over an extended period. These discussions were conducted while on operational tours. The questions were also reviewed with the author's research supervisor.

Once the interview schedule was deemed ready, the author contacted Army Reservists who had agreed to be participants, who were purposely selected on the basis that they were assessed to be able to speak coherently on the subject. They were invited to meet with the author at their local Army Reserve Centre in a vacated office made available for the purpose. The IPA piloting was done for three reasons: (a) to confirm the usefulness of the interview schedule, (b) to practice the procedure for recording the interview, and (c) enable the author to refine his interview technique. The questions used and how the analysis was conducted is described in chapter three.

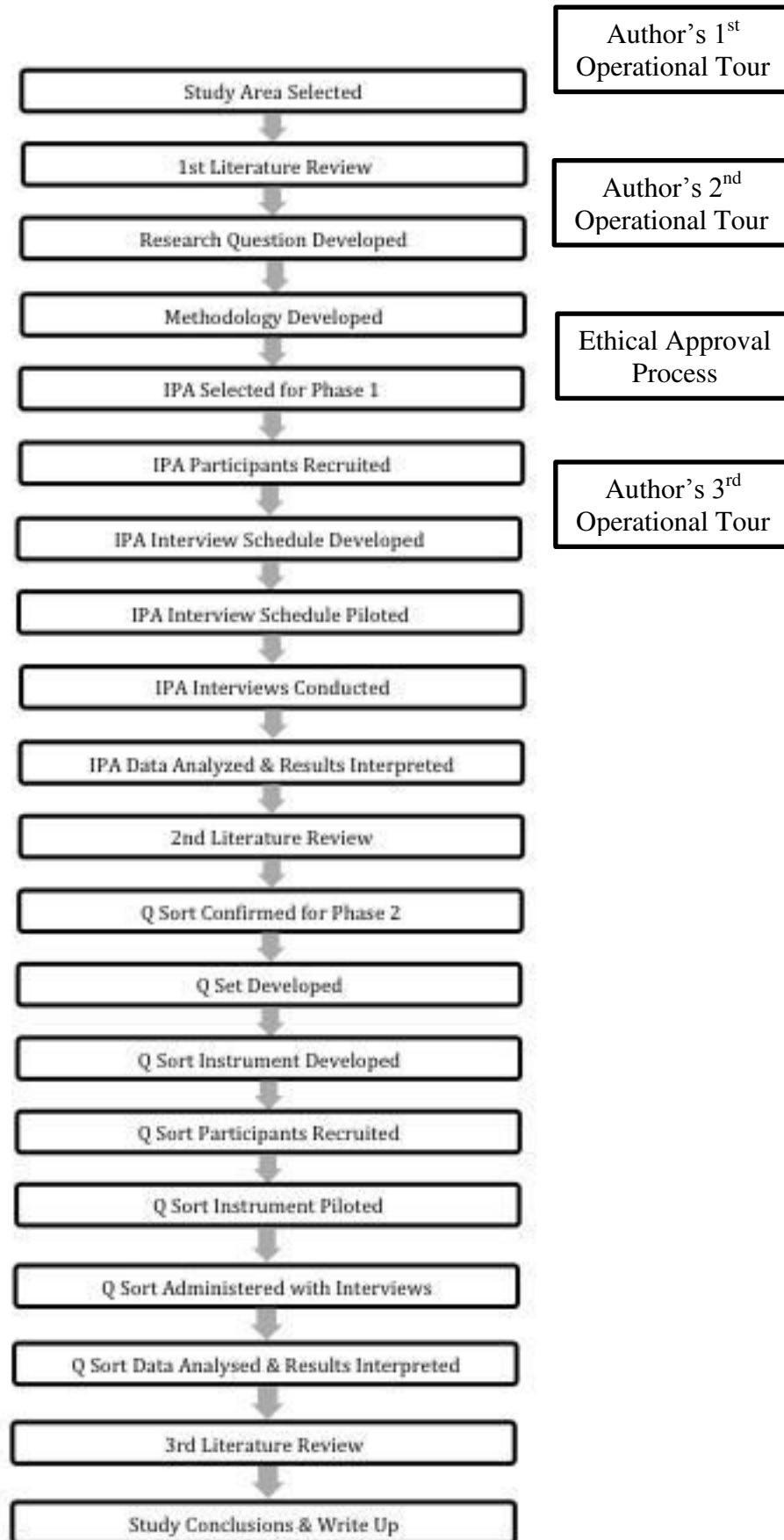
Phase two was set to carry on and investigate, where phase one finished. In order to do this, what was required was a methodology that could use the theoretical framework generated by phase one as the starting point for a wider explanation, which would transform the ideographic interpreted lived experience of the IPA, into a more commonplace general phenomenon. Q methodology was selected as discussed above. The first phase acted as a de facto prelude for the second phase; developing the themes to then more precisely pin down the subjective essence of the lived experience of homecoming for Army Reservists.

The Q Sort cards, distribution template and Participant Information Sheet were developed in conjunction with the author's supervisor, following the guideline set out by two respected Q methodology researchers (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Three members of the Army Reserve known to the author were invited to pilot the Q Sort. They were selected on the practical basis that they were prepared to assist the author in his research. They were invited to meet with the author at their local Army Reserve Centre in an unoccupied office made available for the purpose. The instructions for the participants were printed and delivered orally by the author. The pilot participants did not participate in the main Q Sort. The Q Sort piloting was done for three reasons: (a) to test the practicality of the cards and template, (b) to practice the delivery of instructions and management of the process, and (c) develop a procedure for recording the Q Sort configurations. The Q Sorts used for data collection and analysis were conducted as describe in chapter four.

The IPA themes were taken as the concourse of homecoming and their codes were reviewed in order to come up with the Q Set of items for Q Sorting. After piloting, 20

new participants were selected from one U.K. Army Reserve unit known to the author. Q Sorts were inter-correlated and factor-analyzed and a factor array created for each factor uncovered. The purpose was to identify those important issues about which factors polarized and show that viewpoint relative to the other phase factors, thereby identifying those items that made the most profound and important contributions within each factor.

Figure 1: Sequential Study Plan



3. Phase 1 – Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

This chapter the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) phase of this study and is divided into four sections:

- 3.1. Introduction to IPA.
- 3.2. Research method detailing participant recruitment, sample size, description, interview schedule development, piloting, interviewing process and data analysis.
- 3.3. Results including outline, initial analysis and phenomenological interpretation.
- 3.4. Discussion including interpretative dialogue with existing literature.

3.1. Introduction to IPA

The two main perspectives that IPA aims to reveal are (Larkin et al., 2006):

1. To produce a coherent, third person and psychologically informed description, which tries to get as close to the participant's view of the research question as possible.
2. Then develop a more overtly interpretative analysis of the experience of homecoming, which positioned the first-order description in relation to wider social, cultural and theoretical contexts.

IPA is a flexible method for qualitative data analysis, based in Heidegger's phenomenological hermeneutics. This flexibility requires the method section be detailed, in order to enable to reader to follow the process (Smith et al., 2009, p. 108-117).

3.2. Method

3.2.1. Participant recruitment.

The participants were selected from one unit of the U.K. Army Reserve, who had served together in Afghanistan, for the six months preceding November 2008. They were recruited directly by the author who had served as part of the unit, during his participation on his third operational tour to Afghanistan.

The author used the time between the soldier's last operational patrol at the end of their operational tour, but before returning to the UK, to discuss the concept of the research with the members of the unit. The potential participants were introduced to the concept of the research very informally, individually and in small group discussions in an opportunistic fashion, while the unit handed over their military duties to their replacement unit that had just arrived in theatre. These discussions were conducted at three locations: (a) the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) base in provincial capital of Lashkar Gar, headquarters for U.K. Forces; (b) the main U.K. military base in Afghanistan, Camp Bastion; and (c) Kandahar International Airport (KAF), theatre entry and exit airport for all units serving in Helmand Province.

The pool of volunteers provided their details while on the return flight from Cyprus back to the U.K. in November 2008. Britain owns two large military bases on Cyprus, on land that is sovereign territory to the U.K. This location was selected by the MOD, to conduct *decompression* in order to prepare for transition to non-operational life, back the U.K. Decompression exists to enable post operational briefing procedures to

take place and was a formalised preparation for homecoming (Hacker Hughes et al., 2008). As such it was designed to support the mental well-being of returning service personnel.

The research aims were explained to the volunteer participants on the plane flying from Cyprus to the UK, following decompression. This location was selected opportunistically, because the author considered he might not have such good access to a group of Reservists who had just completed an operation (Smith et al., 2009, p. 48-51). Of the approximately 130 soldiers on this flight, the first 50 asked expressed a positive response to the request to participate in the research. The author took names and contact details of those who expressed an interest and spent several minutes with each one explaining the reason for the research and that it would involve a semi-structured interview, that would be recorded and transcribed verbatim, followed by analysis and write up. He also covered the confidentiality protocols and the fact that the research would need approval from both University of East London (UEL) and MOD Research Ethics Committee.

The 50 volunteer participants were contacted via email over April 2009, 4 months following their return from operations. The first 13 participants contacted responded positively and were booked to have interviews with the researcher over the phone, after which recruiting stopped.

3.2.2. Samples size.

13 participants were selected from the original 50 volunteers. The analysis concentrated on 6 interviews in depth. More than 6 interviews might have lead to the researcher carrying out analysis at too superficial a level (Smith *et al.*, 2009, pp. 51-52) and is consistent with other IPA studies (Lavie & Willig, 2005 [6 participants]; Messenger, Farquharson, Stallworthy, Cawkill & Greenberg, 2012 [7 participants]). The six participants were chosen on the basis of how well the author assessed their interview went, with respect to coverage of the question area.

3.2.3. Interview schedule development.

IPA requires rich data, which requires participants to tell their stories, speak freely and reflect (Smith *et al.*, 2009, p. 56). The aim of the IPA interviews was to focus on the participants' experiences and understanding of the phenomena of homecoming (Smith *et al.*, 2009, p. 46). Gadamer (as cited in Aho, 2008) explained that when using phenomenological hermeneutics, following the thread of initial questions and letting the participant describe what matters to him, enables the researcher to enter the participant's experience. The aim is not to explain (*Erklärung*), but to understand (*Verstehen*) and also to help the participant self-understand (*Sichverstehen*). Therefore the questions generated were directed towards meaning, rather than difference or causality. The free flowing nature of the discussion could lead to the author being unprepared for dealing with questions and any direction that conversation might go. This was mitigated by the careful development of and practice with an interview schedule. The interview questions were selected for being open and expansive, to encourage the participants to talk and tested using pilot interviews. This was done to maximise the author's ability to achieve the outcome of understanding homecoming

for the selected group of reservists in a particular context (Smith et al., 2009, p. 59).

The semi-structured interviews questions arrived at were:

- Do you feel going on Operations has changed you? In what way?
- How have you found fitting back in to civilian life; at home, at work, in the community?
- Are you planning to make any major changes in your life? What are they? Why?
- How have non-military people reacted to you?
- Have you discussed your mobilised experiences with others? Describe how that went?
- What has been the most challenging aspect of homecoming?
- What would you change about the experience of homecoming? Why?

3.2.4. Piloting

From the original 13 volunteers, three pilot interviews were conducted over the period November 2008 to March 2009. The participants were selected opportunistically, based on availability. They were interviewed at various locations as they dictated. Piloting was conducted in order to develop the interview schedule and check timings. This process of rehearsing for the questions, enabled the researcher to construct mental maps for the interview, which could be used should the interview become difficult. This preparation developed the author's interview technique and gave the additional advantage enabling him to engaged and be more attentive during the interviews, developing the flexibility and responsiveness required to gather rich data.

From this, the initial selection of semi-structured questions was deemed appropriate to deliver an outcome (Smith et al., 2009, p. 59-63).

3.2.5. Participants' descriptions.

Each Reservist participant was anonymized in the data and given a participant identifier from P1 to P6.

Table 1: Biographical details at time of interview

Participant	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Sex (M/F)	M	M	M	M	M	M
Age	38	36	33	38	46	30
Marital status (S/M/D)	M	M	M	M	M	M
Children	0	2	0	0	2	2
Year joined military	1997	1991	1993	2004	1984	2003
Experienced threat to life	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Military rank ¹⁵	LCpl	Cpl	Cpl	LCpl	SSgt	LCpl

3.2.6. Interview process.

Of the original 13 participants who volunteered, 12 interviews were completed, of which 3 were used in the pilot phase and 3 were not analysed for reasons of Sample Size (Sub-section 3.2.2.). Each interview was conducted at a location to suit the participant and ranged in length from 37 minutes to 1 hour 22 minutes. The interviews were recorded for later transcription and no contemporaneous notes were written. This was done in order to ensure the author paid attention and was fully

¹⁵ U.K. Army ranks; LCpl, Lance Corporal; Cpl, Corporal; SSgt, Staff Sergeant: <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/our-people/ranks/>

engaged with each participant. The participants were reminded that the interview would be recorded. They were asked to read and sign a *Consent Form For Participants In Research Studies* (Appendix C, p. 27-28), which was kept by the researcher and were handed the *Participant Information Sheet* (Appendix C, p. 23-26), which they kept. The questions used for the interviews were written on the Participation Information Sheet, but were not read by the participants in advance of the interview. The interview followed a semi-structured method to allow for a focused, yet flexible approach, with questions being asked in a manner and at a time in the conversation that the author assessed suited the mood and tempo. Therefore, although the 7 questions outlined above formed the basis of the interviews, they were not necessarily asked in the same way (Smith et al., 2009, p. 64-67).

3.2.7. Data analysis.

The interviews were transcribed from recordings verbatim to text documents. Each transcript was analysed following Smith's guidelines (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

Immediately each interview was completed, the data was reviewed and analysis started. The iterative process ensured interpretation took place at each stage in the analysis: (a) from initial interview, (b) through transcription, (c) on to initial note taking, (d) initial coding, and (e) finally specific interpretative analysis. This process repeated itself for each case in line with the concept of the *hermeneutic cycle* (Smith et al., 2009, p. 27), developing deeper levels of understanding with each iteration and subsequent case.

3.2.7.1. *Step 1- Reading and re-reading.*

This consisted of a mixture of writing up quick notes after the interviews and then reading and re-reading the text. The verbatim transcripts were loaded in to the software database (ResearchWare, 2012). This enabled notes to be written, stored, analysed and revised simultaneously and the data to be managed without recourse to volumes of hard copy. Participant P1's transcript is provided as an example, along with a screenshots how this appeared on a computer using the software (Appendix F & G).

3.2.7.2. *Step 2 - Initial noting.*

An initial noting crib sheet was created based (Smith et al., 2009, p. 83-91). The text was examined systematically to explore the content and language used. More notes were written and stored in the database, which resulted in cataloguing everything deemed of interest on the subject of homecoming, enabling data to be reviewed as required. An example from P1 for this step, along with a screenshot of how this appeared on a computer using software is supplied (Appendix F & G).

3.2.7.3. *Step 3 – Developing emerging themes.*

The next task was to move from expanding the quantity of data in the form of notes, to reducing the volume, whilst maintaining detail and complexity. This involved shifting towards working primarily with the notes in the database, rather than the raw data as transcribed. The original transcript were broken up and re-organized in chunks

of text that coalesced around interrelationships, connections and patterns and then more notes were written based on these chunks. This process was one manifestation of the hermeneutic circle. The notes were turned in to themes through the production of concise statements of what was important in the various comments. These statements became codes, which we used to re-organise the transcripts that captured the psychological essence of the chunks of text. As a starting point, these codes were grouped into six preliminary superordinate themes in order to begin the analysis. By the end of the process, the six superordinate themes remained with their original short form titles. However, as the analysis developed, the themes developed longer more meaningful sub-titles, described below. This process along with a screenshot of how this appeared on a computer using the software is supplied (Appendix G).

3.2.7.4. *Step 4 - Searching connections across emergent themes.*

This step involved developing how the themes fitted together (Smith et al., 2009, p. 96). This was mainly done through identifying patterns between emergent themes and developing them into superordinate themes. In essence this meant putting like things together and giving that set a group name. Some patterns emerged as sub-themes from the text and acquired their own status. The author also looked for connections between themes, by identifying the contextual or narrative elements attending to temporal, cultural and narrative aspects. It was useful to highlight groups related items based on narrative moments that appeared, such as a key life event e.g. births, divorce, combat exposure and the like. Function also served as a tool to develop connections, where narrative was examined by the function it had within the transcript.

A summary of the codes used by P1 with respect to the development of the superordinate theme of Homecoming Activities is provided (Table 2).

Table 2: 8 codes used by P1 that became Homecoming Activities theme

No.	Title	Description
2	Formal decompression	Refers to the military process designed to prepare you for returning to normal life in the UK
3	Everyone's back	Sense of relief
8	Injured colleague	Importance of seeing and meeting up with the guys who were injured and knowing that they had survived
10	Official homecoming	Happy with what was organized officially by military as the homecoming
18	Proper welcome home	Separating homecoming into different phases.
20	Smaller teams	Possibility that when TA (a.k.a. Army Reserve) go away on tours as individuals or smaller teams, they do not get the same homecoming experience and therefore may have different experience
21	Speed of adjustment	Suggesting that it takes about 2 weeks to adjust back into civilian life
22	TA adaptability	TA (Army Reserve) soldiers are a particular type, used to changing from civilian to military lifestyles and therefore very adaptable to changing circumstances

3.2.7.5. Step 5 - Moving to the next case.

Each case was treated separately in keeping with IPA's ideographic commitment (Smith et al., 2009, p. 29-32). This occurred naturally, because of the length of time it took to conduct each analysis at the transcription and coding level. The use of software made it simple to add one code after code, without having to worry about the size, or number of codes created, as large code lists could be created, managed, compared, analysed and edited, throughout the analysis phase.

3.2.7.6. *Step 6 - Looking for patterns across cases.*

A review of all the codes and their descriptive statements was carried out, to ensure they were placed in the appropriate super-ordinate themes. Of the original 179 codes identified as relevant to homecoming, eventually 151 codes were found to be useful and used to build the thematic analysis. A number of techniques were used to do this. The techniques in Step 4 were reapplied, but this time across cases (Appendix I). To a lesser extent, *numeration* (Smith et al., 2009, p. 98) was used, although not over-emphasized, to uncover the frequency with which codes appeared across different cases (Appendix J). Following these procedures resulted in two significant changes to the codes; (a) through a requirement to re-label some of the codes, occasionally merging codes that were judged to be describing the same phenomena; (b) those codes that had cropped up because they were thought interesting initially, but later assessed not to relate to homecoming, were excluded from the final analysis.

3.3. Results

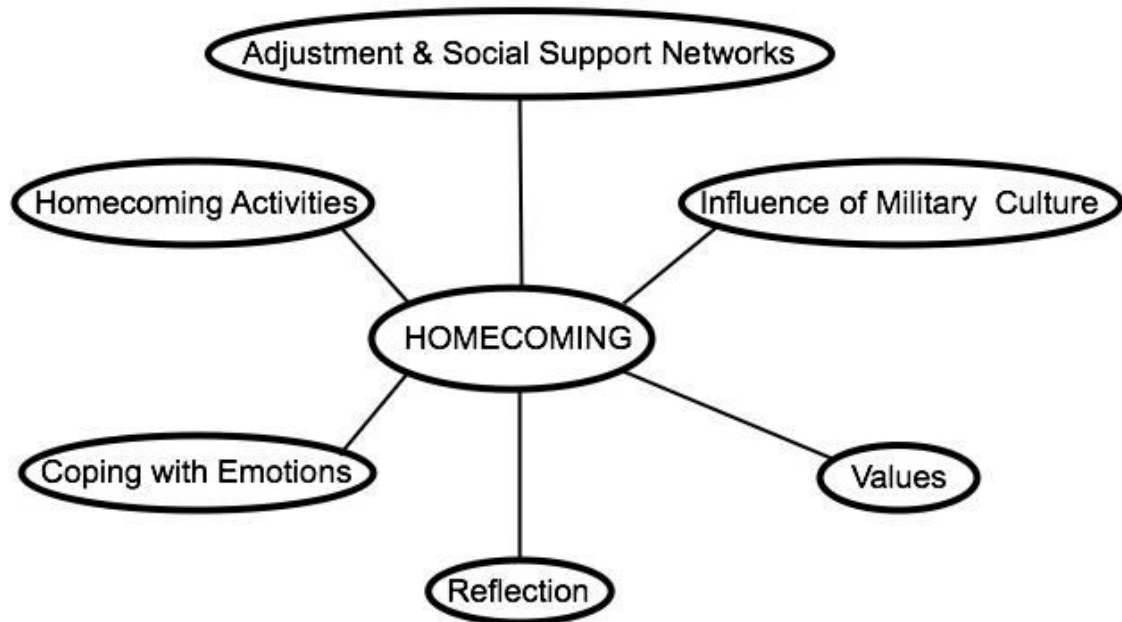
This section links the data analysis, to provide a case-within-theme (Smith et al., 2006, p. 101) phenomenological description of what the participants had said about their experiences of homecoming. It begins by outlining the six themes that emerged from the data. This was done, in order to provide an overview, before following the process.

3.3.1. Summary.

Six themes emerged from the data analysis, which were based on participants' objects of concern around homecoming and their experiential claims about them (Figure 2):

- Activities both official and informal conducted around homecoming.
- Adjustment to homecoming and social support that helped in this.
- The influence of military culture on attitudes to life.
- Coping with strong emotions, including loss of excitement.
- Reflection on the tour and their future direction in life.
- Values that had developed around self worth and belonging.

Figure 2: The 6 IPA Themes of Homecoming



3.3.2. Theme of homecoming activities.

This theme consisted of descriptions of any activities, or things the participants did, or things that participants described that happened relating to the experience of homecoming. The common thread was the reaction the Reservist had towards the activities and how importantly they were expressed, rather than if the reaction was positive or negative. The theme of role of homecoming activities was made up of three main sub-themes:

- Reactions to official events and activities.
- Activities to rebuild relationships with family & friends.
- Activities to enable fitting back in to the normal routines of work and daily life.

3.3.2.1. *Sub-theme 1: Reactions to official events and activities.*

The military planned process of decompression, was designed to prepare soldiers for homecoming, by briefing them on how they might feel, think or behave once back in the UK. Participants were able to compare and contrast the psychological debrief they received from the military while still in theatre, with the actual emotions they experienced once home. All to some degree reaffirmed what they were told that they had some strange feelings on homecoming, which P1 described.

Er, we have various briefs, I think, in Bastion or Kandahar saying it would take several weeks, don't be ashamed if you have emotions such as regret, guilt, fear and all that. I didn't experience any of those but they were certainly right in thinking that things were a little strange ... (P1, reference 3893,4068)

Decompression was held at Cyprus. Although some participants were sceptical in advance, on reflection all the participants were impressed with this procedure. Some had issues with the manner in which decompression had itself been compressed from 48 to 24 hours, which they thought exposed the exercise as being more of a required 'tic-in-the-box' for the MoD, in order to fulfil their legal duty of care, rather than something that demonstrated and real care for their well-being. P2 expressed this when he said.

... I felt Cyprus was good, er, in what it offered but in the way it, the manner that it offered it is, like I said, it, I felt that maybe you should, it, it could be doing with being another day longer at least, ... (P2, reference 53072,54267)

A very powerful element of the homecoming related to the reaction soldiers had towards their wounded comrades. Immediately on touching down in the U.K., the first people to board the plane were those comrades who had been wounded and had been flown home earlier as casualties. The appearance of the injured at the U.K. airport was viewed as important part of coming home and getting out of the 'conflict zone' together all alive. For P1 the relief and joy in seeing injured colleagues alive and recovering was experienced very emotionally and was highly symbolic.

Er, I remember very clearly, we flew into [U.K. airport] and the first thing was one of our injured colleagues was brought to the plane and made his way up the steps and I think that was a difficult moment for a lot of people because they were overjoyed to see this individual and, um, and there were a few, er, a few tearful eyes, I'm sure, on that plane. ... (P1 reference 5154,5645)

The next stage in the homecoming process, was the formal event and family reunion provided at a central location by the unit. It was only after this that the reservists were dismissed and allowed to go home. Having an official homecoming with family and friends waiting was appreciated and considered the proper way to end a military tour. Generally, participants thought this event was a good experience. The welcome home as a hero, rather than just turning up on his doorstep, or worse, returning to a negative response from family and friends, was seen as affirming. In particular, P1 expressed an appreciation that his partner and all the wives and families in general probably had a lot to cope with at home, while the soldiers were away in Afghanistan. For him this event was as much in recognition of their contribution. He thought it was therefore just as important for the families, that homecoming was marked by official ceremony.

... I think that's ever so important so that people can come home and think, yeah, people appreciate it, they know what we've done and they appreciate it and your welcomed home. ... (P1 reference 6492,6798)

P2 stated that he did not like the fact that something had been officially organised by his unit. He did not object to the actual official event, but rather the other personal issues he was having at that time. The emotions he felt around homecoming events were based on feelings of personal embarrassment about his circumstances. He would have far preferred to go home, but not to his family. Rather P2 would have preferred the company of friends for a night and their moral support.

I certainly objected to somebody telling me, um, how I'm going to reintroduce myself to my family and, you know, there's times when I think about it that I actually want to slap [name of somebody], um, you know, and I'd really give him a good fucking hiding for it, um. And the comment that really really riles me was when, when somebody asked [name] why he'd arranged this, it was because he didn't want boys coming back from theatre and going on the piss for a weekend rather than seeing his, their families. ... (P2 reference 58527,59699)

3.3.2.2. *Sub-theme 2: Activities to rebuild relationships with family and friends.*

P3 expected that getting back together with his partner after six months apart would be challenging. He appreciated that they had gone away and satisfied a personal need by getting mobilised for a military operation. On return he appreciated there was now

a need to concentrate on his partner in order to show their appreciation for supporting him and put their personal lives back in order. P3 dealt with this by planning to give their partner far more time than they would normally expect to give, once back in normal routine, in order to work on the immediate need to rebuild the relationship.

Well, from, from like a personal, you know, like relationship point of view, a lot of it's, er, I just need to give the missus enough time to essentially, you know, like settle in so, for me personally, it doesn't actually bother me but I know that the missus needs more time, (P3 reference 61367,61690)

For the partner who stayed at home, the public homecoming event could be important, putting her needs at odds with the wishes of the returning partner. From P2's perspective, the whole homecoming process was about the reservist and perhaps he had not appreciated how significant and important it was for his partner?

... either way it, it wouldn't have made any difference and to, to tell the truth actually if I'd have come home and there'd have been nobody here I would have had peace and quiet in the house for ten minutes for, and to be able to have a bit of time on my own for the first time in twelve months really...(P2 reference 63372,64115)

P4 went to great lengths to start his relationship rebuilding. Planned activity demonstrated an approach to homecoming that dealt with personal relationship issues head on. In the extract below, P4's use of the term *dislocating* is particularly interesting in that it speaks to the importance of getting away from the family normal home, so that they both partners share the experience of getting to know each other in a neutral environment.

... I think we got it right in, in what we did by going away and, um, dislocating ourselves from everybody else and just having our own time and talking through everything we had to talk about, um, you know. And if that meant a few tears before bedtime, you know, it's out of the way, you know, and you're grown up enough to acknowledge that, you know, I'm sorry to put you through it. (P4 reference 41755,42402)

P5 talked about wanting the opportunity to plan some time off, away with his family or partner on holiday, before coming back to do post operational military activities and serving out his mobilization contract¹⁶ with the military. He might be looking to phase his re-integration back in to normal family and social life, rather than be forced in to taking up all his civilian roles, responsibilities and duties at once. The idea that he seems to be describing is to keep returning reservists busy during the day with military work and only letting them back home in the evening for the first week, thereby diluting the intensity of personal re-entry in to relationships and emotions that go with homecoming. P5 compared this transition to coming off a drug, requiring a gradual weaning off process.

If you're on heroin you don't stop taking heroin, do you, on day one and you might, you might try it, coming off heroin for day one, day two but you're going to be fucking shaking like hell. What you then need to be is weaned off it and I think you might have to be weaned off the old military side ... (P5 reference 53759,54932)

¹⁶ Reservists could be obligated to serve out the full length of their mobilization contract, even if they returned to the UK before the contract ended, which would entail conducting duties at barracks or attending military courses.

3.3.2.3. *Sub-theme 3: Activities to enable fitting back in to the work.*

P6 made conscious decision to concentrate on other aspects of his life, away from the normal non-operational reserve commitment. It was accepted that there was a grace period when they might not be expected to train with the Army Reserve and it takes some time to get back in to the habit of being a reservist. At this point a number of the participants thought reservists may make the decision to change their life course and this may involve giving up their reservist occupation. If they choose to remain a reservist, they gradually phased back in to their part-time military career. P6 noted he was finding it hard to get back to that routine, because non-operational reservist activities had less meaning now, compared to other aspects of his life. It seems to be appreciated by senior members of his unit that coming back to the normal reservist activities may be expected to be a bit of an anti-climax. His use of the word 'frustrated' suggested that perhaps he did not feel they (his parent unit) and he shared the same aims any longer. His experience of being in combat is something that separated him from the others in his parent unit.

Yeah. Frustrated at my unit, to... but I think they mean well, and we talk to them, and they've been very good in that circumstance of saying, okay, you have a... have a little break, come back. (P6 reference 8147,8410)

P6 had developed as a soldier and a person. He felt his parent unit had not changed relative to him. Therefore, he felt as though doing normal reservist activities and going back to that routine would be a bit boring, compared to before the tour. He appreciated that part of this feelings might be because he had not actively committed to going back to normal reservist duties; his attitude to staying or going was in flux.

It's more like a drag, now, to go, than enjoying it, to be honest. But maybe that's because I haven't committed myself to it, fully, yet. Once I commit myself a bit more, once I've, um... once I've decided on whether I'm definitely going to stay or whether I'm going to leave, then... at the moment, I'm still half-hearted. (P6 reference 18857,19274)

P3 returned to his normal civilian work almost immediately, without any problems. He was able to do this, because his employer was an arm of government that was run along quasi-military lines and has mainly ex-military working for it. The culture therefore was described as pro the military and accepting the concept of being called away for reservist operational service.

So, in fact, whilst most people had a longer R&R [rest and recovery] period and then went off to do, you know, the Med course or like whatever, I mean, I know a fair few people did, you know, demob but I was actually quite actually like back into the civvy life far sooner than anyone else and it didn't feel strange at all, er. (P3 reference 60496,60804)

3.3.3. Theme of adjustment & social support networks.

This theme demonstrates the crucial role social support networks played in all aspects of Reservist's transition from military operational life; in the military, at home, in their wider social circle and at work. In order to be negotiated successfully, adjustment to civilian life did not happen on its own, but was something that had to be worked. The examples selected demonstrate some of these issues. The theme of adjustment & role of social support networks consisted of three main sub-themes:

- How the Reservists adjusted to separation from military comrades.
- How they adjusted to rekindling close personal relationships, especially with family.
- How they adjusted back in to civilian work.

3.3.3.1. Sub-theme 1: Adjustment to separation from military comrades.

P1 was missing the social support of his military comrades who he considered brothers and now had to adjust to new social support networks. Through the operational tour he considered his military friends closer than the civilian ones he had left behind and was returning to. An unpleasant change was having to loosen those bonds of friendship, in order to settle back in to civilian and family life.

So there is that separation you come back, um, you're aren't seeing your closest friends, almost brothers by the end and suddenly you're not seeing them every day so there's a... you're taken out of your comfort zone or whatever you want to call it. So that was unpleasant. (P1 reference 3462,3866)

There may be issues associated with a partner taking time off work to be with the reservist full time during the early stages of homecoming. This change puts pressure on both partners, which they might find difficult to handle. For P5, he may still be in military tour mode, wanting to be with his mates and sharing the social side of his comrades, not yet ready to jump straight back in to having the same level of full on close relationship he had before he went away.

I think my wife took time off so she could be with me and I think that's where the conflict came because she felt she wanted to have time with me. So me, I think if I had to go back to the Army she wouldn't have had the time off so I could have been back with the squaddies having the crack, the laugh and the whatever but then coming back at night after she's had work and it could have been diluted that way. (P5 reference 55270,55814)

3.3.3.2. *Sub-theme 2: Adjustment to rekindling close personal relationships.*

On the day of arrival in the unit, the unit welfare officer had organized an event, close family could congregate together at one of the Army Reserve Centres belonging to the unit, wait for their Reservists, meet them and then take them home. P3 noted how many of the wives and partners were very emotional at the first meeting with their Reservist. His wife on the other hand, seemed quite reserved towards him. He felt he was treated like a stranger.

I could see there were quite a few women out there that were actually sort of in tears, because they were so glad to see their, you know, blokes whereas with [wife's name] she, she was actually quite distant, um, almost as though I was like a stranger again. (P3 reference 55478,55745)

P4 described that the hardest part of homecoming was returning to the normal routines of home life. The experience of getting back together with his partner and close family was not the same for all participants. There were those who experienced a smooth transition, which seemed to get back to things as normal easily, as if they

had never been away. Some also appreciated how much harder it had been for their partners to stay at home, than it was for them to be away. In order to get back to normal, the views were expressed regards the need to appreciate how the tour was for the partner who stayed at home. The separation was analogous to bereavement, because if the worse were to happen, then the last farewell would be exactly that. Knowing that made any separation very hard for the partner and meant she had been on continuous anticipation of the worst sort of news.

I think, you know, you've got to give a little bit to what they're gone through, you know, because, you know, we all have particularly harsh times, uncomfortable, you know, whatever, you know, um, but that's not to say that, you know, people who are left at home hadn't, you know. (P4 reference 24478,25136)

P2 was surprised by how much their being away had affected their child. Some children had got used to not having the father figure around and expressed this during the homecoming. This required the whole relationship between father and child to be re-negotiated.

I wouldn't say shocked but it, it definitely open my eyes to the fact that my actions were effecting him, er, which I'd never thought they had, you know, they were sort of. (P2 reference 20872,21426)

P2 also experienced adjustments issues around his partner trying to force a harmonious reunion with his son, by getting them to do things together.

It was like why would you want to go out for a walk on your own when you haven't seen your children for six months, because my children do my tits in

and I'm about to hit one of them, um. Er, yeah, she was very much a case of trying to force things onto me which I didn't, I wasn't happy about me, you know. (P2 reference 56006,56620)

Close family and friends could be supportive of their reservist, which helped him to get through the adjustment process. However, with the prevalence of information about adjustment issues in the media, may be diagnosed by family as a symptom of something more serious.

And I think, I think at one time she did say to me actually get to the doctors, you need help and I, and it, and I only, it only stopped, I didn't go and seek help, it only stopped when I made the decision I'm not going back. And that ... (P5 reference 25371,25998)

P4 had open and frank discussion with his partner, covering the worst-case scenarios, which lead to both being prepared psychologically for his going away and not worrying so much about their home situation. There was less an element of guilt for his having been away. This was particularly useful to the P4 while on their tour, as it ensured that they had looked after their partner psychologically, as well as financially.

...you know, and I've told her, you know, don't fuck about, crack on with your life, you know, and if someone comes along they'll come along and I wish you well and you can't dwell on it. (P4 reference 9662,9846)

3.3.3.3. *Sub-theme 3: Adjustment to work.*

To a lesser extent than settling back in to home life, some participants had work related issues that they had to deal with. P5 had the experience of knowing what he was doing to ensure they would fit back in to the workplace was to the detriment of rebuilding his relationship with their family.

My wife's going oh I'm glad you're back, let's go shopping, let's go for a walk, let's go and do something romantic. I'm more thinking about my University course. (P5 reference 57411,57834)

P6's civilian job was as a security supervisor in a large high street supermarket. The employer is known for having good employee practices. P6 was allowed to transition back to work slowly, over a five-week period. He did not have to justify his request for wanting to spend some more time at home, following his return. His boss held meetings with him to discuss work and his transition back to full time employment, in the period during his adjustment.

And my boss said it when I came back to work. We had a meeting after about a... because I had about four, five weeks off, and then I went back to work part-time, and then I fully went back, because I... I didn't want to go fully back, because I think... I don't know. I don't know why I didn't. But I just wanted to spend a bit more time at home. (P6 reference 13727,14071)

P1 thought that Reservists were better at readjusting back in to civilian life than Regular soldiers might be. The fact that Reservists have to adapt between military and civilian life often as part of their normal part-time careers in the military, was seen as appropriate preparation for coping with adjustment and homecoming. This was seen as a particular skill set reservists have learned, or perhaps stemmed from the

individual personality differences and circumstances of the participants in the study, that made them particularly used to adjusting and therefore adaptable to change.

Obviously, going on a tour is the most extreme example, because we're used to switching from a weekend and switching back or a two week camp on a course and switching back, um. So you're, you're really dealing with individuals who are very adept at making that change and living with it and they're used to it, um. (P1 reference 33970,34993)

3.3.4. Theme of influence of military culture.

Military culture strongly mediates how homecoming is experienced. On operations Reservists develop a tour-focused culture, which is quite different from the one they left back home (Schein, 1996). On homecoming this different culture may clash with norms, values and assumptions of those back home who had not experienced the tour, and can be a source of friction. If the culture the Reservist inhabit back in the UK more closely approximates the military tour culture, then homecoming is made easier.

The theme of military culture consisted of 4 sub-themes:

- Hardships and taking risks teaches a different perspective on life.
- Combat can be reflected upon as personally developmental
- Learned behaviours associated with military culture have to unlearned.
- Being in civilian work where the culture aligns with that of the military, improves homecoming.

3.3.4.1. *Sub-theme 1: Hardships enabling perspective.*

For the initial 2 weeks, following his return to the U.K., P6 found some activities ironic. Comparing his experience on military operations, with the way television (TV) personalities were finding it hard to cope with living in a semi-jungle annoyed him. That his wife seemed to take the issues portrayed on TV programmes seriously also annoyed him. He thought what he had been doing while serving in the military was important and was surprised that life back in the UK and for those who had not shared his experience, seemed to pay his experiences no heed.

Um... the initial first two weeks were strange: walking... walking 'round, watching *Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* and people were in there for two weeks, complaining that they can't stand on the carpet. Yeah, it got me a bit annoyed, to be honest. I couldn't watch it. And but my... my wife was saying stuff like that, as well, she... she was annoyed at some of the things that people were doing on TV, in *Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* and all these celebrity programmes, not realising what I was doing out... out... in the country, fighting. So... (P6 reference 14072,14607)

While on operations, everyday choices became a lot simpler for the P1. Many of the mundane tasks of everyday life were taken care of. Once back in the non-military environment, decision-making reverted to more safe subjects. Priorities changed back to civilian ones. Associated with safe decisions were the normal pressures of everyday life. Military decisions by contrast, although they can have life or death consequences, were seen as generally easier to make, than decisions in civilian life, even or perhaps especially when they are important. This may be because military

decisions were seen as very much mission focused and set in the present or very near future.

I think one of the hard, hard adjustments, is, everything's done for you in the Army in terms of your, your subsistence and your living, your creature comforts, you know; you're clothed, you're fed, you're housed, you're told when to be, where. You don't have to make any decisions about living day to day. Counterbalanced against that and the difficult decisions you have to make on the ground and tactically in operations in, in the appalling circumstances you find yourselves in, and daily situations. So it's completely reversed when you come back, you're in an entirely safe situation, but, all the things that have been done for you, er, you then have to go back to doing yourself. (P1 reference 29923,30882)

P1 thought that being part of the military culture changed him and enabled him to put events in to a better perspective. This comes about through the training and situations the military placed him in, so that he had to learn to cope with difficulties. He alludes to civilian life not exposing him to events that promote such development.

It helps you put other things in perspective, so it changes you to that extent. I think being in the Military does that anyway, um, the, the, the problems and the situations you have to cope with by being in the Military, particularly a Unit like this, means when you face a sort of problem, whatever, on civvy street you can relate to how you dealt with things in the Military and you deal with them better. (P1 reference 10295,10702)

3.3.4.2. *Sub-theme 2: Reflecting on combat exposure.*

For P1 the military tour, especially when it involves fighting, become far more significant. Fighting with the inherent risks enforced existential contemplation, develops perspective. That perspective is brought home and the life experience steeped in military culture is then becomes a lens through which all life is viewed.

Now, translate that through to an Operational tour where you're fighting and suddenly things which on civvy street might have been a huge deal before are suddenly put in perspective when you think back to situations we were in out there in (name of operational theatre) when your lives were very very clearly threatened and, and a lot of us came very close to being killed. I, I'd say that's the greatest way it's effected me. It, er, you get things in a better perspective here. (P1 reference 10706,11164)

P5 compares the military to some jobs in the civilian world, where the consequences of not performing are considered serious, such as the Police. Losing control of the situation can quickly lead to an escalation of events that ultimately can lead to serious injury or death. This acceptance of the serious nature of decisions in the military has created a culture effects the way P5 views the world, whatever situation he is in. Aspects of that culture include acceptance of danger and risk, leading to experiences that bond soldiers, with a common understanding. Discipline is required to cope with the risks. However, this culture comes with development of a sense of humour even in the face of adversity.

