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Rebuilding lives: Intimate partner violence and Kiribati mothers in New Zealand

A Cooperative Inquiry

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

This study explores strategies to rebuild lives as a result of intimate partner violence experienced by Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand through cooperative inquiry. Cooperative inquiry is a modality of participatory action research (PAR) based on people examining their own experience and action with those who share the same life experiences (Heron, 1996). It is also concerned with re-visualizing understanding of the world as well as transforming practice within it. As a result of working through an agreed set of actions, this process has empowered personal strength and courage for all those who took part, including myself.

The method of cooperative inquiry is to be both a researcher and a participant and it does research with people but not on people. It is not about confirming or validating previous theories or hypotheses. It is about being deeply engaged with the human situation and inquiry initiated on a common interest shared by the group of participants.

All participants, including the researcher, were Kiribati migrant mothers who have been violence free for at least two years. We all worked together as co-participants in this research project. The inquiry was underpinned by the Pacific Framework *Talanoa* with the Kiribati cultural context, aided by *Te Itera* model designed by the author.

Key results are significant as they venture to restore and strengthen intimate partner relationships for Kiribati families residing in New Zealand. It contributes knowledge to social agency interventions regarding Kiribati families and their children and provides insights to future immigrants to New Zealand. Research participants also suggest that through being involved in a genuine research, they developed strength and courage commitment within their own extended families, communities and social connections in increasing awareness and education to alleviate intimate partner violence specifically targeting young families.

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this thesis to my dearest loving mother Teuea Florence Tamaroa and darling father Charles Lono Tokataake who passed away long before I did this study.

Mama, you constantly reminded me that violence is not okay for me and for the wellbeing of my children. It had always been your wish that I should do something about it. Papa, I thank you for being a non-violent husband to our mother and a kind hearted father to your children. With your advice and guidance, you have moulded me into a strong and resilient woman. You are both forever remembered and treasured in my heart.

A dedication also goes to my one and only brother, Teken Tokataake and caring wife Irima who have been there for me during the ups and downs of my relationship. You have always provided a supportive and safe haven for me and my children, and a loving violence free home for your own family. Rosie and Mereue, the sisters that have shared the pain and love with me in my journey as a mother and wife, may you shed no more tears.

To all the mothers and wives who are devoted to transform their family life for good, this work is for you.

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This study has been a process of cooperation that would not have completed without the contributions and support of many people. With humbleness, I would like to thank the following people:

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To Karen Smith, thank you for your skill of proof-reading and editing. You are my great friend, great colleague and great inspirer. Thank you Marian Kane and Anne McClelland for all the kind support you offered.

My acknowledgement also goes to the advisory committee that has been backing me along the way with knowledge and cultural competence in ensuring this research is carried out in accordance with the Kiribati ethos. I am grateful for your dedication. Thank you.

Thank you Sangeeta, Terara, Baretoka, Mark, nieces and nephews for inspiring me along the way. Kastin, Andrena and Enali your innocent presence around me inspire me more to focus on this piece of work. To the families in Kiribati, thank you for your continuous support and love. I am forever grateful. To the many friends and families who cheered me on, thank you so much.

An enormous debt of gratitude is owed to my beloved amazing children James, Mateata and Remiataake who have been part of my journey as a family. Thank you for being patient in tough times. Thank you too for supporting and encouraging me to do this study. You are the precious gifts of my life and I love you dearly.

In particular, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my dear companion, friend and spouse Ietaake Teatao who never faltered in his support for my academic pursuits. Your faith in my ability to complete this work never wavered. Thank you for who you are. Your weaknesses are my strengths. Your strengths are my pride!

Last but not least, to the magnificent, strong and beautiful Kiribati women who participated in this study, it is an honour to have shared our life stories together in rebuilding and restoring our family lives after living with the act of violence with our children. This thesis could not have been possible without your contribution. I would also like to acknowledge your husbands and children for their support in our adventure in the course of cooperative inquiry. May the blessings of Kiribati - Health, Peace, and Prosperity be with you all (*Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Tabomoa iaomi ni bane*). Thank you very much (*Kam bati n rabwa*).

Prologue

I was in my second year of a social work degree at Whitireia Polytechnic in Wellington when I felt able to seek help for my own violent relationship. I migrated from Kiribati in 2006 with my three children who at the time were aged 16, 13 and 10 through the Pacific Access Category (PAC) scheme to join my husband. My husband had moved to New Zealand in 2004 to undertake his second class marine engineer studies and stayed on as a result of the PAC.

I was unaware of the domestic violence support available in New Zealand. Even when I did learn about it, like many women, I remained fearful of what would happen to my family if I reported my husband. No-one had told us when we came to New Zealand that we could seek help through social services or the police. We just kept the ways we practised before. When I finally reported the violent incidents that had occurred in New Zealand, I realised the authorities accepted me and were supportive. My husband attended counselling which I believe has changed and renewed our life.

The concept of this inquiry came about when I learnt that some members of my Kiribati community ostracised me for the fact that I took legal action against my husband for physically abusing me. I believe that I am the first Kiribati woman in New Zealand to report domestic violence, a move that took considerable courage for me and my children.

The uniqueness and characteristics of intimate partner violence in Kiribati are not a result of colonisation or poverty but its patriarchal system. It is regarded as a cultural practice. The patriarchal system still exists in the Kiribati society where women are considered inferior to men with minimal recognition of female abilities, for example, no woman goes against men's decisions. This prospect immensely challenges my role as an active member of the Auckland Kiribati Society in New Zealand.

As a community social work practitioner working at a Non-Government Christian Social Service Organisation in South Auckland called Iosis, I embedded a desire to do this project. This personal interest has strongly supported the progress of this study and significantly has been both a journey of exploration with Kiribati mothers and academic inquiry.

