

The psychological coping, learning potential and career preferences profiles of operational force military candidates

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this study was to profile the psychological coping, learning potential and career-related interests of 251 candidates for operational force military selection for the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) – 26 of whom were successful in the selection. Data on their sense of meaning, learning potential and career-related interest were gathered using standardised measures supplemented with open-ended responses. The data were analysed to compare the profiles of the successful candidates against those not selected. The selected group showed significantly higher mean scores on meaningfulness and learning potential, and lower scores for career-related interest in law and medicine. Findings suggest that psychological coping, learning potential and career-related preference information can be used to refine the selection of operational force military candidates.