This is not something people, normal people in normal jobs will ever deal with and some people do, um, get injured, some people do lose their lives and some

people can get severely effected by it ... if it's a Police situation they're going to not catch the person or they're not going to, they're going to lose something, they're going to, the riot's going to escalate [clears throat], you know, there's going to be, um, problem, even more problems. If it's a Military situation, you know, you're going to deal with possibly death or for, or somebody else is going to die or you don't achieve your objective and I think that having a group of people that have experienced out of the ordinary things actually bonds them and, and they have an understanding of not only are they disciplined in their mind and disciplined, um, in the things that they, they do and they experience things but then they can laugh about some of the bad things to keep themselves going and it's that humour, that understanding of, you know, ... (P5 reference 32110,33515)

Within military culture, it was accepted that the ultimate experience was to be in combat and get through such action more or less intact. This acted as the ultimate test. P1 described such experiences as immensely important, with the more intense the combat, the more affirming the experience. The importance of being able to say one had actually taken part in combat was central to feeling good about being in the Reserves.

... we all felt that we wouldn't be able to hold our heads up high next to them, and talk about the tour we'd done if we hadn't been through the same thing, which we have now. So I think I would have, many of us would have felt like frauds if we'd come back having had an eventful, an uneventful peaceful tour. (P1 reference 35799,36846)

3.3.4.3. *Sub-theme 3: Unlearning military appropriate behaviour.*

On operations, soldiers develop a heightened sense of aware, as part of their survival skills. This form of hyper-vigilance becomes ingrained. On return to the UK, P3 was aware of the contrast between operational and civilian life and characterized it as civilians not being aware of their surroundings.

You know, um, you know, but there is that excitement of when you are going down, when you are actually like patrolling down the road or whatever it's like you are aware and you are constantly watching whereas in civvy street you spend half the time asleep, um, you know. (P3 reference 7946,8216)

P1 had to learn certain behaviours very quickly in the dangerous environment of the operational theatre, based around appropriate survival skills. Making simple mistakes could lead to very serious consequences. P1 had to align his thoughts to be congruent with these survival behaviours. Once back home in the U.K., this survival-focused frame of mind had to be unlearned and more appropriate civilian behaviour had to be relearned.

... if you were driving around you don't let any other vehicles come within you... near you, if you're on foot you don't let any individuals come near you and you come back into this country and people are all around you, um. (P1 reference 4181,4495)

P5 describes how he carried on with laddish behaviour that was acceptable on operations on tour, but that in his own home with his partner, it was not appreciated. It

takes time for him to adjust from the norms of military culture back to those acceptable in his home environment and is a source of friction between them.

Then I think the things of suddenly I was still in this bloody mode turning round and going I'd see something on telly and I'd made some inane, inappropriate remark that I think it's highly funny because I know my mates would find it funny and my wife just turns round and calls me, you know, whatever. I let out the biggest fart, she turns round and says yes, you've turned into that pig again, you're now back home. So that adjustment... (P5 reference 29448,29889)

3.3.4.4. *Sub-theme 4: Advantages of aligning civilian work to military culture.*

P4 worked for an organization, where he did not care much for the work and found it boring. Shortly after homecoming, he took the opportunity to take redundancy and change careers. He found his direct line manager seemed to have no appreciation for his recent return, and would give him a hard time, for taking time off to help his wife go to hospital. He felt he was not being treated fairly.

And when I came back, you know, it was like hmm, he was very offish but, um, every time I'd take, you know, a day's sick leave or, um, you know, if I had to pick [name of wife] up from a hospital appointment or something like that, you know, and I had to take time out, it was like [tuts] TA (a.k.a. Army Reserve), is it? For fucks sake, you know, take a chill pill, you know, sit back and 'ucking relax. (P4 reference 37324,38119)

P2 was a contractor in civilian life, working for a number of quasi-military organisations and returning to civilian employment seemed relatively easy. The comments suggested that he chose to work for these organisations because he could expect to be given more support in an organisation that has some link to the military already, because they share values and culture, with many of his civilian co-workers being ex military.

I've always worked government, er , projects, either FCO [Foreign & Commonwealth Office], Ministry of Defence, British Aerospace, um, which have all had links obviously into, er, the Military, um, and a lot of the sort of lower middle management in IT seems to be ex Service personnel anyway and they, they've never had any problem with me taking time off for it, er. (P2 reference 38858,39283)

In contrast, P5 talked about work as not being aligned to the military culture he appreciated. He knew something has changed in his thinking because of his experiences and he also appreciated that he would have a period of adjustment, while he settled back into normal family, social and work life. In particular, because work life was something that was interchangeable (it was relatively easy to change jobs compared to changing friends and family), he reported that he had become perhaps more intolerant of the need to make readjustments, in order to fit in with the work environment.

So I've had to go to a senior manager and say I know I look like the bad guy that hasn't delivered, um, the objective but can I tell you and I've actu..., I've actually had to open up and I've gone, I'm not going to beat about the bush,

bang, the manager. Now then, have I changed while I've been in Afghan to the point I thought it was a bit of a ... (P5 reference 34619,36909)

3.3.5. Theme of coping with emotions.

During homecoming Reservists have to cope with issues that bring up strong emotions, which are described as potentially difficult to handle. This reflects the tremendous impact that experiencing an operational tour can have on participants, which bring about a great deal of reflection on life in general. Once back home, these thoughts affect the way 'normal' life is viewed. The theme of coping with emotions contained 4 sub-themes:

- Difficulty with communicating experiences.
- Issues around anger.
- Learning to cope with emotions and alcohol.
- Guilt and thrill seeking.

3.3.5.1. *Sub-theme 1: Difficulty with communicating experiences.*

P3 described how for talking about his experiences was made easier by keeping away from the emotional aspects and only sticking to the facts, without going into the detail of the more violent aspects.

... whereas I've not really talked about how I felt to other people, um, no. I mean, a lot of the stuff I've talked about to other people has been very sort of factual. (P3 reference 65506,65672)

P3 went on to describe that he talked to people who asked about his experiences and would provide more detail if they demonstrated during the conversation that they were handling the information.

But I haven't actually actively sort of like chosen someone, you know, to say well, I think he can handle like knowing this. I haven't actually sort of like thought about that at all, it's just like if you want to know then here you go, but otherwise, it's not information that would get volunteered, if that makes sense. (P3 reference 26466,26964)

3.3.5.2. *Sub-theme 2: Issues around anger.*

Through the interview, the researcher learned that P2 had been having relationship issues with his wife, which preceded the tour. The issues from before the tour were expressed as emotional bitterness and coloured a lot of the issues associated with homecoming.

So I know, I didn't have a good civilian friend left to talk to really and I, and obviously the bitterness now over the way he behaved, over the, over, over the incident so it's caused problems and it's still causing problems for me and my wife, um, but I will try not to let it now because I'm at the point where she, she caused the problem but he exacerbated it by behaving in the way he has. (P2 reference 46493,46887)

P2 described very well how he would get feelings of anger when back in the company of civilians on homecoming. He found their behaviour very irritating. He described

that where this anger stemmed from might be the overwhelming pace of life, compared to military life and operations and the perception that civilians consider things to be important, that military personnel, when fresh from operations, think irrelevant.

You know, I've got a bloke standing behind me all of a sudden, you know, pushing himself onto me again to give himself a bit more space, er, he kept on doing that and doing that and doing that until he got himself, er, and I could just feel myself... and, you know, I was being pretty, er, permissive and I was giving him that space so then I didn't then have to have the confrontation, er, but then it come to the point where I was, I just realised hold on a minute, why should I even bother, just knock him out, er. (P2 reference 6390,7182)

P2 survival on tour had partly depended on the way the he learned to cope and behave in crowds, expecting attack, especially in the former suicide bombers at any moment. It took time for such reactions to be unlearned once back in the UK. He put down some of his feelings to not being used to large crowds, having worked in small teams for the last 6 months.

It made it a very big different, a very different environment because really we work, we'd worked in groups of no more than sort of twelve people, had we, um, sixteen tops I would guess, er, and all of a sudden having ten times the amount of people around you as that you just, er, and it was also the environment as well so, er, and I just wasn't, wasn't happy about being in there. (P2 reference 4465,5557)

3.3.5.3. *Sub-theme 3: Learning to cope with emotions and alcohol.*

P5 returned to the UK and their personal experiences were not acknowledged, then any problems they might have around family or work were magnified. Likewise, if it was felt that the military hierarchy did not appreciate their experience, those negative emotions were carried across into the other spheres of the soldiers' homecoming in a negative way. Only after reflecting on those emotions, did the participants put the pieces together and realize that any anger they were expressing in other aspects of the life, stemmed from the "bad" tour they had experienced, compounded by the lack of acknowledgement from their senior officers of the difficult job they have done. This related to one case in particular.

... the emotions I had for two month back at home, I think they're different emotions for different reasons, you know, and the home bit, being argumentative, was probably more to do with the frustrations and the, the anger of being the way I was treated and that fell, falling on deaf ears. (P5 reference 24598,24970)

P6 reported that his behaviour and thoughts had permanently changed for the better, because of their experiences while away. Now that he was back home, he was able to see how these changes played out in day-to-day interactions. He thought that following the tour he was now much better at controlling his emotions, especially anger.

From uh... it's probably grown me up and calmed me down from... from flying off the handle a bit too soon, or from speaking before I think, sometimes. Knowing you can't sort of say this to certain people, you just

keep your mouth shut. So maybe that's what I've learned, a little bit more.

(P6 reference 30583,30873)

The MOD policy for the tour the participants had returned from was that no alcohol was to be consumed for the entire duration. He noted on his return the striking way most social activities in British society revolved around alcohol consumption. The detox of the military tour broke the link between social life, talking with people and alcohol. Post-tour when he talked about his experiences, without the support of alcohol, the emotions that surfaced had to be faced and reflected upon. Even when he did not come to any profound conclusions about this reflection, there was an appreciation that something indefinable had changed.

... when I went out to Afghanistan it was five and a half months of not drinking, now coming back from that I certainly don't have the passion for drinking that I had before and I don't, I don't, if I, if I, you know, if I've been out half a dozen times, a dozen times, you know, since coming back that's probably it. (P2 reference 9140,9970)

3.3.5.4. *Sub-theme 4: Guilt & thrill seeking.*

P3 had to cope with feeling of guilt associated with leaving family and friends behind in the U.K., so that he could go away and experience an operational tour. These feelings of guilt demonstrated how much P3 appreciated that his partner and family were the ones who would really suffer, because of the tour.

... which is the other thing that kind of makes me feel a bit guilty, if that makes sense, that, you know, maybe I had been a bit too selfish because I

think sort of psychologically she's more vulnerable, I suppose. (P3 reference 67837,68047)

For P4, the guilt stemmed from not supporting his wife during stages of her pregnancy, while he was on the tour.

I mean, you've got to have a little bit of guilt on that, haven't you, you know, but, um, being real or being realistic, you know, um, what can I do anyhow. So, you know, you accept it, you know, you talk it through and, um ... (P4 reference 22598,22987)

P1 suffered from an emotional anti-climax on homecoming, when comparing how he had felt with how he was feeling once back in the U.K. Normal everyday life and routine was found lacking. This feeling was heightened by the element of danger and combat exposure he had experienced and now missed.

... it, it, there's going to be an anti-climax at some point, of course, particularly if you've, you've been fighting every day out in theatre and then you come home. (P1 reference 6286,6445)

Although being on the tour brought up a lot of emotional thoughts and feelings for P1, he was not able to express these to others, or had no reason or desire to do so. He knew he had these feelings, but telling other people about them was not so easy. The feelings and emotions generally discussed were described in very positive and life affirming terms. On homecoming going back to the rules of normal life and everyday work was thought less satisfactory.

The kind of thing that you know when you're older you'll never regret, you'll look back and always remember those times and those things you did whereas I would argue you look back over your career and you'll never remember one distinct year to the other, particularly. (P1 reference 14647,15560)

3.3.6. Theme of reflection.

Military operational tours give Reservists time and reason to reflect upon their lives, while they are in an environment different from home. The more violent the experience of the tour, the more reason to reflect. On homecoming, former ways of living and thinking can be viewed and tested through the prism of these reflections. The reflections can be used to deal with changed circumstances at home, or may indeed provide the motivation to change the course of one's life. This theme was interpreted to have no distinct sub-themes.

For P1 the tour was a break in normal life and acted as a breather, giving him time for reflection about what he wanted to do with the rest of his life. The experience of homecoming itself was reflected upon, but he had not discussed this with other reservists. He did reflect on what the tour meant for him afterwards and how it might have changed him in some way. He reported that being away did not necessarily change them, but rather accentuated existing traits, or brought to the fore and developed issues and desires that had been latent or suppressed. The simplicity of life while on the tour enabled reflection and planning for homecoming. The ability to handle responsibility practiced while on tour remains afterwards and can be directed towards many challenges that might not have been contemplated previously.

You're, you're clothed, you're fed and you have one set of simple tasks but the responsibility is enormous so your life becomes very simple and I think you can see that, then once you're out of that situation there's no reason why you can't achieve XYZ or why you should attempt XYZ. (P1 reference 12894,13578)

P1 acted similarly, making to do lists in order to plan his time once back in the UK. The realization that he could be killed or injured was credited for providing motivating.

A case in point, when we were out, um, in theatre, in the fog, we were making lists of things that we wanted to do, places we want to go if we survived, because it was by no means guaranteed that we would all come back. (P1 reference 11831,12051)

P1 came home to an empty house, because his partner had decided to leave him while he was away. He felt that coming home to this emptiness was the biggest emotional challenge. This separation meant he had to cope with both a divorce and moving house, shortly after returning from his tour. On reflection he believed he had coped with both events well, due to his personality and the fact that he realized getting divorce was likely to have happened anyway and it felt like a release to him.

On a basic level it's good because if it didn't happen now it would have happened at some point in the future, I'm sure, so much better now, earlier, rather than later so I have a chance to meet someone else. Now, but only because we don't have children so they're not dragged through it. (P1 reference 21224,21840)

P2 had been an ex Regular soldier and while in the Reserves, taken part in many military operations. His civilian work as an IT contractor to the government also took him away from home for extended periods of time. This constant being away from home had not bothered him before. This time on homecoming, something was different. With his son starting at school, he was reflecting more on what home life meant to him.

That's not to say that they're not in my thoughts but, er, they're not at the forethought of everything so I don't tend to miss them although I, you know, I am aware, con, conscious of the fact that there's two boys there and a wife there that do miss me and one, one of the big things, I mean, um, well one of the, one of the comments that kind of rose, rose my awareness of this was, er, [name of son] started, [same] being my eldest, started school while we were away, so his first year of, of school. (P2 reference 18664,19451)

P3 also used the isolation and his downtime while on the tour to reflect

It's, um, you know, when you are out there you are working with people, you are interacting, er, you know, you're not just in isolation, you know, just being a geek. So it's all that sort of stuff. I mean, I think it's all, you know, being out there, you know, gives you a lot of time to reflect because you spend a lot of time in your pit, so [laughs] (P3 reference 12497,12852)

P4 came home to redundancy. However, this was not such an issue for him, as he had planned to change career.

So I'm now formally redundant, I'm unemployed, um, but I, what I'm also doing is, I made a decision whilst I was out there that...I got fed up previously with office work, ... (P4 reference 28785,29451)

For P5, returning to work during a period of change at his civilian workplace did not cause him any issues. He had decided he was going to make some changes at work, re-evaluate his life and career.

I think the change in me [pause], I think, did I grow up, did I have a realisation that when I came back I can't make up my mind whether I went stuff it, um, I've been treated so badly over there that they can stick it up their ring piece, I'm off and then I've looked at work and thought actually I'm not going to take your shit as well. (P5 reference 38710,39127)

P6 became a father while he was away on tour. Becoming a father brought along a number of responsibilities, which he potentially could not reconcile with military service. Becoming a father meant he was much more likely to think about leaving the Army Reserve, which when he was just a husband, he had not considered.

Yeah, she was born while I was out there, so I got back to my fiancée and a new baby, so it was quite hard, because I didn't know how I was going to feel when I was out there, when I came back. So yeah. So I'm glad that I'm back, now. Since I've been back I've got married. (P6 reference 533,814)

3.3.7. Theme of values.

The experience of an operational tour can be very value laden for a Reservist. This need to understand their military service in terms of sense making and meaning may be a reflection of contemplating their own mortality and reason for being. On homecoming these values are far sharper and foremost in the mind of the Reservist and used to judge the environment around him. The theme of values contained 4 sub-themes:

- Role of meaning making, pride and authenticity.
- How belonging to a group mediates experience.
- Developed individual values on homecoming.
- How leadership can change perception of experience.

3.3.7.1. Sub-theme 1: Role of meaning making, pride and authenticity.

P6 was very proud of the tour he had just completed. The importance of what he had participated in, he considered was marked by a senior officer being at the airport when the unit landed and the first to board the plane, to personally thank each soldier.

I felt proud to be on that plane when it landed in [name of airport]. Yeah, so I felt proud when the top man got on and said thank you to everyone personally.

(P6 reference 10903,11082)

P4 was also proud of participating on the same tour. He wrapped up this feeling in terms of patriotism and doing the right thing. He wanted to make a difference in the world and felt, that in some same way, participation in this tour had contributed to that.

I'm not a religious person or anything like that but I think, you know, if we can make a difference, you know, even a small one, say one person, you know, or whatever then, you know, we are making a difference. Um, whether we did or not, I don't know, you know, it's hard to say. (P4 reference 17399,17784)

P1 had a clear understanding that the military aims they were there in Afghanistan were unrealistic, and the reasons not clearly defined. For him, the experience itself made up for the missing higher purpose. It became very personal. What mattered was being personally challenged and doing the best he could in difficult circumstances.

... although I don't think we achieved much. I don't know if that sounds contradictory but I won't go into what the mission was but I think the situation out there and the constraints we found ourselves under meant then we didn't really achieve the mission. Er, I don't think we made any difference, no significant difference. (P1 reference 7826,8149)

P1 appreciated that in reality it would probably be very difficult for him to experience the same level of achievement on another tour. Therefore, he decided that he was going to be far choosier which tours he would volunteer to go on in future. Any future tour had to have a certain quality to provide possibilities to gain additional life experiences.

... I basically pick my tours very carefully so, on the one hand, I probably shouldn't go away again for two years. Secondly, if I do go away again it needs to be short and sharp, which was the good thing about the last one because for me it was short and sharp, it was basically like six months all in all, and, um, if I can get away with the, you know, with an even, even like shorter

period then I would. Um, so if there are tours that are very short ... (P3 reference 42959,44130)

P1 thought that being on a 'proper' tour was important. By proper he meant one that involved 'contact' with the enemy; namely danger and fighting. Being a proper soldier at last, put all the effort he had spent in to getting and maintaining his part-time military career into a positive light. The tour provided meaning to all the effort that has gone before and justified any personal cost in terms of relationships, finance, employment etc. It was clear that following homecoming, there was a difference between what he thought of military training meant and going on military operations. Additionally, there was a clear distinction between having gone on operations and then having actually experienced combat personally.

... and then there's a more sort of Unit level, not Unit level, more of a personal thing to do with the Unit where going away gives your, your membership of whatever Unit it is, gives it meaning. You know, I've been doing this for ten years and haven't been away and, um, it was nice to feel that, that that gave us some significance; it actually gave us some meaning me being in, in the Army, in the Reserves. (P1 references 8829,9234)

The importance of experiencing combat in relation to how P1 reflected upon the tour cannot be underestimated. That experience alone seems to have shaped many future actions and makes up for many of the issues that can come along with returning to normal life post homecoming. If the soldier did not share the combat part of the tour, for example, had a role based in an head quarters, then his reflections of the tour was not have been so positive, or life affirming. What mattered to them was the

opportunity to be part of the team and test themselves under the extreme challenge of harsh conditions in combat.

I would not, be talking about a tour I'd done if we hadn't been, um, fighting and hadn't gone through the experiences of being attacked daily and would not be proud of the tour, and there were plenty of people out there in both theatres of war (Afghanistan and Iraq) who will never, have never and will never get rounds down, but then I think they play a hugely important part in the war machine, so I would never look down on people who are non-combatants. But that's an issue when you join, one would hope to be combatants and so it was an affirmation, it was immensely important. (P1 reference 35799,36846)

P1 went on to say that returning home to a heroes welcome with formal recognition of the importance of what the individuals had done, acted as a symbolic focus in understanding the emotions experienced as a result of the tour. This contributed to the development of values based meaning from the experience.

You know, because you, you've looked forward to that moment for the whole tour, and you've also throughout the tour talked to your friends who you're with about their girlfriends, their wives, their family so it's a, you turn up and they, they're there and after seeing your own loved ones you can then go and meet, er, some of the other, er, wives or mums and dads. But it's a nice... closure as it were, to the tour. It's a proper homecoming in other words. (P1 reference 32902,33861)

P1 wanted to be appreciated for what he had done. There was a desire that others should recognize how important his participation and operational tour was for him. This could be expressed in terms of appreciation by others, of the danger that they had been in, or perhaps as recognition of achievement.

Um, and a sense of, er, people being proud of what their Forces are doing and thanking you. If not thanking you outright at least you can tell they're grateful for what you've done. (P1 reference 7523,7704)

3.3.7.2. *Sub-theme 2: How belonging to a group mediates experience.*

The size of the unit one went away with contributed to how P1 valued the tour on homecoming; the bigger the better. Because he went with his own unit and not as an augmentee to another unit, the camaraderie and unit cohesion affects the way he experience the tour and homecoming.

Yeah, definitely. A real sense of pride and, and belonging when we came back. And that's, that's partly coming back in a big group, it's partly having done what we did, you know, a dangerous operational tour where we were fighting every day, but you can hold your head up and say that we've done proper soldiering. (P1 reference 35382,35697)

P3 liked the sense of working for a team of like-minded people, with a clear common purpose. Working as a team with your unit, could make up for having to deal with the inevitable negative effects of working for the wider military, where bureaucratic burden, and rigid formality was to be expected.

Even if the job isn't, it doesn't really matter. As long as you're working within your own organisation and you don't have the usual Green Army [whole Army as one organization] bullshit, it's a lot more relaxed. (P3 reference 37562,37741)

3.3.7.3. *Sub-theme 3: Developed individual values.*

P3 believed that his non-military work colleagues had a positive opinion of his experiences as a soldier, which carried over into his civilian workplace. For example, he thought that he was perceived as someone who could handle pressure because of his military experience.

Um, it's all good effectively in the sense that they think I, I don't get stressed easily and I won't get, you know, I won't flap so easily because I'm used to pressure. (P3 reference 13243,13411)

P4 thought he had developed on the tour, being better at dealing with people. Something he was then able to bring home to his life in the U.K.

... you had to really practice your patience, you know, with trying to get information because there's the, um, Afghan truth, So it was, um, working with that really did make me, um, think differently, you know, how, how I deal with people and, um, if anything I think that's quite a positive thing that's come. (P4 reference 27430,28038)

3.3.7.4. Sub-theme 4: How leadership can change perception of experience.

P5 had a poor experience while he was on his tour. He had been based in a head quarters and was there without the support of the rest of his unit. He had received a poor report based on that. His experience reactions to homecoming activities were mediated by his unsatisfactory experience of the tour.

But me personally, I mean, I was absolutely disgusted that he couldn't be arsed to actually send it to me and I think it's all down to how he respects me. ... I, I don't think he was like that with everybody, so I'm not saying he's a bad Commander in that way because he can't deal with it, I think he made a decision not to deal with my conflict and I think he put his personal thing, his issue, his personal views about me, um, ahead of that. (P5 reference 47839,49603)

For P4 the bad experience with management came after the tour, when he went back to his employment. He did not like his job anyway, but what made matters worse, was the lack of recognition by his line manager, that the reason he had been away for the last year, meant something.

In this mind numbing job even though it was a mind numbing job, you know, I did a bloody good job at it, you know, which showed in the yearly appraisals, you know. They were always, you know, very good and, um, you know, it, it was just a kick in the teeth really because you expect a little bit of welcome back, you know, nice to see you, um. ... (P4 reference 35277,35995)

3.4. Discussion

3.4.1. Overview.

In this section the author placed the results in a wider context in order to provide a deeper levels of analysis. This was done through an interpretative dialogue with the results (Smith et al., 2009, p. 112-3). The interpretation of the author was based on the reflections and interpretations of the participants' on homecoming. The pre-conceptions and experiences of the author have influenced this double hermeneutic (Smith, 2004). It is acknowledged that other researchers may have interpreted the findings differently. What is important is that the author has acknowledged and bracketed his pre-conceptions and experiences and through the adherence to a defined IPA method, based in a phenomenological methodology, underpinned by hermeneutics, developed a focus on the participants' perspectives (Smith et al., 2009, p. 35). The author has taken the centre ground position, adopting both a position of critically questioning and empathetically standing alongside the participants, in order to take a look at what the participants have said from a different angle (Larkin, et al., 2006, p. 115). The aim has been to transcend the participants' own terminology and conceptualizations, placing their interpretation of homecoming, in a theoretical framework.

The interview schedule was designed to open up the broadest discussion possible with the participants, focusing on the theme of homecoming. The themes in the literature that were built in to the interview schedule were uncovering feelings about homecoming, leading to: (a) fitting back in to civilian life, at home, at work and in the

wider community; (b) whether the participants were planning to make any major changes in their life; (c) how non-military people had reacted to the participants in relation to their military service; (d) how had any discussions with others about their military service turned out; (e) what had been the most challenging aspects of homecoming for the participants; and (f) what would the participants want to change about their homecoming experience. With an appreciation of the focus of the interviews, this discussion looks at the uncovered themes and interprets them in the light of selective review of the extant literature, which is particularly resonant with these themes.

3.4.1.1. *Theme of homecoming activities.*

The first official stage to homecoming began with formal decompression in Cyprus. The participants were reticent about being forced to attend this for a number of reasons. Some considered it an extension of the tour they were on, which delayed what they really wanted to do; namely get home and see their families and friends. Also they might be reticent because they did not know what to expect. Once they had experienced it, most of the participants were happy with decompression, as it allowed them time to mentally prepare for homecoming and most felt it useful, once they had experienced it. Their experience is supported with evidence that decompression has a benefit, but only if it is managed well and with a purpose that is clearly communicated to the soldiers (Hacker-Hughes et al., 2008).

The perception of participants in this study was that they were going to Cyprus because the military establishment could not trust them to behave properly once back

in the U.K. Some found was irritating, because for the previous six months the same soldiers had been trusted with lethal use of force, under very testing circumstances, to make life or death decisions of strategic geopolitical significance. This rapid reduction in status from trusted warrior, to potential mental health case has been reported as one cause for U.S. Veterans experiencing a crisis of identity on homecoming (Demers, 2011) and could be a contributing factor why U.K. Armed Forces have been found not to seek mental health support through official channels (Fertout, Jones, Keeling & Greenberg, 2015). There is a stigma associated with mental health (Corrigan & Watson, 2002) and stigma has been found to play an important role in why military personnel may not seek mental health support on homecoming (Gould et al., 2010; Iversen et al., 2011)

Great importance was attached to the participants meeting up with their injured colleagues, who had been flown to military hospital in U.K., earlier in the tour. The psychological significance of homecoming without any serious long term injured, or dead, enabled the group to feel they could be proud of what they had done. Research dating back to the Vietnam war, has demonstrated that when Veterans have survived when some of their comrades have not and returned home to a society where the reasons for the war are questioned, then mental well-being could decrease (Wessely & Jones, 2004).

This group expressed a general understanding that they had a good tour, but those who had suffered where their partners and close family left behind. There is evidence to suggest that this perception generalizes to the whole military community, both regular and reserve (de Burgh, White, Fear & Iversen, 2011). This understanding is

one of the main reasons the participants in this study supported the formal homecoming activities put on by their unit. They wanted their families to know that their sacrifice had been appreciated. The formal welcome home and the ceremonial dinner that followed several months later, where key symbolic events, which helped the families come to terms with what they had been through. Such official events may be key to helping reservists and their partners overcome relational turbulence during the adjustment phase of homecoming (Knobloch & Theiss, 2012).

The formal ceremonies associated with military homecoming are not only important for the families, but also to the service personnel. For the participants in this study, ceremonies have far greater meaning if they are shared with those who the soldiers went on operations with. For reservists, they often go on operations with units who they are unfamiliar with and this has been seen as a reason why they experience greater adjustment issues (Browne et al., 2007). That seems not to be the issue in this study, because Reservists have had time to become comrades with the unit they serve with. Rather any issues relating to how they were treated by the military following homecoming stem from the way they were treated by their parent unit, who the Reservist did not serve on operations with. This finding may help to explain some of the prevalence of higher rates of issues with reservists on homecoming, found in other studies (Harvey et al., 2011).

Some of the negative responses found in this study towards official homecoming events organized by the military, did not stem from the fact of who organized them. Rather the events became an issue because they exposed some participants to public gaze with partners they had not seen for six months, when they were returning to

relationship issues that existed before deployment. This finding is supported by evidence that many of the issues associated with homecoming, stem from pre-deployment factors, irrespective of what went on during operations (Mulligan et al., 2012).

One finding from this study that the researcher thought particularly relevant was that participants, who planned activities with their partner, in order to rebuild personal relationships immediately on return from operations, seemed to settle back to family life the easiest. The Army Families Federation¹⁷ supports this approach (Balgarnie, 2007), but academic evidence to support the efficacy of this homecoming strategy was not found. Another finding was that successful activities around rebuilding relationships followed a clear hierarchy, with partner and young children before family and close family before social friends.

In the case of the participants in this study, their non-military friends can act as a social support network, which helps in the homecoming process. Welcome home parties are symbolic of the appreciation for the Reservists' service and played an important role in providing a form of affirmation to the participants for their operational tour from their peers. The importance of peer support groups to helping in homecoming has been documented in the case of serving soldiers where peers equates to those soldiers still serving with them (Westwood et al., 2010; Etherington, 2012; Hatch et al., 2013).

¹⁷ Army Families Federation: <https://aff.org.uk>

Activities around negotiating a return and taking up the role of partner, family member and friend were not considered an option. Activities enabling the participants to fit back in to work were more negotiable. On homecoming, Reservists may choose to go back to the same job, or they may choose to look for a new one. In this study getting back to work was shown to be secondary to rekindling close personal relationships. Research based on Regulars leaving the military suggests that successful transitioning from the military to civilian life depends on successfully finding employment (Humensky, Jordan, Stroupe and Hynes, 2013) and having secure finances (Elbogen et al. 2012). In this study, participants were more interested in the quality of employment they were going back to and quite happy to begin the process of looking for new employment, should they be dissatisfied. This may be a reflection of their acceptance and ability to cope with the transitory nature of employment in the modern world (Lomsky-Feder, Gazit & Ben-Ari, 2008) and evidence for the effectiveness of U.K. legislation that protects the employment rights of Reservists returning from operations (Reserve Forces (Safeguarding of Employment) Act, 1985; Reserve Forces Act, 1996). The two biggest issues were trying to find employment that was interesting and provided satisfaction and the way direct line managers treated them.

3.4.1.2. *Theme of adjustment & social support networks.*

One factor in this study was the role that military friendship, or camaraderie played in homecoming. One of the transitions the participants had to cope with was loosening the personal bounds that had been formed with their team-mates while on operations, as a requirements of fitting back in to the other social roles he was expected to

perform. An element of conflict can occur, when the normal demands of a close relationship with the participant's partner and close family start to conflict with the social network of the military comrades. Social identity theory has been used to examine why citizens are prepared to serve as Reservists, especially in the current era of "wars of choice", where the likelihood of being asked to participate in conflict and be exposed to life-threatening risk, has increased (Griffith, 2009). The bonds created under operational conditions afford a level of social support not normally experienced in civilian life, which when loosened may give rise to reduced well-being on homecoming (Hatch et al., 2013).

The participants in this study generally did not expect the transition back in to normal family life and social circles to be completely smooth. This was not seen as anything abnormal and was to be worked through over a period of a few weeks to a month or so at most. Other participants found homecoming activities with partners, based on what the partner wanted to do as irritating and something that got in the way of what they considered the more important activities around getting back in to civilian work. In these cases the rebuilding of relationships did not go so smoothly. Some participants expected their partners to feel the same way, while some thought their partners needed to develop some personal characteristics akin to the concept of hardiness or psychological resilience in order to cope with the Reservist being away and that would have benefits on homecoming. Research has shown that much of the distress service members experience on homecoming is as a consequence of the difficulties encountered during efforts to successfully reintegrate with their families and communities (Danish & Antonides, 2013). Studies in the US have shown that military relationships are prone to high separation rates (Hogan & Furst-Seifert, 2010)

and that partners and wives suffer lower rates of well-being when their soldier partners are on operations (De Burgh, White, Fear & Iversen, 2011). The evidence also suggests that as the Reservist settles back in to family and work routines over time, the issues tend to recede (Faber, Willerton, Clymer, MacDermid & Weiss, 2008).

Similarly to the issues found with partners, rekindling relationships with children can be problematic on homecoming. For at least 6 months, all parental responsibilities have fallen to the partner. There is evidence of increased emotional and behavioural problems in children when parents are deployed (White, De Burgh, Fear & Iversen, 2011). The military attempts to help with advice and services parents can access, which have now been made available to Reservists (Balgarnie, 2008b). However, a primary reason cited for Reservists wanting to leave the military following operational deployment, is poor military family welfare support (Dandeker et al., 2009).

In this study, participants seem to have got themselves in to a position with their civilian work and careers, that going away for extended periods of time on operations was not a serious issue. This could be intentional planning, or a by-product of the lives they choose to live. The culture of the organisations they work for is often supportive of their military exploits. Often they are quasi-military, or governmental, where extended leave of absence is accepted for many reasons, not just military service. Some participants were self-employed and chose to be that way, because it gave them the flexibility to conduct operations and then step back easily in to civilian life. Reservist commitment could then be considered as part of a portfolio career (Cooper, 2005), reflecting the very adaptable nature of the role they already inhabit within society (Vest, 2013).

3.4.1.3. *Theme of influence of military culture.*

This study revealed a commonly held view amongst the participants. Their experiences in the military had afforded them the opportunity to develop a certain perspective of life they considered unique, or at least different from the perspective associated with normal civilian society. This perspective was embodied in the culture of the military, which influenced their experience of homecoming. It could be expressed as an understanding that everyday activities and ritual of modern western life, that were considered important to those who had stayed in the UK; partners, friends, employers and society in general, were not so important to the participants. A framework that might be useful in understanding and examining this perspective probably lies in the philosophy of cynicism (Branham & Goulet-Caze, 1996). From that starting point it is not a large step to consider the role of hardiness in homecoming. Hardiness has been proposed as the trait thought to protect Reservists from war related stress (Bartone, 1999) and as a buffer to psychological health on homecoming (Dolan & Adler, 2006). Some participants planned activities to help their partners develop hardiness, in order to help them cope with the Reservist being away and because they thought it would lead to better homecoming in the future. The military certainly believes in the possibility of developing this trait in order to assist soldiers with post-deployment adjustment (Adler, Williams, McGurk, Moss & Bliese, 2015).

The participants in this study had been on a tour together that had exposed them to considerable violence and many had participated in direct fighting. The value they

placed on the tour was increased because it had been combative, bringing their status above those members of the Armed Forces, Regular or Reserve, who had not participated in combat operations. This value was significantly increased if they had themselves been directly involved in the combat. Reservists have suffered from the stigma of being classed not as good as their full time counterparts (Alcock et al., 2015). In times of financial austerity, this has led to Reservists being under trained and under equipped (Dandeker et al., 2011). This stigma has been associated with decreased levels of well-being on homecoming (Dandeker et al., 2009), partly due to having less social support networks (Harvey et al., 2011). Combat exposure been linked to increased wisdom and likened to an insightful epiphany (Jennings et al., 2006). The importance of the role of participating in combat and how that mediates the experience of homecoming, has been demonstrated by the way some Veterans have been judged to elaborate their involvement in combat, in order to gain societal respect (Jones & Milroy, 2016).

Participants reported that on operations, they had to learn behaviours and modes of thinking that would not be considered appropriate in normal society. The behaviours are both physical and psychological survival necessities. On homecoming, some of these behaviours and modes of thinking, which may lead to negative reactions from others including family, friends, work colleagues etc. and are unlearned over a fairly short period of time. Some frameworks that may help in understanding these differences could include the concept that exposure to traumatic events, may not necessarily lead to psychological ill health (Hacker Hughes et al., 2005), short-term emotional reactions to experiences while on operations are to be expected and not treated as mental health problems, and should be allowed to subside in their own time

(Wessely, 2004) and that some soldiers may have changed in some fundamental way, and look forward to more opportunities for exposure to danger (Braender, 2016).

3.4.1.4. Theme of coping with emotions.

Some of the participants in this study reported that they did not find it easy to talk about their experiences with those who had not been on operations. They considered that those without this experience could not understand their feelings and might judge what they said negatively. One area of research that may go some way to explaining this is the stigma associated with mental health issues, which have been barriers to military personnel seeking support (Sharp et al., 2015). From the other side, research has been carried out showing how a lack of appreciation for the life lead by service personal can lead to those charged with providing support, being less effective (Coll, Weiss & Yarvis, 2011). Anger was seen in the participant group and may be associated with pre-existing issues, rather than with any specific traumatic combat experiences (MacManus et al., 2015; Rona et al, 2015) The use of alcohol was also mentioned by some participants and plays a role how they coped with emotions on homecoming. The heavy drinking culture associated with British society (Szmigin et al., 2008) and the U.K. Armed Forces in particular (Jones & Fear, 2011), has a considerable negative impact on adjustment issues related to homecoming (Thandi et al. 2015). Another emotion the participants had to deal with on homecoming was guilt towards their loved ones, for leaving them, while they went off to have their military experience. This has also been found elsewhere in the research, along with other emotions of benefit, appreciation and alienation (Adler et al, 2011).

3.4.1.5. *Theme of reflection.*

This theme can be understood in terms of the participants considering existential questions about themselves during and following the operational tour, which became an important part of the homecoming experience. The tour acted as a break in the normal civilian routine, enabling the some participants to compare, reflect and take stock of his life. The military tour as relief from civilian job stress and burnout has been studied (Etzion, Eden & Lapidot, 1998). If these reflections lead to a positive re-evaluation, then the homecoming was more successful. The concept that soldiers generally can have a positive experience from military operations is far from new (Wessely, 2006). Evidence is developing that military experience can end up having positive benefits following homecoming (Jennings et al., 2006). The concept that captures much of what the participants expressed when they reflected on their military experience and homecoming can be examined using the framework of post traumatic growth (Linley & Joseph, 2004, 2011). As such post traumatic growth can be seen as a subset of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

3.4.1.6. *Theme of values.*

The participants placed personal meaning of the tour. The effect of the importance or value the participant placed on the tour had a powerful influence on how their homecoming was perceived. This value can be bolstered or corroded by the Reservist's military command. The way service personnel felt on homecoming depended, to a large extent, on how the society viewed the conflict. The more widely the civilian community shared the same belief and values towards the conflict, the

better the homecoming experience. A mismatch of these values has been shown to lead to negative experiences in veterans, as in the diagnosis of Lack of Moral Fibre by the RAF at the beginning of WW2 (Jones, 2006c). The controversial term was an administrative one rather than a psychiatric diagnosis. It was born out of military necessity to keep bomber crews flying during a period of heavy casualties. It was dropped as the casualty rates declined later in the war, when Britain was no longer in such a dire position and public opinion against the concept grew. The literature supported a clear link found between leadership, unit cohesion, morale, and common mental disorders (Jones *et al.*, 2012). This link accounted for the influential UK study that found reservists had increased ill-health including mental ill-health on homecoming following service in Iraq, compared to their regular counterparts (Browne *et al.*, 2007). This increase was due to the way they were employed and treated both in theatre and on return to the U.K.; namely, as individual augmentees, attached to Regular units, who were not treated the same or afforded the same benefits afforded their regular counterparts. On their return they went straight back to their civilian jobs, without any thought from the Army about their integration back in to civilian society.

Reservists felt proud of their contribution to the military operations they had participated in. On homecoming their sense of having participated in something important was validated by the fact that senior officers in the military had made special efforts to attend their arrival in the U.K. and welcome them back personally. The role of supportive leadership has been shown to increase cohesion, morale and mental health of service personnel (Jones *et al.*, 2012). A review of psychiatric lessons following the Vietnam War argued that culture and social attitudes mediate

the effect of military operations on homecoming (Wessely & Jones, 2004). On homecoming, many Veterans experienced negative attitudes from the general public, towards their involvement, in what had by then turned out to be an unpopular war back home in the U.S. The controversial argument is that the postwar adjustment problems some Veterans developed on homecoming, were as much caused by the reaction of the general population to returning soldiers, as it was due to any experiences directly related to combat. Jones & Wessely (2005) defined culture as an elusive phenomenon of a system of meaning and learned patterns of group behaviour.