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List of Definitions

Ataei	Babies or Children
Batua	Old men
Bibiran te Itera	The weaving of a flower head wreath
Bouanikaua	Middle aged mature man
Bowii	The getting together of people formally to talk or discuss for specific reasons
Fale	Samoaan name for house
Ientaboniba	Adolescent and young adult
Ifoga	Samoaan way of formal apology in serious matters
I-Kiribati	A person from Kiribati
Matai	Chiefly title of the Samoans
Noa	Without thought or no value
Mwaneaba	A meeting house
Taan bibiri	Weavers
Takataka	Dried coconut flesh
Tala	To talk/discuss
Talanoa	Talk or discuss, a Pacific research framework
Te	The
Te bibiri	Weaving
Te Itera	A flower head wreath
Te Kairake	see 'Ientaboniba'
Te Katei ni Kiribati	The Kiribati culture
Te Katoka Bau	The presentation of a flower head wreath
Te Kaunganano nakon te Utu	Empowering families
Te Mwaneaba	The Kiribati meeting house
Te Rikia ni Kiribati	The Kiribati way of life or rationale way of thinking
Te Rorobuaka	See 'Bouanikaua'
Te Unimwane	See 'Batua'
Tetei	A baby or a child
Tuae	Dried pandanus fruit syrup

List of Abbreviations

IPV – Intimate Partner violence

KPC – Kiribati Protestant Church

KUC – Kiribati Uniting Church

NZVAW – Violence against women in New Zealand study

PAR – Participatory Action Research

RC – Roman Catholic

RSE – Recognised Seasonal Employer

SPC – South Pacific Commission

Kiribati on the map



Figure 1: Kiribati location in the Pacific region (Worldatlas, 2015).

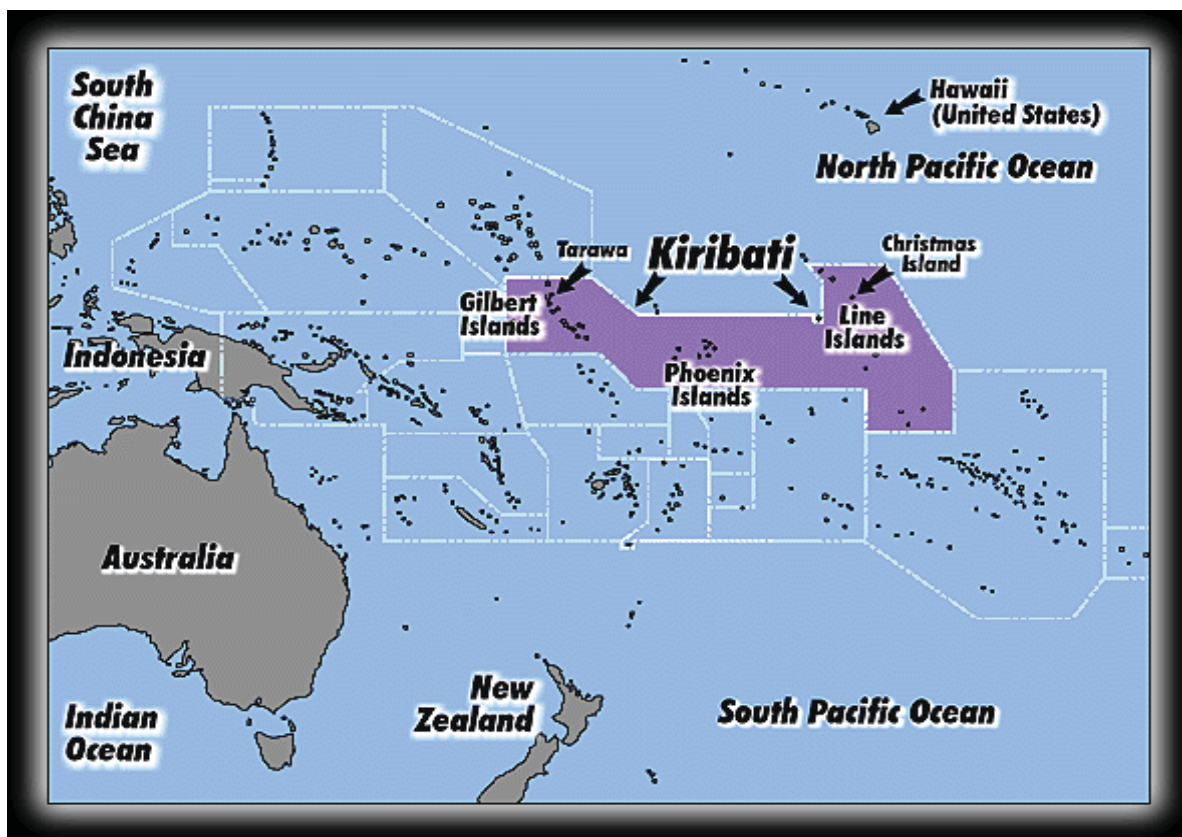


Figure 2: Closer image of the Kiribati territory (Search For One, 2015).

**“The Mother is the heartbeat of the
family. If you take care of her,
Everyone does well”
(Dowd, 2008, para. 4).**

Chapter 1

Introduction

*Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
Husbands love your wives and do not be embittered against them
(Bible Hub, 2015).*

Religion Facts (2015) in its report stated that Kiribati is known to be a 98% predominantly Christian nation. I-Kiribati acknowledge the Bible¹ as a leading path. Its teachings and messages are known to have an influence on the I-Kiribati society. The quote stated above seemed to be misunderstood or misconstrued by I-Kiribati which has led to serious relationship problems and devastation to women and children. In January 2014, two men were arrested by Kiribati Police in connection to the death of two women believed to be their wives. One of the victims was a 30 year old pregnant woman suspected to being beaten to death while the other died of serious knife injuries. In that same year in June, another woman was stabbed to death by her husband in front of onlookers including the victim's children. The incident took place at the Catholic Church headquarters village, *Teaoraereke* in *Tarawa*. A week later on 13 June 2014, a mentally ill husband stabbed his wife to death on Kiritimati Island. These incidences were believed to be influenced by jealousy towards the wives (Radio New Zealand International, 2014; Beneath Paradise, 2014).

The purpose of this research is to explore how Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand, who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV), re-establish safety and confidence for themselves and their children. Key questions that inform the research are around the context to and the nature of IPV:

- What are the impacts (short and longer term) of IPV on the children and their partners?
- What are the solutions to Kiribati IPV (prevention and recovery)?
- What are the future outlooks to Kiribati parents and children who have been affected by IPV?

¹ The Christian scriptures

Benefit and value of this project

This research aims to achieve a number of positive outcomes from the social practice perspective. It will:

1. Restore and strengthen intimate partner relationships within families
2. Empower mothers who want to remain in their relationship to learn from women who have managed to stop the violence
3. Promote positive vision for Kiribati children's future
4. Contribute to informing, educating and promoting awareness to social service organisations and New Zealand authorities with regard to Kiribati culture for mothers and women
5. Avert or reduce IPV in the Kiribati families living in New Zealand and in Kiribati
6. Benefit mothers who participated as well as benefit their families.

I wanted to do research that fully explored real survived personal experiences and by engagement with people, I applied a cooperative inquiry methodology. This methodology is suitable as it allowed participants to share and narrate events surrounding their situation and experiences through an interest in the agreed topic area (Heron & Reason, 2000). The research inquiry is supported by a Pacific Framework *Talanoa* (Vaiotei, 2006) with *Te Itera* model concept for participants to fully comprehend the process.

Eight mothers were involved in this research. Two of whom have left a violent relationship and six remained in a relationship. All participants have been violence-free for at least two years. This research served as inspiration for many women and children who suffer from abuse. It endeavours to provide a practical guide with embedded strategies to transform and restore self-confidence.

Methodological issue

Cooperative Inquiry is not a process that is meant to be analysed. However, critical analysis is a major element in any research. When cooperative inquiry is employed, there are no theories or hypotheses to prove or disapprove. Continuous cycles of reflection and action in the inquiry phases serve as validity measures with the justification of validity procedures which excels the celebration of cooperative inquiry valid outcomes (Heron, 1996). Heron and Reason (2000) justified that:

Cooperative inquiry is based on people examining their own experience and action carefully in collaboration with people who share similar concerns and interests...they can look at themselves—their way of being, their intuitions and imaginings, their beliefs and actions—critically and in this way improve the quality of their claims to four-fold knowing. We call this ‘critical subjectivity’; it means that we don't have to throw away our personal, living knowledge in the search for objectivity, but are able to build on it and develop it. We can cultivate a high quality and valid individual perspective on what there is, in collaboration with others who are doing the same (pp.15).

The eight participants in this research jointly inquired into their IPV experiences and actions through collaborating together in sharing their knowledge and sense making skills which validated cooperative inquiry procedures as detailed in chapter 8.

Issues encountered prior to the inquiry process

I was intending to hold a first meeting of the project in March 2014 after I was given permission from the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC) number 2013-1089 to start my research in December 2013, (see appendix 3). UREC's approval was valid for twelve months only therefore I had to complete my inquiry before 14 December 2014. The inquiry group did not take place as anticipated due to some changes in my study programme.

During the first semester in 2014 while still studying for the Master of Social Practice at Unitec Institute of Technology, I decided to apply for a Master of Philosophy in Social Work by Thesis only at Massey University. This was due to following my principal supervisor from the Unitec Institute of Technology who took up a job at Massey University, Albany, early in 2014. I had no choice but to change school as I was avid for an advantage from a specialised person in a cooperative inquiry methodology. Acceptance from Massey University was granted in the second semester of 12 July 2014 as per appendix 1. I did not need to re-apply for ethics approval as UREC's endorsement was recognised at Massey University as per appendix 2. If I had not changed schools, I would have completed my research with the women as already discussed when I met them, and it would not have taken so long for the women to be contacted for the initial meeting. The research actually commenced on 22 July 2014 to 26 August 2014 for six weeks and a follow up meeting on 18 November 2014, three months after the actual inquiry meetings ended.

Report structure

Since Kiribati is largely unknown to the world due to its isolation and small physical size, it is crucial to provide a brief background of Kiribati and its location to the reader. It is also necessary for the reader to fully understand how important culture is to the I-Kiribati which shapes how we behave and act according to the way we have been raised. The background history also provides vital information that connects to the project. Culture is part of who we are and it is embedded in every I-Kiribati. More importantly, parts of the Kiribati practises allow this research to transpire. I explain all these domains in chapter 2.

Chapter 3 provides a literature review of a woman's place in Kiribati which is still patrilineal compared to our Micronesian sister countries and other Pacific cultures, followed by more specific discussion around IPV and the backgrounds of IPV in Kiribati and in New Zealand. Discussion about Kiribati connections to New Zealand and some of the projects that Kiribati benefits from are also covered in this chapter. Chapter 4 details the research design which is the methodology with a discussion that explains reasons why a Pacific research framework and the Kiribati cultural model in this research complement cooperative inquiry. In chapter 5, I discuss a research design which talks about participants' criteria and a recruitment design. I also explain the advisory committee I formed to assist with the cultural side of the research. Methods of recruitment, ethical consideration and data collection are all explored in this chapter too. The discussion on the actual step by step practical applications of co-operative inquiry with the eight Kiribati mothers including myself as co-researchers and co-subjects, and the actions undertaken by the participants in the context of this study are examined and justified in chapter 6.