The participants in this study were not naïve to what they had achieved; they did not consider they had made the world a better place. Rather the pride and sense making of their experience was internally validated, in that they knew they had done achieved their tactical level tasks and had remained true to their own set of values. On homecoming, these values were not attacked by society. For the participants in this study, the pride they felt in the tour was mirrored by the positive support directed towards them, both from their superiors and the general public and may have contributed positive affect on their homecoming experience. Social identity theory may go part of the way to explain the importance of being accepted by the group to how Reservist might feel towards operations (Griffith, 2009). The importance of having supportive groups in order to reflect and make sense of military experiences is well supported (Greden et al., 2010; Rona et al., 2009; Wessely, 2006). On homecoming, the group expands to partners, family, friends, work colleagues and the rest of society, where the Reservist takes on the role of Citizen Soldier, represented their society and the values it stands for (Vest, 2013).

The value the Reservists placed on the tour was affected positively by the authenticity of the military activities they undertook. The combative nature of the operation the participants of this study shared, made their contribution more meaningful and justified many of the sacrifices they had made in terms of relationships, employment and finance on homecoming. The importance of the risk shared can be perhaps demonstrated in the research that shows Veterans on homecoming can fabricate the degree of risk they were exposed to, in order to benefit from the social support and approval they perceived they would receive from society (Jones & Milroy, 2016). Other studies suggest that combat exposure can lead to benefits on homecoming, which include mitigating negative mental health affect, positive adaption to stress and increased wisdom in later life (Jennings et al., 2006).

There is evidence the more challenging the circumstances one experiences in harsh environments the more an individual's values change to reflect that experience (Kiaergaard, Leon, Venables & Fink, 2013). This form of personal development has also been seen in the spouses of military personal left behind, coping with the stress of being at home, while their partners served on operations (Spera, 2011) and has been found to generalize in non military populations (Duan, Guo & Gan, 2015). The military attempts to foster these values, in terms of what it considers the personality trait hardiness (Bartone, 1999) and has turned this in to formal training on homecoming (Castro, Hoge & Cox, 2006), which at the time of writing is under review with the U.K. Armed Forces (Foran, 2013).

4. Phase 2 – Q Sort

This chapter details the Q methodology (Q Sort) phase of this study and is divided into four sections:

- 4.1. Introduction to Q methodology.
- 4.2. Research method detailing design and content (materials used), participant recruitment, sample size, description, piloting, administration, statistical data analysis.
- 4.3. Results (factor interpretations), providing a full and holistic representation of the relevant viewpoints.
- 4.4. Discussion demonstrating why and how the results matter.

4.1. Introduction to Q methodology

This phase built on the theory developed in the IPA phase, that the experience of homecoming could be conceptualized by way of six themes. The aim of this Q Sort phase was to resolve these themes down to underlying latent factors, thereby accessing the shared viewpoints of participants about the experience of homecoming.

4.1.2. Q data, Q sort and standardization.

Q Sort is the method by which Q data is subjected to Q methodology. In this phase, the experience of homecoming is the Q data. Q data starts as data that refers to a single object of enquiry or subject matter, but is different in composition or character, or *heterogeneous*. In order to become Q data it must be standardized to be uniform in composition or character, or *homogeneous*. To achieve this, the data is sorted in terms of *psychological significance* to each participant (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 15). The data is entered in a correlation matrix. Each row of Q Sort data in the correlation matrix is then treated as a single holistic entity. This entity captures the point of view of the individual conducting the Q Sort, towards the object of enquiry (homecoming). The data is then enhanced by the imposition of a pre-arranged normal frequency distribution, forcing a relatively large proportion of the items towards the midpoint and permitting fewer peripheries (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 16).

4.1.3. By-person factor analysis.

In Q methodology, the factor analysis is looking at groups of people, rather than traits across people. By applying correlation statistics to the rows of the Q Sort data matrix, the degree of agreement, or disagreement between the entire set of items rankings produced between any two persons can be calculated (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 17). The next step is to apply Q factor analysis to the whole correlation matrix, as a means of reducing the number of factors. The co-variation between what would have been considered disparate individuals can then be understood in terms of alternate manifestations of a number of latent factors, which reveals the groups shared perspective, viewpoint or attitude about the single object of enquiry or subject matter (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 18).

4.2. Method

4.2.1. Participant recruitment.

The author as a Reservist had access to a Reserve unit. The participants were selected from one unit of the U.K. Territorial Army (now Army Reserve). The participants for the Q Sort study were different from the participants in the IPA study. All selected participants were assessed as having viewpoints that mattered in relation to the research question. In particular, all had experience of homecoming, following a tour of military service.

4.2.2. Sample size.

Watts & Stenner (2012, p. 72) point out that applying R methodological logic to selecting participant numbers would be inappropriate to Q methodology. Rather Q methodology requires the researcher to create the Q set first and then select the appropriate number of participants. Kline (1994) suggests a minimum ratio of two participants to every research variable. The variables in this case are the 49 Q Set items. This would suggest a maximum of 24 participants. Webler, Danielson & Tuler (2009) provide a figure closer to 17 participants, based on the number of Factors one expects to uncover. In this case 20 participants were considered sufficient, as more quantity does not lead to greater quality in Q methodology (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 72) and is consistent with the number of respondents for other studies (Allan, 2010 [23 participants]; Hinkson, 2013 [20 participants])

4.2.3. Q Set design and content.

The items of a Q Sort are known as a Q Set. Stephenson (1952) suggested that a Q Set might be composed of anything from objects, statements, descriptions of behaviour, or traits. Therefore, it is useful to apply a scheme in order to focus effort and apply rigour to the generation of the Q Set (Watts & Stenner, 2012, pp. 54-56). In this study, the Q Set took the form of statements based on the findings of the phase one (IPA) of this study. The scheme applied to develop the Q Set items, was based on the aim of uncovering any shared viewpoints about the experience of homecoming for Reservists, following an operational tour of duty. The aim of the research was stated clearly at the beginning of the administration of each Q Sort. This was done in order to set each Q Sort in context and help avoid ambiguity in the minds of participants. In turn this was meant to assist participants in sorting along a single face valid dimension of *most agree* to *most disagree* (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 53).

4.2.3.1. From IPA themes to Q set statements.

In Q methodology, *concourse* refers to all forms of communication about a subject matter (Brown, 1993). It has been left to other researchers to develop an approach to design that has generally been agreed to deliver good enough Q Sets (Shemmings, 2006; Shinebourne, 2009; Herrington & Coogan, 2011). The Q set can be composed of objects, but more generally consists of written statements, which cover all the relevant ground in as thorough, a fashion as possible. In order to enable the participants to respond via the Q Sort with their point of view, it is imperative that the Q Set does not appear value laden or biased towards any particular viewpoint (p. 58). Here it should be stressed that design perfection is probably not achievable. However, Stanton-Rogers (as

cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 66) has argued that this does not invalidate Q methodology, because evidence suggests participants will try hard to impose their viewpoint on any set of items and it is this imposed meaning that the author is trying to capture.

It has been argued that while Stephenson was instrumental in developing Q methodology, he was vague in providing detail how to actually go about designing Q Sets (Watts and Stenner, 2012). Watts and Stenner suggest that a broad concourse will enable the Q Set to provide good coverage and representative balance of the concourse topic. They also state that there are basically two ways to sample the concourse in order to achieve this; structured and unstructured (Watts and Stenner, 2012, p. 59). In this phase, the author sampled four sources of the concourse in order to create the Q Set statements used for the Q Sort.

4.2.3.2. Structured sampling of the homecoming concourse.

The first and primary sample source consisted of the results from phase one (IPA) of this study. In order to be structured, it is argued that concourse has to be broken down into themes (Watts and Stenner, 2012, p. 59). The results from the IPA phase were presented as themes and therefore presented a methodologically sound way to create the Q Set items. Specifically, the items were developed directly from IPA codes that made up the themes. The use of the codes as the basis for the Q Set items delivered two major benefits: (a) the effort and rigour required of Q Sort (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 57), and (b) a neat way of providing the integration between the two phases of this study, as required in pragmatic mixed methodology (Hanson et al, 2005).

The IPA phase interpreted six themes from 151 codes (Appendix G). Using an iterative and hermeneutic approach, the initial IPA codes were reviewed within the overall context of each IPA theme, to come up with the Q Set of items for the Q Sort.

Throughout this process, the aim was to strike the right balance between reducing the Q Set statements to a practical number on the one hand and ensuring that as much of the concourse of military homecoming experiences was represented on the other (Watts & Stenner, 2012, pp. 56-65). Specifically, the following steps were taken over a period October 2012 to March 2013:

- The literature on military and homecoming was reviewed.
- Every code in the IPA themes was compared with every other code by inspection, removing those that were synonyms.
- IPA results were reviewed and broken down in to essential elements that were assessed by the author to be part of the concourse of homecoming, using his expert knowledge and experience.
- Q Set statements that were developed during this process, were cross-referenced against the elements from the IPA results.
- Q Set statements were cross-referenced, with the long form notes created for each theme, based on the original IPA interviews (Appendix I).
- Codes were grouped together to prevent overlap, unnecessary repetition, or redundancy.
- No items were created just as an opposite, in order to not waste data.
- Any negatively expressed statements were written in the positive, in order to avoid confusion over double negatives.
- The wording of each statement edited to remove complicated terminology, ensure clarity and conciseness.

- A continuous process of editing and review of existing Q Set statements and writing new statements was conducted in order to update Q Set list.
- Using informal interviews, items were peer reviewed with members of the Army Reserve, not involved in the actual Q Sorts.
- Items were reviewed with the author's supervisor.

The number of Q Set statements developed from each theme, were not in exact proportion to the number of IPA codes generated for each theme. Smith et al., (2009, p. 98) argued that support for emergent themes should not be over-emphasized by the frequency with which codes appear, because it is possible that very important themes may be evidenced by only one occurrence. This argument was used to overcome the *balanced-block* approach to design (Fisher, 1960, as cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 59), as it was assessed that not matching the number of IPA theme codes to Q Set items did not threaten the underlying validity of Q methodology. It is suggested that the number of statements developed should range from anywhere between 10 and 100. In practice, 40 to 80 items have been found to be a good standard, with as few as 25 items proving to work, if the research question warrants it (Watts & Stenner, 2012, pp. 61-62). Finally, it must be acknowledged that the implicit assumption being made using the structured approach to create the Q Set items was that the IPA themes adequately covered the experience of homecoming.

4.2.3.3. *Unstructured sampling of the homecoming concourse.*

In order to overcome the possibility that the IPA themes might not have covered all the ground adequately, a more artful and intuitive approach was also applied as a secondary

source of sampling (Watts & Stenner (2012, p. 59). Three unstructured sources were used to review the items created from the IPA codes: (a) the author's personal experience of being a Reservist who had been on a number of operational tours; (b) informal interviews with Reservists who had experienced homecoming; and (c) the published literature on Reservists and homecoming. Unstructured here refers to the means by which the Q Set was constructed, not to the absence of structure (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 66). In summary, 151 IPA codes were used to create 49 Q Set statements and are compared below (Tables 3 to 8).

Table 3: From IPA Activity Theme Codes to Q Set Activity Statements

IPA Codes	Q Set Statements
<p>Dissatisfied with official events Everyone's back Formal decompression Gradual return to TA routine Graduated return back to work Happy with decompression Ideal homecoming Injured colleague Making an impact at work Official homecoming Partner needs attention Phased work re-integration Phased social re-integration Planned adjustment time Poor personnel administration Pre-planning the cost Preparing for worst case Proper welcome home Seeing injured colleagues Smaller teams Speed of adjustment TA adaptability Temporary focus on family code Unhappy with official homecoming</p>	<p>From first theme of activities described the more official aspects of homecoming and how what happens there affects the experience. Descriptions of the activities the soldier planned with his close relations, which were not official, but really helped him in the homecoming process. Following on from this, the ideas of the soldiers about what they think would make for a better homecoming experience, when commenting on the official and more formal activities associated with homecoming. From this theme the following 11 (1-11) Q-set items were generated:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The military briefs I got before leaving theatre, to prepare me for homecoming where useful 2. Attending the decompression phase before returning to the UK was important 3. The military system in general treated me properly throughout the homecoming process 4. Knowing my injured comrades were OK after the tour, was important 5. I felt proud of participating in a military operation 6. It is important to include family and friends in the official homecoming events 7. Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me 8. It was important to do some special activities with my partner in order to rebuild a relationship 9. It was important to do some special activities with my friends in order to rebuild these relationships 10. I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit in to the normal routines of my work 11. I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit into the normal routines of civilian life, outside of work

Table 4: From IPA Adjustment Theme Codes to Q Set Adjustment Statements

IPA Codes	Q Set Statements
Adjusting back to family life Adjustment Anxious about family reaction Appreciating partners problems Developing partner hardiness Different priorities Affect of children Effect on children Family feeling rejected Getting used to family's emotions Getting used to your family Partner's experience of homecoming Partner's reaction to soldier's behaviour Reflecting on adjustment Relationship problems Relatives fear of PTSD Supportive partner Talking to partner Unofficial home coming	Adjusting back to family life (including partner, family and close friends), as opposed to adjusting back to other less intimate social networks and working life. From this theme the following 6 (12-17) Q-set items were generated: 12. After my last tour, I found it difficult to adjust to being away from my military mates. 13. Following my last tour, I felt my relationships with my civilian friends were strained. 14. I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour. 15. I found it difficult to adjust to being with my non-military friends again, following my last tour. 16. I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job, following my last tour. 17. I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues, following my last tour.

Table 5: From IPA Military Culture Theme Codes to Q Set Military Culture Statements

IPA Codes	Q Set Statements
<p>Army vs. civilian friendships Army vs. Civilian life Army vs. Civilian work pressure Civilian skill fade Describing differences Differences between TA units Easier for others Employer lack of support Employer support Expecting anti-climax Inappropriate questions Lack of emotional intensity Military perspective Out of comfort zone Phased adjustment from military to civilian Reaction of civilian mates Sense of danger Separation from friends Separation from mates Sharing experiences with outsiders Supportive boss Supportive work mates Talking about experience Talking about facts not feelings Talking to tour mates Useful friend</p>	<p>The difference between military and civilian culture and how sharing the experiences of being away on tour effect homecoming. Such issues include: missing ‘true’ friendships; the invaluable role of having someone who understands military culture as a person to talk to about your experience, if you have issues. From this theme the following 10 (18-27) Q-set items were generated:</p> <p>18. I looked at civilian life differently, following my last tour. 19. My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends. 20. It is easier to make decisions about day-to-day things on an operational tour, compared to making decisions back in civilian life. 21. In general, life on an operational tour is less stressful than life back in the civilian world. 22. My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return from my last military tour. 23. My direct line manager was supportive of me and helped me to reintegrate back into civilian work. 24. My experiences on my operational tour have helped me in some way in my civilian life. 25. My work colleagues and friends respected me more, because I have been on an operational tour. 26. I had to unlearn certain behaviours associated with surviving on an operational tour, once I was back in the UK. 27. My experiences on my operational tour, led me to question or change what I do for a civilian job.</p>

Wondering about other's experience Work based personality issues Work nerves	
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Table 6: From IPA Emotions Theme Codes to Q Set Emotions Statements

IPA Codes	Q Set Statements
Alcohol culture Alcohol detox Anger building up Assault on senses Changes to attitude and behaviour Controlling anger Feeling guilty Feeling strange Irritation anger Judgemental Life's contradictions Not extreme emotions Ochlophobic anger Overwhelming emotions Pre-existing problem Relationship breakdown Resenting method Resenting relationship sacrifices Settling back to normal Suppressing emotions Wife's reason	<p>Issues of handling and expressing thoughts, feelings and emotions around anger and resentment; the role of drugs, especially alcohol, their effect on senses and emotions; pre-existing emotional problems and how all these effect homecoming. From this theme the following 12 (28-39) Q-set items were generated:</p> <p>28. I felt a bit deflated when I came back from my last operational tour.</p> <p>29. Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experiences on my return from my last operational tour.</p> <p>30. I found it easier to talk to strangers about my operational tour, than to people who know me well.</p> <p>31. I only talked about light-hearted, less serious moments of my tour, on my return to the UK.</p> <p>32. I noticed that my consumption of alcohol reduced after my last tour, compared to before the tour.</p> <p>33. I noticed how the pace of civilian life is very much faster than military life, on my return from my last tour.</p> <p>34. On returns from my last operational tour, I felt that I was now a better, more rounded person.</p> <p>35. I felt guilty on my return for having left my partner and family, when I went on my last operational tour.</p> <p>36. It took some time for me to learn to relax in crowds, once I was back from my last operational tour.</p> <p>37. Returning home following an operational tour was the spur for making big personal changes in my life, which I knew were important even before the tour.</p> <p>38. On return from my last operational tour, I appreciated the good things I have in my life.</p> <p>39. On return, my last operational tour made me appreciate all aspects of my life more.</p>

Table 7: From IPA Reflection Theme Codes to Q Set Reflection Statements

IPA Codes	Q Set Statements
<p>Accentuate existing trait Becoming a father Coping with change Empty house Enabling career change Forced to move Good reasons Liberating Losing goals Make an effort Making changes Making lists No regrets Possible future Power of reflection Reflecting on army career Reflecting on life stage Regretting married life Setting priorities Simplifying life Social changes Subtle change Valuing time What's important Work life balance</p>	<p>The tour acts a break in the normal civilian routine, enabling the soldier to reflect and take stock of his life. If this reflection leads to a positive re-evaluation, then the homecoming is more successful. From this theme the following 4 (40-43) Q-set items were generated:</p> <p>40. The homecoming period was a time when I reflected about what was important in my life. 41. Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my personal life. 41. Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my civilian employment. 43. Reflecting on my operational tour led me to make better decisions in all aspects of my life once home.</p>

Table 8: From IPA Values Theme Codes to Q Set Values Statements

IPA Codes	Q Set Statements
Affirmation Appreciation by others Bigger group Choosing good tours Civilian perception Close knit unit Combat affirmation Combat perspective Credibility Different this time Difficult mission Doubts about mission Good thing Justifying mission Lack of achievement Lack of acknowledgement by civilians Lack of acknowledgement by command Mission failure On balance positive Personal value Positive experience Positive reaction towards soldiers Public opinion Reflecting on value of tour Returning heroes Sense of duty	The affect, importance or value placed on the tour by the soldier, his higher command, the military in general, or the wider civilian community, has on the soldiers experience of homecoming. From this theme the following 6 (44-49) Q-set items were generated: 44. I felt appreciated for my contribution to my last operational tour. 45. My friends and work colleagues think I'm a better at dealing with stressful situations, because I have been on an operational tour. 46. Having been in 'contact' with the enemy makes an important difference when judging the whole operational experience. 47. I felt tested as a person on my last operational tour. 48. I believed in the overall military mission as to why I was on operations. 49. Any positive feeling I had relating to my last operational tour soon wore off and did not amount to much once I was home.

Sense of injustice Sense of pride Sense of significance Strategic success Thrill seeking Understanding TA unit Unit experience	
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4.2.4. Materials.

The in person, or face-to-face method of administering the Q Sorts was selected because the author was able to find and meet participants easily (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 74). There were two main benefits to face-to-face data collection: (a) less potential for confusion due to misunderstanding complex written instructions (p. 87) and (b) benefiting from the richness of data that could be gained from direct contact with the participants (p. 75), especially during the post-sort interviews (pp. 81 – 83). It was important to consider the locations each Q Sort would be conducted, so that the cards created were not too big to manage, or too small to read and were robust enough to withstand interference from local conditions, such as wind and weather. The Q Set statements (Tables 3 to 8) were transferred to plain white card and laminated. Each card measured 4cm x 4cm. The typeface was selected to be easy to read. A Q Sort distribution template was created on stiff paper that was laminated to enable the Q Sort measuring 60cms x 40cms, (Figure 2). All the tools could be rolled up and fit into a cardboard tube for protection and ease of transportation. An iPhone was used to take a picture of the final Q Sorts and record the post-sort interviews for later analysis.

4.2.4.1. *Shape and size of frequency distribution.*

A Q Set with 49 items normally warrants an 11-point distribution (-5 to +5) in order to prevent the participants from feeling restricted in expressing extremes of most important and most unimportant (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 80). In this study the participants had considerable experience of the military and homecoming ranging from three to 29 years and one to six tours (Table 9). The researcher took the opportunity to maximize from

this experience by flattening the distribution (Brown, 1980). This offered the participants the opportunity to make fine-grained discriminations in the extremes. Therefore the 49 statements were matched to a distribution ranging from -6 to plus 6 (Figure 2).

Figure 3: Q Sort template forced choice frequency distribution

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1)												(1)
	(2)											(2)
		(3)										(3)
			(4)									(4)
				(5)								(5)
					(6)							(6)
						(7)						

4.2.5. Piloting.

The cards, distribution template and Participant Information Sheet were piloted with 3 members of the Army Reserve, who were selected from the military unit of the author. They did not participate in the main Q Sort. They were selected based purely on pragmatic expedience of being available when the Q Sort instrument was ready for testing. The selection criterion was that they had participated on an operational deployment. The instructions for the participants were printed and delivered verbally.

Table 9: Participants' details

Participant	Sex	Age	Marital status Single/ Partner/ Married/ Divorced	Children	Years military service Regular + Reserve = Total	Number of military tours	Nature of tour was life threatening Number of life threatening tours	Military rank	Civilian occupation
01	M	50	D	2	0 + 22 = 22	3	1	Capt	IT Project manager
02	M	43	M	1	10 + 9 = 19	3	2	Major	Financial consultant
03	M	36	S	0	0 + 11 = 11	4	2	Sgt	Journalist
04	M	38	S	0	5 + 7 = 12	4	4	Cpl	Specialist Decorator
05	M	44	S	0	0 + 17 = 17	3	0	Cpl	Private security
06	M	47	D	0	4 + 25 = 29	2	1	Cpl	Construction manager
07	M	39	P	2	0 + 20 = 20	2	1	Cpl	Electrical lineman
08	M	49	S	0	0 + 22 = 22	2	1	WO2	NHS manager
09	M	49	M	2	6 + 22 = 28	2	1	WO2	Teacher
10	M	38	S	0	0 + 9 = 9	3	1	Cpl	Property developer
11	M	41	P	2	10 + 15 = 25	3	1	Sgt	Service manager
12	M	48	P	3	7 + 15 = 22	4	3	WO2	Landlord & Builder
13	M	43	M	2	0 + 25 = 25	6	6	WO2	Fire officer
14	M	46	M	3	0 + 21 = 21	1	0	Capt	Electrician
15	M	38	P	2	0 + 10 = 10	1	1	LCpl	Private security
16	M	31	S	0	0 + 7 = 7	2	1	LCpl	Manager family business
17	M	34	M	0	9 + 5 = 14	6	0	LCpl	Civil servant SOCA
18	M	37	M	0	0 + 10 = 10	3	2	LCpl	Police officer
19	M	25	M	0	0 + 3 = 3	1	0	Pte	Outdoor education
20	M	26	S	0	0 + 8 = 8	2	0	LCpl	Project manager

4.2.6. Main Q Sort.

The author selected and went along on a number of his units' training events May and June 2013. The events were held at a number of military training areas throughout the south of England and Wales. During the course of these events, individual Reservists were approached and asked if they would care to participate. Strategic sampling was conducted, based on the author's personal knowledge of the group. Participants were selected from across the rank structure of the military.

One of the main limitations associated with Q Sort, is the participant's unfamiliarity with the procedure (Dennis, 1986, p. 6). By being with the participants as they performed the Q Sort, the author was able to deal with this limitation by coaching them through the process. The additional benefit of being there was that he became more familiar with the participants' feelings about the topic (Dennis 1986: p. 6). Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, were handed and asked to read a *Participant Information Sheet* (Appendix K), which they kept. Participants were then asked to read and sign a *Consent Form For Participants In Research Studies* (Appendix C, p. 14). The author stayed with the participants, while they made their Q Sort, which is considered by some the preferred way of gathering data, compared to post or online (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 74). This enabled any questions about the procedure of sorting to be addressed as they occurred. This also mitigated the need to create elaborate instructions, which are used to reduce the issues noted with gathering data at a distance (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 87).

The Q Sort distribution template was then laid out and the cards shown to the participants. The cards were not numbered, so that the participants could not infer any relationship between each card. Once the author was sure the participant was clear about the instructions, the participant was asked to commence sorting. This started with the participants pre-sorting the items into three provisional categories: (a) feel positive towards, (b) feel negative towards, and (c) feel indifferent too or unsure about. The three piles of cards were then placed on the right for category one, left for category two and centrally below for category three, of the template (Figure 3). Starting with either the statements they most agreed with (most relevant), or most disagreed with (least relevant), the participants then placed the cards on the template, creating their Q Sort. At the end of the sorting, the result was recorded using a mobile phone camera.

Immediately on completion, the participants were interviewed in order to gather post-sorting information, using digital recording for referral during the process of interpretation. This was done in order to achieve a richer and more detailed understanding of each participant's Q Sort. Firstly, biographical data was captured (Table 9). Then the participants were asked to talk through the reasons they placed, or ranked items as they did. In particular, the meaning of items placed at the extremes of the distribution template was explored. After that, the focus of the interview shifted to items the participant found particularly significant. Finally, questions were asked to appreciate the participants' wider understanding of the issues (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 81-2).

4.3. Results

4.3.1. Summary.

A total of 20 Q Sorts were inter-correlated and factor analyzed. Four factors were extracted and rotated, of which one was a bi-polar factor and separated in to two parts making a fifth factor for interpretation. Together the factors explained 41% of the study variance (Table 10). 19 of the 20 Q Sorts loaded significantly on one or other of the factors. Factor loadings of ± 0.37 or above were significant at $p < 0.01$ level.

The results have been split in to three phases, which correspond to the methodological transitions (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 180):

1. From Q Sorts to Factors.
2. From Factors to Factor Arrays.
3. From Factor Arrays to Factor Interpretations.

4.3.2. From Q sorts to factors.

The following details the process of extracting the factors from the participants' Q Sorts.

4.3.2.1. *Software package.*

The software used to conduct the Q analysis was PQMethod version 2.33 for Mac (Schmolck, 2013). The approach used by Watts & Stenner (2012, p. 195-218) was used

to conduct the analysis. The final 31-page output file from PQMethod can be viewed (Appendix L).

4.3.2.2. *Varimax rotation & centroid factor analysis.*

Q methodological analysis is an inductive approach, belonging to the wider body of exploratory factor analysis. Watts & Stenner (2012, p. 125) suggest that when the main concern of the analysis is the majority viewpoints of the group, Varimax rotation is the preferred choice. Varimax rotation statistically tries to ensure that each Q Sort has a high factor loading in relation to only one of the study factors. The factors are positioned so that the overall solution maximizes the amount of study variance explained (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 125). Centroid Factor Analysis was performed on the data, because it allowed for exploration further along the process of analysis (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 100-1).

4.3.2.3. *Correlation matrix.*

A correlation matrix was created from the 20 participant Q Sorts (Appendix L, p. 1). It measured the extent to which each Q Sort was similar to every other Q Sort. The total correlation matrix represented 100% of the meaning and variability of the participants, in relation to the research question. This is known as the *study variance* (Kline, 1994).

4.3.2.4. *Variance & the process of extraction: unrotated factor loadings.*

The basic function of factor analysis was to account for as much of the study variance as possible. This meant explaining as much as possible of the relationship that holds between the participants' 20 Q Sorts, through the identification of any sizeable common meaning (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 98). The analysis looked for shared sorting patterns in the data and extracted the first portion of common variance; this became Factor 1. It is usual that the first factor extracted accounts for the largest amount of variance, or shared ground, through which any group of participants and their viewpoints are connected. A *factor loading* in the form of a correlation coefficient, described the extent to which each Q Sort was typical of the pattern in each factor. Any factor with a loading ≥ 0.37 (Equation 1) was considered significant (Appendix L, p. 2; Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 107).

Equation 1: Significant factor loading at the 0.01 level of significance for a Q Set of 49 items

$$\geq 2.58 \times (1 \div \sqrt{\text{number of items in the Q Set}})$$

$$\geq 2.58 \times (1 \div \sqrt{49})$$

$$\geq 2.58 \times (1 \div 7)$$

$$\geq 2.58 \times 0.143$$

$$\geq 0.37$$

4.3.2.5. Residual correlations.

With every subsequent factor extracted, the amount of variance accounted for steadily decreased. This was because each extracted factor removes a sizeable portion of the shared ground. This left what are termed *residual correlations* (Watts & Stenner, 2012,

p. 10-12). This process theoretically matched how each participant compared two items by what was of most meaning to them first using psychological significance as the unit of measure (Burt & Stephenson, 1939, as cited in Watts & Skinner, 2010, p. 276) before moving on to make second and third order comparisons.

4.3.2.6. *Unrotated factor matrix.*

The factor analysis continued searching the residual correlation matrix, also known as the *Table of First Residuals*, for any further portions of common variance, until it finds the next factor. This process is iterative, until no more common variance i.e. factors were detected in the data. The end products were factor loadings, indicating the initial association, or correlation, of each Q Sort with 7 factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 114-122). This appeared as a table in the PQMethod output file as the *Unrotated Factor Matrix* (Appendix L, p. 2).

4.3.2.7. *Factor extraction & eigenvalues.*

The initial unrotated analysis produced 7 factors. To make sense of the data, the PQMethod Centroid Factor Analysis required the author to choose the number of factors to extract (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 95-6). Eigenvalues (EVs) are probably the most commonly used criteria for making decisions and deciding how many factors to retain in the final solution (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 105-6). EVs are a special set of scalars associated with a linear system of equations (Weisstein, 2007). Initially the author used the QCENT feature of the PQMethod software, to produce a number of output files; extracting 3, 4, 5, 6 and then 7 factors and visually inspected to review EVs.

Extracted factors with EVs less than 1.00 were closely reviewed and considered for exclusion, because mathematically they accounted for less study variance than a single Q Sort (Guttman, 1954; Kaiser, 1960, 1970). The process was made more complicated by a known glitch in the PQMethod software, which failed to provide EVs for rotated solutions (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 206). This required all EVs to be calculated by hand. This method proved to be interesting if not productive, as each file showed pros and cons in the use of the data. Through a combination of experience (Coogan, 2013) and using the *magic number* (Brown, 1989, as cited in Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 106), the initial 7 factors were kept and subjected to rotation. The two main reasons this was considered acceptable were: (a) factors that are statistically insignificant might still shed light on commonalities between Q Sorts, and (b) one can always reduce the number of factors at a later date.

4.3.2.8. *Factor rotation.*

When reviewing the *Unrotated Factor Matrix* (Appendix L, p. 2) and the *Cumulative Commonalities Matrix* (Appendix L, p.3), visual inspection showed that Factors 3 and 6 added very little extra understanding at an explanatory variance level, both with EVs of 1. Therefore Factors 1, 2, 4, 5, & 7 were selected and subjected to Varimax rotation.

The significant factor loading remained the same at ≥ 0.37 and was used to decide:

- Which Q Sorts loaded significantly on a single factor i.e. those that possessed a single factor loading of 0.37 or more.
- Which Q Sorts were confounded or load significantly on more than one factor i.e. those that possessed more than one factor loading of 0.37 or above.

- Which Q Sorts did not load significantly on any of the factors i.e. those Q Sorts that possessed no factor loadings of 0.37 or above.

4.3.2.9. *Factor inversion.*

Factor 5 had an eigenvalue of approximately 0.8 (Appendix L, p.2). At this early stage it was not possible to conclude whether there were four or five factors; and whether one or two of them had *bipolar facets* (Watts & Stenner, 2012, pp. 133-139) or were two separate factors. In order to decide which rotation would come up with the preferred solution, *by-hand* rotation (Watts & Stenner, 2012, pp. 122-5) was performed to create 3 different configurations, to reflect the potential for bipolar factors. Each configuration was then subjected to Varimax rotation (Coogan, 2013). The 3 configurations were:

1. Keep 5 Factors (1, 2, 4, 5, 7) invert Factor 7.
2. Keep 4 Factors (1, 2, 4, 7) invert Factor 7.
3. Keep 5 Factors (1, 2, 4, 5, 7) invert Factors 5 & 7.

In deciding which of the 3 variant rotations to use for the analysis, a number of different criteria were used. In order to create factor estimates, weighted averages of the individual Q Sorts that loaded significantly on that factor only must be used. Under condition 1 (5 Factors invert Factor 7) Q Sort 11 for Factor 4 was relatively high at 0.6141 (Appendix L), therefore the weighting would be high. All other Factor 4 loadings were low, which meet with one type of selection criteria (Jordan, Capdevila & Johnson, 2005). However, if this were used, then it would have to be used across all the sorts. The data did not allow this, therefore this criteria was dropped. Factor estimates should be the composite of at least two Q Sorts. This last point precludes the interpretation of factors that are associated with only one defining Q Sort. Condition 3

(5 Factors invert 5 & 7) was eliminated as it had one confounding Q Sort (16) and therefore only has one Q Sort left (11) for Factor 4. Finally, condition 2 (4 Factors invert Factor 7) was selected. This was because the steady decline in the value of the eigenvalues suggested 4 Factors would be better than 5. Also, having fewer factors than the other 2 conditions, it was closer to the parameter of extracting one factor for approximately every 6-8 participants (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 107). Finally, with only 20 Q Sorts in this study, the starting point for the number of factor extractions was 4 (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 197). These different criteria resulted in the choice to take the 7 extracted factors and reduce them to 4. The fourth factor was considered bi-polar (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 133) and was separated out in to its own fifth factor by rotation of 180 degrees. The results of this selected solution for the Varimax rotation are displayed (Tables 10, 11 & 12).

Table 10: Eigenvalues and Variance

Factors	1	1	3	4	5
Variance	9	10	10	6	6
Eigenvalue	4.41	4.9	4.9	2.94	2.94

Table 11: Rotated Factor Matrix

Participants	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
01	0.2030	0.2350	0.0818	0.6647X	- 0.6647
02	0.2957	0.4296X	0.2235	0.0446	- 0.0446
03	0.5043X	- 0.1213	- 0.0121	0.1147	- 0.1147
04	0.1237	0.3647	0.5088X	0.1132	- 0.1132
05	0.0908	0.1584	0.4893X	0.3059	- 0.3059
06	0.1294	0.1385	0.0950	0.2033	- 0.2033
07	0.2881	0.3624	0.2373	- 0.0199	0.0199
08	0.1177	0.5138X	- 0.0128	- 0.1559	0.1559
09	0.2011	0.5529X	- 0.1390	- 0.0309	0.0309
10	0.6821X	0.2207	0.2075	0.0208	- 0.0208
11	0.2288	0.1144	0.1162	- 0.1153	0.1153
12	0.2236	0.3458	0.5434X	- 0.0196	0.0196
13	0.0249	- 0.0431	0.4684X	- 0.0331	0.0331
14	0.7078X	0.1931	0.1223	0.0189	- 0.0189
15	0.1043	- 0.2310	0.7465X	0.0623	- 0.0623
16	0.1022	0.2273	0.1807	- 0.4321	0.4321X
17	0.0436	0.1789	- 0.0358	- 0.5459	0.5459X
18	0.4338X	0.1954	0.3639	0.0152	- 0.0152
19	- 0.153	0.4093X	0.1225	0.0916	- 0.0916
20	- 0.2121	0.6232X	0.0837	0.2058	- 0.2058

See footnotes ^{18 19 20 & 21}¹⁸ Taken from Appendix L, p. 4¹⁹ X marks a significance factor loading ≥ 0.37 ²⁰ A zero (0) or minus (-) represents no or negative correlation respectively²¹ Factors 4 & 5 are bipolar factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 133-139)

4.3.3. From factors to factor arrays.

The ranking of each item was compared across factors in the PQMethod table *Factor Scores with Corresponding Ranks* (Appendix L, p. 6-7). It uses the z scores to facilitate comparison. The z scores for the factors are listed in the PQMethod output file under the heading *Normalized Factor Scores – For Factor X*, where X stands for each Factor from 1 to 5 (Appendix L, p. 9-18). The factor arrays for all five of the factors are listed (Table 12) in the PQMethod output file in the table *Factor Q Sort Values for Each Statement* (Appendix L, p. 39-40). These factor arrays are the basis for the factor interpretations and have been turned in to exemplar factor Q Sorts (Figures 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7).

Table 12: Factor Arrays for all 5 Factors

No.	Statements	Factors				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The military briefs I got before leaving theatre, to prepare me for homecoming where useful.	-5	2	-3	0	1
2	Attending the ‘decompression’ phase before returning to the UK was important.	-6	1	-5	-2	2
3	The military system in general treated me properly throughout the homecoming process.	0	2	-4	2	1
4	Knowing my injured comrades were OK after the tour was important.	5	-2	2	-2	-1
5	I felt proud of participating in a military operation.	1	5	6	3	-4
6	It is important to include family and friends in the official homecoming events.	-3	4	-2	0	-3
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.	-5	0	-6	0	0
8	It was important to do some special activities with my partner in order to rebuild a relationship.	4	0	-4	1	0
9	It was important to do some special activities with my friends in order to rebuild these relationships.	-4	0	-1	-4	4
10	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit in to the normal routines of my work.	0	-3	-2	2	-4
11	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit into the normal routines of civilian life, outside of work.	1	-1	-3	0	-5
12	After my last tour, I found it difficult to adjust to being away from my military mates.	-1	-4	-2	-3	0
13	Following my last tour, I felt my relationships with my civilian friends were strained.	-2	-4	-1	-5	-3
14	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour.	0	-6	-1	-5	0
15	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my non-military friends again, following my last tour.	0	-5	-3	-1	0
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job, following my last tour.	1	-5	1	3	-3
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues, following my last tour.	0	-3	1	1	-2
18	I looked at civilian life differently, following my last tour.	3	0	3	-1	-1
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.	5	6	2	3	6
20	It is easier to make decisions about day-to-day things on an operational tour, compared to making decisions back in civilian life.	1	5	1	-2	2
21	In general, life on an operational tour is less stressful than life back in the civilian world.	2	4	3	-4	4
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return from my last military tour.	-2	3	1	-6	-1

23	My direct line manager was supportive of me and helped me to reintegrate back into civilian work.	-2	2	-5	0	5
24	My experiences on my operational tour have helped me in some way in my civilian life.	4	1	0	-1	3
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more, because I have been on an operational tour.	-3	3	-2	5	-2
26	I had to unlearn certain behaviours associated with surviving on an operational tour, once I was back in the UK.	2	0	0	2	-2
27	My experiences on my operational tour, led me to question or change what I do for a civilian job.	0	-2	5	2	2
28	I felt a bit deflated when I came back from my last operational tour.	-1	-1	0	-2	1
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experiences on my return from my last operational tour.	-1	1	0	-3	4
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my operational tour, than to people who know me well.	-3	-4	-1	-4	-5
31	I only talked about light-hearted, less serious moments of my tour, on my return to the UK.	2	-2	-3	2	3
32	I noticed that my consumption of alcohol reduced after my last tour, compared to before the tour.	-2	-1	-1	0	-2
33	I noticed how the pace of civilian life is very much faster than military life, on my return from my last tour.	-3	2	2	-1	1
34	On returns from my last operational tour, I felt that I was now a better, more rounded person.	3	2	3	1	3
35	I felt guilty on my return for having left my partner and family, when I went on my last operational tour.	4	-1	-4	-1	-1
36	It took some time for me to learn to relax in crowds, once I was back from my last operational tour.	-4	-3	3	3	0
37	Returning home following an operational tour was the spur for making big personal changes in my life, which I knew were important even before the tour.	-4	1	4	-2	3
38	On return from my last operational tour, I appreciated the good things I have in my life.	6	4	4	4	1
39	On return, my last operational tour made me appreciate all aspects of my life more.	3	3	1	-1	1
40	The homecoming period was a time when I reflected about what was important in my life.	-1	1	-1	-3	1
41	Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my personal life.	-1	1	2	4	-3
42	Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my civilian employment.	-2	-1	2	1	-1
43	Reflecting on my operational tour led me to make better decisions in all aspects of my life once home.	3	0	1	5	-2
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to my last operational tour.	-1	-2	0	4	-4
45	My friends and work colleagues think I'm a better at dealing with stressful situations, because I have been on an operational tour.	2	0	0	1	5
46	Having been in 'contact' with the enemy makes an important difference when judging the whole operational experience.	1	-1	4	1	2
47	I felt tested as a person on my last operational tour.	1	-2	5	0	-1
48	I believed in the overall military mission as to why I was on operations.	2	3	0	6	-6

49	Any positive feeling I had relating to my last operational tour soon wore off and did not amount to much once I was home.	0	-3	-2	-3	0
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4.3.3.1. Factor-exemplifying Q Sorts.