Chapter 7 provides the inquiry outcomes as a result of the reflection and action phases of the inquiry process. Critical or reflective analysis discussed in the chapter was a way to honour and respect the procedures of cooperative inquiry chosen for this research and to honour the outcomes the group generated throughout the process of the inquiry. A justification on why critical analysis was removed as part of this thesis is also argued in this chapter. Chapter 8 covers reflections on the quality, relevance and validity of our approach by applying the set of procedures cooperative inquiry holds. Ultimately, chapter 9 concludes the whole study and highlighting my personal recommendations with the aim to help reduce IPV in families focussing mainly on Kiribati families and those who are intending to migrate to New Zealand in the near future.

Chapter 2

Background

*This is my island in the sun where my people have toiled since time began,
I may sail on many a sea, her shores will always be home to me
(Kester1940, 2011).²*

Introduction

Kiribati was once a British colony formerly known as the Gilberts or the Gilbert Islands. When the Gilbert Islands gained independence on 12 July 1979 and became a Republic within the British Commonwealth, the name Kiribati was used to signify the whole nation and I-Kiribati designate its people. Hence, the word Kiribati used in this writing mostly refers to the Republic of Kiribati or the nation and I-Kiribati designate the people of the land which can be in single or plural form.

The Kiribati language is very unique in its own form as it is not close to or related to any language in the Micronesian states. Laxton (1953) in his article about a Kiribati song described the Kiribati language as follows:

The language of the Gilbertese original falls into Iambic tetrameters. In pronouncing the native tongue the vowels and consonants should be given the same general values as in Māori, except that the combination “ti” is pronounced as in the English “ti” of nation (pp.344).

While similarities are drawn with Māori, the alphabets of the two languages differ.

This chapter discusses the actual location of Kiribati in the world, its size and its stance against global warming. It also examines how our culture is being conceived through the four stages of life as well as stating the importance of old men’s status in the community as their decisions influence how culture is being performed, nurtured and cultivated. The chapter also talks about the relationship of the Kiribati government and New Zealand and how it has contributed to the desire to live and work in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

² Harry Belafonte, 1957 song - ‘Island in the sun’.

Where on earth is Kiribati?

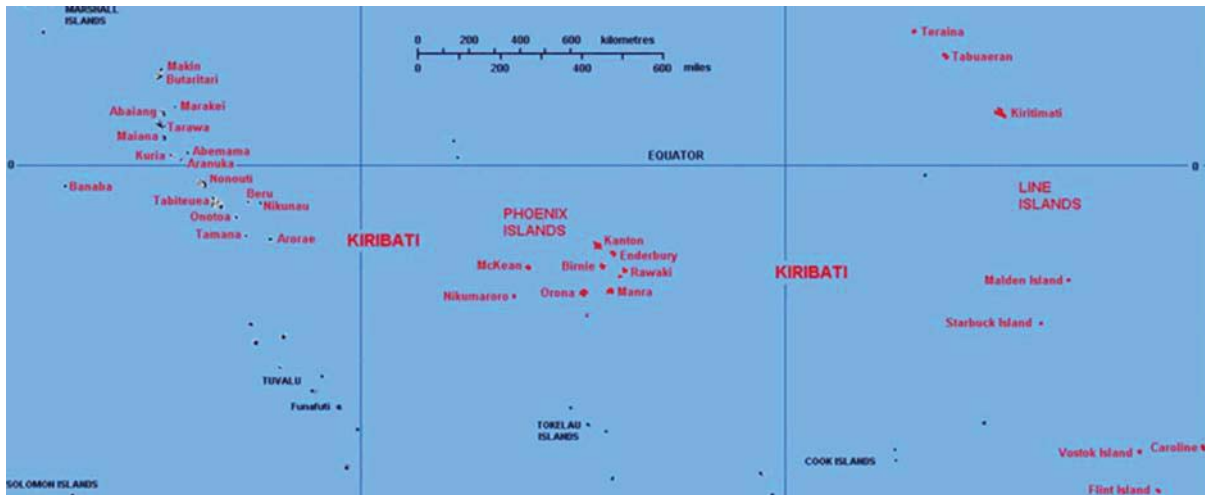


Figure 3: Layout of Kiribati territories in the Pacific Ocean.

Kiribati is a Micronesian atoll state situated in the Central Pacific straddling the Equator and International Date Line between 04°43' North and 11°25' South latitude and between 169°32' East and 150°14' West longitude. The total land area however, only slightly exceeds 800 square kilometres (Figure 1 & 2). The islands were inhabited around 3000 years ago. It is north-east of the Fiji Islands when sighted on the world atlas (Thomas, 2003). Kiribati is made up of thirty three atolls and reef islands scattered in the two million square miles of ocean. Kiribati is very isolated. It is nesting in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati accommodates nearly half the population of Kiribati. The Roman Catholic Church and the Kiribati Uniting Church formerly known as the Kiribati Protestant Church are the main dominant religions in the country. Population was 102,000 in 2012 each with its own unique culture, customs, history and lifestyle (High Beam Research, 2005; Index Mundi, 2012; Secretariat for Pacific Community [SPC], 2010). The thirty three atolls and reef islands are divided into three parts as per figure 3 which make up the Republic of Kiribati. These are known as:

1. The Gilbert Islands
2. Line Islands
3. Phoenix Islands

The Gilberts group consists of sixteen coral atolls and one coral island. These islands spread over 640 kilometres on both sides of the equator at the south eastern edge of Micronesia between 03°30' North and 02°45' South latitude and between 172°30' East and 177°00' East

longitude. The total land area for the group is 279 square kilometres. The group of islands is divided into three parts which distinguished the northern part of the Gilberts as Makin, Butaritari, Marakei, Abaiang, Tarawa and Maiana. The central parts are Kuria, Aranuka and Abemama. The southern part is Nonouti, Tabiteuea, Onotoa, Beru Nikunau, Tamana and Arorae. Banaba which is the coral island stands on its own and does not belong to any of the three categories. About 1,480 kilometres east of the Gilberts is the Phoenix Group, a cluster of eight largely uninhabited atolls and reef islands. Further east are the Line Islands including Kiritimati (Christmas Island) situated some 3,330 kilometres from Tarawa and 2,100 kilometres southeast of Honolulu (Thomas, 2003).

Cultural importance and how it is constructed in the Kiribati society

Kiribati people interpret life as crucial to the family and the village. The more children you have, the stronger your family is in terms of their roles and responsibilities in the village. A family with many men is seen as more fortunate than the family with many women. Within this diversity, Kiribati society and culture are conservative and male dominated. Women have by tradition been subordinate to their fathers, husbands and male elders. Men and women have roles that are firmly distinct. The family is managed by the husband while women usually follow and fulfil men's decisions (Griffen, 2006). Being an I-Kiribati is exquisite with its diverse culture where each island has its own unique ways of life but still hold similarities to be I-Kiribati. Culture is defined as a set of ideas and values of a particular society (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006). According to Yazd (2003), culture is an interaction of the social aspects of human contact, including the give and take of socialisation, negotiation, protocol, and conventions. Therefore, culture can be interpreted as an individual or collective behaviour that signifies people in different settings or atmosphere.

While there are no recognised theories of cultural construction for the context of I-Kiribati culture, I would argue that the aspects of cultural construction in which Kishwar and Rumina (2010) defined is related to how the culture is being constructed in the settings of I-Kiribati through developmental stages. Kishwar and Rumina (2010) found that there are different dimensions that construct any culture. They argued that human beings have certain types of social relationships which encompass a part of their culture. These different social relationships have economic, political and religious aspects. These various aspects provide the base or infrastructure of society. They help in building or constructing the culture.

Kiribati distinguishes life through four phases where each phase contains certain cultural values. Each step incorporates beliefs, values, traditions, customs, entire lifestyles and roles and responsibilities of an I-Kiribati. Throughout the four stages, culture is built and underpins certain practices and beliefs.

The Four Phases of human development in Kiribati

Although there is no formal academic theory of life stages for the people of Kiribati, I would argue that Piaget's theory of cognitive development well relates to the Kiribati phases of development and its structures hence these phases depend on the roles and errands which are expected of people in each phase. According to Piaget (Bird & Drewery, 2006), infants, young children and adolescents use very different kinds of thought processes and by the end of adolescence, a person is considered to be capable of mature thought. Piaget considered his theory to be universal where he thought the theory could be applied to children of all cultures, in general sense, even though each particular culture would have its own specific language, knowledge and rituals (Bird & Drewery, 2006).

Kishwar and Rumina (2010) together with Piaget's ideas can be weaved together to support the human and cultural structure of I-Kiribati through four stages. The human development stages that I discuss in the next sections are from my own upbringing. The knowledge I embrace is passed within my own family in the village of Tebiauea on the island of Maiana, predominantly from my mother who I perceived as an Orator.

***Tetei or Ataei* (New born to young children)**

Babies and young children are results of their parents' love. These children are compared to the 'pearls in the family'. Children are lovingly cared for by their families. It is common to see children playing happily together in the village closely minded by a parent, relative or another older child. The village environment provides children with a network of caregivers and friends.

By the time babies are able to walk and to pick things off the floor or ground using their motor skills; it is the very beginning of culture being born. Children are then taught to do simple tasks such as picking up rubbish around the home or passing light items from one place to another. Children are generally expected to be obedient to parents, relatives, elders and community leaders, not to embarrass their family or parents and to respect culture and

traditions. Children are taught their gender roles and socialised into the correct behaviour for boys and girls. As children grow older, they are expected to do household chores, which are closely tied to gender. For example, girls wash dishes; boys fetch water from the well. Girls are more restricted in their movements, even at an early age. Modesty for girls and correct ways of behaving towards boys are strictly prescribed in culture. Children are viewed as the image of the parents or the family the children belong to. Hence, the concept of reputation and manners places boundaries around personal behaviour and family interactions, as what you do reflects on your family's status.

Te Kairake or Ientaboniba (Adolescent and young adult)

I would argue that this phase of development begins when children reach the age of 12 or 13 years old until the individual gets married. Another significant physical sign for this phase for females in particular, is the girl's first menstrual period. A formal rite often takes place to mark this important stage. During this period, the girl is placed in a hut or room with a grandmother or an elder aunt for three consecutive days. During this period, the girl is prepared for womanhood which involves learning new skills and qualities that are diligent with fasting for three days surviving on limited amount of water and *takataka* (dried coconut flesh) or *tuae* (dried pandanus fruit syrup). At the end of the third day, it is celebrated with feasting to mark the moulding rite of the girl into the kind of woman valued by Kiribati society in general. At this point, a girl is supposed to be mindful of socialising with boys as she is regarded as a woman. It is also an expectation after this point that a young Kiribati girl has learnt to perform her role and duties with willingness and gracefulness. She has also trained to live life with perseverance and endurance and is ready for marriage.

A physical sign for a boy to be considered to the next stage is reaching puberty and masculinity. As Kiribati is a hot country, most village boys wear *lavalava* without a shirt except for special occasions such as church services. It is a norm for boys to be seen naked from the waist up therefore, the visibility of the armpit hairs or moustache contributes to this selection. In addition, the boys have to prove they are able to fish in the ocean using canoes, have good skills in building local houses and work in the bush without the support and help of their father or elders.