Factor interpretation could be carried out, by simple reference to the Z scores (Table 12) (Zambelli & Bonni, 2004). Watts & Stenner (2012, p. 140) suggest that Z scores are converted for each individual item in a factor into a single factor-exemplifying factor array. Each exemplar factor array is a single Q Sort, configured to represent the viewpoint of that factor. Grouping the items into an array entails loss of information relative to the Z score, because continuous data is being reduced to ordinal form. However, these exemplar Q Sorts captured the holism of the factors point of view, in line with the ethos of Q methodology (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 149).

The exemplifying Q Sorts cannot be perfect, in that they are very unlikely to perfectly match any individual participant's viewpoint. In the absence of the perfect Q Sort, the factor arrays are estimates and therefore must contain some error. This error accounts for any inter-correlations between factors, which mathematically are *orthogonal* and therefore zero-correlated (Watts & Stenner, 2012, pp. 117-22). The exact nature and size of the correlations was outlined in the PQMethod table *Correlations Between Factor Scores* (Appendix L, p. 8).

4.3.4. From factor arrays to factor interpretations.

Factor interpretation “takes the form of a careful and holistic inspection of the patterning of items in the factor array” (Stenner, Cooper & Skevington, 2003, p. 2165). The factor arrays provide the basis for the factor interpretations. The aim of the interpretation is to uncover, understand and fully explain the viewpoint captured by each factor and shared by the significantly loading participants.

4.3.4.1. *Crib sheets.*

The author generated Interpretation *crib sheets* to aid in the holistic factor interpretations (Tables 13, 14, 15, 16, 17) for each factor (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The crib sheets placed each statement from its factor in to one of four basic categories:

1. The highest ranking.
2. Statements ranked higher in the factor than by any other factor (Appendix L, p. 39).
3. The lowest ranking.
4. Statements ranked lower in the factor than by any other factor (Appendix L, p. 39).

The crib sheets helped to identify items of potential importance ranked in the middle or zero point of the distribution that acted as a fulcrum about which the whole viewpoint was expressed. Further investigation by adduction was carried out in reference to other items in the factor array and using the comments of significantly loading participants, these served to confirm and clarify the situation. The use of the crib sheets aided in drawing attention to potentially crucial middle ranking items, which were identified in order to conduct a full interpretation.

4.3.4.2. *Presentation of results.*

The results are presented with biographical detail about those participants who loaded significantly on each factor ranking item. There follows the exemplar Q Sort (Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) and the crib sheet used for interpretation (Tables 13, 14, 15, 16, 17). The

interpretation is provided and followed with notes recorded by the author, based on the post Q Sort interviews conducted with the participants where they clarified the interpretation. The following notation was used e.g. (24: +4) indicates that statement 24 was ranked in the +4 position, in the factor array exemplar Q Sort for that factor.

4.3.5. Factor 1 – Homecoming reflection on personal growth.

Factor 1 had an eigenvalue of 4.41 and explained 9% of the study variance. 4 participants were significantly associated with this factor (Table 9: 03, 10, 14, 18). They were all male, with an average age of 39 years. 1 was married and had children. They had an average of 2.75 operational service tours, of which the average was 1.25 tours, where the nature of the tour was perceived as a threat to life. They had on average 12.75 years service in the military and their ranks ranged from Lance Corporal to Captain. Their collective viewpoint with respect to the research question can be described by reference to an exemplar Q Sort for Factor 1 (Figure 3).

Figure 4: Factor 1 Exemplar Q Sort

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	1	9	6	13	12	3	5	21	18	8	4	38
	7	36	25	22	28	10	11	26	34	24	19	
		37	30	23	29	14	16	31	39	35		
			33	32	40	15	20	45	43			
				42	41	17	46	48				
					44	27	47					
						49						

Table 13: Factor 1 Crib Sheet

Statements ranked +5 or +6	
38	On return from my last operational tour, I appreciated the good things I have my life.
4	Knowing my injured comrades were OK after the tour was important.
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.
Statements ranked higher by factor 1 than by any other factor	
4	Knowing my injured comrades were OK after the tour, was important
8	It was important to do some special activities with my partner in order to rebuild a relationship.
24	My experiences on my operational tour have helped me in some way in my civilian life.
35	I felt guilty on my return for having left my partner and family, when I went on my last operational tour.
39	On return, my last operational tour made me appreciate all aspects of my life more.
34	On return from my last operational tour, I felt that I was now a better, more rounded person.
18	I looked at civilian life differently, following my last tour.
11	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit into the normal routines of civilian life, outside of work.
26	I had to unlearn certain behaviours associated with surviving on an operational tour, once I was back in the UK.
14	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour.
15	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my non-military friends again, following my last tour.
49	Any positive feeling I had relating to my last operational tour soon wore off and did not amount to much once I was home.
38	On return from my last operational tour, I appreciated the good things I have in my life.
Statements ranked at -5 or -6	
2	Attending the 'decompression' phase before returning to the UK was important.
1	The military briefs I got before leaving theatre, to prepare me for homecoming where useful.
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.
Statements ranked lower by factor 1 than by any other factor	
2	Attending the 'decompression' phase before returning to the UK was important.
1	The military briefs I got before leaving theatre, to prepare me for homecoming where useful.
36	It took some time for me to learn to relax in crowds, once I was back from my last operational tour.
9	It was important to do some special activities with my friends in order to rebuild these relationships.
37	Returning home following an operational tour was the spur for making big personal changes in my life, which I knew were important even before the tour.

6	It is important to include family and friends in the official homecoming events.
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more, because I have been on an operational tour.
33	I noticed how the pace of civilian life is very much faster than military life, on my return from my last tour.
42	Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my civilian employment.
32	I noticed that my consumption of alcohol reduced after my last tour, compared to before the tour.
Other interpreted statements	
19, 43, 21, 45, 48, 5, 16, 20, 46, 47, 10, 17, 27, 12, 41, 13, 22, 23, 7	

4.3.5.1. Factor 1 interpretation.

Factor 1 was characterized by a sense that going on a military tour was a personal growth experience (24, +4), which broadens the mind (34, +3). On homecoming, following a period of reflection (43, +3), this was expressed as an appreciation for the good things in life (39, +3), when compared to the experiences on the tour (38: +6).

Although these emotions had an effect on homecoming, they were not thought as the driving force for change (49: 0) and did not lead to profound changes (37: -4) (42: -2) (41: -1) (27: 0). Also there was a feeling that something had changed in the individual and therefore something needed to change in their civilian life to match this (18, +3).

Why the participants were on a military mission was not so important an element in the personal development aspect of the tour (48: +2), or whether they had been specifically been in combat (46: +1). However, the sense of pride (5: +1) they had in themselves, born out of a sense of surviving the test (47: +1), did to some small extent contribute to homecoming well-being.

There was a strong sense that gaining this life experience was at a risk, which had not been at the expense of a comrade dying (4: +5). This would have introduced an element of guilt, which may have lead to questioning the sense of positive development. The

effect of the experience was multiplied by the fact it was shared with friends. This emotional multiplier may have gone either way, depending on the outcome. This belief in and value for close relationships were central to carrying that good feeling home (19: +5), although it was not necessary to remain in close contact with comrades (12: -1).

Less influentially, but still an important element of this viewpoint that made it distinct was the appreciation that on homecoming, participants had to rebuild personal relationships (8: +4). However, this need came as much from a feeling of guilt, that the reservist had a good personal development experience, but had done so possibly at the expense of others (35: +4). This was not really the case for work relationships (11: +1), as work was clearly not as important to homecoming as getting family life right (22: -2) (23: -2) (10: 0). Likewise, relationships with non-military friends were either unimportant, or did not need to be worked on, in order to manage homecoming (9: -4) (13: -2).

There was bound to be a period of transition during homecoming, where what was appropriate while on tour, had to be unlearned (26: +2). Alcohol was not thought to be an issue with homecoming (32: -2). This adjustment was not thought of as an issue and was thought to happen quite quickly (36: -4), but was a clear distinguishing element (14, 0) (15, 0) (17, 0). Civilian life was thought to be more complicated (21: +2) than military life (20: +1), if not more interesting (33: +3). Applying military logic did not seem to fit with civilian norms and values (16: +1), despite the fact that civilian friends and work colleagues had a high regard for the participants abilities (45: +2), this respect was not necessarily born out of the reservists' military experience (25: -3).

The formal homecoming briefs (1: -5) and decompression (2: -6) provided by the military were thought of little use. Even events provided by the unit had little value (7: -5) both for the reservists themselves and their civilian partners and friends (6: -3).

4.3.5.2. Factor 1 clarifying comments.

... best thing I've done, got a buzz out of it, better than work in the office ...
being there with you mates, enjoying the experience, the crack, then coming
home and having to deal with the same old shit back home, that was a lick out
... P 03

... after all that time training and getting ready for action, finally to have a
chance to go somewhere and do it for real decompression, don't think
much of it really, tried to avoid it on every tour, as it gets in the way ... P 10

... might not have made much of any difference in the big scheme of things, but
I no I worked hard, looked after my team, ... and was proud how we'd
performed ... P 18

4.3.6. Factor 2 – Homecoming experienced as adjustment, not stress.

Factor 2 had an eigenvalue of 4.9 and explained 10% of the study variance. 5
participants were significantly associated with this factor (Table 9: 02, 08, 09, 19, 20).
They were all male, with an average age of 40.4 years. Two were married and both of
these had children. They had an average of 2 operational service tours, of which the
average was 0.8 tours where the nature of the tour was perceived as a threat to life. They

had on average 18.2 years service in the military, of which 14.8 years were in the reserves and their ranks range from private to major. Their collective point of view with respect to the research question can be described by reference to Factor 2 exemplar Q Sort (Figure 4).

Figure 5: Factor 2 Exemplar Q Sort

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	15	12	10	4	11	7	2	1	22	6	5	19
	16	13	17	27	28	8	24	3	25	21	20	
		30	36	31	32	9	29	23	39	38		
			49	44	35	18	37	33	48			
				47	42	26	40	34				
					46	43	41					
						45						

Table 14: Factor 2 Crib Sheet

Statements ranked +5 or +6	
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.
5	I felt proud of participating in a military operation.
20	It is easier to make decisions about day-to-day things on an operational tour, compared to making decisions back in civilian life.
Statements ranked higher by factor 2 than by any other factor	
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.
20	It is easier to make decisions about day-to-day things on an operational tour, compared to making decisions back in civilian life.
6	It is important to include family and friends in the official homecoming events.
21	In general, life on an operational tour is less stressful than life back in the civilian world.
39	On return, my last operational tour made me appreciate all aspects of my life more.
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return from my last military tour.
1	The military briefs I got before leaving theatre, to prepare me for homecoming where useful.

3	The military system in general treated me properly throughout the homecoming process.
33	I noticed how the pace of civilian life is very much faster than military life, on my return from my last tour.
40	The homecoming period was a time when I reflected about what was important in my life.
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.
Statements ranked at -5 or -6	
14	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour.
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job, following my last tour.
15	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my non-military friends again, following my last tour.
Statements ranked lower by factor 2 than by any other factor	
14	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour.
15	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my non-military friends again, following my last tour.
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job, following my last tour.
13	Following my last tour, I felt my relationships with my civilian friends were strained.
4	Knowing my injured comrades were OK after the tour was important.
12	After my last tour, I found it difficult to adjust to being away from my military mates.
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues, following my last tour.
49	Any positive feeling I had relating to my last operational tour soon wore off and did not amount to much once I was home.
27	My experiences on my operational tour, led me to question or change what I do for a civilian job.
47	I felt tested as a person on my last operational tour.
46	Having been in 'contact' with the enemy makes an important difference when judging the whole operational experience.
45	My friends and work colleagues think I'm a better at dealing with stressful situations, because I have been on an operational tour.
Other interpreted statements	
5, 38, 25, 48, 37, 41, 11, 31, 10, 36, 30	

4.3.6.1. Factor 2 interpretation.

Factor 2 was characterized by the viewpoint that being on a military tour was less stressful, than normal civilian life (20: +5). With respect to the research question, this equates to the stress of homecoming (21: +4). From this viewpoint, there was a good

clustering of support from work (22: +3) (23: +2) and civilian work colleagues (25: +3). In civilian work, these reservists were not known for having to deal with stressful events (45: 0), with the pace of civilian life being considered faster than while on tour (33: +2).

Coming home was much easier from this viewpoint (14: -6) with little or no adjustment period (36: -3). The military system had worked for these reservists (3: +2) and the briefs on what to expect on homecoming were thought useful (1: +2). Having family and friends share in this sense of being part of something, aided in the process of homecoming (6: +4), so despite not central, official homecoming events were appreciated (7: 0). Conversations with family and friends about the tour flowed easily (30: -4) and were honest (31: -2). Leaving behind military comrades was not an issue (12: -4), neither was adjusting back to friends (15: -5) (13: -4), civilian work (16: -5) (10: -3) and colleagues (17: -3). Nothing had happened to make the reservists question why they would be returning to civilian work (27: -2), or was required to fit back in to a normal civilian routine (11: -1).

Being in the military was highly valued (19: +6) and this was supported by a sense of pride in participating in military operations (5: +5) and a belief in the mission (48: +3). Worrying about comrades did not challenge this, who had been injury or killed (4: -2). The last tour these Reservists were on seemed not to have been very testing (47: -3) or dangerous (46: -1). However, there was an appreciation for being home and the values which support this way of life, that had been bought in to stark relief by contrast to the state of the world the reservists had just come from (39: +3) (38: +4). This positive attitude towards the experience remained after homecoming (49: -3) and lead to a period of reflection about what to value in life (40: +1), with some consideration towards making important changes to civilian life (41: +1) (37: +1).

4.3.6.2. Factor 2 clarifying comments.

... the pressures I have in my day job now, loads more than doing this. When I was going on ops, life was very simple, had no worries about job was a Regular see. P 02

No I really appreciate things now, much more, much more than before, get a sense of perspective, little things don't really bother me, not like the big stuff that can come around the corner, anytime ... P 08

...going away was great, I got something out of it. Coming home was a bit of a let down. You don't want to go back to anything boring and have to deal with those who don't get it. P 19

Easy peasy on the op, coming home, then stuff got trickier, work, family, stuff, my old job making me work harder to make up for stuff ... P 20

4.3.7. Factor 3 – Ascribing value and meaning on homecoming.

Factor 3 had an eigenvalue of 4.9 and explained 10% of the study variance. 5 participants were significantly associated with this factor (Table 9: 04, 05, 12, 13, 15). They are all male, with an average age of 42.2 years. One was married and two were in stable relationships. All three had at least two children each. They had an average of 3.6 operational service tours, of which the average was 2.8 tours where the nature of the tour was perceived as a threat to life. They had an average of 17.8 years service in the

military, of which 15.2 years were in the reserves and their ranks range from Lance Corporal to Warrant Officer Class 2. Their collective point of view with respect to the research question can be described by reference to Factor 3 exemplar Q Sort (Figure 5).

Figure 6: Factor 3 Exemplar Q Sort

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	2	3	1	6	9	24	16	4	18	37	27	5
	23	8	11	10	13	26	17	19	21	38	47	
		35	15	12	14	28	20	33	34	46		
			31	25	30	29	22	41	36			
				49	32	44	39	42				
					40	45	43					
						48						

Table 15: Factor 3 Crib Sheet

Statements ranked +5 or +6	
5	I felt proud of participating in a military operation.
47	I felt tested as a person on my last operational tour.
27	My experiences on my operational tour, led me to question or change what I do for a civilian job.
Statements ranked higher by factor 3 than by any other factor	
5	I felt proud of participating in a military operation.
47	I felt tested as a person on my last operational tour.
27	My experiences on my operational tour, led me to question or change what I do for a civilian job.
37	Returning home following an operational tour was the spur for making big personal changes in my life, which I knew were important even before the tour.
46	Having been in 'contact' with the enemy makes an important difference when judging the whole operational experience.
18	I looked at civilian life differently, following my last tour.
36	It took some time for me to learn to relax in crowds, once I was back from my last operational tour.
34	On return from my last operational tour, I felt that I was now a better, more rounded person.

42	Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my civilian employment.
33	I noticed how the pace of civilian life is very much faster than military life, on my return from my last tour.
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues, following my last tour.
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my operational tour, than to people who know me well.
13	Following my last tour, I felt my relationships with my civilian friends were strained.
Statements ranked at -5 or -6	
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.
2	Attending the 'decompression' phase before returning to the UK was important.
23	My direct line manager was supportive of me and helped me to reintegrate back into civilian work.
Statements ranked lower by factor 3 than by any other factor	
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.
3	The military system in general treated me properly throughout the homecoming process.
23	My direct line manager was supportive of me and helped me to reintegrate back into civilian work.
35	I felt guilty on my return for having left my partner and family, when I went on my last operational tour.
8	It was important to do some special activities with my partner in order to rebuild a relationship.
45	My friends and work colleagues think I'm a better at dealing with stressful situations, because I have been on an operational tour.
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.
Other interpreted statements	
38, 21, 4, 41, 6, 1, 2	

4.3.7.1. Factor 3 interpretation.

Factor 3 was tightly focused and strongly expressed the viewpoint that the homecoming experience has a powerful impact on the reservists. The reservists were looking to re-capture something lost on the tour. Feeling proud about what they had done comes top of the array (5: +6). They felt tested on their tour (47: +5). The feeling was driven partly by the threat to life whilst on tour, or combat, and this was viewed as a positive (46: +4). Life now looked sweeter for the reservist and needed to be savoured (38: +4). This

positive outlook on life transferred over to civilian life (18: +3), delivering developmental benefits (34: +3). The intense experience was a very personal one, not necessarily born out of camaraderie (19: +2). This did not mean the reservist did not care for his comrades (4: +2), just the experience felt very personally, because it was born out of extreme threat to life.

The official homecoming activities both before returning to the UK (1: -3), on route back (2: -5) and once back with the unit in the UK were not valued (7: -6) and the reservists perhaps felt let down by the military system on homecoming (3: -4). This may account for the expressed view, not to want family and friends to be part of any official events (6: -2)?

There was a period of adjustment back in to civilian life (36: +3), but this was to be expected and not fretted over. This spilled over in to civilian work relationships (17: +1) and the workplace (16: +1). This had the potential for friction with the reservists' management (23: -5), where the reservists' going away was not appreciated (45: 0). Personal relationships on the other hand fell back in to place quickly (13: -1), without any undue fuss (8: -4). Perhaps some guilt was felt about leaving the family for so long. Despite the threat to life, at first military life was more relaxed and ordered than the chaos and pace of civilian life (33: +2).

Once adjustment was underway, the reservists questioned (42: +2) what they did for civilian work (27: +5) and made big changes in their personal lives (37: +4) (41: +2).

4.3.7.2. Factor 3 clarifying comments.

Been on lots of tours and I guess the tricky ones, make you think what's important, why when you go home, you just can't be bother with rubbish stuff, important stuff I mean ... but we did a good job and got through the dangerous bits without letting the side down ... P 04

... and all that show at the end was bullshit, compared to the way I had been treated, everyone being so nice, when what I would have wanted was just to go home, but I suppose it was OK for everyone else, the younger lads, all excited as they were ...P 12

Being in combat, that's what makes the difference to how you feel about it, about everything, once you've done that, got through it, liked it even, then that makes stuff so much easier back home, makes you realize how lucky, alive you are ... P 13

4.3.8. Factor 4a – Impact of personal circumstances on homecoming.

Factor 4 was bipolar i.e. defined by two opposing viewpoints, offering qualitatively different views. This factor had an eigenvalue of 2.94 and explained 6% of the variance. This factor has one participant who is significantly associated with it (Table 9: 01). He was male, aged 50 years. He was divorced with two children. He had three operational service tours, of which the nature of the tours was perceived as no threat to life. He had 32 years service in the military and was now a captain. His point of view with respect to the research question can be described by reference to Factor 4 exemplar Q Sort (Figure 6).

Figure 7: Factor 4 Exemplar Q Sort

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	13	9	12	2	15	1	8	3	5	38	25	48
	14	21	29	4	18	6	17	10	16	41	43	
		30	40	20	24	7	34	26	19	44		
			49	28	33	11	42	27	36			
				37	35	23	45	31				
					39	32	46					
						47						

Table 16: Factor 4 Crib Sheet

Statements ranked +5 or +6	
48	I believed in the overall military mission as to why was on operations.
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more, because I have been on an operational tour.
43	Reflecting on my operational tour led me to make better decisions in all aspects of my life once home.
Statements ranked higher by factor 4 than by any other factor	
48	I believed in the overall military mission as to why was on operations.
43	Reflecting on my operational tour led me to make better decisions in all aspects of my life once home.
41	Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my personal life.
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to my last operational tour.
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job, following my last tour.
36	It took some time for me to learn to relax in crowds, once I was back from my last operational tour.
3	The military system in general treated me properly throughout the homecoming process.
10	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit in to the normal routines of my work.
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues, following my last tour.
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.
32	I noticed that my consumption of alcohol reduced after my last tour, compared to before the tour.
Statements ranked at -5 or -6	

22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return from my last military tour.
13	Following my last tour, I felt my relationships with my civilian friends were strained.
14	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour.
Statements ranked lower by factor 4 than by any other factor	
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return from my last military tour.
9	It was important to do some special activities with my friends in order to rebuild these relationships.
21	In general, life on an operational tour is less stressful than life back in the civilian world.
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experiences on my return from my last operational tour.
40	The homecoming period was a time when I reflected about what was important in my life.
49	Any positive feeling I had relating to my last operational tour soon wore off and did not amount to much once I was home.
4	Knowing my injured comrades were OK after the tour was important.
20	It is easier to make decisions about day-to-day things on an operational tour, compared to making decisions back in civilian life.
28	I felt a bit deflated when I came back from my last operational tour.
18	I looked at civilian life differently, following my last tour.
24	My experiences on my operational tour have helped me in some way in my civilian life.
39	On return, my last operational tour made me appreciate all aspects of my life more.
34	On return from my last operational tour, I felt that I was now a better, more rounded person.
Other interpreted statements	
25, 38, 5, 19, 6, 13, 14	

4.3.8.1. Factor 4 interpretation.

Factor 4 viewpoint of homecoming, was that it was strongly effected by a belief in the mission (48: +6) and that on return, the military system treated him fairly (3: +2) and there was something to be proud of (5: +3), despite the tour being fairly demanding in some way (21: -4) (20: -2). The sense of achievement lasted upon completing the tour (49: -3) and coupled to a comedown feeling (28: -2) probably helped in motivating to make decisions about the future course of life events (43: +5). These changes were

forced upon homecoming, both at a personal level (41: +4) and at a work level (44: +4), not because of any meaningful reflection (40: -3). (20: -2). This viewpoint was not about changing attitude and personal growth (18: -1) (24: -1), but more about dealing with circumstances (39: -1) (34: +1).

There was a period of adjustment to work (16: +3) and work colleagues (17: +1), which was probably related to the change in employment. It was clear that civilian work had not been supportive of homecoming (22: -6). There was also a period of adjustment back in to normal civilian life (36: +3), which required some special activities to be undertaken (10: +2). However, close friends and family were not an issue (13: -5) (9:-4) and (14: -5). Official homecoming activities did not play a major role in this adjustment, but were not thought of as negative (7: 0). With the changes in personal life, including family and friends in these formal activities was of no benefit (6: 0). Alcohol was not used as a crutch to aid homecoming (32: 0), rather along with the other changes, this was one that was carried forward.

4.3.8.2. *Factor 4 clarifying comments.*

... but what's important is that we are doing it properly, for the Regiment and being professional, ... but it made me think about the future and doing something better with my life, so I've been working at it ... P 01

4.3.9. Factor 4b – Impact of personal circumstances (another perspective).

Factor 4b was the other end of factor 4a and as such is the opposing view on factor 4, offering a qualitatively different viewpoint. It had an eigenvalue of 2.94 and explained 6% of the study variance. Two participants were significantly associated with factor five (Table 9: 16, 17). Both were male, with an average age of 32.5 years. One was single and the other married, but neither had children. They had an average of four operational service tours, of which the average was 0.5 tours where the nature of the tour was perceived as a threat to life. They had on average 10.5 years service in the military, of which six years when the reserves and they were both Lance Corporals. Their point of view with respect to the research question can be described by reference to Factor 5 exemplar Q Sort (Figure 7)

Figure 8: Factor 4b Exemplar Q Sort

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
48	11	5	6	17	4	7	1	2	24	9	23	19
	30	10	13	25	18	8	3	20	31	21	45	
		44	16	26	22	12	28	27	34	29		
			41	32	35	14	33	46	37			
				43	42	15	38	40				
					47	36	39					
						49						

Table 17: Factor 4b Crib Sheet

Statements ranked +5 or +6	
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.
23	My direct line manager was supportive of me and helped me to reintegrate back into civilian work.
45	My friends and work colleagues think I'm a better at dealing with stressful situations, because I have been on an operational tour.
Statements ranked higher by factor 5 than by any other factor	
19	My military friends in general are closer to me than my civilian friends.
23	My direct line manager was supportive of me and helped me to reintegrate back into civilian work.
45	My friends and work colleagues think I'm a better at dealing with stressful situations, because I have been on an operational tour.
21	In general, life on an operational tour is less stressful than life back in the civilian world.
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experiences on my return from my last operational tour
31	I only talked about light-hearted, less serious moments of my tour, on my return to the UK.
34	On return from my last operational tour, I felt that I was now a better, more rounded person.
2	Attending the 'decompression' phase before returning to the UK was important.
1	The military briefs I got before leaving theatre, to prepare me for homecoming where useful.
28	I felt a bit deflated when I came back from my last operational tour.
7	Once in the UK, the official homecoming events and activities were important to me.
12	After my last tour, I found it difficult to adjust to being away from my military mates.
14	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my partner again, following my last tour.
15	I found it difficult to adjust to being with my non-military friends again, following my last tour.
49	Any positive feeling I had relating to my last operational tour soon wore off and did not amount to much once I was home.
Statements ranked at -5 or -6	
48	I believed in the overall military mission as to why was on operations.
11	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit into the normal routines of civilian life, outside of work.
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my operational tour, than to people who know me well.
Statements ranked lower by factor 5 than by any other factor	
48	I believed in the overall military mission as to why was on operations.
11	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit into the normal routines of civilian life, outside of work.
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my operational tour, than to people who know me well.
5	I felt proud of participating in a military operation.

10	I needed to conduct some special activities in order to fit in to the normal routines of my work.
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to my last operational tour.
6	It is important to include family and friends in the official homecoming events.
41	Homecoming was the trigger to making important changes in my personal life.
26	I had to unlearn certain behaviours associated with surviving on an operational tour, once I was back in the UK.
32	I noticed that my consumption of alcohol reduced after my last tour, compared to before the tour.
43	Reflecting on my operational tour led me to make better decisions in all aspects of my life once home.
18	I looked at civilian life differently, following my last tour.
38	On return from my last operational tour, I appreciated the good things I have in my life.
Other interpreted statements	
9, 24, 37, 17, 13, 16	

4.3.9.1. *Factor 4b interpretation.*^{22 23}

Factor 4b expressed the viewpoint that homecoming was fairly straightforward (23: +5) with support from civilian employment, back to a world that was considered more stressful than that experienced on tour (21: +4). Civilian employment was picked up easily (16: -3) and work life was improved by the experience away (24: +3), as the reservists felt they had developed as a people (34: +3) that could be the spur to making positive changes in personal life (37: +3). These reservists were better able to deal with situations, that their civilian colleagues might find stressful (45: +5) and had no issue with adjusting back to work colleagues (17: -2).

Military friendships were seen as closer than civilian ones (19: +6), partly because civilian friends could not appreciate the experiences the reservist had (29: +4). Social

²² PQMethod produced 7 statements ranked at 1 and only 4 statements ranked at 2. The source of the error could not be found. As the error appeared in columns next to each other, statement 40 was moved from column 1 to column 2.

²³ Factor 5 was expressed as the opposite viewpoint within Factor 4. However, the separate factor created by-hand rotation did not mirror image the Factor 4 Array. Rather it came up with a different configuration of statements than was expected. This was interpreted without reference to Factor 4.

integration with friends happened (9: +4), but when experiences were talked about with friends (30: -5), it was in terms that did not deal with overly emotional matters (31: +3).

In order to have a smooth homecoming, official homecoming briefing and events both before arrival in the UK (1: +1) (2: +2) (7: 0) and adjusting back to civilian relationships (12: 0) (14: 0) (15: 0) were viewed as secondary to sorting out civilian work and required very little if anything to enable in the form of special activities (11: -5) (10: -4). Family and friends did not require public acknowledgement of their supporting role (6: -3) and personal relationships (41: -3) friendships (13: -3) were found to be stable and picked up easily. There were no adjustment issues to speak of (26: -2). The reservists went back to drinking alcohol as before, but not as a crutch to aid adjustment (26: -2).

From this viewpoint, having a clear mission while out on tour (48: -6) and sense of pride in having accomplished something special (5: -4) were not a consideration to successful homecoming. Perhaps the tour was considered a bit uneventful ((28: 1), leading to a matter-of-fact attitude to the task completed (44: -4) (49: 0). This suggested that the tour was not considered difficult or dangerous and therefore had not created that contrast with civilian life (18: -1). Lacking this contrast, an appreciation for the quality of life at home (38: +1) was not part of this viewpoint. Therefore there had not been a need to reflect on more existential questions around the meaning and purpose of life (43: -2).

4.3.9.2. *Factor 4b clarifying comments.*

... life was just as normal, it was work where it was a bit more diff... nothing I couldn't handle cos I'm just better for it ... P 16

No, everything back hone just fine. It's everything else that is rubbish, people not taking it seriously, not having a moral compass ... P 17

4.4. Discussion

The shared viewpoints for this group of U.K. Army Reservists around the experience of homecoming were revealed by the factor analysis of Q Sorts. Watts & Stenner (2012, p. 183) point out that the opinions revealed by Q methodology are holistic statements, whereas most academic research reports present their findings along thematic lines. In order to bring the two ways of reporting together in a discussion, Watts and Skinner suggested that the viewpoints should be compared and contrasted with just one or two key themes identified in the literature (Stenner, Cooper & Skevington, 2003; Watts & Stenner, 2005). The author applied the same technique in discussing the factors and selected two key conceptual themes based on his intermit knowledge of the viewpoints and literature: (a) reintegration, or things getting back to how they were before mobilization; and (b) change, associated with reflecting on the experience and personal development. These themes were selected because they were considered orthogonal topics to each other, when related to the experience of homecoming. The themes were broken down further in to 10 sub-themes in order to aid discussion: (a) homecoming phases, (b) formal events, (c) personal relationships, (d) civilian life stress, (e) supportive work, (f) personal growth, (g) pride in military or self, (h) combat experience, (i) valuing society or life, and (j) reflection and change (Table 18).

Table 18: Reintegration vs change on homecoming

Factors				
1	2	3	4	5
Reintegration				
Homecoming phases		Homecoming phases	Homecoming phases	Homecoming phases
Formal events		Formal events		
Personal relationships	Personal relationships			Personal relationships
	Civilian life stressful	Civilian life stressful		
	Supportive work			Supportive work
Change				
Personal growth				Personal growth
	Pride in military or self		Pride in military or self	Pride in military or self
Combat experience		Combat experience		Combat experience
	Valuing society or life	Valuing society or life		
	Reflection and change	Reflection and change		

4.4.1. Reintegration on homecoming.

4.4.1.1. Homecoming phases.

For the participants in this study, homecoming was understood and experienced as a series of phases that one is expected to transition through. Over time the feelings, emotions and behaviours that have become the norm while on operations subside. They are gradually replaced with those feelings, emotions and behaviours that are considered more appropriate to the environment back in the U.K. Much on the research on homecoming is focused on looking for negative effects on mental health (Ashcroft, 2014; KCMHR, 2010). There is general consensus that what makes homecoming less stressful are access to resources including: (a) social support (Westwood et al., 2010),

(b) strong friendships (Greden et al., 2010), (c) good civilian employment (Iversen et al., 2005), and (d) sound personal finances (Elbogen et al., 2012). The benefits of supporting soldiers in their transition to civilian life are documented (Westwood et al., 2010) and are the basis of stress management procedures used by the MOD (Greenberg et al., 2006). The research on Reservists and homecoming generally suggests that transition may be problematic, but that the issues seen are generally not to do with any direct consequences of military activity on operations (Harvey, et al., 2011). Rather the issues are to do with organizational factors of being a Reservist in a Regular military organization (Dandeker et al., 2009). The regimental routines necessary on military operations are thought to be beneficial in controlling stressors and it is therefore argued that purposefully developing civilian routines on homecoming may be a useful transition strategy (Shaw & Hector, 2010).

4.4.1.2. *Formal events.*

Although soldiering is a job, the MOD sees itself not just as an employer, but also as a family that takes care of its members (Langston et al., 2007). The military through a combination of tradition, culture, values and legal requirement to take on responsibility for providing formal activities for soldiers on homecoming. Formal decompression is the first event on homecoming that soldiers experience together and is aimed at smoothing the transition back to non-operational life (Hacker Hughes et al., 2008). Some of the participants clearly expressed the view that they were resistant to participating in decompression. If the participants associated decompression with issues around mental health, then there is evidence that resistance to attending such formal activities may be due to stigma associated with mental health issues (Fertout et al., 2011). Formal gatherings at a central locations, where family and close friends would be

invited to meet their returning soldier were considered by some as beneficial, as they marked a formal closure to the tour. For those that expressed the opposite view, there is evidence to suggest that pre-existing circumstances could lead to strong negative emotions towards such gatherings (Eaton et al., 2008; Hogan & Furst Seifert, 2010). Interpersonal relationship issues may have existed prior to mobilization, between the returning service person and their family members, which are played out in public. Formal events organized with the best of intentions can have both positive and negative effects. It may therefore be incumbent on those organizing such events to consider the individual circumstances of each Reservist and make allowances in the cases where participation may not be beneficial.

4.4.1.3. *Personal relationships.*

The views expressed in this study are that reintegration with partners is generally not an issue. This is contrary to a lot of the research on the effects of homecoming on personal relationships. Wives and partners in particular may find it hard to cope with their other half being away on military operations (de Burgh et al., 2011). Studies suggest that reintegration on homecoming for service personnel and their families can sometimes be challenging (Danish & Antonides, 2013), with Reservists describing feelings of disconnection psychologically and families experiencing boundary ambiguity (Faber et al. 2008). Studies have shown negative correlations between the experience of homecoming and the stressors of re-negotiating personal relationship, especially with partners (Knobloch & Theiss, 2012) and children (White et al., 2011). There may be a link between length of separation and how well families reintegrate on homecoming. The experience of the participants in this study was that of most U.K. service personnel, with operational tours lasting 6 months or less. Studies have suggested that for

separation much longer than 6 months, negative effects on the well-being of families can be significantly increased (Buckman et al., 2011). It has been suggested that incorporating couples and family therapy into treatment plans may be useful for soldiers struggling with mental health problems during homecoming (Shaw & Hector, 2010)

4.4.1.4. *Civilian life stressful.*

Some participants expressed the view that they found coping with their civilian lives provided them with more problematic issues than when they were on operations. On operations basic activities of existence are brought to the fore. Back home, day-to-day living is seen as more complicated. In this sense, homecoming could be considered stressful, because it entailed a change from the basic to the complicated way of life. Research with Israeli Defence Force has suggested that Reservists find operational service a relief from their civilian work stress and treat their service as a respite that relieves burnout from the pressures of civilian life (Etzion, Eden & Lapidot, 1998). Research on journalists assigned to the Iraq War (2003) has concluded that they were adversely affected by three stressors: (a) loss of control over the situation, (b) loss of support of management, and (c) grief related to the death of a colleague (Greenberg, Thomas, Murphy, & Dandeker, 2007). These occupational stressors were far more the cause of stress, compared to the hazardous environment they were working in. Therefore it is suggested that Government policy must strive to support families and foster support for Reservists in wider community, if homecoming reintegration is to be made as smooth as possible.

4.4.1.5. *Supportive work.*

Research in to the Regular Forces suggests that the transition from military to civilian life can be made difficult for financial reasons and the difficulty with getting employment (Robertson et al., 2013). From this study, this potential issue does not seem to cross over to Reservists. It would appear that the participants did not have issues with homecoming relating from their civilian employment circumstances. Fitting back in to work went smoothly, or other circumstances prevailed, including finding better employment elsewhere. This may be due to the participants being Reservists and therefore already having careers in civilian life and also their being experienced in handling the dual role of soldier and civilian (Vest, 2013). The evidence from this study goes against some researchers who claim that employers are dissatisfied with having to accommodate the demands of the MOD to mobilize Reservists (Alock, Greenhalgh, Taylor & Murphy, 2015). It does suggest that policy and legislation to support the employment rights of Reservists have probably had the desired positive affect (Dandeker et al, 2009).

4.4.2. Change on homecoming.

4.4.2.1. *Personal growth.*

Some researchers consider that homecoming adjustment to civilian life is generally to be considered normal reactions to what might be considered abnormal circumstances (Wessely, 2004; Hacker Hughes, 2005). This concept has begun to gain some ground, with a shift away from looking for the negative effects of operational service (Adler et al. 2011; Goodwin et al., 2015; Iversen et al., 2009; Jones & Wessely, 2007) and towards looking for the positive aspects of participating in potentially stressful events

(Aslam, 2015). The benefits of participating in military operations and exposure to combat have been reported (Jennings et al., 2006).

Some of the participants of this study reported that their participation on military operations had been developmental. This concept of growth through adversity is supported in the literature and has been termed stress-related growth, or post-traumatic growth (Linley & Joseph, 2004; Tedeschi & McNally, 2011). Post-traumatic growth has been seen in non military populations (Powell et al., 2003) as well as in military ones (Gallaway et al., 2011) and has now been measured in large cohorts of the new generation of military Veterans (Tsai et al., 2015). Research suggests that post traumatic growth can be operationalized through the development of the trait of hardiness in individuals (D'Arienzo, 2010), which has already been shown to protect Reservists against war-related stress (Bartone, 1999). Hardiness has been found to be a buffer to mental health issues on homecoming (Dolan, 2006). The developing field of research is how to facilitate hardiness through synthetic post traumatic growth (Nash, 2011). The aim is to develop resilience to the stressors of war (Castro et al., 2006) as well as the stressors of homecoming (Adler, 2009; Mulligan, 2012).

4.4.2.2. *Pride in military or self.*

Some participants expressed the view that homecoming went well for them because they were proud in what they had done. They were proud either of being part of the military organization they worked in, or they were proud of themselves, for having done a good job. Shaw and Hector (2010, p. 128) found similar findings in their theme of “being there”. Bartone (2005) argued that military personnel need to derive positive meaning from their deployments. Reservists are seen as “transmigrants”, belonging to a

special group in society, who are simultaneously “special soldiers” and “special civilians” (Lomsky-Feder, Gazit & Ben-Ari, 2008, p. 602). Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004; Haslam, et al., 2009) may provide an explanation for the role of self worth in the well-being of returning Veterans and their motivation to serve as Reservists (Griffith, 2009).

Culture is thought to play a role in mediating the process of normal adjustment following operations (Jones et al., 2003; Langston, Gould & Greenberg, 2007). There is evidence to suggest that if this feeling of personal worth is not reciprocated by the social world the soldier inhabits on his return to his home society, then he is more like to succumb to problems associated with homecoming and adjusting back in to the civilian world (Siassi, 1973; Wessely & Jones, 2004; Forster, 2012). Negative treatment of returning war Veterans by society and what society in general thought about the rights and wrongs of that war could precipitate mental health issues (Jones & Wessely, 2005). This suggests that homecoming outcomes can be improved if society supports Veterans as soldiers (Coll et al., 2011), even if the reason for the war may be questioned (Demers, 2011).

4.4.2.3. *Combat experience.*

The role of danger on military operations has been shown to effect homecoming (Shaw and Hector, 2010). In this research, specifically the experience of personally participating in combat made a difference to how homecoming was experienced. Direct exposure to combat was considered the most important experience, the knowledge of which could outweigh any negative aspects of homecoming. Participating in combat can be seen as validating the role of Reservist as being authentic soldiering, irrespective

of the full-time/part-time divide between Regular and Reserve forces personnel, which has on occasion been one source of homecoming issues for Reservists (Dandeker et al, 2009; Dandeker et al., 2011). Faulker and McGaw (1977) reported that following the Vietnam War participation in combat was seen by some as a right of passage to a higher level of consciousness, which would then act as a prism through which normal life was perceived once back home. Braender (2016, p. 3) found evidence that exposure to combat could lead soldiers to becoming “adrenalin junkies” on homecoming, seeking activities that could simulate the thrill of combat. It has even been reported that some soldiers seem to know about these positive aspects to the extent that they claim to having participated in combat, even when they have not, in order to benefit from the warrior status (Jones & Milroy, 2016). To experience combat as something other than harmful goes against the flow of much of the literature in to the effects of warfare on soldiers, but is not uncommon (Jones, 2006b).