***Te Rorobuaka* or *bouanikaua* (Middle aged mature man)**

This phase of development begins when *Te Kairake* (Adolescent/Young adult) gets married. The couple are expected to settle and be more responsible for the village commitments. Having children is another significant contribution to the society. The mother takes on the role of raising the children while the father takes care of the bush and fishing to support the family while engaging in the village activities too.

Accordingly, the middle aged man now teach the young ones the values, skills and knowledge children ought to acquire to become successful members of society. More importantly, men in this stage are responsible to enforce and implement the decisions made by the elders of the village. For example, if alcohol is banned from the village then it is the middle aged men's responsibility to ensure no alcohol is consumed or brought into the village. Stiff sanctions follow the wilful breaking of protocols and rituals that govern how members behave with each other. Penalties can result in extreme violence as a form of punishment.

***Te Unimwane* or *Batua* (Village Male elder/Old man)**

At this stage, the village elders are regarded as old wise men. These village elders play a central and crucial role in leading life in the village affairs. They have knowledge about their land and have the wisdom to guide and manage the land. It is in his maturity and age that he automatically reaches this last stage of human development in the Kiribati society. *Te Unimwane* is also a personage of peace and asylum where women would seek shelter or refuge. He is considered powerful in resolving family issues and decision making where no one goes against their decisions as it is dishonourable. They are valued and respected by everybody. *Te Unimwane* is simply the people to whom everyone goes to for advice on culture and practices based on his age and his reputations for giving guidance. His decisions are seen as valuable and precise. *Te Unimwane* is an example of the governmental and political system and is responsible for policies and decision making. Roles of *Te Unimwane* are also acknowledged at local governments (Resture, 2012; Chung, 2005).

Te mwaneaba, a local meeting house for the villagers, is where rules and regulations of the land and people are discussed, approved and reviewed by *Te Unimwane* only supported by *Te Rorobuaka*. *Te mwaneaba* is also a place for gathering on special occasions and village social celebrations. Whincup (2010) expressed *te mwaneaba* as:

“It is in this structure that village decisions are made by *Te Unimwane*, whose seating positions declare their authority and status within the community. *Te mwaneaba* is the site of significant social activities. It is a place of dignity and formality. There is an inter-relationship in which the activities in *te mwaneaba* are imbued with stature and significance, and which in turn define *te mwaneaba* as a place of power and authority (p.113).

Te mwaneaba is the only huge local house most often situated in the centre of the village. It is regarded as a sacred place so guidelines have to be strictly followed and operated. Therefore, *te katei ni Kiribati* or the Kiribati cultural ways of life and practices are seen as essential to maintaining national, ethnic and family identity (Resture, 2012; Chung 2005).



Figure 4: The inside of 'te mwaneaba'. Women sit behind the men to listen and to observe. Photographed by Whincup (2010).

Cultural practices are traditions that strongly exist and are valued as part of being I-Kiribati. Since Independence from Britain in 1979, the lifestyle of I-Kiribati gradually changes adopting more of the western lifestyle. As with other theories of development, Kiribati perspectives have developed and changed over the years. What would have been seen in the past might be different from today. Still, every I-Kiribati is culturally raised according to *te katei ni Kiribati* with its expectations. What might be more interesting are the experiences and practices of an I-Kiribati grown up in the village of Kiribati who then immigrates to New Zealand with his family. This is about life change and transformation in a new home, Aotearoa. Nevertheless, culture remains in every I-Kiribati.

Kiribati – the sinking nation

Kiribati spans the equator near the International Date Line, and has found itself at the leading edge of the debate on climate change because many of its atolls rise just a few feet above sea level (Marks, 2006). Kiribati is affected by global warming. Watters (2008, as cited in Bedford & Bedford, 2010) noted in his Pacific research for over 40 years that the Kiribati population is likely to be relocated due to the effects of global warming where water will become contaminated and land will be covered by sea. Even a one metre water rise could affect the landmass by 12.5 per cent in Kiribati. Consequently, Kiribati will have no choice but to find a home elsewhere. Low lying atoll nations in the South Pacific such as the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Tokelau are extremely vulnerable to small rises in sea level in terms of land loss. Climate change will pose a fundamental threat to the rights to development, enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and state of belonging. According to the Kiribati Women Activists Network (2010) women will be the most affected by the causes of climate change. Their roles and expectations as mothers and caregivers of the family will increase hence their mental and physical well-being will be vulnerable and weakened.

The President of Kiribati, His Excellency Anote Tong, has spoken at the United Nations General Assembly in Copenhagen, to address the environmental issues Kiribati is facing with climate change (Trevett, 2011). Perry (2012) reported that Tong and his cabinet have endorsed a plan to buy nearly 6000 acres of land on Fiji's other main island Vanua Levu as a matter of survival for the Kiribati population. Climate change is a daily battle for Kiribati and the President admitted it is one that his country will ultimately lose. Kiribati's officials hope that many Kiribati people will be allowed to settle in other countries in the vast region including Australia and New Zealand given this disastrous issue (Trevett, 2011; Perry, 2012). Bedford (2005) reported that in a press release of the New Zealand Herald of 6 June 2008, President Tong stated:

His country may already be doomed by global warming... under 'worst case' scenarios, it will be flooded by the Pacific this century and its 94,000 people will have to be re-settled in other countries...To plan for the day when you no longer have a country is indeed painful but I think we have to do that (pp.6).

Kiribati Migration

The people of Kiribati perceive migration as crucial development. Ferro and Wallner (2006) stated that “migration is seen as an effect of rational economic decision-making process undertaken by individuals” (p.15). Education, health, better lifestyle, job opportunity and marrying foreigners are key factors that have driven I-Kiribati to leave their country and settle in other parts of the world such as America, Australia and New Zealand. The Banabans were moved to settle in Fiji in 1945 due to phosphate mining on Banaba, later becoming citizens of Fiji. Some I-Kiribati relocated to the Solomon Islands in 1953 due to land shortages and resource scarcity such as water. These migrations were arranged by British Colonial powers when Kiribati, Fiji and Solomon Islands were under Britain’s authority (Bedford & Bedford, 2010; Minority Rights Group International, 2007; Edwards, 2014).

Kiribati and New Zealand

New Zealand has already made connections and links to Kiribati through several schemes and aid. The establishment of friendly agreements between the New Zealand Government and the Kiribati Government inspired and forced more I-Kiribati to migrate to New Zealand to escape the effect of global warming affecting their country and to grab opportunities for their children and family. These are:

The Pacific Access Category (PAC) permits the allocation of 75 residential permits per year. The PAC provides an opportunity for people to migrate permanently to New Zealand provided the applicants meet character, health and age requirements. Other components of the package are to have Basic English language skills as well as a job offer. This treaty friendship was first implemented on 1 July 2002 and was later introduced to some of the South Pacific islands like Tonga, Tuvalu and Kiribati in 2003 (Dalziel, 2001). The scheme has become popular among Kiribati people who now make up the majority number of I-Kiribati settlers in New Zealand (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2011).

Kiribati civil servants complete in-service training in New Zealand through the sponsorship of the New Zealand Government Education funding project. Students who completed tertiary qualifications through this funding will be able to secure employment in their academic area whether in New Zealand or in any other developing country (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.).

The Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme between New Zealand and Pacific Island states is also supporting the development of the strong relationship between New Zealand and Kiribati. The RSE employ I-Kiribati under this scheme as well as other Pacific Island countries such as Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa and Vanuatu when New Zealand departments exhaust its employees needed in the horticulture and viticulture industries. The scheme has encouraged continuity of labour opportunities to I-Kiribati as New Zealand employers tend to use the same people who were already know the work, trained and have the skills for the business. This has pushed I-Kiribati to gain entrance into the New Zealand labour market (International Labour Organisation, 2013; State Services Commission, 2013).

I-Kiribati in New Zealand

The Kiribati community is a smaller ethnic group in contrast to other Pacific groups in New Zealand. New Zealand's 2013 census highlighted Kiribati population to be just 2,115 with the largest concentration in Auckland (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). The term 'Pacific people' refers to the largest Pacific populations in New Zealand such as Samoa (49%), Cook Islands (20%) Tonga (18%), Niue (8%) and Fiji (4%), with very little contributed by the smaller groups (5% in total) including Kiribati (0.3%) (Paterson, Feehan, Butler, Williams, & Cowley-Malcolm, 2007).

As Kiribati is a minor community in New Zealand, there have only been three research projects done so far on the Kiribati people in New Zealand. In 2011, Gillard and Dyson conducted research on the I-Kiribati immigrants regarding their experiences, needs and aspirations in New Zealand. Korauaba (2011) also conducted a survey on the I-Kiribati regarding their experiences with accommodation, employment, age and gender, together with transport and communication means in New Zealand. Fedor (2012), in his master's degree research, explored and examined the perceptions of I-Kiribati migrants in New Zealand considering the impacts of climate change on their cultural and national identity. Yet, there has been no research on I-Kiribati women's experiences on IPV in New Zealand so the intent of this study is to increase specific knowledge, understanding and awareness of the experiences of mothers and women who are victims of intimate partner violence from this small ethnic group in New Zealand. The intention behind this research is to fill this gap.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

“Violence against women and children and the broader problem of gender inequality is a significant constraint on development. It negates every area of development activity and is an abuse of human rights”
(Robinson, as cited in SPC, 2010, pp. X)

Introduction

This chapter reviews some of the existing literature on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Kiribati and women’s positions in Kiribati and other Pacific cultures. It cites the factors that contribute to IPV perpetrated on Kiribati mothers and children as well as factors that influence the thinking towards IPV and its effects among Pacific families in New Zealand.

A woman’s place in Kiribati society is primarily defined by age and marital status. After marriage, women live with their husbands and his family where they take on a subordinate position. The husband holds significant authority over the wife which impacts on her social connections and the activities she partakes in. Within the household, women are largely responsible for domestic work including cooking, cleaning, child care and overall family welfare. Women are active in supporting males’ or elder men’s decisions but their interests get little attention (Chung, 2005; Griffen, 2006; Kidd & Mackenzie, 2012). Kiribati is unlike other Pacific cultures where women have positions in their society such as in Samoa, where a *matai* or chiefly title can be given to either men or women (Leauga, 2005). In Tonga, men have more political power but women are ranked higher in the community (Taumoefolau, 2012). Micronesian countries such as Nauru, the Marshall Islands, Pohnpei and the Federated States of Micronesia highlight matrilineal descent. Identity, titles, land rights, and property are attained through women. This provides women with a level of status that is not found in more patriarchal societies, allowing women to exercise considerable influence over the conduct of domestic affairs, and even the allocation of land rights. Women in the family and community discuss matters of importance and relay their decisions to men, who are expected to act accordingly (Micsem, 1994; Advameg Inc., 2013). Kiribati society is patrilineal and whilst the status of women is gradually changing, women are still often considered inferior to men (Secretariat of the Pacific Community [SPC], 2010).

That is why the unique and conservative Kiribati culture and practices need more study to elicit in-depth knowledge and perception of Kiribati migrant mothers and women who are struggling to balance their culture and commitments in a new setting, New Zealand.