4.4.2.4. *Valuing society or life.*

Reservists may come back from operational service with a different outlook to their normal life back at home. They value the simple pleasures of living in the U.K., which are taken for granted by the rest of society, but were luxuries only dreamt of while living in austere operational conditions, along with valuing what society has to offer and valuing life intrinsically. Other studies have reported similar findings with soldiers valuing what they had back home, developing personal maturity (Adler et al, 2011) and gaining wisdom (Jennings et al., 2006). It is suggested that perhaps exposure to danger, combat, or trauma may alter self-concepts and personality and associated assumptions about the world (Epstein, 1991, as cited in Jennings et al., 2006, p. 117).

4.4.2.5. *Reflection and change.*

In order to bring about change, homecoming is often a time of reflection, where the experiences of the operational tour are processed and given meaning (Linley & Joseph, 2011). For stressful events, research suggests that how one interprets these events is predictive of positive adaption (Jennings et al., 2006), as discussed above. For concepts around the self, the influence of Reservists as a group on the self-concept of each individual Reservist depends on the meaning the individual attaches to group membership (Griffith, 2009). Griffith has gone on to develop this concept to suggest that the self-identity of Reservists has evolved over time, in response to changes in the missions, structure and organization of the Reserve Forces. These in turn stem from the changing geo-political climate and national security threats. It is argued that modern U.S. Reservists have transitioned to *Soldier Warriors* or further to *Conservative Ideologues*, with the individual adopting beliefs, attitudes and behaviours consistent with the assumed identity (Griffiths, 2011a). U.K. Reservists are experiencing the same forces as their U.S. counterparts and therefore in this phase of the study, on reflection are experiencing the same internal dialogue and changing their pre-deployment beliefs, attitudes and behaviours on homecoming, to ones that better match the experiences they have had on operations (Folkman, 2013).

5. Summary and Conclusions

To conclude this study, the following chapter has been divided into four sections:

- 5.1. Summary of results.
- 5.2. Methodological comments.
- 5.3. Comparison of results with other key studies.
- 5.4. Concluding discussion.

5.1. Summary of results

The aim of this study was to explore U.K. Army Reservists' experiences of homecoming, following a period of prolonged military mobilization. The study was split in to two sequential phases: (a) an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) phase, and (b) a Q methodology (Q Sort) phase. The IPA phase revealed the experience from the perspective of the participants and interpreted this in terms of six themes. The Q Sort phase took those themes and distilled them into four latent factors, which provided the shared points of view of the participants towards homecoming.

The results from the IPA phase in the form of 6 themes were:

- **Activities.** Either official or unofficial activities that are conducted during the process of homecoming were important to the way homecoming was experienced. Official activities were found useful, if the Reservist had a good tour. However, if the Reservist was returning to other personal issues at home, which existed before the tour, the official activities were thought to get in the way. Likewise, if the Reservist felt that he had been managed badly by the military, and then the official homecoming activities were not appreciated.
- **Adjustment.** Reservists did go through a period of adjustment, during which they felt strange or different, but that was to be expected and normal. Partners, close family, close friends and then the workplace took priority in that order, when it came to adjustment to other people. The partner and family were seen to be those who had the most difficulty because of the tour. Psychological trauma was not considered an issue, even for those who had seen a lot of intense combat.

- **Cultural.** The differences between military and civilian values, attitudes and beliefs exist and influence. In particular, the close friendships formed by strong military culture were important to good homecoming and when functioning properly acted as an adhesive that strengthened the Reservists' ability to withstand pressures that society might put on them.
- **Emotions.** The emotions Reservists' felt about their experiences of military operations were strong and spilled over in to homecoming. Although the Reservists did not always overtly express these emotions, managing and understanding where they were rooted, positively effected successful transition to civilian life. Personal relationship issues did occur with this group, but were expected and handled as a matter of normal life. The powerful and potentially negative influence of alcohol on emotions was appreciated and the accepted as the norm in British society.
- **Reflection.** Reservists reflected on the meaning of the tour and life in general on homecoming. This was something to be embraced and used for positive personal development.
- **Values.** The actual behaviour of the organizations the Reservists were working for in civilian life (U.K. Government, MOD, Army, or Unit) could in some instances be incongruent with these institutions stated values and the value espoused by the Reservists. This incongruence could have a detrimental effect on how the Reservist experienced both their operational service and homecoming.

The results from the Q Sort phase resolved into four latent factors in descending order of priority; hence the numerical ordering. This is because the relative variance

accounted for by each factor steadily decreased, as each factor was made of the residual correlations, after the previous factor had been resolved (Sub-section, 4.3.2.4):

1. **Factor 1 – Homecoming reflection on personal growth.** Operational tours were considered development opportunities for the Reservists, rather than the causes of homecoming stress. Furthermore operational tours could be viewed as personal adventures. On homecoming there were feelings of guilt, because the adventure had been at the expense of those that had stayed behind; namely partners and close family.
2. **Factor 2 – Homecoming experienced as adjustment, not stress.** Operational tours had their own form of stress that was different and not related to the stressors of civilian life. Any stress associated with homecoming was not due to what happened on the tour, but an artefact of adjustment or civilian life. Homecoming could be made less stressful, through personal resources, such as social support, friendship, good employment and sound finances.
3. **Factor 3 – Sense making on homecoming.** Positive homecoming depended on being able to ascribe value and meaning to the operational tour and that those values were not challenged by contrary values in the military or society, as perceived by the Reservists.
4. **Factors 4a & 4b²⁴ – Impact of personal circumstances on homecoming.** There were opposing viewpoints on the same factor. The overarching concept was that personal circumstances on homecoming affected the way homecoming was perceived. If personal circumstances were negative, then the homecoming experience would be negative. On the other hand, if personal circumstances were good, then homecoming

²⁴ The last factor was bipolar (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 133) and therefore represented two opposite viewpoints. Each was treated separately in the Q Sort chapter in order to aid interpretation at that stage.

would be experienced as good. In general, for this group the viewpoint was that homecoming was a relatively easy transition.

5.2. Methodological comments

5.2.1. Mixed methods

IPA was selected for the first phase because it was designed to explore and understand the subjective lived experience of U.K. Army Reservists. It was well rooted in a philosophical tradition, that was distinctive and had a clearly set out method (Smith et al., 2009). It is argued that communication of the results across the qualitative / quantitative divide would be improved by using a statistically based method, which would mutually support each other from potentially hostile readers, unfamiliar or unhappy with non-reductionist methods (Smith et al., 2009, p. 30). The qualiquantological nature of Q methodology (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004) had different strengths and weaknesses when compared to IPA method and was one reason why Q Sort was selected for the second phase of this study (Section, 2.3.).

Q Sort was selected for the second phase of the study for two more reasons: (a) the author wanted to sequentially build on the subjective results from the IPA phase, and (b) Q methodology accepts and is able to measure subjectivity (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The IPA themes were used as data to create Q methodology's concourse that describes homecoming. The concourse was sampled to create the Q Set and from that the Q Sort tool was constructed. The Q Sort was able to distil the shared experience, or points of view, of the participants towards homecoming and helped the author better communicate the experience of homecoming, which in itself is a key justification for using mixed methods (Todd et al., 2004, p. 11).

5.2.2. Mixed methodology.

The research question could have been studied using either IPA or Q Sort method on their own. The reason why the study was split into two phases, with two distinct methods, was because together they created a deeper understanding. The artificial divide between positivist and phenomenological camps in the hard sciences has long been crossed (Baert, 2011) and is considered by some more imagined than real (Todd et al., 2004). It is argued that quantitative and qualitative methods already have a long tradition of being integrated in the study of human action (Jick, 1979) and are being found to be useful in even the most esoteric areas of psychological research (Khrennikov & Haven, 2016). A more pragmatic approach does away with the quantitative / qualitative divide in psychological research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In its place a methodology that considers mixing methods as complementary is accepted (Yvonne Feilzer, 2009). It has been argued that mixed methods research design is not just as a better way to understand the subject matter, but also as a distinct methodology in its own right (Greene, 2008; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

This pragmatic methodology moved the debate away from epistemological problems associated with the multi-methodologies, towards the technical questions about combining methods (Morgan, 2007). The major issue was how to get the results from the IPA into a format usable by the Q Sort. The author chose a unique solution to this problem, by combining the IPA with Q Sort sequentially. The IPA themes of phase one were considered part of the Q methodological concourse sampled, in order to create the Q Set used in phase two (Sub-section, 4.2.3.). In this sense, the IPA results do not tell us something about the Q Sort results. Rather, the IPA results are fully integrated into the Q Sort. Therefore it was to be expected that the four Q Sort factors had considerable

overlap with the six IPA themes (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Activities as themes would become development opportunities. Development opportunities would be making big changes in personal and work life. Adjustment was considered a normal process, from an operational environment, where stressors were considered basic and easy to understand, to a non-operational environment, where stressors were complicated and therefore more difficult to understand. This reflects the everyday complexity that everyone has to struggle with, when living in a modern society such as the U.K. It was the opportunity to compare this normal life, with the simpler existence on military operations, which enabled Reservists to contemplate and reflect on meaning of life issues. The feelings of guilt felt towards the partners and family were the same in both phases of the study and were related to the participants understanding that the families had the harder time, with both the operational tour and homecoming.

Q methodology is distinct from other methods in that it provides the researcher with a way to measure subjectivity. Some researchers have suggested that Q methodology is a phenomenological research method (Shinebourne & Adams, 2007) and others consider Q methodology is a mixed method in its own right and have made this explicit in the term qualiquantological to describe its hybridity (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004). In drawing conclusions from both phases, it is important to appreciate that each set of results stem from a method with different strengths and weaknesses (Section, 2.4.). The results from each phase should be viewed as different ways to understanding the same research phenomenon. Viewed this way, it is suggested the reader will develop a more rounded construct of Reservist's homecoming. What would help the reader to develop an even more rounded construct would be to compare the study results presented with other key studies.

5.3. Comparison of results with other key studies

The author's interest in the subject matter was partly inspired by a report on homecoming, that found the effect of deployment was different for Reservists compared to Regulars (Hotopf et al., 2006). Subsequent research concluded that the increased ill health of U.K. Reservists compared to Regulars was due to experiences on deployment and difficulties with homecoming (Browne et al., 2007), with domestic and employment circumstances have a far greater impact (Fear et al., 2010). Following on from this, the largest longitudinal study into deployed U.K. Reservists reported that after five years, Reservists were functioning well and there was no evidence of mental illness above that which would be expected in any population (Harvey et al., 2012). The main finding of the author's study supports their overall conclusion, that the majority of Reservists function normally on homecoming and any evidence of adjustment issues were not related to exposure to life threatening events or combat.

U.S. research in to *Battlemind Training* designed to help soldiers on homecoming, shows how elements of positive psychology have been used to reframe what have been considered transition difficulties, in terms of adaptive cognitions (Adler, et al., 2009). Such training programmes are cited as evidence for the science of positive human functioning and concepts around personal growth, influencing what has been predominantly a clinical approach to assisting homecoming, based in abnormal psychology. So far U.K. versions of Battlemind have found no difference in outcome between their programmes and standard debriefing that was part of the decompression phase of homecoming (Mulligan et al., 2012). However, there is a growing number of researchers who start from this positive perspective and find PTG following military service, both in the U.S. (Gallaway, Millikan & Bell, 2011) and coincidentally, using

IPA methodology, in U.K. Veterans (Palmer, Murphy & Spencer-Harper, 2016). The results presented in this study supports the theory that positive affect does occur and should perhaps be considered the norm. Specifically, the role of IPA theme of reflection and Q Sort factor of homecoming reflection on personal growth demonstrate the synergy with research findings based in positive psychology (Fredrickson et al., 2003; Linley & Joseph, 2004; Murphy et al, 2014; Nguyen, 2018; Schaefer & Moos, 1998).

Reserve service has been viewed by some as a relief, or respite from the stressors of normal life, which could then lead to improvements in performance once back home (Etzion, Eden & Lapidot, 1998). This concept is supported in the author's research as elements of the IPA themes of adjustment, when participants talk about how they found operational tours less stressful then dealing with the day-to-day stressors of life, back at home. Faulkner and McGaw (1977, p. 323) described homecoming adjustment as consisting of three phases: (a) disengaging from war, (b) re-entry into the "The World", and (c) movement toward reintegration. Homecomings were described as a subjective and interactional process, which can vary on a spectrum from stable to precarious. The author's research was based in the subjective nature of homecoming and supported the concept that homecoming is experienced as a procession through phases. In particular, the homecomers' self-conceptions are seen as a crucial dependent variable, which needs to be paid attention in order for adjustment to head towards the stable end of the spectrum (Faulkner & McGraw, 1977). Demers (2011, p. 169) conducted thematic qualitative research on Veterans and described the theme of "coming home", which was divided into three sub-themes of: (a) time travellers, (b) no one understands us, and (c) crisis of identity. In unpacking these sub-themes, it was clear that adjustment required a number of transitions along each sub-theme and any stress label came from

the medical professional conducting the research, not from the Veterans themselves. Participants in the author's study expressed similar sentiments, although questions of identity were not identified as crises, but rather as a positive life-stage progression.

The IPA theme of adjustment and Q Sort factor of homecoming being experienced as adjustment, not as stress, suggest that homecoming is a natural process of adjustment and that undue stress is not necessarily associated with this process. Some researchers see problems with adjustment stemming from heightened levels of excitement motivation developed while on operations, leading to more sensation seeking behaviours on homecoming (Braender, 2016), which was also reported by some of the participants in the IPA interviews. Other researchers described homecoming as a period of change in "boundary ambiguity" for families, from "ambiguous absence" to "ambiguous presence", where roles and responsibilities were renegotiated and redistributed (Faber et al., 2008, p. 228). Similarly, some of the IPA participants reported on discussions with their partners that took place on homecoming that were negotiations around roles.

Some researchers suggest there are at least four distinct elements in the transition from combat to home: (a) benefit, (b) appreciation, (c) anger/alienation, and (d) guilt/remorse (Adler et al., 2011). The author found similar elements and reported on them when discussing the IPA theme of emotions, suggesting that strong emotional reactions might be necessary in order to enable the affective process of sense making. This study presented evidence that generally supports the concept that the experience of operational military service and subsequent homecoming can be experienced as positive, dependent of how participants make sense of their experience. Hacker Hughes et al. (2005) contended that participating in war was not necessarily bad for psychological

health and stands in contrast to research that looked for negative outcomes (Hoge et al 2004). Similarly, Jones (2006b) argued that experiencing combat was not a devastating experience, but rather could be perceived as exciting, adventurous and fun, precisely because of the danger. The important role of sense making in how traumatic experiences could lead to positive affect runs throughout the IPA interviews and is focused upon in the Q Sort Factor on sense making on homecoming.

The IPA themes of reflection and values and the Q Sort factor of sense making on homecoming, suggest that ascribing value and meaning to the military experience, was important in successful reintegration on homecoming. This supports other studies that found that the perception of homecoming reception would positively correlate to how well those returning would adapt to the change (Bolton et al., 2002). Bartone (2005) argues that returning soldiers need to ascribe positive meaning on their participation on military operations, in order to adjust successfully on homecoming and this relationship is heightened if the operations could be considered controversial by the rest of society, such as when participating in wars of choice. This might account for the evidence why some U.K. Veterans would lay claim to suffering from psychological trauma following homecoming, in order to benefit from the status of the “heroic warrior” (Jones & Milroy, 2016, p. 59).

A comprehensive review of fifty publications demonstrated the key role non-deployment factors have on psychological well-being of soldiers on homecoming (Brooks & Greenberg, 2017). Dandeker et al. (2009) reported that while the experience of U.K. Reservists during the current phase of high intensity operations had improved, family welfare issues were now the primary cause of friction. The IPA theme of adjustment and the Q Sort factors of homecoming experienced as adjustment, not stress

and impact of personal circumstances on homecoming, suggest support for the theory that personal circumstances at home play a significant role in how reintegration is experienced. With regard to specific elements of personnel circumstances, this study did not support the suggestion of Alcock et al., (2014) that employers are not as supportive of Reservists as the MOD requires in order fulfil the strategic manning targets. However, this study did support a review of 14 U.S. based studies to demonstrate the potential negative effects of mobilization of the partners and families left behind (de Burgh et al., 2011).

Together the IPA themes and Q Sort factors reported very much support the conclusions of Hector and Shaw (2010). The similarities were that participants: (a) viewed the whole experience as positive, (b) needed to ascribe value and meaning to the experience, (c) that any negative affect related more to families and personal relationships, (d) generally had some dissatisfaction with returning to the routines of home life, and (e) reported a positive reaction to exposure to danger. Only with respect to the conclusions drawn around danger, do the two studies markedly diverge. Hector and Shaw suggest clinical interventions to deal with the potential for PTSD, while this author prefers to see the potential for PTG and interventions designed to foster such development. Both studies agree that the interesting results were possible through the application of quantitative, phenomenological methodologies.

5.4. Concluding discussions

The concluding discussion has been divided in to four sub-sections: (a) theoretical perspectives, (b) study limitations, (c) future research, and (d) concluding comments.

5.4.1. Theoretical perspectives.

The theoretical perspectives have been divided in to four sub-sections, based on the four factors revealed by the Q Sort phase. Perspectives specific to IPA themes have been considered, when they add additional theoretical understanding.

5.4.1.1. Positive outcomes and reflection.

Contemporary psychological and psychiatric literature sees adversity as having inevitable and deleterious consequences (Wessely, 2006). The study of PTSD and its predecessors (Jones et al. 2002) is the single most researched theory looking in to mental functioning of military personnel (Jones & Wessely, 2007). Following the current tempo of military operations, the anticipated surge in PTSD cases has not materialized (KCMHR, 2010). This lack of empirical evidence has enabled other theories to receive more research attention (Palmer et al., 2016). The switch from studying PTSD to PTG is considered by some a research paradigm shift (Aslam, 2015) and is thought useful in understanding the results from this study.

The experience of trauma is often assumed to challenge an individual's core beliefs that define their assumptive world (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006). The potential for PTG can occur as a consequence of the cognitive effort to redefine one's beliefs and rebuild the

associated view of the world. The greater the need to examine one's core beliefs and the more an individual engages in the cognitive process, the higher the potential to experience growth (Cann, et al., 2010). In this process, individuals may examine many aspects of their life and experience growth in areas including: (a) personal strength, (b) relationships, (c) appreciation for life, (d) spirituality, and (e) new possibilities (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). PTG and ongoing distress are not exclusive of each other, but considered to be positively, if weakly correlated and can coexist. They also have opposite relationships with two key outcome variables, such that PTG is associated with greater life satisfaction and meaning in life (Wild & Paivio, 2004).

As the PTG model develops, evidence suggests that people can be categorized into four groups, based on their search for resolving challenges to their beliefs (Davis, Wohl, & Verberg, 2007): (a) those able to make sense of the experience, (b) those still in the process of making sense, (c) those who gave up trying to make sense, and (d) those who did not feel the need to make sense. Lastly, it is important to note that in terms of this study, it has been assumed that rumination, thinking and reflecting are valid synonyms.

5.4.1.2. *Adjustment through resilience.*

Contrary to much of the research focus in to military homecoming, this study found the participants to be generally well adjusted on homecoming, more reflective individuals, who have used their experience to reappraise their lives and move forward with stronger purpose and conviction. It is considered instructive to consider theories on resilience in order to understand how Reservists may have managed to adjust to homecoming, without either bringing trauma with them, or experiencing homecoming as stress. Bonanno (2004) considers that resilience reflects the ability to maintain a stable

equilibrium following exposure to stressful events and is typically discussed in terms of factors that foster positive outcomes. He goes on to argue that the failure of loss and trauma theorists to adequately distinguish “recovery from resilience” has led many researchers to fundamentally ignore how common resilience is when coping with stress (Bonanno, 2004, p. 20). Some have suggested that grief and trauma theorists have failed to comprehend the surprising lack of empirical support for Freud’s ([1917] 1957) view that people need to work through negative thoughts, memories and emotions when dealing with grief (Bonanno & Field, 2001). Research conclusions have at times gone to the other extreme, suggesting that successfully coping with stressful events can be viewed as a form of personality pathology (Osterweis, Solomon & Green, 1984). Bonanno (2004) posits the reason why resilience under conditions of trauma have been misunderstood by many researchers, down to the errors and biases in judgment that can occur under conditions of uncertainty (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974) and the limitations of clinical inference (Dawes, 1994).

There is now good evidence to support the idea that many individuals suffering loss will exhibit little or no grief and that these individuals are not cold, unfeeling, or lacking in attachment, but are exhibiting resilience (Bonanno et al., 2002). It is now generally accepted that the majority of individuals exposed to violent or life-threatening events do not go on to develop disorders (Ozer et al., 2003) and these results transfers over into the military community (KCMHR, 2010). If resilience were distinct from recovery, it would be interesting and perhaps useful to know what factors promote resilience.

Substantial research has revealed the predictors of PTSD reactions, including: (a) lack of social support from the family, (b) lack of support from the wider community, and (c) prior psychiatry issues. Therefore it would be logical to conclude that inverting these factors would predict resilience (Bonanno, 2004).

Research supports multiple and complex pathways to resilience (Luthar, Doernberger & Zigler, 1993). A growing body of evidence suggests that the personality trait of hardiness is one of these pathways (Kobasa, Maddi & Kahn, 1982). Hardiness is thought to be composed of three dimensions: (a) committing to finding meaningful purpose in life, (b) belief in one's own ability to influence one's surroundings, and (c) belief that one can learn and grow from negative as well as positive life experiences. Hardy individuals are also thought to be more confident, use active coping and social support networks and do face up to stressful experiences (Florian, Mikulincer, & Taubman, 1995). It has also been argued that people who cope with stressful events by repressing any unpleasant thoughts, emotions and memories are also exhibiting a form of resilience (Weinberger, 1990). Lastly, positive emotion has been associated with resilience through the process of reducing distress following adverse events. This is thought to happen through activities such as humour and laughter, which are thought to increase contact with supportive people in one's social environment and also directly mitigate negative emotions (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh & Larkin, 2003).

5.4.1.3. *Importance of sense making.*

This study has revealed the importance of meaning making and the value Reservists ascribe to their military service and how this impacts the way they experience homecoming. Up until recently, the motivation to be a member of the Reserves might be based more on compensation. Viewed this way, Reservists could be considered “rationally incentivized actors”, who evaluate their military service in terms of costs and benefits (Griffith, 2009, p. 39). This study was conducted during a period of high operational tempo, with more frequent and longer mobilizations, into theatres that

exposed participants to danger and combat. Participation in military combat is seen as one of those events considered powerful enough to trigger the cognitive-emotional processes involved in finding meaning (Linley & Joseph, 2011).

The competing demands placed on Reservists in the current era, have lead to changes in the way meaning and value are placed on the experience of homecoming (Griffith, 2009). It is suggested that under these circumstances, social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) might be a more useful framework that incentivized rationality, to understand why meaning making and placing value are so important on homecoming. There are two important processes involved in the formation of social identity, which produce different consequences (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, as cited in Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 226): (a) self-categorization and (b) social comparison. The consequences of self-categorization are the accentuation of perceived similarities with in-groups and the accentuation of perceived differences with out-groups. The consequence of social comparison is the selected application of accentuation effects, to dimensions that enhance outcomes for the self; especially self-esteem, where in-groups are judged positively and out-groups are judged negatively. Also in-group identification leads to greater commitment to stay with the group. Finally, people are more likely to behave in concert within the group, potentially leading to internalizing group culture and possibly developing groupthink (Ethier & Deaux, 1994, as cited in Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 226). Groups provide us with a sense of place, purpose and belonging and generally tend to be good psychologically (Haslam, Jetten, Postmess & Haslam, 2009). In this way, intense experiences shared and the existential need to form strong social bounds on operations, may manifest themselves in new, shared in-group military meanings and values. These persist on homecoming and are different from the meanings and values placed on daily life events for the out-groups in the rest of society.

Social identity theory suggests that the social environment is not simply an external feature of the world. Instead groups to which we belong can impact on the psychology on individuals through their capacity of the group to become internalized as part of a person's social identity (Taifel & Turner, [1979] 2004). It is argued that social identity affects health and well-being in at least five domains: (a) the way individuals appraise and respond to health and well-being symptoms, (b) health-related norms of behaviour, (c) as a basis for social support, (d) in terms of coping responses, and (e) as a determinant of clinical outcomes (Haslam et al., 2009). There is now considerable evidence that social identities can both embody and create health and well-being. Changes in social identity, such as those associated with the experience of military operations, can have both positive and negative consequences. The relevant point for this study is that some adjustment is required on the part of individuals because, at least during the process of homecoming, the changes are likely to lead to a loss of psychological balance and social identities, which are central to the processes of adjustment and coping (Haslam & Reicher, 2006).

Lomsky-Feder et al., (2008) have developed a complex theoretical model of the experience of being in the Reserves, by likening Reservists to *transmigrants*. Transmigrants are those who have at least two permanent homes in different countries and who travel between them. Reserves constantly mediate and sometimes create critical perspectives between the military and wider society by: (a) reflecting changing approaches towards the military in society, (b) expressing attitudes to military service that are different from Regulars; and (c) applying resources, skills and abilities from their civilian worlds, not available to the rest of the military. Reservists' experiences of the mental, physical and emotional changes during homecoming are considered unique.

This shifting, like the movement of transmigrants between different homes, fosters much more critical thinking about the meaning and value of the experience of military life, including homecoming.

A permeable boundary is said to exist between the military and civilian sectors of society, which can be considered zones for negotiation, friction and fluidity (Lomsky-Feder et al., 2008). Here the concept of the *psychological contract* (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008) is used to explain why Reservists are far more intrinsically motivated to volunteer for military service than their Regular counterparts, where: (a) meaning making, (b) being needed, (c) being utilized effectively, (d) trained suitably, (e) respected, and (f) given reasonable conditions, are far more important than extrinsic motivators such finance or career (Lomsky-Feder et al., p. 605).

5.4.1.4. *Influence of personal circumstances.*

This study found relatively little stress in homecoming. Participants did not talk of homecoming as not being stressful, rather they had cultural and social resources to apply to the pressures of homecoming and in most cases had enough of these resources. Conservation Of Resources (COR) theory predicts that resource loss is the principal ingredient in the stress process (Hobfoll, 2001). COR is a resource-based theory, which suggests that people are nested within families, which are nested in tribes, which provide resources. Hobfoll (2001) makes it clear that COR does not reject appraisal-based theories, but rather imbeds them within a social context. Specifically, 74 transcultural resources have been found that appear to be valid in many Western contexts (Hobfoll, 1998). Many of these resources have been mentioned by participants in this study and include: (1) family stability, (2) sense of pride in myself, (3) sense of

commitment, (4) adequate income, (5) feeling my life has meaning/purpose, and (6) involvement in organizations with others who have similar interests. In COR theory, positive life events are considered stressful to the extent they contain negative sub-events (Thoits, 1983), which could be an elegant explanation for some of the results in this study. Also, resource loss was found to be the best of a host of predictors for PTSD and general psychological distress (Ironson et al., 1997). First and foremost, COR theory points to the need to look for external objects in the environment as the sources of stress.

Stress buffering theory describes the possible protective affect of social support and the deleterious effects of the lack of support respectively, on the health and well-being of those faced with psychosocial stress (Cohen & McKay, 1984; Cohen & Wills, 1985). They proposed a model where it is necessary to evaluate the relationship between the coping requirements elicited by the event and the experience of stress and the coping resources provided by one's support systems. In order to do this, they divide support into three forms: (a) tangible, which although usually of less interest to researchers, may have psychological implications; (b) appraisal, which help the individual to re-assess the threat, and coping strategies; and (c) emotional, which work through the processes of self-esteem and increasing feelings of belonging. Hobfoll, Freedy, Lane and Geller (1990) went on to develop their model of social support, based on COR mentioned above, which suggested that social support may be central to health and well-being because, together with personal resources, it is related to one's overall sense of identity.

5.4.2. Study limitations.

In order to discuss the limitations of any study, it is important to consider the theoretical basis of the methods used (Shinebourne, 2011). Theoretical basis, benefits and limitations of both IPA and Q Sort have already been discussed (Chapter 2). What still needs to be discussed is assessing this study against appropriate quality criteria that define good research. Ratner (2002) argued that once the researcher accepts the subjective nature of all research, objectivity in psychological research could be achieved, once the researcher has organized his subjectivity appropriately. Ratner's criteria presented to do this closely match the characteristics suggested by Yardley (2000) for good research that can be used to assess quality in qualitative research, irrespective of any specific theoretical orientation. It is clear that IPA is qualitative method (Smith et al., 2009). It is argued that Q methodology represents a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative aspects of research and is in fact the first example of a truly mixed method (Ramlo & Newman, 2011). It has also been argued that Q methodology is a phenomenological research method and well suited to pairing with IPA in mixed methods (Shinebourne & Adams, 2007). With the combination of qualitative and qualiquantitative methods and close fit between IPA and Q Sort, the author considered it acceptable to use Yardley's (2000) quality criteria for both methods. Yardley suggests four key assessment dimensions, which will be used as the framework to assess this study: (a) sensitivity to context, (b) commitment and rigour, (c) transparency and coherence, and (d) impact and importance.

5.4.2.1. *Sensitivity to context.*

In IPA, sensitivity to context is demonstrated in the initial choice of the method itself and the rationale for its adoption (Shinebourne, 2011). IPA implies a commitment to idiographic principles and a focus on recruiting participants from a particular context,

with a particular lived experience. The author being a Reservist had the advantage of being able to sensitively engage with the research participants' individual experiences and understand their predicaments. In IPA, verbatim extracts were included in order to: (a) give voice to the participants, (b) support the arguments made, and (c) enable the reader to check the interpretations (Shinebourne, 2011). Sensitivity continued in the commitment to ensuring the analytical claims were based in the participants' accounts and not just direct reflections of the author's experience. This is why the author chose to use verbatim extracts that were more numerous and longer compared to most other IPA studies (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005). Finally, sensitivity was improved by taking care to ground interpretations in data and contextualize in the relevant existing literature (Sub-section, 5.1.2., 5.2.1.). Sensitivity was maintained in the Q Sort, via extensive grounding in the philosophy of Stephenson's approach (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Following each Q Sort, the participant was interviewed in order to add his perspective on the outcome. Then in the interpretation, the voice of participants were heard in the form of clarifying comments, coupled to extensive references to relevant literature on Reservists homecoming and conclusions drawn in the light of social context.

5.4.2.2. *Commitment and rigour.*

Commitment is demonstrated through the research process, while rigour refers to the thoroughness of the data collection and analysis (Shinebourne, 2011). The author showed commitment, by being prepared to risk his personal and professional reputation in the military in order to conduct the research. The fact that 100% of all those contacted volunteered to participate and none that participated withdrew from the research process, is testament to that commitment. The rigour of the study is demonstrated is the completeness with which the data collection and analysis were

presented in both phases (Chapter, 3, 4) and the supplemental appendices (Appendix A – L).

5.4.2.3. *Transparency and coherence.*

Transparency refers to the clarity of the method description and data presentation, while coherence refers to the fit between theory and method (Yardley, 2000. P. 219) between the research question and the philosophical perspective adopted and the method of investigation and analysis undertaken (Shinebourne, 2011). The need for transparency required the author to be exhaustive in his description of methods used for both phases (Chapters 3 & 4), enabling the reader to follow every step. With regard to Coherence, the fit of the methods has already been discussed along with the pragmatic approach to mixed methods (Sub-section, 2.2.3.). It is argued that the real validity in qualitative research lies in whether the reader finds the study interesting, important or useful (Smith, et al., 2009, p. 183). The author has found the results informative and important for the future of Reserve Forces well-being and believes readers who have a similar interest will find the same.

5.4.2.4. *Impact and importance.*

Yardley (2000) states that theoretical and practical impacts are the decisive criteria by which any piece of research must be judged. Yardley also states the value of qualitative research can only be assessed in relation to the objectives of the analysis, the applications it was intended for, and the community for whom the findings were deemed relevant. This suggests that this study should be valued in three ways: (a) in relation to the study's ability to describe the experience of homecoming for Reservists,

(b) in order to stand as a counter-weight to the model that participation in operational military service will probably lead to negative experiences of homecoming, and (c) this should be presented to the community that includes all those with specific interest in policy towards Reservists, Reservists themselves and their families, their local social circles, employers and researchers in this field of study.

This study has already had some impact through public presentation. The author has presented methods and preliminary findings three times, at events that may have had policy implications. Firstly, at the 9th European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology Conference 29th-31st March 2010, held at Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome. Secondly, as the keynote address at the Army Families Federation Biennial Conference 20th September 2010, held at the Institute of Education, London, where the theme of my address was the effect of homecoming on families. Thirdly, at the British Psychological Society 2nd Military Psychological Conference 13th November 2013, held at Winchester Guildhall, where the conference theme was Military Well-Being of Families and Reservists. This exposure has held this study up for comment and may have influenced some researchers in this field more used to quantitative methods, to experiment with IPA (Messenger, Farquharson, Stallworthy, Cawkill & Greenberg, 2012; Murphy, Hunt, Luzon & Greenberg, 2014).

A main research finding that is supported in the literature is that homecoming and adjustment issues are to be found more with the families left behind. Partners in particular, are more susceptible to being negatively effected with their Reservist being on military operations (Darwin, 2006; de Burgh *et al.*, 2011; White *et al.*, 2011; Danish & Antonides, 2013; Knobloch *et al.*, 2013). This would suggest when Reservists are mobilized, the MOD needs to proactively plan for and integrate the partners and close

family in to the normal support system afforded to Regular soldiers. Reservists living far away from military bases where such services are standard may cause geographical problems. These could be overcome by supplying outreach from the Regular Army and more training and resources for those permanent staff stationed at Reserve Centres close to the home of each Reservist.

Military operations were not necessarily the cause of homecoming stress. These were experienced as different types of stress; basic versus complicated. What helped in homecoming adjustment was access to resources in the form of social support (Westwood, et al., 2010), strong friendships (Greden et al., 2010), good civilian employment (Iversen et al., 2005) and finances (Elbogen et al., 2012). The groups indicted fall within the community of interest. Members of these groups could be mobilized to provide both formal and informal support for returning Reservists. The responsibility for coordinating these different groups falls to the MOD.

The importance of military values and leadership at an organisational level are important to the experience of homecoming. There must be congruence between the espoused values of the military and how the organization treats Reservists, if reintegration on homecoming is going to be assisted (Jones et al., 2012). Reservists do better if they go and return as part of a formed unit, rather than as individual augmentees (Wessely, 2006) and need to be valued for their contribution to the overall military effort (Shaw & Hector, 2010). If they were used as individuals, procedures designed to quickly integrate them in to the Regular team would be useful. On homecoming, the strong link with the Regular unit the Reservist served with should not be severed abruptly, but given time to transition from the performing to the mourning phase associated with team development (Aritzeta, Swailes, & Senior, 2007).

5.4.3. Future research.

Future research in to the generalizability of the findings of this study would be most useful and require researchers to be creative in how to operationalize their research questions. This study adds to the growing body of research that suggests there is utility considering the role positive psychology has to play in examining all aspects of military life (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). More work needs to be done to understand how PTG occurs and under what circumstances it thrives and whether PTG should and can be fostered. Similarly, resilience may be a related phenomenon, or something separate and needs to be clearly defined. The link between resilience and personality traits needs to be further explored and how individuals can develop the hardiness required for military service. Positive concepts such as wisdom, courage and spirituality may become fruitful areas for research into why some soldiers seem to be addicted to life in the combat zone (Braender, 2015). Social identity theory has proved to be very fruitful in understanding aspects of Reservists' experiences (Griffith, 2009). This strand should be followed and related theories including the conservation of resources (Hobfoll, 2001) and relational regulation (Lakey & Orehek, 2011) may possibly be useful concepts to test on military groups. There is an official *Military Covenant* that formalizes the psychological contract for British civilian-military relations (Forster, 2012). There is also an unofficial psychological contract linking Reservists with the different groups they inhabit, which seems to have received little attention. The link between this contract, meaning making and Reservist motivation to participate on operations may turn out to be a fruitful line of investigation. Other aspects of U.K. Reserve Forces are just beginning to draw academic attention, including violence (Kwan, Jones, Hull, Wessely, Fear & MacManus, 2016) and organizational

culture (Edmunds, Dawes, Higate, Jenkins & Woodward, 2016). Finally, with the growing proportion of females joining the UK Armed Forces and all roles being opened up to them, including close combat (BBC, 2016), research on female Reservists is starting to be published (Basham & Catignani, 2018), but needs to include all relevant phenomena.

5.4.4. Concluding comments.

There is a not unexpected strand in the literature that psychological research in to the military and in to Reservists followed cyclical patterns. Heightened interest peaks immediately following a major period of conflict and then ebbs away. In the process a lot of good research is conducted, which often can progress general psychological knowledge. Theories of stress and coping are a prime example. Alongside this research is the development of policy designed to improve the lot of all military personnel, including Reservists. It is argued that his study, coming as it does from a particular, but clearly stated context, has gone some way to show a different side of the phenomenon of Reservist's homecoming. In this respect it is suggested it will be useful to future researchers and policy makers.

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Appendix A: Reflective Comments

The military, conflict and war instigate a lot of psychological research. I found myself in the right place and time to take that opportunity to study an aspect of psychology related to people, organisations and extraordinary part-time work and how military operations effect people's well-being. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan draw to a close, new wars are starting in Africa and the Middle East. The Global War on Terrorism continues. It is a time to not only to reflect and maximize lessons learned, but also look forward to what lies ahead for Service personnel.

Throughout the study I was aware of myself as an expert and the approach being woven out of the different strands of my life: part military, part civilian, part psychological and part existential. I felt the study of the military in conflict was too prone to reductionism and nomothetic, treating soldiers as objects rather than people. I wanted my research to be a study of the people, so whether the military experience is told in terms of biochemical reactions or cognitive processes, military concepts like cohesion and morale, or universal human feelings like friendship and trust, these are all seen as refractions of the same beam of light, the person. There is no dissonance for me going from one language to another, but rather it is I the person, the soldier, the researcher and the expert bringing it all together with a unified, and perhaps controversial theory. This will be elaborated further by exploring my journey and reflecting on professional practice and personal growth.

Professional practice

My previous experience in psychology started from an undergraduate degree in business, a conversion masters degree in psychology in order to gain the BPS Graduate Basis for Registration, a professional masters in occupational psychology and then BPS Chartership and HCPC Registration. Throughout these forays in to academic study, all the research conducted was qualitative, objective, positivist and nomothetic. Wanting to learn more about psychology in general and develop my skills as an occupational psychologist. The next step was naturally to enter a professional doctorate programme.

With the untimely death of the Course Director at UEL (Dr. Christine Doyle), my start of the programme was delayed. My personal circumstances changed and as a member of the Army Reserve (then Territorial Army) I was called up for operational service in Afghanistan (October 2005 to June 2006). On returning from this tour, I felt I had experienced something different and developed as a person. How I had developed was difficult to conceptualise and even more difficult to put in to words. Now I felt ready to start on the next step of my professional development and undertake the DOccPsych programme. What followed was a very long and at times frustrating process to gain approval from my unit, during which I completed the taught qualitative component. I was also called up for a second operational tour (January to September 2007), which although very different in nature, was a time of reflection. On returning from my second tour, I repeated the qualitative component and was able to complete the research proposal. The two tours had affected me profoundly and given me the interest in and ideal focus for a research topic. The taught component of the programme had given me an insight in to qualitative methodology, that until that time had been completely alien to me. This coupled with the desire to want to make sense of the experience of military operations, was the perfect opportunity to use the new professional tools I had been given.

The literature review conducted at this time, in order to write the research proposal was an eye opener, both professionally, but more personally. The soldiers that were being described in the literature seemed both lifeless and foreign. The way they were talked about in the third person conveyed nothing to me about what the experience meant to them and in no way reflected my own personal experience as a Reservist. Rather I was sensing something, that later in the course of the project I was able to understand as, the values, experiences, interests, beliefs and political commitments, of the researchers and the institutions they belonged too. The objectivity to higher sort in quantitative methodology had taken out the humanity of the subjects and reduced them to mere objects. This revelation opened my understanding both personally and professionally to the powerful influence of the researchers epistemological position. Questions I began to ask were; how has the research question defined and limited what can be found; how has the design of the study and the method of analysis 'constructed' the data and the findings; how could the research question have been investigated differently; and, to what extent would this have given rise to a different understanding of the phenomena under investigation. These questions encouraged me reflect upon the assumptions made in the literature based around studying the military and how research findings were effecting policy and procedure in the military.

On returning from my third operational tour (March 2008 to February 2009) I completed the quantitative part of taught programme and had to work hard to get the MOD Research Ethics Committee to process my application to conduct research. Despite the fact that the application had gone in a year earlier, I discovered that while I had been away, it had simply not been processed. This was very disheartening at the time. Therefore it was not until May 2019, that I was able to being the research proper.

What I had learned up to that point was what was missing in the research and this naturally lead me to use phenomenological methodology in order to make an original contribution to professional knowledge and practice. This also perfectly matched my need to develop professionally, using qualitative method for the first time. Fortunately in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), I found a robust tool, reliant on the hermeneutic circle and reflexivity to mitigate the major pitfall that I could have fallen in to: namely, using the data to justify my experience, rather than let the data speak for the participants. I believe the advantage of being a Reservist with operational experience and therefore a subject matter expert aided rather than hindered this. Interpretation being central to hermeneutics would have been far more difficult without the insiders' perspective. My knowledge and experience gave me the ability to check whether the method actually worked and was accurate. This experience will hold me in good stead in the future, when I next go to apply a methodology on a subject matter where I am no expert. I will not know what to look for and what steps are required to validate findings that may be completely outside of my personal experience.

I found the Q Sort study took me back closer to my original comfort zone of statistical analysis, but this time with a completely different perspective. Mixed methods design is a requirement of the programme and conducting a second study contributed further to my professional development. This showed me how to explore different levels of the same phenomenon by approaching the same question from different methodological positions and that they were not mutually exclusive. The reason for conducting mixed methodology now seems natural to me, in a world where the word scientific is still predominately associated with reductionist methodologies and quantitative methods. My IPA results naturally lead to and benefited from the Q methodology on many levels,

particularly; triangulation to gain a better understanding of the themes and as supportive evidence to a small-scale study.

The benefits of my research have not only been one way.

Personal growth

It has been relatively easy to reflect on my professional development over the course of the programme. Reflecting on my own personal development has been a little more taxing. This is because in the course of events, one develops and it is not always easy to see where the root cause of the development stems from. A lot has gone on in my life that has tested me over the period of research: taking a personal relationship to the next level; moving house, twice; the third operational tour, with personal experiences of combat; being elevated from the ranks in the military to becoming an officer, with the extra duties and responsibilities that entails; starting my own psychological services business; and, most poignantly helping to nurse my mother through the final six months of her life as she died of cancer. All have been potential causes of stress, but in line with the findings of this project, these events have developed me. Are these examples of post-traumatic growth; I think yes.

If I did want to point to one particular aspect of my personal life that has probably had most influence on me and influenced my research, it is probably the fact that my partner is an experienced psychotherapist. Throughout the time I have worked on this project, I have benefited from the opportunity to regularly talk to her about it. I am sure a lot of her knowledge and insight has rubbed off on the way I have developed reflexively and applied that to gathering my data and interpreting my results. That along with the

normal process of gaining experience has toned down the more positivist aspects of my beliefs and values, opening me up to a more introspective and phenomenological understanding. I believe that has made me more balanced in my worldview and this cannot but be reflected in my approach to research. I feel like a mixed methodology, but the work is never complete.

Throughout this research, I have maintained a reflexive log. On reviewing my it, I note one of the earliest comments that is now informative and show how much I was a subject as much as a researcher.

I felt that it was very difficult to explain to my partner the complexity, activities and emotions associated with my military life to her, someone who did not share the same experiences. Pointedly I noted that it was quite easy for me to get angry with her for not seeing the situation in the same way that I experienced it. I also noted at that time the military administrative staffs that deal with personnel processes and procedures (such as pay and allowances) had in my opinion not done very much to support others or me. It felt to me that the actual troops on the ground, the Reservists, were considered a burden to these full time administrative staff, rather than the actual sole purpose for the existence of their jobs and roles. Other comments from my notebook at that time demonstrated that I felt that I was feeling unusual emotions. My thoughts were that when I mixed with the normal civilian population back on 'civvy street', I thought I did not share the same worldview as I considered most people had. My reasoning behind this was that I believed people with no operational experience did not appreciate the good life they had in the West and that people in general got agitated over things that I considered unimportant; pointless jobs, getting to work on time, working for organisations that they obviously did not enjoy working for. My conclusions were that

through having had experiences that were 'unusual', this made everyday experiences and routines seem superficial and unimportant. In my notes, I considered that my perspective on the existential meaning of life was broader and perhaps more 'worldly'. I felt that these feelings that I was having contributed to my difficulties as a Reservist in adjusting back into my pre-deployment roles, work, home, friends etc.

Author

Appendix B: UEL Ethics Application

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

**APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF AN EMPIRICAL PROGRAMME
INVOLVING HUMAN
PARTICIPANTS**

Please read the Notes for Guidance before completing this form. If necessary, please continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper: indicate clearly which question the continuation sheet relates to and ensure that it is securely fastened to the report form.

<p>1. Title of the programme: Professional Doctorate in Occupational Psychology</p> <p>Title of research project (if different from above): How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a prolonged period of military mobilisation?</p>
<p>2. Name of person responsible for the programme (Principal Investigator): Lionel Fairweather</p> <p>Status: Part time student and Occupational Psychologist</p> <p>Name of supervisor (if different from above): Donald Ridley</p> <p>Status: Principal Lecturer</p>
<p>3. School: Psychology</p> <p>Department/Unit: Occupational & Organizational Psychology</p>
<p>4. Level of the programme (delete as Appropriate):</p> <p>(a) undergraduate basic</p> <p>(b) undergraduate project</p> <p>(c) Postgraduate (taught)</p>

	(d)	Postgraduate (research)
	(e)	post-doctoral or staff
<hr/>		
5.	Number of:	
	(a) experimenters (approximately): 1	
	(b) participants (approximately): 10	
<hr/>		
6.	Name of researcher (s) (including title): Mr. Lionel Fairweather	
	Nature of researcher (delete as appropriate):	
	(a) staff	(b) student (c) others
	If "others" please give full details:	
<hr/>		
7.	Nature of participants (general characteristics, e.g. University students, primary school children, etc):	
	All participants will be volunteers who are current members of the British Army Volunteer Reserve, who have been mobilised for regular military service and returned from an overseas tour to Afghanistan.	
<hr/>		
8.	Probable duration of the programme:	
	from (starting date): September 2007	to (finishing date): June 2010

9.	Aims of the programme including any hypothesis to be tested:
	<p>The main objective of this research is to find out if there is a shared experience of mobilisation for volunteer reserves that is different from that of other soldiers and enduring beyond their mobilisation. Furthermore whether this shared experience changes the attitude of volunteer reservist to their former civilian life? Therefore the focus of the research will be descriptive and interpretive.</p> <p>This research question will explore the transitional phase from military mobilised service back to 'normal' civilian life for the volunteer reservists in the UK under the present</p>

context of the Global War On Terrorism. The research question is: 'How do volunteer reservists experience homecoming following a period of mobilisation'?

10. Description of the procedures to be used (give sufficient detail for the Committee to be clear about what is involved in the programme). Please append to the application form copies of any instructional leaflets, letters, questionnaires, forms or other documents which will be issued to the participants:

This research will be a qualitative. This will consist of semi-structured interviews with approximately 5 to 10 members of the volunteer reserve, who have been on operational deployment. Each interview is expected to last approximately a little over one hour. Smith & Osborn (2003) state that there is no right answer to the question of sample size. The deciding factors will be the degree of commitment of the researcher, the richness of individual cases and the constraints one is operating under.

The aim of the interviews is to describe and interpret the lived experience of retuning to civilian life following a period of mobilised service. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed verbatim, before being analysed in line with the general phenomenological method of epoche (preparing the researcher to be receptive to what is actually going on), phenomenological reduction (describe totality of phenomena to identify constituent parts) and imaginative variation (asking how this experience is made possible) in order to come up with the essence of what is it to come home after operational service (Willig, 2006). The fact that the researcher is also a member of the volunteer reserve with operational experiences, means he can't but help interpret the participant's experience through my own perceptual filter. The researcher in this case is also an experiential expert. This fact should produce richer data. Therefore de facto he will be conducting a form of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, 1996). This requires that the data undergo a series of steps in order to identify the themes and integrate them into meaningful clusters, first within and then across cases.

Smith, J.A. (1996) Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology. *Psychology & Health*, 11, 261-71.

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2003) Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In JA Smith (ed) *Qualitative Psychology*. London: Sage.

Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: adventures in theory and method*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

11. Are there potential hazards to the participant(s) in these procedures?

YES

If yes: (a) what is the nature of the hazard(s)?

The hazard to consider is the potential than an interview about homecoming may induce memories associated with psychological trauma leading to flashbacks that are a symptom of existing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This should not arise, as the nature of the research methods used has no history of inducing any additional trauma.

(b) what precautions will be taken?

In pre-interview literature and at the beginning of the interview the researcher would make the participant aware that if the participant feels distressed, they are to inform the researcher and can stop the interview at any time. The participant will be reassured as to the confidentiality of the research.

If a participant does not have PTSD, then the interview cannot induce PTSD. If the participant already has undiagnosed PTSD, the interview may be where the PTSD is initially diagnosed.

Therefore the interview may provide the added benefit to an individual participant, in as much as directing those with as yet undiagnosed PTSD to the best possible source for diagnosis and treatment. If the participant discloses that they already have diagnosed PTSD, then the interview will be terminated and an alternate participant found.

If any PTSD is suspected, then the participant will be advised to seek the assistance of the services made available to him/her through the military system and associated organisations. The interview will be terminated and that participant will take no further part in this research. The NICE Guidelines for dealing with PTSD will be followed at all times (Post-traumatic stress disorder: The management of PTSD in adults and children in primary and secondary care: National Clinical Practice Guideline Number 26 commissioned by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence published by Gaskell and the British Psychological Society, 2005).

This services that will advised include but are not limited to the following:

- Reserve Training and Mobilisation Centre
 - Reservists Mental Health Programme
- Combat Stress – Ex Services Mental Welfare Society
- GP referral to NHS Mental Health Services

The Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants, Ethical Principles for Research with Human Subjects (British Psychological Society, 1978), will be followed throughout this research.

12. Is medical care or after care necessary?

NO

If yes, what provision has been made for this?

13. May these procedures cause discomfort or distress?

YES

If yes, give details including likely duration:

There is a potential that discussing adjustment back into civilian life might be found uncomfortable or distressing for the participant. In pre-interview literature and at the beginning of the interview the researcher would make the participant aware that if they feel psychological discomfort or distressed during the interview, they are to inform the researcher and can stop the interview at any time. The participant will be reassured as to the

confidentiality of the research. If the participant informs the researcher that they are distressed, or if the researcher recognizes that the participants mood has changed and they are showing signs of discomfort or distress, the researcher will stop the interview and provide the participant with details of the support services available to him/her and suggest they go and seek professional advice.

This services that will advised include but are not limited to the following:

- Reserve Training and Mobilisation Centre
 - Reservists Mental Health Programme
- Parent unit
 - Welfare officer
 - Direct line supervisor
- SaBRE – Support for Reservists and Employers
- Citizen Advice Bureau

The Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants, Ethical Principles for Research with Human Subjects (British Psychological Society, 1978), will be followed throughout this research.

14. (a) Will there be administration of drugs (including alcohol)?

NO

If yes, give details:

(b) Where the procedures involve potential hazards and/or discomfort or distress, please state what previous experience you have had in conducting this type of research:

15. (a) How will the participants' consent be obtained?

All reservists go through the Reserve Training and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC), Chilwell in order to be mobilised and de-mobilised. The RTMC now has a new purpose built block especially to provide the services of the new Reservists Mental Health Programme (RMHP) on homecoming. It is mandatory that all soldiers being demobilized receive a brief on the psychological effects they may experience and informing them of the sources of help available to them. The RTMC is the perfect location to introduce and explain the value of the

research to returning reservists and ask for participation. Returning Reservists will be invited to attend a presentation on the aims and methodology of the research at the RTMC. Following the presentation, participant volunteers will be requested from those attending the presentation. All those who volunteer to be research participants will be asked to provide their contact details, including their military Unit address. Each volunteer will leave the presentation with a letter detailing the proposed research, research question, aims of the research and methodology. Their letter will also summarise what will happen next.

(b) What will the participants be told as to the nature of the research?

At the presentation, all attendees will be informed that the research will take the form of a one to one interview with the researcher. The interview will be recorded and transcribed verbatim. The researcher will ask a number of questions in order to tease out the experience of returning to civilian life, following a period of mobilization. On accepting to be take part, all participants will receive a letter detailing the University Secretary of the Research Ethics Committee, contact details of the researcher, all disclaimer clauses, summary of the presentation, and how their information will be used, safe-guarded and destroyed at the end of the research.

16. (a) Will the participants be paid?

NO

(b) If yes, please give the amount: £

(c) If yes, please give full details of the reason for the payment and how the amount given in 16 (a) above has been calculated (i.e. what expenses and time lost is it intended to cover):

17. Are the services of the University Health Service likely to be required during or after the programme?

NO

If yes, give details:

18. (a) Where will the research take place?

In a private office at each participants Territorial Army Centre.

(b) What equipment (if any) will be used?

Digital tape recorder, paper and pencil.

(c) If equipment is being used is there any risk of accident or injury? If so, what precautions are being taken to ensure that should any untoward event happen adequate aid can be given:

NO

19. Are personal data to be obtained from any of the participants?

YES

If yes, (a) give details:

The participants will be categorised in terms of standard demographics, type of deployment, level of perceived stress while in theatre and exposure to potentially traumatic events such as combat, near death and or seeing and dealing with others trauma or death.

(b) state what steps will be taken to protect the confidentiality of the data?

Only the researcher will know the personal contact detail for the participants. All personalised data that cannot be made anonymous will be kept by the researcher on a desktop computer in the locked private office of the researcher. The computer is both password protected and 128-bit AES encrypted.

(c) state what will happen to the data once the research has been completed and the results written-up. If the data is to be destroyed how will this be done? How will you ensure that the data will be disposed of in such a way that there is no risk of its confidentiality being compromised?

Written material will be shredded. Audio-recorded material will be deleted and the digital device electronically wiped clean. Computer stored data will be deleted using the Gutmann method of overwriting 35 times, which surpasses the US DoD standard.

20. Will any part of the research take place in premises outside the University or will any members of the research team be external to the University? YES

University or will any members of the research team be external to the University?

If yes, please give full details of the extent to which the participating institution will indemnify the experimenters against the consequences of any untoward

event:

The researcher is a military reservist and occupational psychologist. As such he is covered by his own personal Professional Indemnity Insurance and by the MoD's liability insurance. All the participants will be Reservists of the British Army on MoD property, and therefore also covered by the MoD's insurance.

21. Are there any other matters or details, which you consider relevant to the consideration of this proposal? If so, please elaborate below:

As a serving member of the reserve forces, the researcher has direct access to the participant pool. The researcher has been security cleared by the MoD using the Developed Vetting procedures. He has received written authority from his Commanding Officer to conduct the research, which is the first step required of any activity within a military organisation. He has also the support of Combat Stress (Ex-Service Mental Welfare Society), which an independent charity set up after WW1 by the wives of soldiers suffering from 'Battle Shock' (later reclassified as PTSD). The researcher also has held meetings with members of SaBRE (Support for Reservists and Employers) an organisation in the MoD and received positive feedback that this research should be undertaken. He also have a letter of support from Desmond Swayne MP the Chairman of the All Party Reserve Forces Group, stating that his proposed research is 'very important and timely'. Finally, senior researchers at King's Centre for Military Health Research have been very generous with allowing the researcher access to at that time unpublished research and consider the occupational perspective under researched and of value.

22. If your programme involves contact with children or vulnerable adults, either direct or indirect (including observational), please confirm that you have the relevant clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau prior to the commencement of the study. NOT APPLICABLE

23. DECLARATION

I undertake to abide by accepted ethical principles and appropriate code(s) of practice in carrying out this programme.

Personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and not passed on to others without the written consent of the subject.

The nature of the investigation and any possible risks will be fully explained to intending participants, and they will be informed that:

- (a) they are in no way obliged to volunteer if there is any personal reason (which they are under no obligation to divulge) why they should not participate in the programme; and**

- (b) they may withdraw from the programme at any time, without disadvantage to themselves and without being obliged to give any reason.**

NAME OF APPLICANT:

Signed:

(Person responsible)

Date:

NAME OF HEAD OF SCHOOL:

Signed: _____

Date:

Appendix C: MoDREC Application



Ministry Of Defence

Application for MoDREC Approval

MoDREC Protocol No: 0806/161

Document Description:

Application for MoDREC approval for scientific research.

Version	Date	Description
1.0	19 Jun 2006	First issue

This document will be subject to version control by:

SIT-Sec2	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
01.K.46	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
MoD Main Building	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
London		
SW1A 2HB		



MoDREC Protocol No: 0806/161

Date: 26 February 2008

Version No:

Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MoDREC)

APPLICATION FOR MoDREC APPROVAL

Please read the notes in “Procedure for obtaining ethical approval from the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MoDREC) for research involving human participants” before completing this form. Type in the grey boxes, which will expand automatically to encompass your text.

1. TITLE OF STUDY

How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a period of prolonged military mobilisation?

2. NATURE OF PROJECT

The main objective of this research is to find out if there is a shared experience of mobilisation for Volunteer Reservists that is different from that of other soldiers and enduring beyond their mobilisation. Furthermore whether this shared experience changes the attitude of Volunteer Reservist to their former civilian life? Therefore the focus of the research will be descriptive and interpretive.

This research is being submitted for a Professional Doctorate in Occupational Psychology.

3. INVESTIGATORS

3a. Principal Investigator

Name: Lionel Fairweather *BA(Hons), MPhil, MSc, CPsychol.*

Grade/Rank: Chartered Occupational Psychologist, British Psychological Society

Post Title: Postgraduate Student

Department: School of Psychology

Establishment: University of East London

Telephone: [REDACTED]

E-mail:

Primary Work: [REDACTED]

Secondary University: [REDACTED]

3b. Other investigators / collaborators / external consultants

Research Supervisor

Donald Ridley

Principal Lecturer in Organisational Psychology

Department of Psychology

University of East London

3c. Name of the Independent Medical Officer (if applicable)

N/A

4. PREFERRED TIMETABLE

4a. Preferred start date: January 2009

4b. Expected date of project's completion: January 2010

5. SPONSOR / OTHER ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED AND FUNDING

5a. Department/Organisation requesting research: N/A

Commanding Officer

Artist Rifles

MoD Leighton House

Regents Park Barracks

Albany Street

London NW1 4AL

5b. If you are receiving funding for the study please provide details here: N/A

5c. Please declare any competing interests: N/A

6. OTHER REC APPROVAL

Has the proposed study been submitted to any other reviewing body? If so, please provide details:

University Ethics Committee

The Graduate School

University of East London

Docklands Campus

4-6 University Way

London E16 2RD

7. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research will explore the transitional phase from military mobilised service back to ‘normal’ civilian life for the Volunteer Reservists in the UK under the present context of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOt). The explicit research question is:

‘How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a period of prolonged military mobilisation’?

In the UK there are approximately 200,000 regular members of HM Armed Forces. In addition there are approximately 36,000 Volunteer Reserves (who are recruited directly from the civilian community into any of the four Volunteer Reserve Forces - the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR), the Royal Marines Reserve (RMR), the Territorial Army (TA) and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAuxAF)) and 52,000 Regular Reserves (former full-time members of the Armed Forces who may still be liable for service under certain circumstances). As such the reserves constitute a sizeable organisation.

It is expected that mobilisation has long term effects on volunteer reservists, whether or not they see combat, that is different from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and although a less acute condition, may be expected to effect more numbers than PTSD.

Reservists may experience the return from operational deployment differently from regulars. This may stem from the fact that regulars work with the same colleagues whether on operations or not and therefore all share the same experiences. The military culture the reservist has got used too while on operations, is different from any other civilian organisational culture with different rules of behaviour, values, norms etc. This difference may be partly grounded in the context of returning to civilian life, as opposed

to returning to non-operational military life.

Qualitatively this research is looking at the experience of being a volunteer reservist returning to civilian life in the present situation of increased use of the reserve forces. As such it looks to capture the quality and texture of individual experience. If a coherent phenomena is found to exist that leads to the identification of themes, which can be integrated into meaningful clusters within and across the study group, then there may be an opportunity to conduct a quantitative analysis. It would be interesting to find out whether these same clusters are experienced throughout the wider body of mobilised volunteer reserves in the UK at this time.

The specific topics in psychology that are focused on by this project are attitude and attitude change brought on by being placed in completely different working environment of military operations for an extended period of time. This research may demonstrate that mobilising volunteer reservists has the potential to be a life-changing event, which has repercussions (that could be either negative, positive or both) for the individual. These repercussions need to be understood in order to make better informed policy and practice in regard to managing reservists both by the military and organisations who are the civilian employers of the returned reservist.

This investigation is relevant to military and occupational psychology research and practice for a number of reasons. Volunteer reservists with 36,000 members (and plans to grow this number), are a large occupational group within the UK system. Regular reservists add a further 52,000 to this work force. Therefore just in terms of absolute numbers, reservists are an appropriate population for study. Reservists have been an under-studied group, that are subject to some very demanding and potentially life

threatening circumstances and are therefore owed a duty of care by their employer. HM Government as the ultimate employer needs to make reservist policy based on sound research in order to maintain capability, ensure they can do their job and deliver the expected duty of care. Considerable public money is spent training and utilising reservists; the public need to be assured that public money is being well spent. If some research findings hold out to be true (Hacker Hughes et al, 2005; Browne et al, 2007), then more public money may need to be allocated in order to deal with the issues associated with homecoming.

There are a number of other reasons that demonstrate the relevance of this research to the wider field of psychological research. The current GWoT is the cause for such research; the literature review shows that research into subjects associated with military matters is often only relevant and permissible during times of large scale conflicts.

Therefore while the will is there on the part of Government and military organisations to conduct research, the opportunity should not be missed. As members of the civilian population, reservists live out any psychological problems they have in their own families, communities and workplaces. Also because the military are very much in the spotlight of the modern media, how soldiers behave has implications for society in general (Zimbardo, 2007). In that way what happens to them while on operations, can have far reaching consequences for the whole of UK society. In the civilian world, much research time has been spent studying the issues around portfolio careers, temporary and part-time working. Reservists are a sub-set of this area of research.

Therefore it is possible that findings from this research will contribute to all these areas.

Willig (2001) points out that qualitative methodologies can be differentiated according to the extent they emphasize reflexivity and the importance they place on the role of

language. As the researcher is an active volunteer reservist, who has been on three operational tours, the importance of his reflective piece must be paramount.

Conducting the literature review from the researcher's insider's perspective makes him aware of the 'contractedness' of the research on this subject. With the heavy focus on medical problems and PTSD, this researcher gets no sense from the literature of what it is to be either a soldier, or a volunteer reservist. If he gets little sense of this, how can someone who is not in the military get a sense of this experience? It is the researcher's hope that by investigating something so personal, he will develop an insight into the application and interpretation of the methodology, that would be different and richer, than if he were studying a phenomena from the outsider's perspective.

On a more general level, the literature review points out that the research is predominately US centric and based on the regular soldiers experience. Only recently have the facts on the ground forced the responsible organisations to consider the volunteer reservist as a special case. The fact that current operational tempo cannot be maintained without the reserves, means that now is a good time to examine any differences between regulars and reserves. This could have the benefit of enabling the reservist's experience of mobilisation to be improved. This could include different preparation and post-operational processes that include different types of psychological support, both for the troops and their families. In the past reservists' organisations and command structures, in an attempt to fit in to a system run by their regulars bosses, would not want to make the distinction. Now that government and MoD policy has changed (House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts, 2007) to increase the status of reservists and acknowledge their current essential contribution, the constructed reality has changed and reservists can be researched as a separate group, with different experiences, issues and needs. This research should be a valuable contribution in the

UK, by adding a qualitative dimension to the small but steadily growing quantity of sound occupational psychology research in this area.

References:

Browne, T., Hull, L., Horn, O., Jones, M., Murphy, M., Fear, N. T., Greenberg, N., French, C., Rona, R. J., Wessely, S. & Hotopf, M. (2007). Explanations for the increase in mental health problems in UK reserve forces who have served in Iraq. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 190, 484-489.

Hacker Hughes, J., Cameron, F., Eldridge, R., Devon, M., Wessely, S., & Greenberg, N. (2005). Going to war does not have to hurt: Preliminary findings from the British deployment to Iraq. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 186(6), 536-537.

House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts. (2007) Reserve Forces. *Thirty-sixth report of session 2006-7*. London: The Stationary Office Limited.

Zimbardo, P. (2007). *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding how good people turn evil*, Random House, New York.

Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: adventures in theory and method*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

8. STUDY DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

It is expected that this research will use a mixed methods approach. Firstly a qualitative study will be conducted. This will consist of semi-structured interviews with approximately 10 members of the volunteer reserve, who have been on operational deployment. Each interview is expected to last approximately an hour. The data will be categorised and analysed in terms of demographics, type of deployment (whether inside or out side a secure environment), level of perceived stress while in theatre and exposure to potentially traumatic events such as combat, near death and or seeing and

dealing with the trauma of others or death. The aim of the interviews is to describe and interpret the 'lived experience' (Dilthey, 1977) of retuning to civilian life. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed verbatim, before being analysed in line with the general phenomenological method of; epoche (preparing the researcher to be receptive to what is actually going on), phenomenological reduction (describing the totality of phenomena to identify constituent parts) and imaginative variation (asking how this experience is made possible) in order to come up with the 'essence' (Husserl, 1931) of what is it to come home after operational service.

The fact that the researcher is also a member of the Volunteer Reserve with operational experiences makes him an experiential expert. This fact should produce richer data.

The researcher's worldview as well as the interaction between him and the research participants will have to be reflected upon and necessitate him to constantly interpret the participants' experiences. Therefore the methodology that is appropriate for this particular research is Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. (Smith, 1996; Smith and Osborn, 2003). This requires that the data undergo a series of steps (iterations of analysis) in order to identify the themes and integrate them into meaningful clusters, first within and then across cases. If the qualitative investigation uncovers meaningful clusters, these may be developed in to a questionnaire that will be used for future supportive quantitative research.

References:

Dilthey, W. (1977) *Descriptive psychology and historical understanding* (R.M. Zaner, & K.L. Heiges, Trans.). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff. (Original work published 1894).

Husserl, E. (1931) *Ides*. Translated by W.R. Boyce Gibson. London: George Allen &

Unwin.

Smith, J.A. (1996) Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology. *Psychology & Health, 11*, 261-71

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2003) Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In JA Smith (ed) *Qualitative Psychology*. London: Sage.

9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In general the Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants, Ethical Principles for Research with Human Subjects (British Psychological Society, 1978), will be followed throughout this research. More specifically, the main hazard to consider is the potential that an interview about homecoming may induce memories associated with psychological trauma leading to flashbacks that are a symptom of existing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This should not arise, as the nature of the research methods used has no history of inducing any additional trauma.

In pre-interview literature and at the beginning of the interview the researcher would make the participant aware that if the participant feels distressed, they are to inform the researcher and can stop the interview at any time. The participant will be reassured as to the confidentiality of the research.

If any PTSD is suspected, then the participant will be advised to seek the assistance of the services made available to him/her through the military system and associated organisations. The NICE Guidelines for dealing with PTSD will be followed at all times (Post-traumatic stress disorder: The management of PTSD in adults and children in primary and secondary care: National Clinical Practice Guideline Number 26

commissioned by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence published by Gaskell and the British Psychological Society, 2005).

10. PARTICIPANTS TO BE STUDIED

Number of participants: 5 - 10

Lower age limit: 18

Upper age limit: 55

Gender: Male / Female

Please provide justification for the sample size:

The qualitative research will consist of semi-structured interviews with approximately 5 to 10 members of the volunteer reserve, who have been on operational deployment.

Smith & Osborn (2003) state that there is no right answer to the question of sample size.

They argue the deciding factors will be the degree of commitment of the researcher, the richness of individual cases and the constraints one is operating under.

Reference:

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2003) Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In JA Smith (ed) *Qualitative Psychology*. London: Sage.

11. SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria will be that the participants are serving members of the Volunteer Reserve Forces who recently have been mobilised for an overseas tour, of which 6 months have been in theatre and who volunteer to participate in the research. There are no exclusion criteria.

12. RECRUITMENT

12a. Describe how potential participants will be identified:

The researcher is a member of a Volunteer Reserve Unit that has just been mobilised and therefore has access to a large pool of potential participants who meet the selection criteria.

12b. Describe how potential participants will be approached:

The researcher will give a presentation to all members of his unit, during their demobilization phase, explaining why and how the research is being carried out.

12c. Describe how potential participants will be recruited:

At the end of his presentation to his unit, the researcher will request volunteer participants.

13. CONSENT

13a. Please describe the process you will use when seeking and obtaining consent:

Returning Volunteer Reservists of the researcher's unit will be invited to attend a presentation on the aims and methodology of the research at their unit location.

Following the presentation, participant volunteers will be requested from those attending. All those who volunteer to be research participants will be asked to provide their contact details. Each volunteer will leave the presentation with a letter detailing the proposed research, research question, aims of the research and methodology. Their letter will also summarise what will happen next.

At the presentation, all attendees will be informed that the research will take the form of a one-to-one interview with the researcher. The interview will be recorded and

transcribed verbatim. The researcher will ask a number of questions in order to tease out the experience of returning to civilian life, following a period of mobilization. On accepting to be take part, all participants will receive a letter detailing the University of East London Secretary of the Research Ethics Committee, contact details of the researcher, all disclaimer clauses, summary of the presentation, and how their information will be used, safe-guarded and destroyed at the end of the research.

A copy of the participant information sheet and consent form must be attached to this application. For your convenience proformas are provided at the end of this document. These should be filled in, modified where necessary, and attached to the end of your application.

13b. Will the participants be from any of the following groups?

Under 18: No

Subordinates: No

Prisoners: No

Pregnant or nursing mothers: No

Mental Illness: No

Learning disabilities: No

How will you ensure that participants in the groups listed above are competent to consent to take part in this study?

The researcher is a subject matter expert, having been mobilized three times for active duty in Afghanistan and is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist. His experience and judgement will be used to ensure that participants in the groups listed above are competent to consent to take part in this study.

13c. Are there any special pressures that might make it difficult for people to refuse to take part in the study? How will you address such issues?

No

14. PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT: RISKS, REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS

14a. What are the potential hazards, risks or adverse effects associated with the study?

There is a potential that discussing adjustment back into civilian life might be found uncomfortable or distressing for the participant.

14b. Does your study involve invasive procedures such as blood taking, muscle biopsy or the administration of a medicinal product? No

If so, please provide details:

N/A

14c. Please indicate the experience of the investigators in the use of these procedures:

The researcher is a BPS Chartered Occupational Psychologist in commercial practice, with 18 years professional work experience. He has also received MoD Developed Vetting clearance. The researcher is also a member of the Volunteer Reserves with 20 years service, who has been mobilised three times and can therefore be said to be a subject matter expert.

14d. If medical devices are to be used on any participant, do they comply with the requirements of the Medical Devices Directives?

N/A

14e. Please name the locations or sites where the work will be done:

Territorial Army Centre of each participant.

14f. Will group or individual interviews / questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting? If so, please list these topics and explain how you will prevent, or respond to, volunteer discomfort:

There is a potential that discussing adjustment back into civilian life might be found uncomfortable or distressing for the participant.

In pre-interview literature and at the beginning of the interview the researcher would make the participant aware that if they feel psychological discomfort or distressed during the interview, they are to inform the researcher and can stop the interview at any time. The participant will be reassured as to the confidentiality of the research. If a participant informs the researcher that they are distressed, or if the researcher recognizes that the participants mood has changed and they are showing signs of discomfort or distress, the researcher will ask the participant if they wish to stop the interview and provide the participant with details of the support services available to him/her. An informed decision will then be made as to whether this particular participant should then be removed from the research pool and replaced, or whether it is appropriate to continue with the same participant.

The services that will be advised include but are not limited to:

- Reserve Training and Mobilisation Centre
 - Reservists Mental Health Programme
- GP referral to NHS Mental Health Services

- Parent unit
 - Welfare officer
 - Direct line supervisor
- SaBRE – Support for Reservists and Employers
- Combat Stress – Ex Services Mental Welfare Society
- Citizen Advice Bureau

14g. Is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action (e.g. evidence of professional misconduct) could take place during the study? If yes, give details of what procedures will be put in place to deal with these issues:

N/A

14h. Please describe any expected benefits to the research participant:

The implications for finding a generally shared phenomenon are that such experiences may have to be catered for in government policy, as part of the MoD's duty of care towards its part-time employees (reservists). In the same way that in theory, reservists require more pre-deployment training than their regular counterparts, they may also require more explicit post-deployment assistance to readjust back into civilian life, if the duty of care is to be maintained.

14i. Under what circumstances might a participant not continue with the study, or the study be terminated in part or as a whole?

In general the Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants, Ethical Principles for Research with Human Subjects (British Psychological Society, 1978), will be followed throughout this research. More specifically, the main hazard to consider is the potential that an interview about homecoming may induce memories associated with psychological trauma leading to flashbacks that are a symptom of existing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This should not arise, as the nature of

the research methods used has no history of inducing any additional trauma.

In pre-interview literature and at the beginning of the interview the researcher would make the participant aware that if the participant feels distressed, they are to inform the researcher and can stop the interview at any time. The participant will be reassured as to the confidentiality of the research.

If any PTSD is suspected, then the participant will be advised to seek the assistance of the services made available to him/her through the military system and associated organisations. The NICE Guidelines for dealing with PTSD will be followed at all times (Post-traumatic stress disorder: The management of PTSD in adults and children in primary and secondary care: National Clinical Practice Guideline Number 26 commissioned by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence published by Gaskell and the British Psychological Society, 2005).

15. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES, EXPENSES AND COMPENSATION

15a. Will travelling expenses be given?

N/A

15b. Is any financial or other reward, apart from travelling expenses, to be given to participants? If yes, please give details and justification:

N/A

15c. If this is a study in collaboration with a pharmaceutical company or an equipment or medical device manufacturer, please give the name of the

company:

N/A

16. CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY AND DATA STORAGE

16a. What steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality (including the confidentiality and physical security of the research data)? Give details of the anonymisation procedures to be used, and at what stage they will be introduced:

Only the researcher will know the personal contact detail for the participants. All personalised data that cannot be made anonymous will be kept by the researcher on a desktop computer in the locked private office of the researcher. The computer is both password protected and 128-bit AES encrypted.

Written material will be shredded. Audio-recorded material will be deleted and the digital device electronically wiped clean. Computer stored data will be deleted using the Gutmann method of overwriting 35 times, which surpasses the US DoD standard.

16b. Who will have access to the records and resulting data?

Researcher only.

16c. Where, and for how long, do you intend to store the consent forms and other records?

1 year following completion of research at University of East London.

17. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

The participant information sheet and consent form should be composed according to the guidelines and submitted with this form.

The following, where applicable, are attached to this form (please indicate):

Participant Information Sheet

Consent Form

Appendix relating to medicines and/or healthcare products

Letter to general practitioners

Letter to parents/guardians

Letter of other ethics committee approval or other approvals

Copy of e-mail recruitment circular/poster/press advertisement

Questionnaire/ topic guide/ interview questions

Evidence of permission from organisation (e.g. hospital) where research is to take place

List of Acronyms

Please list any other supporting documents:

- CV of Principal Investigator
-

Comments about form

If you have any suggestions for improving this form please e-mail them to

ethics.sec@dstl.gov.uk

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Question: “How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a period of prolonged military mobilisation?”

I am a Chartered Occupational Psychologist who is also a serving member of the Territorial Army since 1985. I have served on three operational tours in Afghanistan in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you would like to take part, please let us know if you have been involved in any other study during the last year.

This research will explore the transitional phase from military mobilised service back to ‘normal’ civilian life for the Volunteer Reservists in the UK under the present context of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOt).

If there are problems commonly experienced by volunteer reservists when they return to civilian life, then it may be possible to find ways to reduce them. In the same way that in theory, reservists require more pre-deployment training than their regular counterparts, they may also require more explicit post-deployment assistance to readjust back into civilian life, if the duty of care is to be maintained.

You may at any time withdraw from the study without giving a reason. If you ever require any further explanation, please do not hesitate to ask.

The study will take the form of an interview with me that will last approximately 1 hour and be recorded. The recording will be word-for-word transcribed by me, in to written text. You can request destruction of the tape and or transcript at any time. The questions discussed will be based on the following:

- **Do you feel going on Operations has changed you? In what way?**
- **How have you found fitting back in to civilian life; at home, at work, in the community?**
- **Are you planning to make any major changes in your life? What are they? Why?**
- **How have non-military people reacted to you?**
- **Have you discussed your mobilised experiences with others? Describe how that went?**
- **What has been the most challenging aspect of homecoming?**
- **What would you change about the experience of homecoming? Why?**

Any information obtained during this study will remain confidential as to your identity. I will keep all personalised data that cannot be made anonymous, on a secure desktop computer in my locked private office. The computer is both password protected and 128-bit AES encrypted. If the data can be specifically identified with you, your permission will be sought in writing before it will be published. Other material, which cannot be identified with you, will be published or presented at meetings with the aim of benefiting others. You may ask me for copies of all papers, reports, transcripts, summaries and other published or presented material. All information will be subject to the current conditions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

In the event of you suffering any adverse effects as a consequence of your participation in this study, you will be eligible to apply for compensation under the MoD's 'No Fault Compensation Scheme' (see separate sheets for details).

If required by the MoD or University of East London, experimental records, including paper records and computer files, will be held for a minimum of 100 years in conditions appropriate for the storage of personal information. You have right of access to your records at any time. Otherwise, it is my intention that once the research is completed, any written material will be shredded. Audio-recorded material will be deleted and the digital device electronically wiped clean. Computer stored data will be deleted using the Gutmann method of overwriting 35 times, which surpasses the US Department of Defence standard.

The Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee has approved a full scientific protocol for this research. This study complies and at all times will comply with the Declaration of Helsinki²⁵ as adopted at the 52nd WMA General Assembly, Edinburgh, October 2000 and with the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, concerning Biomedical Research, (Strasbourg 25.1.2005). Ask the Project Officer if you would like further details of the approval or to see a copy of the full protocol.

Name and contact details of Investigator:

Lionel Fairweather *BA(Hons), MPhil, MSc, CPsychol*

²⁵ World Medical Association (2000) Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects. 52nd World Medical Association General Assembly, Edinburgh, Scotland October 2000.

Professional Doctorate Programme

Occupational Psychology

University of East London

School of Psychology

Romford Road

Stratford

London E15 4LZ

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Title of Study: ‘How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a period of prolonged military mobilisation’?

Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee Reference: 0806/161

- The nature, aims and risks of the research have been explained to me. I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet and understand what is expected of me. All my questions have been answered fully to my satisfaction.
- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and be withdrawn from it immediately without having to give a reason for my withdrawal. I also understand that I may be withdrawn from it at any time, and that in neither case will this be held against me in subsequent dealings with the Ministry of Defence.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study. I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- I agree to volunteer as a subject for the study described in the information sheet and I give full consent to my participation in this study.
- This consent is specific to the particular study described in the Participant Information Sheet attached and shall not be taken to imply my consent to participate in any subsequent experiment or deviation from that detailed here.
- I understand that in the event of my sustaining injury, illness or death as a result of participating as a volunteer in Ministry of Defence research, I or my dependants may enter a claim with the Ministry of Defence for compensation under the provisions of the no-fault compensation scheme, details of which are attached.

Participant’s Statement:

I _____

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Participant Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed

Date

Witness

Name

Signature

Investigator’s Statement:

I _____

confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the Participant.

Signed

Date

19. AUTHORISING SIGNATURES

The information supplied above is to the best of my knowledge and belief accurate. I clearly understand my obligations and the rights of research participants, particularly concerning recruitment of participants and obtaining valid consent.

Signature of Principal Investigator

.....

Date

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

APPENDIX: DETAILS OF MEDICINES AND/OR HEALTHCARE PRODUCTS

Please state name, dose, number of doses of the substances to be administered, and the route of administration.

N/A

Please state briefly the known pharmacology of any pharmacologically or physiologically active substances, including possible side effects. Please provide appropriate documentation.

N/A

REGULATORY STATUS

If the study involves the administration of medicinal products to participants, please indicate which of the following is applicable and append a copy of the relevant documentation or in the case of the exemptions, a copy of the letter from the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency confirming exemption.

- a) **Marketing Authorisation** (previously called a Product licence)
- b) **Clinical trial authorisation (CTA)***

*The CTA replaces the CTC (Clinical Trial Certificate), CTX (Clinical Trial Exemption) and DDX (Doctors and dentists exemption scheme). Further information

on this can be found on the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency
website: <http://www.mhra.gov.uk>

*The Committee will only give approval on presentation of the relevant certificate
or letter confirming authorisation or exemption.*

QUESTIONNAIRE/ TOPIC GUIDE/ INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The methodology that is appropriate for this particular research is Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. (Smith, 1996; Smith and Osborn, 2003). Therefore the use of semi-structured questions is appropriate. The following questions will guide, not dictate, the course of the interview and if participants open up novel and interesting areas of inquiry, these are pursued. The aim is to facilitate the giving and making of an account in a sensitive and empathetic manner, recognizing that the interview constitutes a human-to-human relationship.

Q1: Do you feel going on Operations has changed you? In what way?

Q2: How have you found fitting back in to civilian life: at home, at work, in the community?

Q3: Are you planning to make any major changes in your life? What are they? Why?

Q4: How have non-military people reacted to you?

Q5: Have you discussed your mobilised experiences with others?

Describe how that went?

Q6: What has been the most challenging aspect of homecoming?

Q7: What would you change about the experience of homecoming? Why?

Appendix D: UEL Ethics Approval



Donald Ridley
School of Psychology
Stratford

ETH/08/60

08 May 2018

Dear Donald,

Application to the Research Ethics Committee: How do UK volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a prolonged period of military mobilisation? (L Fairweather)

I advise that the University Research Ethics Committee has now approved the above application on the terms previously advised to you. The Research Ethics Committee should be informed of any significant changes that take place after approval has been given. Examples of such changes include any change to the scope, methodology or composition of investigative team. These examples are not exclusive and the person responsible for the programme must exercise proper judgement in determining what should be brought to the attention of the Committee.

In accepting the terms previously advised to you I would be grateful if you could return the declaration form below, duly signed and dated, confirming that you will inform the committee of any changes to your approved programme.

Yours sincerely



Debbie Dada

Administrative Officer for Research

d.dada@uel.ac.uk

02082232976

Research Ethics Committee: ETH/08/60/0

I hereby agree to inform the Research Ethics Committee of any changes to be made to the above approved programme and any adverse incidents that arise during the conduct of the programme.

Signed:.....Date:

Please Print Name:

Appendix E: MoD Approval



science | innovation | technology

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Level 1, Zone K, Main Building,
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB**

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ref: 0806/161

Mr Lionel Fairweather BA(Hons), MPhil, MSc, CPsychol

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Fairweather,

**Re: How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life,
following a period of prolonged military mobilisation? Version 3 (0806/161)**

Thank you for submitting this interesting research protocol for ethical review and for this most recent revision.

I am now happy to confirm ethical approval for this research and should be grateful if you would send me a copy of your final report on completion of the study. This approval is conditional upon adherence to the protocol – please let me know if any amendment becomes necessary.

I hope the work goes well.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Robert Linton

Chairman MoD Research Ethics Committee

Appendix F: IPA P1 Transcript

Transcription of Interview

A Everything we say now is being recorded...

P1 That's very clever.

Aand everything I write is related to what I record.

P1 Yeah.

A Um, you will have to sign that, um, put your name and sign it and say you agree to the research and you keep a copy of this and I keep a copy of this...

P1 Hmm mmm.

A ...and that tells you what the research is about and roughly what the questions I'm asking, after, er, however it's very important that you appreciate that, um, the research is... I, I, well I think it's irrelevant, it's, it's completely what you think that is irrelevant, that is relevant.

P1 Mmm.

A So that's why the type of questions, you'll be surprised how I ask them and why I ask them.

P1 Okay.

LF I don't want you to be fazed by that. Are you happy to carry on with that?

P1 Very happy, yeah.

LF Okay, you could do that at the end. Okay, start now. Um, how do you feel?

P1 Clarify the question for me, is it a general one or how do I feel in relation to having come back from an operational tour?

LF It is for you to tell me what's important to you here, bear, bearing in mind my research is about homecoming.

P1 Okay, how do I feel? I feel unaffected in any negative way having been away on a tour. I predominantly put the tour in a good light so I feel now that we did a good job. Thankfully, I feel good about myself and the Unit. I want to go away again, so the last impression can't have been that bad. So how do I feel right now is pretty good despite the fact that on a personal level I'm on an injury hold which I hope is about resolve and I'm about to be passed as physically fit soon. So I'm feeling pretty good but we are six months on from having come back from the tour...

LF What –

P1 ...and I think if you'd have asked me that question within a week or two of coming back you'd have got a slightly different answer, not massively different but slightly different answer.

LF So what would have been different, if I'd have asked you that right at the beginning?

P1 On a personal level my wife left me whilst I was away and I found out about it in the last week when we were out there. So coming home, the homecoming was doubly strange. It was first of all the, the whole environmental change from being in a theatre of war constantly under threat. So coming home and trying to readjust to the normal life here, normal normal as opposed to what was normal out there, which was being shot at every day. That was hard enough but then I had the other adjustment of coming home to an empty house, er, and a relationship that had ended. So, so I would have given you a slightly different answer, um, back then if you'd asked me in November but, um, on the whole I'm a fairly relaxed, easy going, happy go lucky bloke so I tend to look on the bright side of things.

LF Could you go back and remember, be more specific about what you would have said differently, then?

P1 Er, yes.

LF What has changed?

(3:50)

P1 What has changed? Well, I remember one of the greatest things was being taken away from guys that you'd spent the previous, effectively, including the build up, nine months with and certainly during the tour, every day, with certain individuals, people who were looking out for you, save your life, actually saved your life. You'd been through some very intense experiences with both in terms of fire fights and just getting close to them as mates. So there is that separation you come back, um, you're aren't seeing your closest friends, almost brothers by the end and suddenly you're not seeing them every day so there's a... you're taken out of your comfort zone or whatever you want to call it. So that was unpleasant. It was, it was definitely for two or three weeks, as they warned us it would be, it was very strange adjusting to normal life here.

LF Who warned us?

P1 Er, we have various briefs, I think, in Bastion or Kandahar saying it would take several weeks, don't be ashamed if you have emotions such as regret, guilt, fear and all that. I didn't experience any of those but they were certainly right in thinking that things were a little strange. And they were right, they were bound to be because, you know, we spent the tour, for instance, if you were driving around you don't let any other vehicles come within you... near you, if you're on foot you don't let any individuals come near you and you come back into this country and people are all around you, um. Whilst I, I certainly was and I don't, I'm not aware of anyone else who was paranoid or scared, it's just strange. It's like an assault on the senses to have, to come back to a busy civilised country where the rules are completely different and, er, and you readjust very quickly. Very quickly, I think the Americans say it takes six months, the Brits say

it takes about six weeks and I reckon after about two weeks you've slotted back into normal life here.

A Okay, so what was then your experience of homecoming, can you describe that more?

P1 Mmm.

A And it's your personal experience, what you feel as much as what you think about it.

(5:55)

P1 Er, I remember very clearly, we flew into Southampton and the first thing was one of our injured colleagues was brought to the plane and made his way up the steps and I think that was a difficult moment for a lot of people because they were overjoyed to see this individual and, um, and there were a few, er, a few tearful eyes, I'm sure, on that plane. So that was the first aspect of the homecoming, you were actually on British soil and you see one of your blokes who's been blown up, you know, he's there and then we were taken to a Base where our families were waiting, um, and, er, that was tremendous. I thought it was a proper welcome home, I had everyone from my family there bar my wife, of course, who'd left me by then but, you know, at that particular moment in time that didn't matter, just the realisation that other, family had been there for me throughout the tour and still were there, um, and it gave the homecoming a sense of significance. I think no soldier wants to do whatever it is, whether it was a dangerous tour or any kind of tour, any time away and feel unappreciated and you don't want to come... it, it, there's going to be an anticlimax at some point, of course, particularly if

you've, you've been fighting every day out in theatre and then you come home and suddenly find yourself wondering what to do, but the homecoming wasn't an anticlimax. I think that's ever so important so that people can come home and think, yeah, people appreciate it, they know what we've done and they appreciate it and your welcomed home. Whether your welcomed home as heros or what, that you're welcomed home as a loved one. So, yeah, I remember the homecoming very clearly.

A That's, that's, er, so you thought it was a good thing. What, what, what other experiences have you had since you've been back that you think are, are related to coming back, what experiences have you had?

P1 Er, a lot of people asking me what it was like over there, what the experiences were that I had, what it was like to fight, to be shot at. Lots of people ended up asking very blunt questions, have you killed anyone. You... they're very quick to become quite professional deflecting questions like that but I'm sure other people answer it in different ways. I think it's a bit of a distasteful question but, um, those are mainly the other experiences. Um, and a sense of, er, people being proud of what their Forces are doing and thanking you. If not thanking you outright at least you can tell they're grateful for what you've done.

A So you're talking a bit there about a sense of pride and achievement?

P1 Yeah, I, I'm very proud of what we did although I don't think we achieved much. I don't know if that sounds contradictory but I won't go into what the mission was but I think the situation out there and the constraints we found ourselves under meant then we

didn't really achieve the mission. Er, I don't think we made any difference, no significant difference.

A Going away from the mission though, this sense of pride, describe that to me a bit more?

(9:34)

P1 Well, it's two things. The overall thing is, er, be proud to be part of the Army, the British Army prepared to put your life on the line for, I've difficulty here, because it can sound really grandiose and pompous, um. I suppose at the end of the day you go away partly because your mates are there and you need to look out for them and partly because your county, I am patriotic, partly for your Unit which I'm immensely proud of. So there's that whole noble cause of going away, um, to fight or even not to fight, you're just on, on more of a peacekeeping mission, and then there's a more sort of Unit level, not Unit level, more of a personal thing to do with the Unit where going away gives your, your membership of whatever Unit it is, gives it meaning. You know, I've been doing this for ten years and haven't been away and, um, it was nice to feel that, that that gave us some significance, it actually gave us some meaning me being in, in the Army, in the Reserves.

A So is that something that you felt was missing...

P1 Definitely.

A ...up until then?

P1 Yeah.

(11:00)

A So going away on Operations in, in that way has there, what changes has that created for you?

P1 You feel you have no credibility before you've been away. I don't, I wouldn't for a minute say that people who haven't been away aren't valuable, they can contribute, and as I contributed before, but you have no military credibility. Everything is purely hypothetical when you talk about situations in training and so on. Everything now can be put in the context of the job actually being done in, er, very stressful circumstances.

A But as far as, um, you've talked a bit about feelings, do you feel, and here... the word feel is important, do you feel the Operation had changed you?

P1 [Pause] Yeah, but I'm just wandering if it's a fundamental significant change or just changed subtly. I don't think it's fundamentally and significantly changed me. Short term it's made me want to go back out and do another job out there, er. It helps you put other things in perspective, so it changes you to that extent. I think being in the Military does that anyway, um, the, the, the problems and the situations you have to cope with by being in the Military, particularly a Unit like this, means when you face a sort of problem, whatever, on civvy street you can relate to how you dealt with things in the Military and you deal with them better. Now, translate that through to an Operational tour where you're fighting and suddenly things which on civvy street might have been a

huge deal before are suddenly put in perspective when you think back to situations we were in out there in Helmand when your lives were very very clearly threatened and, and a lot of us came very close to being killed. I, I'd say that's the greatest way it's affected me. It, er, you get things in a better perspective here.

A You, you say it's a better perspective, what, why do you say it's better?

P1 I think you have an even better grasp of what's important in life, what's worth worrying about.

A What's worth worrying about then?

P1 I think making the most of your life rather than wasting time. There are, there are everyday problems back here when you're back in civvy street that, yeah, you have to turn your mind and attention to because you can't simply dismiss everything and say that's not important, but it's not worth worrying about in the same way. What's worth worrying about is, er, is achieving what you want to achieve, taking, making use of opportunities. A casing point, when we were out, um, in theatre, in the fog, we were making lists of things that we wanted to do, places we want to go if we survived, because it was by no means guaranteed that we we would all come back.

A Do you have your list?

P1 Yeah, my bucket list, yeah.

A You, you know where that list is?

P1 Yeah, I'm ticking them off slowly. I know now I won't achieve all of them and I knew when I made it I wouldn't but it's, from, from travel to reading to languages, er, experiences, there's a, you know, that sort of list.

A Would you not have done that without going on the Operation, or do you think it was something about going on the Operation?

(15:04)

...

A But you did talk to your folks about personal stuff?

P1 Oh yeah.

[End of Interview 00:48:55]

Appendix G: IPA Coding Screens

Source: 1 - BS.txt

Font Settings... ▶ Related Media ?

Reflecting on briefings

Formal decompression

Not extreme emotions

Feeling strange

Describing differences

Not extreme emotions

Assault on senses

Speed of adjustment

Injured colleague

Difficult moment

Everyone's back

Proper welcome home

Display Codes In Context

menus, almost brothers by the end and suddenly you're not seeing them every day so there's a... you're taken out of your comfort zone or whatever you want to call it. So that was unpleasant. It was, it was definitely for two or three weeks, as they warned us it would be, it was very strange adjusting to normal life here.

LF Who warned us?

BS Er, we have various briefs, I think, in Bastion or Kandahar saying it would take several weeks, don't be ashamed if you have emotions such as regret, guilt, fear and all that. I didn't experience any of those but they were certainly right in thinking that things were a little strange. And they were right, they were bound to be because, you know, we spent the tour, for instance, if you were driving around you don't let any other vehicles come within you... near you, if you're on foot you don't let any individuals come near you and you come back into this country and people are all around you, um. Whilst I, I certainly was and I don't, I'm not aware of anyone else who was paranoid or scared, it's just strange. It's like an assault on the senses to have, to come back to a busy civilised country where the rules are completely different and, er, and you readjust very quickly. Very quickly, I think the Americans say it takes six months, the Brits say it takes about six weeks and I reckon after about two weeks you've slotted back into normal life here.

LF Okay, so what was then your experience of homecoming, can you describe that more?

BS Mmm.

LF And it's your personal experience, what you feel as much as what you think about it.

(5:55)

BS Er, I remember very clearly, we flew into Southampton and the first thing was one of our injured colleagues was brought to the plane and made his way up the steps and I think that was a difficult moment for a lot of people because they were overjoyed to see this individual and, um, and there were a few, er, a few tearful eyes, I'm sure, on that plane. So that was the first aspect of the homecoming, you were actually on British soil and you see one of your blokes who's been blown up, you know, he's there and then we were taken to a Base where our families were waiting. um. and. er. that was tremendous. I

Homecoming analysis

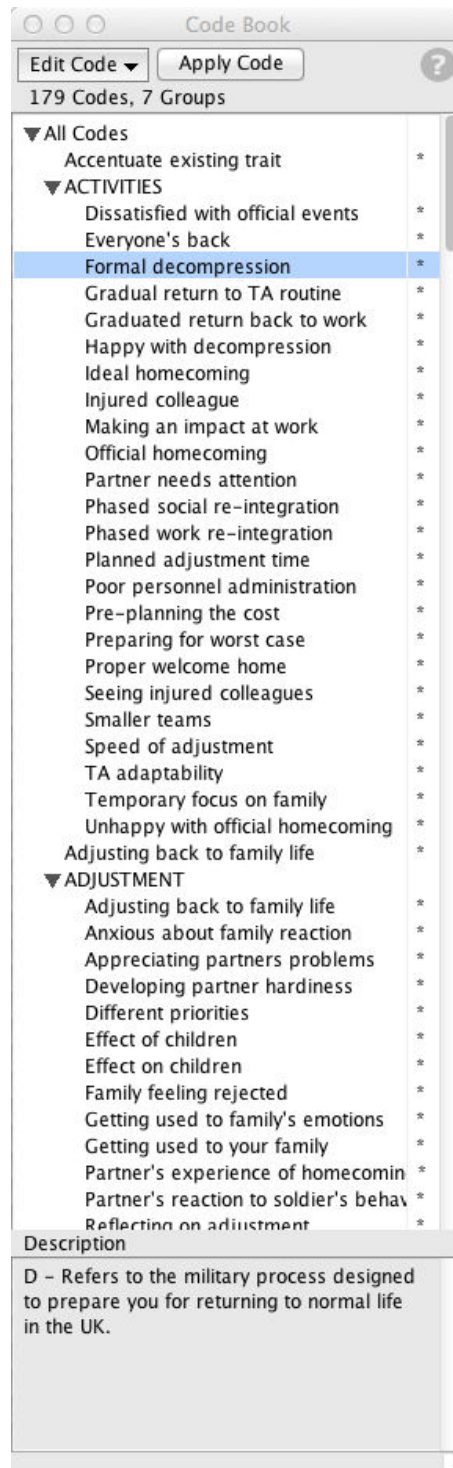
Case Filter: All Cases
6 of 6 Filter Cases

3 BS

Code Name	Source	Type	Reference
† Understanding research	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	938,1060
† Positive experience	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	1204,1522
† Being injured	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	1576,1666
† Time passing	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	1697,1959
† Relationship breakdown	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	2077,2227
† Relationship breakdown	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	2527,2625
† Coping with change	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	2053,2854
† Separation from friends	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	3010,3461
† Out of comfort zone	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	3462,3866
† Reflecting on briefings	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	3711,3866
† Formal decompression	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	3893,4068
† Feeling strange	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	4117,4177
† Describing differences	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	4181,4495
† Not extreme emotions	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	3989,4101
† Not extreme emotions	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	4497,4609
† Assault on senses	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	4613,4737
† Speed of adjustment	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	4752,4956
† Difficult moment	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	5325,5484
† Everyone's back	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	5513,5666
† Proper welcome home	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	5707,5843
† Relationship breakdown	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	5845,5957
† Sense of significance	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	5960,6117
† Appreciation by others	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	6121,6283
† Sense of danger	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	6185,6198
† Expecting anticlimax	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	6286,6445
† Proper welcome home	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	6492,6798
† Sharing experiences with outsiders	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	7070,7285
† Inappropriate questions	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	7288,7519
† Appreciation by others	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	7523,7704
† Sense of pride	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	7787,7824
† Lack of achievement	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	7826,8149
† Sense of pride	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	8283,8826
† Affirmation	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	8829,9234
† Credibility	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	9454,9686
† Affirmation	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	9690,9887
† Subtle change	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	10056,10213
† Wanting to repeat tour	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	10216,10292
† Military perspective	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	10295,10702
† Combat perspective	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	10706,11164
† What's important	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	11249,11344
† Valuing time	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	11390,11450
† What's important	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	11454,11828
† Making lists	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	11831,12051
† Making lists	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	12159,12378
† Combat perspective	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	12523,12890
† Making lists	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	12523,12646
† What's important	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	12792,12890
† Simplifying life	1 - BS.txt	TEXT	12894,13578

Code Filter: All Codes
117 of 117 Filter Codes

View Annotation View Source



Appendix H: IPA Noting Crib Sheet

Objects of concern

- relationships
- processes
- places
- events
- values
- principles

Experiential claims

- what the objects of concern are like for the participant

Consider

- similarities and differences
- echoes
- amplifications
- contradictions

Descriptive comments (normal text)

- keywords, phrases or explanations
- descriptions, assumptions, sound bites, acronyms, idiosyncratic figures of speech, emotional responses (both participant and the researchers)
- take things at face value-highlight objects which structure participants thoughts and experiences

Linguistic comments (Italic)

- pronoun use, pauses, laughter, functional aspects of language, repetition, tone, degree of fluency
- metaphor (linguistic device which links descriptive notes)

Conceptual comments (Underlined)

- more interpretive
- questions may lead to nowhere
- move away from explicit claims of participants
- shift researchers focus towards participants overarching understanding of the matters they are discussing
- element of personal reflection in conceptual coding
- drawn from researchers own experience/professional knowledge (Gadamerian dialogue) between researchers pre-understandings and newly emerging understandings
- draw upon researchers perceptions and understandings
- conceptual annotation is often about opening up provisional meanings
- this may feel like stretching the interpretation pretty far

Appendix I: IPA Analysis of Theme of Activities

Code	Original Sections from Transcripts	Comments
<p>1.</p> <p>Dissatisfied with official events</p>	<p>1.1</p> <p>P2 [Pause] Um, the most difficult part of homecoming? [Pause] I mean, I, I certainly didn't want to have that fucking thing that was arranged down in Bramley.</p> <p>A Mmm.</p> <p>P2 I would have far preferred to have come home when we came home, to go out and have a night out with the lads and then come home, blow that out of my system and then come home and see my family. Um, you know, which, which is what I'd done pretty much on all my previous tours as well.</p>	<p>1.1</p> <p>Angry with his military unit for arranging formal homecoming event.</p> <p><i>Swearing as a sign of the strong emotions</i></p> <p>Experienced soldier with previous tours, wanting to do things the way he has always done them.</p> <p><i>Blow – Sense of relief, having lots of emotional energy to expend, before returning to normal routine.</i></p> <p>Wanting a party with 'mates' before going home to family.</p> <p><u>Being controlled by 'the system' is not appreciated. Does not see returning home, as a shared event that has meaning for all</u></p>

	<p>I'd come home, either had one night out with the lads back in camp or back in Aldershot and, or I'd gone out with my civvy mates, er, and then finally come home.</p> <p>1.2</p> <p>P6_She did say to me that she thinks she should have had more of a talk afterwards. And I mean, they just all met, and then the... the... [unclear] the coaches arrived. Maybe they should have had a speech before that. She thought she was going to get one. She said [unclear] she was going to get one. Um, yeah. My medal ceremony was a case of... I found it... this was my unit, all over. I found out about it on the Monday, and it was on the Sunday. I got told on the Monday it's this Sunday, your medal ceremony, and it was</p>	<p><u>those involved, not just him.</u></p> <p><u>Home life may not be something he is looking forward too.</u></p> <p><u>Relationship issues crop up in the conversation.</u></p> <p>1.2</p> <p>Wife wanted the formal homecoming event to have more staged activities, with formal speeches.</p> <p><i>WO found it hard to express the essence of what he was trying to say, often repeating himself.</i></p> <p>Describing the formal medal ceremony he had, which was with his parent unit, not with the unit he had been on operations with. Received short notice from his parent unit and had to travel a long distance. Therefore could not arrange for his family to attend and had to go on his own. Did not share</p>
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	<p>in Cannock, which was a long, long way away, so for me to sort of arrange my family to get a hotel and stuff for them to come, was impossible. And I put that complaint to my unit. So I went to my medal ceremony to collect my medals on my own, basically, which really, I should have shared that with the people that went through everything I went through. So that was quite hard. I was a bit angry that day. So things like that are just little... little... little daggers that you think that make you a little bit, they could have done more.</p> <p>1.3</p> <p>P6_ Yeah. The homecoming... the homecoming for families should have been done better. They should have been more... more waited on, if you like, more...</p>	<p>his medal experience with either military ‘comrades’ or family. This made him angry at the wider military, particularly his parent unit.</p> <p><i>Little daggers as a metaphor for being stabbed in the back, meaning his parent unit did not care for him or appreciate how important the formal recognition was for him.</i></p> <p><u>WO would have preferred to have his formal medal ceremony with the soldiers he had been on operations with. The shared experience would have been more meaningful, rather than just a process the military goes through.</u></p> <p><u>Speaks to the considerable importance and meaning he placed on this operational tour.</u></p> <p><u>Very easy for formal activities to not deliver their intended outcome i.e. thanking and acknowledging.</u></p> <p><u>Soldier himself might not realise how important activities are</u></p>
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		<p><u>to him, until he has time to reflect on his feelings about events.</u></p> <p><u>Different operational tours may have to be acknowledged differently i.e. not to one set formula, dependent on circumstances of tour.</u></p> <p><u>Those personnel attached to units for operational tours need a period of time with their operational buddies as per Belbin's stages of team development (5th stage – adjourning/mourning).</u></p> <p>1.3</p> <p>The families of the soldiers returning were not treated as well as they could or should have been. More fuss, pomp and ceremony should have been directed their way.</p> <p><i>Waited on meaning attention directed at them for their part in the operation.</i></p>
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		<p><u>Recognition of the role of families in enabling reservists to go on operations.</u></p> <p><u>Potentially speaks to stresses at home and in relationships due to operational separation.</u></p> <p><u>Appreciation by soldier that he knows what experience and he has had and he has enjoyed it, but family had non of the benefit. Perhaps a feeling of guilt?</u></p>
<p>2. Everyone's back</p>	<p>2.1 P4 ...you know, and I've told her, you know, don't fuck about, crack on with your life, you know, and if someone comes along they'll come along and I wish you well and you can't dwell on it.</p>	<p>2.1 Conversations held with partner before going away, where the worst possible scenario was discussed and soldier had given 'permission' for wife to carry on with her life, should he be killed.</p> <p><i>Crack on expression commonly used in military for dealing</i></p>

	<p>2.2</p> <p>P1 Er, I remember very clearly, we flew into Southampton and the first thing was one of our injured colleagues was brought to the plane and made his way up the steps and I think that was a difficult moment for a lot of people because they were overjoyed to see this individual and, um, and there were a few, er, a few tearful eyes, I'm sure, on that plane. So that was the first aspect of the homecoming, you were actually on British soil and you see one of your blokes who's been blown up, you know, he's there and then we were taken to a Base where our families were waiting, um, and, er, that was tremendous. I thought it was a proper welcome home, I had everyone from my family there bar my wife, of course, who'd left me by then but, you know, at that particular</p>	<p><i>with issues as they are presented and keep going with the task at hand</i></p> <p><u>Discussing worst case scenarios in advance clears conscience, enabling soldier to worry less about partner/family at home.</u></p> <p>2.2</p> <p>Landing on British soil was symbolic of homecoming, as opposed to just leaving the operations theatre.</p> <p>Recollecting when those who had been injured while on operations and flown home early for treatment, were reunited with main returning party. One soldier had received particularly bad injuries to his legs. Seeing this soldier walk on to the plane that had just landed in the UK was a powerful moment.</p>
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	<p>moment in time that didn't matter, just the realisation that other, family had been there for me throughout the tour and still were there, um, and it gave the homecoming a sense of significance. I think no soldier wants to do whatever it is, whether it was a dangerous tour or any kind of tour, any time away and feel unappreciated and you don't want to come... it, it, there's going to be an anticlimax at some point, of course, particularly if you've, you've been fighting every day out in theatre and then you come home and suddenly find yourself wandering what to do, but the homecoming wasn't an anticlimax. I think that's ever so important so that people can come home and think, yeah, people appreciate it, they know what we've done and they appreciate it and your welcomed home. Whether your welcomed home as heros or what, that you're welcomed home as a loved one. So, yeah,</p>	<p>Knowing that everyone who had gone on the tour had survived and seeing everyone on one place.</p> <p>All his family were at the Army Reserve Centre waiting for him along with all other families and friends. This made the homecoming event feel significant. He felt appreciated for what he had done.</p> <p>This soldier's wife was not there to see him, because during the tour she had decided to leave him. This was not a surprise for him.</p> <p>Want to feel appreciated, especially if the tour was in any way dangerous or combative.</p> <p>Expectation that at some point homecoming will be an anti-climax, but because event was well attended by family and friends (f&f), this anti-climax did not occur.</p> <p>Feeling loved was an important part of a good homecoming</p>
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	<p>I remember the homecoming very clearly.</p>	<p>event.</p> <p>Touching down on British soil critical to feeling of homecoming.</p> <p>Realisation came on suddenly that loved ones were there.</p> <p>Sense of significance provided by f&f being there.</p> <p>Anti-climax expresses coming down from a high.</p> <p>Hero or loved, one or the other had to be felt in order for homecoming to be experienced as good.</p> <p><i>Stress over the tears associated with seeing injured but recovering colleague on the plane.</i></p> <p><i>Appreciated sentiment repeated often through passage.</i></p> <p><u>For those returning, the knowledge that their wounded buddies had returned home and were not recovering was important.</u></p> <p><u>Perhaps if they had not returned there would be a sense of <u>guilt?</u></u></p>
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		<p><u>The formal event of landing and then meeting close family and friends can contribute greatly to overall smooth transition and homecoming, if the soldier feels either loved or is welcomed as a hero.</u></p> <p><u>What if no one was there, or the tour was considered something shameful (e.g. return of Vietnam era soldiers to USA)?</u></p> <p><u>Separation from wife was not an issue, because it was already expected before departure</u></p>
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Appendix J: IPA Codes Frequency

<u>Code</u>	Total	Mean	Std Dev	Bar Graph
Accentuate existing trait	1	0.167	0.408	
Adjusting back to family life	6	1	1.265	
Affirmation	4	0.667	1.033	
Alcohol culture	2	0.333	0.816	
Alcohol detox	1	0.167	0.408	
Anger building up	1	0.167	0.408	
Anxious about family reaction	6	1	2	
Anxious for loved ones	2	0.333	0.816	
Appreciating partners problems	1	0.167	0.408	
Appreciation by others	4	0.667	0.816	
Army vs civilian friendships	2	0.333	0.516	
Army vs Civilian life	11	1.833	2.137	
Army vs Civilian work pressure	6	1	1.265	
Asian experience	3	0.5	1.225	
Assault on senses	1	0.167	0.408	
Becoming a father	5	0.833	1.329	
Being injured	1	0.167	0.408	
Bigger group	1	0.167	0.408	
Calculating period of transition	2	0.333	0.816	
Changes to attitude and behaviour	7	1.167	2.401	
Choosing good tours	3	0.5	0.837	
Civilian perception	2	0.333	0.516	
Civilian skill fade	1	0.167	0.408	
Close knit unit	2	0.333	0.516	
Combat affirmation	6	1	1.095	
Combat perspective	3	0.5	0.837	
Controlling anger	2	0.333	0.816	
Coping with change	2	0.333	0.816	
Creating worry	1	0.167	0.408	
Credibility	2	0.333	0.516	
Describing differences	2	0.333	0.516	
Developing partner hardiness	2	0.333	0.816	
Differences between TA units	1	0.167	0.408	
Different priorities	1	0.167	0.408	
Different this time	1	0.167	0.408	
Difficult mission	1	0.167	0.408	
Difficult moment	1	0.167	0.408	
Dissatisfied with official events	3	0.5	0.837	
Don't care	1	0.167	0.408	
Doubts about mission	1	0.167	0.408	
Easier for others	1	0.167	0.408	
Easy adjustment	0	0	0	
Effect of children	5	0.833	2.041	
Effect on children	4	0.667	0.816	
Employer lack of support	2	0.333	0.816	

Appendix K: Q Sort Participant Form

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Question: “How do UK Volunteer Reservists experience returning to civilian life, following a period of prolonged military mobilisation?”

I am a Chartered Occupational Psychologist who is also a serving member of the Territorial Army since 1985. I have served on three operational tours in Afghanistan, in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you would like to take part, please let us know if you have been involved in any other study during the last year.

This research will explore the transitional phase from military mobilised service back to ‘normal’ civilian life for the Volunteer Reservists in the UK under the present context of the Global War on Terrorism (GWoT).

If there are problems commonly experienced by volunteer reservists when they return to civilian life, then it may be possible to find ways to reduce them. In the same way that in theory, reservists require more pre-deployment training than their regular counterparts, they may also require more explicit post-deployment assistance to readjust back into civilian life, if the duty of care is to be maintained.

The study will take the form of you placing 49 cards with pre-prepared statements on them, on to a gridded table. This research method is called a Q

Sort. You will rank all the statements by placing those you most agree with nearer the right end of table provided (i.e. nearer the +6) and those you most disagree with nearer the left end of the table provided (i.e. nearer the -6).

You may agree with all or many of the statements and therefore feel that you find it hard to fill the left hand side of the table with statements you disagree with.

Naturally the reverse might also be true and you might find it hard to fill the right hand side of the table with statements you agree with. This does not matter.

Your aim is to place all the statements on the Q Sort table, ranking them as best you can from those you strongest agree with (or least disagree with) on the right, to those you strongest disagree with (or least agree with) on the left. Once again, you will have to place every card on the Q-Sort table and thereby what you will end up doing is ranking every statement on the cards, relative to each other.

You may at any time withdraw from the study without giving a reason. If you ever require any further explanation, please do not hesitate to ask.

Any information obtained during this study will remain confidential as to your identity. I will keep all personalised data that cannot be made anonymous, on a secure desktop computer in my locked private office. The computer is both password protected and 128-bit AES encrypted. If the data can be specifically identified with you, your permission will be sought in writing before it will be published. Other material, which cannot be identified with you, will be published or presented at meetings with the aim of benefiting others. You may ask me for copies of all papers, reports, transcripts, summaries and other published or presented material. All information will be subject to the current conditions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Appendix K: Q Sort Participant Form

In the event of you suffering any adverse effects as a consequence of your participation in this study, you will be eligible to apply for compensation under the MoD's 'No Fault Compensation Scheme' (see separate sheets for details).

If required by the MoD or University of East London, experimental records, including paper records and computer files, will be held for a minimum of 100 years in conditions appropriate for the storage of personal information. You have right of access to your records at any time. Otherwise, it is my intention that once the research is completed, any written material will be shredded. Audio-recorded material will be deleted and the digital device electronically wiped clean. Computer stored data will be deleted using the Gutmann method of overwriting 35 times, which surpasses the US Department of Defence standard.

The Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee has approved a full scientific protocol for this research. This study complies and at all times will comply with the Declaration of Helsinki²⁶ as adopted at the 52nd WMA General Assembly, Edinburgh, October 2000 and with the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, concerning Biomedical Research, (Strasbourg 25.1.2005). Ask the Project Officer if you would like further details of the approval or to see a copy of the full protocol.

Name and contact details of Investigator:

Lionel Fairweather *BA(Hons), MPhil, MSc, CPsychol*

Professional Doctorate Programme

Occupational Psychology

University of East London

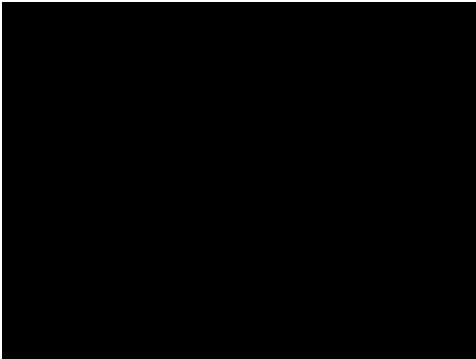
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²⁶ World Medical Association (2000) Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects. 52nd World Medical Association General Assembly, Edinburgh, Scotland October 2000.

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Appendix L: PQMethod Output File

PQMethod2.33 sort1
 Path and Project Name: c:/pqmethod/projects/sort1
 Nov 12 13

Correlation Matrix Between Sorts

SORTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 KJ01	100	21	15	22	34	20	4	8	12	29	20	8	-11	23	7	-9	-28	22	14	19
2 MD02	21	100	20	30	33	4	23	32	22	23	7	31	4	24	2	17	21	40	20	19
3 AW03	15	20	100	11	10	15	9	-18	6	31	10	-1	-3	27	16	5	-4	7	-15	-15
4 BP04	22	30	11	100	38	23	29	13	8	18	18	47	15	31	33	11	3	25	30	31
5 GM05	34	33	10	38	100	-1	24	7	0	19	14	23	26	15	34	-12	-21	39	23	21
6 GB06	20	4	15	23	-1	100	12	3	11	12	-8	18	-1	28	1	-14	-10	19	5	30
7 RB07	4	23	9	29	24	12	100	27	22	38	18	39	11	37	8	-3	14	33	21	25
8 JC08	8	32	-18	13	7	3	27	100	33	25	7	18	15	19	-21	27	9	11	14	23
9 BR09	12	22	6	8	0	11	22	33	100	27	16	10	-9	17	-12	21	14	6	25	32
10 MH10	29	23	31	18	19	12	38	25	27	100	31	43	17	57	23	13	-3	39	14	-5
11 BH11	20	7	10	18	14	-8	18	7	16	31	100	10	7	36	18	-11	18	-2	28	-8
12 NS12	8	31	-1	47	23	18	39	18	10	43	10	100	18	33	17	35	2	51	22	25
13 GA13	-11	4	-3	15	26	-1	11	15	-9	17	7	18	100	17	46	8	-10	18	3	6
14 SH14	23	24	27	31	15	28	37	19	17	57	36	33	17	100	0	1	11	41	19	-9
15 LM15	7	2	16	33	34	1	8	-21	-12	23	18	17	46	0	100	10	-6	24	-1	-5
16 AS16	-9	17	5	11	-12	-14	-3	27	21	13	-11	35	8	1	10	100	22	12	4	14
17 AN17	-28	21	-4	3	-21	-10	14	9	14	-3	18	2	-10	11	-6	22	100	2	7	6
18 BJ18	22	40	7	25	39	19	33	11	6	39	-2	51	18	41	24	12	2	100	7	2
19 CA19	14	20	-15	30	23	5	21	14	25	14	28	22	3	19	-1	4	7	7	100	28
20 MD20	19	19	-15	31	21	30	25	23	32	-5	-8	25	6	-9	-5	14	6	2	28	100

Unrotated Factor Matrix
Factors

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SORTS							
1 KJ01	0.3114	0.2722	0.0696	-0.0686	0.4157	0.1796	0.4241
2 MD02	0.5457	-0.1379	0.0132	-0.0060	0.2001	0.0454	-0.0654
3 AW03	0.1674	0.3333	0.1064	-0.3142	0.1031	0.0931	-0.1632
4 BP04	0.6144	0.0224	0.0013	0.2502	-0.0665	0.0399	0.1216
5 GM05	0.4450	0.2505	0.0588	0.2771	0.0257	0.0553	0.1922
6 GB06	0.2234	0.0808	0.0069	-0.0109	0.1365	0.0246	0.1059
7 RB07	0.5457	-0.0632	0.0022	-0.0522	-0.0622	0.0000	0.0038
8 JC08	0.3392	-0.3955	0.1353	-0.1114	0.0482	0.0153	0.0061
9 BR09	0.3577	-0.3535	0.1043	-0.2794	0.0853	0.0723	0.1323
10 MH10	0.6408	0.1864	0.0335	-0.3029	0.0092	0.0707	-0.1859
11 BH11	0.3064	0.0910	0.0085	-0.2176	-0.5084	0.2007	0.1484
12 NS12	0.6329	-0.0444	0.0013	0.2761	0.0702	0.0620	-0.1522
13 GA13	0.2360	0.1570	0.0235	0.3318	-0.1115	0.0769	-0.1223
14 SH14	0.6000	0.2334	0.0515	-0.4404	-0.1554	0.1606	-0.0747
15 LM15	0.2618	0.4820	0.2495	0.4798	-0.1750	0.1868	-0.1520
16 AS16	0.2010	-0.3624	0.1105	0.1362	0.0787	0.0226	-0.4680
17 AN17	0.0616	-0.3676	0.1142	-0.1152	-0.3544	0.0724	-0.2423
18 BJ18	0.5507	0.0978	0.0099	0.0358	0.1578	0.0313	-0.2588
19 CA19	0.3631	-0.1478	0.0151	0.0084	-0.1309	0.0013	0.3217
20 MD20	0.3215	-0.3578	0.1072	0.1368	0.1173	0.0314	0.4603
Eigenvalues	3.5610	1.3416	0.1528	1.1376	0.7789	0.1771	1.0747
% expl.Var.	18	7	1	6	4	1	5

Cumulative Communalities Matrix
Factors 1 Thru

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SORTS							
1 KJ01	0.0970	0.1710	0.1759	0.1806	0.3534	0.3856	0.5654
2 MD02	0.2978	0.3168	0.3170	0.3170	0.3570	0.3591	0.3634
3 AW03	0.0280	0.1391	0.1504	0.2491	0.2598	0.2684	0.2951
4 BP04	0.3775	0.3780	0.3780	0.4406	0.4450	0.4466	0.4614
5 GM05	0.1980	0.2608	0.2643	0.3410	0.3417	0.3448	0.3817
6 GB06	0.0499	0.0564	0.0565	0.0566	0.0752	0.0758	0.0870
7 RB07	0.2978	0.3018	0.3018	0.3045	0.3084	0.3084	0.3084
8 JC08	0.1150	0.2715	0.2898	0.3022	0.3045	0.3047	0.3048
9 BR09	0.1279	0.2529	0.2638	0.3418	0.3491	0.3543	0.3718
10 MH10	0.4106	0.4454	0.4465	0.5383	0.5384	0.5434	0.5779
11 BH11	0.0939	0.1021	0.1022	0.1495	0.4080	0.4483	0.4703
12 NS12	0.4006	0.4025	0.4025	0.4788	0.4837	0.4875	0.5107
13 GA13	0.0557	0.0804	0.0809	0.1910	0.2034	0.2093	0.2243
14 SH14	0.3599	0.4144	0.4171	0.6110	0.6351	0.6609	0.6665
15 LM15	0.0685	0.3009	0.3632	0.5934	0.6240	0.6589	0.6820
16 AS16	0.0404	0.1717	0.1839	0.2025	0.2087	0.2092	0.4282
17 AN17	0.0038	0.1389	0.1520	0.1652	0.2908	0.2961	0.3548
18 BJ18	0.3033	0.3129	0.3130	0.3142	0.3391	0.3401	0.4071
19 CA19	0.1319	0.1537	0.1539	0.1540	0.1711	0.1711	0.2747
20 MD20	0.1033	0.2314	0.2429	0.2616	0.2754	0.2764	0.4882
cum% expl.Var.	18	25	25	31	35	36	41

Factor Matrix with an X Indicating a Defining Sort Loadings

QSORT	1	2	3	4	5
1 KJ01	0.2030	0.2350	0.0818	0.6647X	-0.6647
2 MD02	0.2957	0.4296X	0.2235	0.0446	-0.0446
3 AW03	0.5043X	-0.1213	-0.0121	0.1147	-0.1147
4 BP04	0.1237	0.3647	0.5088X	0.1132	-0.1132
5 GM05	0.0908	0.1584	0.4893X	0.3059	-0.3059
6 GB06	0.1294	0.1385	0.0950	0.2033	-0.2033
7 RB07	0.2881	0.3624	0.2373	-0.0199	0.0199
8 JC08	0.1177	0.5138X	-0.0128	-0.1559	0.1559
9 BR09	0.2011	0.5529X	-0.1390	-0.0309	0.0309
10 MH10	0.6821X	0.2207	0.2075	0.0208	-0.0208
11 BH11	0.2288	0.1144	0.1162	-0.1153	0.1153
12 NS12	0.2236	0.3458	0.5434X	-0.0196	0.0196
13 GA13	0.0249	-0.0431	0.4684X	-0.0331	0.0331
14 SH14	0.7078X	0.1931	0.1223	0.0189	-0.0189
15 LM15	0.1043	-0.2310	0.7465X	0.0623	-0.0623
16 AS16	0.1022	0.2273	0.1807	-0.4321	0.4321X
17 AN17	0.0436	0.1789	-0.0358	-0.5459	0.5459X
18 BJ18	0.4338X	0.1954	0.3639	0.0152	-0.0152
19 CA19	-0.0153	0.4093X	0.1225	0.0916	-0.0916
20 MD20	-0.2121	0.6232X	0.0837	0.2058	-0.2058
% expl.Var.	9	10	10	6	6

Note: Due to a glitch in PQMethod software (Watts & Stenner, 2012): p206. the Eigenvalues for the rotated solution did not appear. These were calculated using the equation:

EV for Factor = Variance x (number of Q sorts in the Study ÷ 100) (Watts & Stenner, 2012): p.105.

Eigenvalue	4.41	4.9	4.9	2.94	2.94
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Free Distribution Data Results

QSORT	MEAN	ST. DEV.
1 KJ01	0.000	2.858
2 MD02	0.000	2.858
3 AW03	0.000	2.858
4 BP04	0.000	2.858
5 GM05	0.000	2.858
6 GB06	0.000	2.858
7 RB07	0.000	2.858
8 JC08	0.000	2.858
9 BR09	0.000	2.858
10 MH10	0.000	2.858
11 BH11	0.000	2.858
12 NS12	0.000	2.858
13 GA13	0.000	2.858
14 SH14	0.000	2.858
15 LM15	0.000	2.858
16 AS16	0.000	2.858
17 AN17	0.000	2.858
18 BJ18	0.000	2.858
19 CA19	0.000	2.858
20 MD20	0.000	2.858

Factor Scores with Corresponding Ranks

No.	Statement	No.	Factors									
			1	2	3	4	5					
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.69	48	0.76	11	-1.18	43	0.00	28	0.53	18
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK importa	2	-2.32	49	0.18	18	-1.91	48	-0.70	39	0.63	14
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-0.26	28	0.76	12	-1.43	46	0.70	15	0.36	21
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	1.50	3	-0.73	37	0.88	12	-0.70	39	-0.15	31
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	0.33	18	2.08	2	1.80	1	1.05	10	-1.31	45
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.97	42	1.49	4	-0.66	36	0.00	28	-0.98	41
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-1.44	47	0.02	22	-2.49	49	0.00	28	0.17	22
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild re	8	1.44	4	-0.11	25	-1.27	44	0.35	21	0.08	24
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild re	9	-1.28	45	-0.19	27	-0.55	34	-1.40	46	1.34	6
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work ro	10	0.15	22	-0.85	40	-0.72	37	0.70	15	-1.67	46
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non wor	11	0.18	21	-0.23	29	-0.87	42	0.00	28	-1.95	48
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.59	34	-1.27	44	-0.74	38	-1.05	43	-0.08	28
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.82	38	-1.40	46	-0.45	32	-1.75	48	-1.06	42
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.14	27	-1.95	49	-0.51	33	-1.75	48	0.08	24
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.08	25	-1.44	47	-0.76	40	-0.35	34	0.01	25
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.32	19	-1.87	48	0.36	20	1.05	10	-0.80	40
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colle	17	0.12	24	-1.22	43	0.45	19	0.35	21	-0.72	38
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	0.97	9	-0.23	28	1.22	7	-0.35	34	-0.53	34
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.76	2	2.54	1	0.83	13	1.05	10	2.03	1
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civ	20	0.24	20	1.75	3	0.57	16	-0.70	39	0.79	11
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian wo	21	0.82	12	1.27	6	1.03	9	-1.40	46	1.41	4
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my retur	22	-0.77	37	0.81	10	0.48	17	-2.10	49	-0.53	34
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civi	23	-0.67	35	0.55	15	-1.83	47	0.00	28	1.49	3
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	1.34	5	0.51	16	-0.03	26	-0.35	34	0.88	10
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after	25	-0.94	41	1.01	9	-0.74	39	1.75	3	-0.79	39
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving	26	0.70	14	-0.08	24	0.08	24	0.70	15	-0.71	37
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian j	27	0.13	23	-0.82	39	1.45	3	0.70	15	0.69	13
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.50	32	-0.44	34	0.09	23	-0.70	39	0.54	16
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my ex	29	-0.58	33	0.15	20	-0.01	25	-1.05	43	1.40	5
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.05	43	-1.31	45	-0.18	29	-1.40	46	-1.87	47
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on r	31	0.69	15	-0.81	38	-0.81	41	0.70	15	0.97	9
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.69	36	-0.43	33	-0.44	31	0.00	28	-0.54	35
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military l	33	-0.93	40	0.61	14	0.71	15	-0.35	34	0.36	21
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	1.08	8	0.73	13	0.95	10	0.35	21	0.98	8
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	1.22	6	-0.34	32	-1.33	45	-0.35	34	-0.11	30
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-1.34	46	-0.97	42	1.09	8	1.05	10	-0.08	28
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-1.18	44	0.17	19	1.43	4	-0.70	39	1.15	7
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	2.42	1	1.34	5	1.22	6	1.40	6	0.44	19
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.14	7	1.07	8	0.22	21	-0.35	34	0.54	16
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is impo	40	-0.29	29	0.25	17	-0.41	30	-1.05	43	0.53	18
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in	41	-0.29	30	0.07	21	0.71	14	1.40	6	-1.15	43
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian emplo	42	-0.89	39	-0.28	31	0.91	11	0.35	21	-0.10	29
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of	43	0.93	10	-0.14	26	0.47	18	1.75	3	-0.61	36

44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.31	31	-0.48	35	0.21	22	1.40	6	-1.23	44
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with s	45	0.77	13	-0.05	23	-0.06	27	0.35	21	1.59	2
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging o	46	0.55	16	-0.24	30	1.41	5	0.35	21	0.72	12
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.48	17	-0.49	36	1.54	2	0.00	28	-0.44	32
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	0.88	11	1.11	7	-0.08	28	2.10	1	-2.29	49
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore of	49	-0.11	26	-0.87	41	-0.63	35	-1.05	43	-0.01	26

Correlations Between Factor Scores

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.0000	0.1969	0.3680	0.3107	0.0769
2	0.1969	1.0000	0.1530	0.2278	0.2617
3	0.3680	0.1530	1.0000	0.1637	0.0183
4	0.3107	0.2278	0.1637	1.0000	-0.2565
5	0.0769	0.2617	0.0183	-0.2565	1.0000

Normalised Factor Scores - For Factor 1

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	2.419
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.757
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	1.503
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	1.438
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	1.342
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	1.223
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.140
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	1.077
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	0.971
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.935
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	0.883
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	0.824
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.767
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.702
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.685
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.547
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.476
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	0.328
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.319
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.239
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.185
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.146
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.127
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.122
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.079
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.111
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.142
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-0.264
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.290
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-0.295
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.306
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.498
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.583
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.592

23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-0.670
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.686
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-0.766
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.824
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.895
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.932
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.941
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.972
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.051
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-1.180
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.284
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-1.342
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-1.444
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.686
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-2.322

Normalised Factor Scores - For Factor 2

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	2.541
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	2.083
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	1.748
6	Important to include family in official events	6	1.491
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.344
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.272
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	1.111
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.071
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	1.005
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.811
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.760
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.756
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.732
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.605
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	0.552
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	0.508
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	0.249
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	0.176
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	0.170
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	0.155
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.067
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.023
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.054
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	-0.076
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-0.106
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	-0.143
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.186
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.228
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.233
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	-0.245
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.283
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.339
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.426
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.441

44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.479
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	-0.494
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.731
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.806
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	-0.817
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.848
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.867
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-0.973
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	-1.218
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1.267
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.308
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.399
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-1.441
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	-1.867
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-1.954

Normalised Factor Scores - For Factor 3

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1.801
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	1.541
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	1.447
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	1.426
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	1.410
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.218
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	1.217
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	1.087
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.028
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.948
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	0.907
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	0.885
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	0.830
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.711
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.709
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.569
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.484
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.474
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.449
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.356
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	0.217
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	0.209
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	0.092
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.085
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.015
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	-0.033
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.063
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	-0.078
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-0.179
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.413
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.437
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.451
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.514
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.545

49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.628
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.659
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.717
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.738
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.739
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.756
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.809
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.875
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.179
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-1.273
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-1.331
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-1.433
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-1.833
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-1.911
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-2.491

Normalised Factor Scores - For Factor 4

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	2.100
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	1.750
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	1.750
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.400
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	1.400
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	1.400
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	1.050
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.050
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	1.050
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1.050
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.700
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.700
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.700
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.700
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.700
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.350
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	0.350
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.350
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	0.350
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.350
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.350
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	0.000
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.000
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	0.000
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.000
6	Important to include family in official events	6	0.000
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.000
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.000
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	-0.350
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.350
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.350
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.350
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	-0.350
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.350

37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-0.700
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.700
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-0.700
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	-0.700
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.700
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-1.050
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-1.050
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1.050
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-1.050
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.400
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	-1.400
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.400
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-1.750
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.750
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-2.100

Normalised Factor Scores - For Factor 5

No.	Statement	No.	Z-SCORES
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	2.032
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	1.590
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	1.493
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.410
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	1.397
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	1.340
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	1.147
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.981
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.968
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	0.885
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.788
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.718
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.692
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	0.635
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	0.539
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	0.539
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.526
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	0.526
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	0.442
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.359
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.359
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.166
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	0.083
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	0.083
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	0.013
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.013
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-0.083
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.083
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.096
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.109
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.153
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	-0.442
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-0.526
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.526

32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.539
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	-0.609
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	-0.705
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	-0.718
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.788
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	-0.801
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.981
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.064
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-1.147
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-1.231
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	-1.314
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-1.673
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.865
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-1.949
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	-2.295

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 1 and 2

No.	Statement	No.	Type 1	Type 2	Difference
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	1.503	-0.731	2.233
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.319	-1.867	2.187
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.142	-1.954	1.811
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	1.223	-0.339	1.563
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	1.438	-0.106	1.544
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.685	-0.806	1.491
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.079	-1.441	1.362
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.122	-1.218	1.339
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	0.971	-0.228	1.199
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.935	-0.143	1.078
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	2.419	1.344	1.075
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.146	-0.848	0.995
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.476	-0.494	0.970
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.127	-0.817	0.944
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	1.342	0.508	0.834
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.767	-0.054	0.821
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.547	-0.245	0.791
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.702	-0.076	0.778
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.111	-0.867	0.756
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.592	-1.267	0.675
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.824	-1.399	0.575
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.185	-0.233	0.418
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	1.077	0.732	0.346
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.051	-1.308	0.257
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.306	-0.479	0.173
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.140	1.071	0.069
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.498	-0.441	-0.057
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	0.883	1.111	-0.228
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.686	-0.426	-0.260
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-0.295	0.067	-0.362
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-1.342	-0.973	-0.369
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	0.824	1.272	-0.448
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.290	0.249	-0.538
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.895	-0.283	-0.612

29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.583	0.155	-0.738
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.757	2.541	-0.784
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-0.264	0.756	-1.020
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.284	-0.186	-1.098
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-0.670	0.552	-1.222
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-1.180	0.170	-1.350
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-1.444	0.023	-1.468
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.239	1.748	-1.508
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.932	0.605	-1.537
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-0.766	0.811	-1.577
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	0.328	2.083	-1.755
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.941	1.005	-1.946
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.686	0.760	-2.447
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.972	1.491	-2.463
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-2.322	0.176	-2.498

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 1 and 3

No.	Statement	No.	Type 1	Type 3	Difference
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	1.438	-1.273	2.711
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	1.223	-1.331	2.554
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.685	-0.809	1.494
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	1.342	-0.033	1.375
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	2.419	1.218	1.201
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-0.264	-1.433	1.169
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-0.670	-1.833	1.163
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.185	-0.875	1.060
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-1.444	-2.491	1.047
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	0.883	-0.078	0.961
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.757	0.830	0.927
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.140	0.217	0.923
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.146	-0.717	0.864
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.767	-0.063	0.830
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.079	-0.756	0.677
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	1.503	0.885	0.618
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.702	0.085	0.617
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.111	-0.628	0.517
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.935	0.474	0.461
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.142	-0.514	0.372
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.592	-0.738	0.146
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	1.077	0.948	0.129
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.290	-0.413	0.123
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.319	0.356	-0.037
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.941	-0.739	-0.202
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	0.824	1.028	-0.204
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	0.971	1.217	-0.246
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.686	-0.437	-0.248
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.972	-0.659	-0.313
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.122	0.449	-0.328
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.239	0.569	-0.329
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.824	-0.451	-0.373
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-2.322	-1.911	-0.412
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.686	-1.179	-0.508

44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.306	0.209	-0.515
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.583	-0.015	-0.568
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.498	0.092	-0.590
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.284	-0.545	-0.739
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.547	1.410	-0.863
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.051	-0.179	-0.872
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-0.295	0.711	-1.006
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.476	1.541	-1.065
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-0.766	0.484	-1.249
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.127	1.447	-1.320
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	0.328	1.801	-1.473
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.932	0.709	-1.642
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.895	0.907	-1.802
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-1.342	1.087	-2.430
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-1.180	1.426	-2.606

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 1 and 4

No.	Statement	No.	Type 1	Type 4	Difference
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	0.824	-1.400	2.224
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	1.503	-0.700	2.202
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	1.342	-0.350	1.692
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.142	-1.750	1.607
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	1.223	-0.350	1.573
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.140	-0.350	1.490
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-0.766	-2.100	1.334
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	0.971	-0.350	1.321
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	1.438	0.350	1.088
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	2.419	1.400	1.020
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.239	-0.700	0.939
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.111	-1.050	0.939
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.824	-1.750	0.926
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.290	-1.050	0.760
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	1.077	0.350	0.727
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.757	1.050	0.707
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.476	0.000	0.476
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.583	-1.050	0.467
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.592	-1.050	0.458
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.767	0.350	0.417
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.051	-1.400	0.349
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.079	-0.350	0.271
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.498	-0.700	0.202
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.547	0.350	0.197
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.185	0.000	0.185
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.284	-1.400	0.116
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.702	0.700	0.002
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.685	0.700	-0.015
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.122	0.350	-0.228
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-1.180	-0.700	-0.481
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.146	0.700	-0.554
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.127	0.700	-0.573
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.932	-0.350	-0.582
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-0.670	0.000	-0.670

32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.686	0.000	-0.686
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	0.328	1.050	-0.722
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.319	1.050	-0.730
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.935	1.750	-0.815
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-0.264	0.700	-0.964
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.972	0.000	-0.972
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	0.883	2.100	-1.217
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.895	0.350	-1.245
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-1.444	0.000	-1.444
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-2.322	-0.700	-1.623
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.686	0.000	-1.686
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-0.295	1.400	-1.695
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.306	1.400	-1.706
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-1.342	1.050	-2.392
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.941	1.750	-2.691

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 1 and 5

No.	Statement	No.	Type 1	Type 5	Difference
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	0.883	-2.295	3.178
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.185	-1.949	2.134
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	2.419	0.442	1.977
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.146	-1.673	1.819
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	1.503	-0.153	1.656
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	0.328	-1.314	1.642
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.935	-0.609	1.544
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	0.971	-0.526	1.497
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.702	-0.705	1.407
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	1.438	0.083	1.355
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	1.223	-0.109	1.333
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.319	-0.801	1.121
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.306	-1.231	0.924
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.476	-0.442	0.918
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-0.295	-1.147	0.852
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.122	-0.718	0.840
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.051	-1.865	0.814
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.140	0.539	0.602
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	1.342	0.885	0.458
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.824	-1.064	0.240
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	1.077	0.981	0.096
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.972	-0.981	0.009
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.079	0.013	-0.092
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.111	-0.013	-0.098
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.686	-0.539	-0.147
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.941	-0.788	-0.153
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.547	0.718	-0.171
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.142	0.083	-0.225
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-0.766	-0.526	-0.240
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.757	2.032	-0.275
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.685	0.968	-0.283
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.592	-0.083	-0.509
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.239	0.788	-0.549
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.127	0.692	-0.565

21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	0.824	1.410	-0.586
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-0.264	0.359	-0.623
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.895	-0.096	-0.799
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.290	0.526	-0.815
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.767	1.590	-0.823
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.498	0.539	-1.037
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-1.342	-0.083	-1.259
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.932	0.359	-1.291
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-1.444	0.166	-1.611
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.583	1.397	-1.980
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-0.670	1.493	-2.163
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.686	0.526	-2.212
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-1.180	1.147	-2.328
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.284	1.340	-2.624
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-2.322	0.635	-2.957

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 2 and 3

No.	Statement	No.	Type 2	Type 3	Difference
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.023	-2.491	2.514
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	0.552	-1.833	2.385
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.756	-1.433	2.190
6	Important to include family in official events	6	1.491	-0.659	2.150
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	0.176	-1.911	2.086
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.760	-1.179	1.939
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	1.005	-0.739	1.744
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	2.541	0.830	1.711
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	1.111	-0.078	1.189
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	1.748	0.569	1.179
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-0.106	-1.273	1.166
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.339	-1.331	0.991
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.071	0.217	0.854
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	0.249	-0.413	0.662
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.233	-0.875	0.642
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	0.508	-0.033	0.541
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.186	-0.545	0.359
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.811	0.484	0.328
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	2.083	1.801	0.281
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.272	1.028	0.244
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	0.155	-0.015	0.170
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.344	1.218	0.126
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.426	-0.437	0.011
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.054	-0.063	0.009
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.806	-0.809	0.003
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.605	0.709	-0.104
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.848	-0.717	-0.131
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	-0.076	0.085	-0.160
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.732	0.948	-0.217
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.867	-0.628	-0.239
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1.267	-0.738	-0.529
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.441	0.092	-0.533
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	-0.143	0.474	-0.617
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.067	0.711	-0.644

15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-1.441	-0.756	-0.685
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.479	0.209	-0.688
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.399	-0.451	-0.948
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.308	-0.179	-1.129
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.283	0.907	-1.190
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	0.170	1.426	-1.256
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-1.954	-0.514	-1.440
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.228	1.217	-1.445
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.731	0.885	-1.615
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	-0.245	1.410	-1.655
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	-1.218	0.449	-1.667
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	-0.494	1.541	-2.035
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-0.973	1.087	-2.060
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	-1.867	0.356	-2.223
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	-0.817	1.447	-2.264

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 2 and 4

No.	Statement	No.	Type 2	Type 4	Difference
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.811	-2.100	2.911
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.272	-1.400	2.672
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	1.748	-0.700	2.447
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	2.541	1.050	1.491
6	Important to include family in official events	6	1.491	0.000	1.491
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.071	-0.350	1.421
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	0.249	-1.050	1.299
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.186	-1.400	1.214
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	0.155	-1.050	1.204
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	2.083	1.050	1.033
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.605	-0.350	0.955
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	0.176	-0.700	0.875
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	0.170	-0.700	0.870
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	0.508	-0.350	0.858
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.760	0.000	0.760
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	0.552	0.000	0.552
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.732	0.350	0.382
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.399	-1.750	0.350
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.441	-0.700	0.259
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.867	-1.050	0.182
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.228	-0.350	0.122
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.308	-1.400	0.092
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.756	0.700	0.056
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.023	0.000	0.023
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.339	-0.350	0.011
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.731	-0.700	-0.031
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.344	1.400	-0.055
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-1.954	-1.750	-0.204
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1.267	-1.050	-0.217
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.233	0.000	-0.233
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.054	0.350	-0.404
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.426	0.000	-0.426
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-0.106	0.350	-0.456
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	-0.494	0.000	-0.494

46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	-0.245	0.350	-0.595
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.283	0.350	-0.633
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	1.005	1.750	-0.745
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	-0.076	0.700	-0.776
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	1.111	2.100	-0.989
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-1.441	-0.350	-1.091
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.067	1.400	-1.333
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.806	0.700	-1.506
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	-0.817	0.700	-1.517
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.848	0.700	-1.548
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	-1.218	0.350	-1.568
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.479	1.400	-1.879
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	-0.143	1.750	-1.893
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-0.973	1.050	-2.023
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	-1.867	1.050	-2.917

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 2 and 5

No.	Statement	No.	Type 2	Type 5	Difference
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	1.111	-2.295	3.406
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	2.083	-1.314	3.396
6	Important to include family in official events	6	1.491	-0.981	2.472
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	1.005	-0.788	1.793
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.233	-1.949	1.716
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.811	-0.526	1.337
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.067	-1.147	1.214
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	1.748	0.788	0.959
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.344	0.442	0.902
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.848	-1.673	0.824
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-0.479	-1.231	0.751
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	-0.076	-0.705	0.629
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.308	-1.865	0.558
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	1.071	0.539	0.532
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	2.541	2.032	0.509
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	-0.143	-0.609	0.465
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.756	0.359	0.397
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.228	-0.526	0.298
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.605	0.359	0.246
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.760	0.526	0.235
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.426	-0.539	0.113
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	-0.494	-0.442	-0.052
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.272	1.410	-0.138
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.023	0.166	-0.143
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-0.283	-0.096	-0.186
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-0.106	0.083	-0.190
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.339	-0.109	-0.230
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.732	0.981	-0.249
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	0.249	0.526	-0.277
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.399	-1.064	-0.335
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	0.508	0.885	-0.376
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	0.176	0.635	-0.459
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	-1.218	-0.718	-0.500
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.731	-0.153	-0.577

49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.867	-0.013	-0.854
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-0.973	-0.083	-0.890
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	0.552	1.493	-0.941
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	-0.245	0.718	-0.963
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	0.170	1.147	-0.978
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.441	0.539	-0.980
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	-1.867	-0.801	-1.066
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1.267	-0.083	-1.184
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	0.155	1.397	-1.242
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-1.441	0.013	-1.454
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	-0.817	0.692	-1.509
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.186	1.340	-1.526
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.054	1.590	-1.644
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.806	0.968	-1.774
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-1.954	0.083	-2.037

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 3 and 4

No.	Statement	No.	Type 3	Type 4	Difference
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.484	-2.100	2.583
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.028	-1.400	2.427
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	1.426	-0.700	2.125
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	0.885	-0.700	1.584
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	1.217	-0.350	1.566
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	1.541	0.000	1.541
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.451	-1.750	1.299
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.569	-0.700	1.268
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.514	-1.750	1.236
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-0.179	-1.400	1.221
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	1.410	0.350	1.060
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.709	-0.350	1.059
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.015	-1.050	1.035
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.545	-1.400	0.854
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	0.092	-0.700	0.792
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1.801	1.050	0.751
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	1.447	0.700	0.747
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.413	-1.050	0.637
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.948	0.350	0.598
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	0.217	-0.350	0.567
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	0.907	0.350	0.557
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.628	-1.050	0.422
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	-0.033	-0.350	0.317
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.738	-1.050	0.312
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.449	0.350	0.099
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	1.087	1.050	0.037
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.218	1.400	-0.182
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	0.830	1.050	-0.220
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.756	-0.350	-0.406
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.063	0.350	-0.413
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.437	0.000	-0.437
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.085	0.700	-0.615
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.659	0.000	-0.659
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.711	1.400	-0.689

16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.356	1.050	-0.694
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.875	0.000	-0.875
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-1.331	-0.350	-0.981
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.179	0.000	-1.179
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	0.209	1.400	-1.190
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-1.911	-0.700	-1.211
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.474	1.750	-1.276
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.717	0.700	-1.417
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.809	0.700	-1.509
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-1.273	0.350	-1.623
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-1.833	0.000	-1.833
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-1.433	0.700	-2.133
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	-0.078	2.100	-2.177
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.739	1.750	-2.489
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-2.491	0.000	-2.491

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 3 and 5

No.	Statement	No.	Type 3	Type 5	Difference
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1.801	-1.314	3.115
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	-0.078	-2.295	2.217
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	1.541	-0.442	1.983
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	0.711	-1.147	1.858
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	1.217	-0.526	1.742
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-0.179	-1.865	1.687
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	0.209	-1.231	1.440
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	1.087	-0.083	1.170
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.449	-0.718	1.167
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	0.356	-0.801	1.157
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	0.474	-0.609	1.083
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	-0.875	-1.949	1.074
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	0.885	-0.153	1.038
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	0.484	-0.526	1.009
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	0.907	-0.096	1.004
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	-0.717	-1.673	0.956
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.085	-0.705	0.790
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.218	0.442	0.776
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	1.447	0.692	0.755
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	1.410	0.718	0.692
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-0.451	-1.064	0.613
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	0.709	0.359	0.350
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-0.659	-0.981	0.321
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	1.426	1.147	0.278
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-0.437	-0.539	0.101
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-0.739	-0.788	0.049
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.948	0.981	-0.033
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	0.569	0.788	-0.220
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	0.217	0.539	-0.321
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	1.028	1.410	-0.382
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	0.092	0.539	-0.446
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-0.514	0.083	-0.597
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-0.628	-0.013	-0.615
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-0.738	-0.083	-0.655

15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.756	0.013	-0.769
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	-0.033	0.885	-0.918
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-0.413	0.526	-0.939
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	0.830	2.032	-1.202
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-1.331	-0.109	-1.221
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	-1.273	0.083	-1.356
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-0.015	1.397	-1.412
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	-0.063	1.590	-1.653
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-1.179	0.526	-1.704
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	-0.809	0.968	-1.777
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	-1.433	0.359	-1.792
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-0.545	1.340	-1.885
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-1.911	0.635	-2.546
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-2.491	0.166	-2.658
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-1.833	1.493	-3.326

Descending Array of Differences Between Factors 4 and 5

No.	Statement	No.	Type 4	Type 5	Difference
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	2.100	-2.295	4.394
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	1.400	-1.231	2.630
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	1.400	-1.147	2.547
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	1.750	-0.788	2.538
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0.700	-1.673	2.373
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1.050	-1.314	2.364
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	1.750	-0.609	2.358
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	0.000	-1.949	1.949
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	1.050	-0.801	1.851
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	0.700	-0.705	1.405
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	1.050	-0.083	1.133
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0.350	-0.718	1.068
6	Important to include family in official events	6	0.000	-0.981	0.981
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	1.400	0.442	0.957
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	0.000	-0.539	0.539
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-1.400	-1.865	0.466
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	0.350	-0.096	0.446
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	0.000	-0.442	0.442
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0.700	0.359	0.341
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	0.350	0.083	0.267
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	-0.350	-0.526	0.176
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0.700	0.692	0.008
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	0.000	0.166	-0.166
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	-0.350	-0.109	-0.241
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	0.700	0.968	-0.268
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	-0.350	0.013	-0.363
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	0.350	0.718	-0.368
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	0.000	0.526	-0.526
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	-0.700	-0.153	-0.546
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	0.350	0.981	-0.631
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-1.750	-1.064	-0.686
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-0.350	0.359	-0.709
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	-0.350	0.539	-0.888
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1.050	-0.083	-0.967

19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	1.050	2.032	-0.982
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	-1.050	-0.013	-1.037
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	-0.350	0.885	-1.234
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-0.700	0.539	-1.238
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	0.350	1.590	-1.240
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-0.700	0.635	-1.335
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	-0.700	0.788	-1.488
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	0.000	1.493	-1.493
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-2.100	-0.526	-1.574
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-1.050	0.526	-1.575
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	-1.750	0.083	-1.833
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-0.700	1.147	-1.847
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-1.050	1.397	-2.447
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-1.400	1.340	-2.740
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	-1.400	1.410	-2.810

Factor Q Sort Values for Each Statement

Factor Arrays

No.	Statement	No.	1	2	3	4	5
1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-5	2	-3	0	1
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-6	1	-5	-2	2
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0	2	-4	2	1
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	5	-2	2	-2	-1
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1	5	6	3	-4
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-3	4	-2	0	-3
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-5	0	-6	0	0
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	4	0	-4	1	0
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-4	0	-1	-4	4
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0	-3	-2	2	-4
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	1	-1	-3	0	-5
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1	-4	-2	-3	0
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-2	-4	-1	-5	-3
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	0	-6	-1	-5	0
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	0	-5	-3	-1	0
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	1	-5	1	3	-3
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0	-3	1	1	-2
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	3	0	3	-1	-1
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	5	6	2	3	6
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	1	5	1	-2	2
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	2	4	3	-4	4
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-2	3	1	-6	-1
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-2	2	-5	0	5
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	4	1	0	-1	3
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-3	3	-2	5	-2
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	2	0	0	2	-2
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0	-2	5	2	2
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-1	-1	0	-2	1
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-1	1	0	-3	4
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-3	-4	-1	-4	-5
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	2	-2	-3	2	3
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-2	-1	-1	0	-2
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-3	2	2	-1	1
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	3	2	3	1	3
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	4	-1	-4	-1	-1
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-4	-3	3	3	0
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-4	1	4	-2	3

38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	6	4	4	4	1
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	3	3	1	-1	1
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-1	1	-1	-3	1
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-1	1	2	4	-3
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-2	-1	2	1	-1
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	3	0	1	5	-2
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-1	-2	0	4	-4
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	2	0	0	1	5
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	1	-1	4	1	2
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	1	-2	5	0	-1
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	2	3	0	6	-6
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	0	-3	-2	-3	0

Variance = 8.000 St. Dev. = 2.828

Factor Q-Sort Values for Statements sorted by Consensus vs. Disagreement (Variance across Factor Z-Scores)

		Factor Arrays					
No.	Statement	No.	1	2	3	4	5
32	My consumption of alcohol reduced after the tour	32	-2	-1	-1	0	-2
34	I felt I was now a better more rounded person	34	3	2	3	1	3
12	I found it difficult to be away from my military mates	12	-1	-4	-2	-3	0
49	Any positive feeling I had following tour soon wore off	49	0	-3	-2	-3	0
13	I felt relationships with my civilian friends strained	13	-2	-4	-1	-5	-3
28	I felt a bit deflated once back from last op tour	28	-1	-1	0	-2	1
26	I had to unlearn behaviours associated with surviving ops	26	2	0	0	2	-2
15	I found it difficult to adjust to non-military friends	15	0	-5	-3	-1	0
46	Being in contact with enemy is importance to judging op expe	46	1	-1	4	1	2
40	Homecoming period was time I reflected on what is important	40	-1	1	-1	-3	1
39	Ops made me appreciate all aspects of my life more	39	3	3	1	-1	1
30	I found it easier to talk to strangers about my ops	30	-3	-4	-1	-4	-5
42	Homecoming trigger to making changes in civilian employment	42	-2	-1	2	1	-1
24	My op experiences have helped me in my civilian life	24	4	1	0	-1	3
45	Friends colleagues think I am better at dealing with stress	45	2	0	0	1	5
33	I noticed pace of civilian life faster than military life	33	-3	2	2	-1	1
19	My military friends are closer to me generally	19	5	6	2	3	6
38	I appreciated the good things I have in life on return	38	6	4	4	4	1
17	I had difficulties adjusting to my civilian work colleagues	17	0	-3	1	1	-2
18	I looked at civilian life differently	18	3	0	3	-1	-1
47	I felt tested on my last tour	47	1	-2	5	0	-1
27	My op experiences led me to question change civilian job	27	0	-2	5	2	2
11	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into non work life	11	1	-1	-3	0	-5
31	I only talked about light hearted moments of tour on return	31	2	-2	-3	2	3
20	Easier to make day to day decisions on ops than in civilian	20	1	5	1	-2	2
3	Military system in general treated me properly	3	0	2	-4	2	1
35	I felt guilty for having left my partner and family	35	4	-1	-4	-1	-1
43	Tour led to making better decisions in all aspects of life	43	3	0	1	5	-2
10	Needed to conduct some activities iot fit into work routine	10	0	-3	-2	2	-4
29	Civilians asked me inappropriate questions about my experien	29	-1	1	0	-3	4
14	I found it difficult to adjust to partner again	14	0	-6	-1	-5	0
41	Homecoming was trigger to making important changes in life	41	-1	1	2	4	-3
8	Important to do activities with partner iot rebuild relation	8	4	0	-4	1	0
44	I felt appreciated for my contribution to last tour	44	-1	-2	0	4	-4
4	Knowing my injured comrades OK was important	4	5	-2	2	-2	-1
6	Important to include family in official events	6	-3	4	-2	0	-3

1	Military briefs before leaving theatre were useful	1	-5	2	-3	0	1
9	Important to do activities with friends iot rebuild relation	9	-4	0	-1	-4	4
36	It took time for me to learn to relax in crowds	36	-4	-3	3	3	0
37	Ops was spur for making big personal changes in life	37	-4	1	4	-2	3
16	I had difficulties adjusting back to my civilian job	16	1	-5	1	3	-3
22	My civilian workplace was supportive of me on my return	22	-2	3	1	-6	-1
21	Life on ops is less stressful than back in civilian world	21	2	4	3	-4	4
7	Once in UK official events and activities important	7	-5	0	-6	0	0
25	My work colleagues and friends respected me more after tour	25	-3	3	-2	5	-2
23	My direct line manager helped me reintegrate into civilian w	23	-2	2	-5	0	5
2	Attending decompression before returning to UK important	2	-6	1	-5	-2	2
5	I felt proud of participating in military operation	5	1	5	6	3	-4
48	I believed in overall military mission	48	2	3	0	6	-6

Factor Characteristics	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
No. of Defining Variables	4	5	5	1	2
Average Rel. Coef.	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800
Composite Reliability	0.941	0.952	0.952	0.800	0.889
S.E. of Factor Z-Scores	0.243	0.218	0.218	0.447	0.333

Standard Errors for Differences in Factor Z-Scores
 (Diagonal Entries Are S.E. Within Factors)

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
1	0.343	0.326	0.326	0.509	0.412
2	0.326	0.309	0.309	0.498	0.398
3	0.326	0.309	0.309	0.498	0.398
4	0.509	0.498	0.498	0.632	0.558
5	0.412	0.398	0.398	0.558	0.471

Distinguishing Statements for Factor 1

(P < .05 ; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the Z-Score (Z-SCR) are Shown.

Factors

No. Statement	No.	1		2		3		4		5	
		Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
38 I appreciated the good ...	38	6	2.42	4	1.34	4	1.22	4	1.40	1	0.44
8 Important to do activi ...	8	4	1.44	0	-0.11	-4	-1.27	1	0.35	0	0.08
35 I felt guilty for havi ...	35	4	1.22*	-1	-0.34	-4	-1.33	-1	-0.35	-1	-0.11
7 Once in UK official ev ...	7	-5	-1.44*	0	0.02	-6	-2.49	0	0.00	0	0.17

Distinguishing Statements for Factor 2

(P < .05 ; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the Z-Score (Z-SCR) are Shown.

Factors

No. Statement	No.	1		2		3		4		5	
		Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
20 Easier to make day to ...	20	1	0.24	5	1.75	1	0.57	-2	-0.70	2	0.79
6 Important to include f ...	6	-3	-0.97	4	1.49*	-2	-0.66	0	0.00	-3	-0.98
27 My op experiences led ...	27	0	0.13	-2	-0.82*	5	1.45	2	0.70	2	0.69
15 I found it difficult t ...	15	0	-0.08	-5	-1.44	-3	-0.76	-1	-0.35	0	0.01
16 I had difficulties adj ...	16	1	0.32	-5	-1.87*	1	0.36	3	1.05	-3	-0.80

Distinguishing Statements for Factor 3

(P < .05 ; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the Z-Score (Z-SCR) are Shown.

Factors

No. Statement	No.	1		2		3		4		5	
		Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
47 I felt tested on my la ...	47	1	0.48	-2	-0.49	5	1.54*	0	0.00	-1	-0.44
48 I believed in overall ...	48	2	0.88	3	1.11	0	-0.08*	6	2.10	-6	-2.29
30 I found it easier to t ...	30	-3	-1.05	-4	-1.31	-1	-0.18	-4	-1.40	-5	-1.87
8 Important to do activi ...	8	4	1.44	0	-0.11	-4	-1.27*	1	0.35	0	0.08
35 I felt guilty for havi ...	35	4	1.22	-1	-0.34	-4	-1.33	-1	-0.35	-1	-0.11
3 Military system in gen ...	3	0	-0.26	2	0.76	-4	-1.43*	2	0.70	1	0.36
23 My direct line manager ...	23	-2	-0.67	2	0.55	-5	-1.83*	0	0.00	5	1.49
7 Once in UK official ev ...	7	-5	-1.44	0	0.02	-6	-2.49*	0	0.00	0	0.17

Distinguishing Statements for Factor 4

(P < .05 ; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the Z-Score (Z-SCR) are Shown.

Factors

No. Statement	No.	1		2		3		4		5	
		Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
48 I believed in overall ...	48	2	0.88	3	1.11	0	-0.08	6	2.10	-6	-2.29
44 I felt appreciated for ...	44	-1	-0.31	-2	-0.48	0	0.21	4	1.40	-4	-1.23
21 Life on ops is less st ...	21	2	0.82	4	1.27	3	1.03	-4	-1.40*	4	1.41
22 My civilian workplace ...	22	-2	-0.77	3	0.81	1	0.48	-6	-2.10*	-1	-0.53

Distinguishing Statements for Factor 5

(P < .05 ; Asterisk (*) Indicates Significance at P < .01)

Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the Z-Score (Z-SCR) are Shown.

Factors

No. Statement	No.	1		2		3		4		5	
		Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
45 Friends colleagues thi ...	45	2	0.77	0	-0.05	0	-0.06	1	0.35	5	1.59
23 My direct line manager ...	23	-2	-0.67	2	0.55	-5	-1.83	0	0.00	5	1.49
29 Civilians asked me ina ...	29	-1	-0.58	1	0.15	0	-0.01	-3	-1.05	4	1.40*
9 Important to do activi ...	9	-4	-1.28	0	-0.19	-1	-0.55	-4	-1.40	4	1.34*
36 It took time for me to ...	36	-4	-1.34	-3	-0.97	3	1.09	3	1.05	0	-0.08
16 I had difficulties adj ...	16	1	0.32	-5	-1.87	1	0.36	3	1.05	-3	-0.80*
41 Homecoming was trigger ...	41	-1	-0.29	1	0.07	2	0.71	4	1.40	-3	-1.15
5 I felt proud of partic ...	5	1	0.33	5	2.08	6	1.80	3	1.05	-4	-1.31*
10 Needed to conduct some ...	10	0	0.15	-3	-0.85	-2	-0.72	2	0.70	-4	-1.67
11 Needed to conduct some ...	11	1	0.18	-1	-0.23	-3	-0.87	0	0.00	-5	-1.95*
48 I believed in overall ...	48	2	0.88	3	1.11	0	-0.08	6	2.10	-6	-2.29*

Consensus Statements -- Those That Do Not Distinguish Between ANY Pair of Factors.

All Listed Statements are Non-Significant at $P > .01$, and Those Flagged With an * are also Non-Significant at $P > .05$.

No.	Statement	No.	Factors									
			1		2		3		4		5	
			Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR	Q-SV	Z-SCR
28	I felt a bit deflated ...	28	-1	-0.50	-1	-0.44	0	0.09	-2	-0.70	1	0.54
32*	My consumption of alco ...	32	-2	-0.69	-1	-0.43	-1	-0.44	0	0.00	-2	-0.54
34*	I felt I was now a bet ...	34	3	1.08	2	0.73	3	0.95	1	0.35	3	0.98
49	Any positive feeling I ...	49	0	-0.11	-3	-0.87	-2	-0.63	-3	-1.05	0	-0.01

QANALYZE was completet at 14:03:23