Intimate partner violence (IPV)

Researchers have defined IPV with different meanings and interpretations according to previous studies. Basile and Black (2011), Dannis and Bhandari (2010) and Resko (2010) report that IPV includes threatened or completed physical, sexual, or psychological abuse caused by a male partner or husband. However, Danis and Bhandari (2010) indicate that the use of term IPV has not yet been fully accepted and this may never be achieved as it is a complicated problem needing attention of many different disciplines. Danis and Bhandari believe that although it has accounted for women as the primary victims of violence caused by male partners, it fails to reflect the gendered nature of the violence.

Nichols (2006) reported that violence against women by intimate partners is common. Women are often attacked by someone they know and are most commonly victimised by someone they are familiar with or very close to. Men who commit violent acts are no strangers to their victims. Resko (2010) also stated that IPV is violence committed by a partner with whom a victim has had an intimate sexual relationship. Although not all perpetrators of intimate violence are men, women are the most affected by these events and their injuries are more likely to cause permanent damage or death (Rennison & Welchans, 2000). An abundance of research shows that men's violence towards women is more likely to result in serious injury, intimidation and fear and that women are more likely to use violence in self-defence. Statistically, most family violence is perpetrated by men (Schluter, Patterson et al. 2007).

The causes and effects of violent behaviour are complex. Researchers in New Zealand, Europe and North America generally have believed that domestic violence grows out of a patriarchal attitude of male dominance and control (Durfee & Messing 2012; Hattery & Smith 2012; Semple, 2011). It is recognised that the overwhelming burden of partner violence is tolerated by women. Hattery (2009) argued that IPV is a problem faced by society but caused by men. Hattery believed that the existence of patriarchy has led men to use power and control over women through IPV perpetration. Marmion (2006) also added that in societies where women grow up to respect men and hold them in high esteem tends to

generate men who are violent, to take advantage of women and enforce gender discrimination towards group of people or one another. People who are repeatedly victimised by spouses or other partners often suffer from low self-esteem, feelings of shame and guilt, and a sense that they are trapped in a situation from which there is no escape (Fairweather, 2012). Findings from research studies have also led to the challenging of traditional beliefs, customs and practices where violence has been justified in a cultural context (UNFPA, 2006).

IPV – Kiribati context

The role of women within the marital relationship is generally accepted by both men and women in Kiribati. This continues to make women vulnerable to partner violence. According to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) study, women in Kiribati who step outside their prescribed gender roles often receive physical punishment for disciplinary actions. Other forms of violence against women such as verbal aggression and emotional abuse are well accepted in the society too (SPC, 2010). Domestic violence is common in Kiribati and regarded as acceptable. There is still community acceptance that men can, or even should, physically punish their wives and children if they disobey or go against men's decisions. Kidd and Mackenzie (2012) added that many Kiribati women believe men are justified in beating their wives, especially if the wife is unfaithful or disobedient.

As elsewhere, gender inequality is prevalent in the Pacific island nation of Kiribati. This impacts on health through discriminatory patterns towards women and girls, violence against women, lack of decision-making power, and unfair divisions of work, leisure, and possibilities of improving one's life, in addition to limiting access to health care services (Kingi & Roguski, 2011). A significant consequence of gender inequality is the high level of gender-based violence women in Kiribati face including sexual, emotional or physical violence perpetrated by intimate partners and family male members (Kingi & Roguski, 2011). Young boys abuse their mothers and sisters as behaviour is learnt from their fathers and other male adults who practise it. This leads to abusing their girlfriends and wives and IPV therefore, becomes a customary cycle in the family, community and village.

The patriarchal system also has impacts on children's position in the family and the community. Although children are seen as the pearls in the family, they can often be subjected to harsh physical punishment (Griffen, 2006). Gendered expectations are placed from a young age in terms of chores and the expectations around relationship and marriage.

Virginity is an expectation which in turn contributes to wife beating if not witnessed at marriage (SPC, 2010). Domestic violence or violence from an intimate partner is considered a private family matter. It is the norm that violence against women and girls remains unreported to the authorities because of social and cultural demands from families (Kingi & Roguski, 2011). The SPC (2010) reported that the main reasons for Kiribati women not to report the violence is because the violence is seen as normal; it is not anybody's business so there is no need to share it with others. Also, women feel ashamed of the violence perpetrated on them, so they remain silent to avoid being bothered by other people in the community, especially by their families.

Pacific research highlighted Kiribati to be one of the Pacific nations with the worst incidence of domestic violence. World Bank (2012) reported that “a 2008 WHO survey found that 23 per cent of women in Kiribati reported abuse during pregnancy, while 68 per cent of women aged 15-49 experienced violence from an intimate partner” (para. 5). New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2013) also reported that

Statistics around domestic violence in some Pacific nations are shocking: 68% of women in Kiribati, 63% of women in Solomon Islands, and 46% of women in Samoa say they have been the victims of domestic violence at some point. The Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Programme (or PPDVP), a joint initiative between the NZ Aid Programme, NZ Police, and Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, was set up in 2006 to do something about it (para. 1-2).

Kingi and Roguski (2011) reported that a PPDVP has been introduced to the Kiribati Police Department to help raise awareness that domestic violence and violence against women and children is a crime. There is no effective legislation to cater for these problems in Kiribati. The law does not regard partner violence as a crime (Kidd & Mackenzie, 2012). The customary law of perpetrators seeking forgiveness from the victim allows the perpetrator to escape punishment and aggravates the abuse (Kingi & Roguski, 2011). However, recent improvements have taken place to improve legislation to address violence against women and to eliminate violence against children. The Kiribati Government has prepared draft legislation called the Family Peace Bill 2012 as a result of some research findings on violence towards women and children led by the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (SPC, 2013).

IPV – New Zealand context

The 2004 Violence against Women in New Zealand Study (as cited in Fanslow, Robinson, Crengle & Perese, 2010), which was the first population-based study and the largest study of violence against women that has ever been completed in New Zealand, indicates that IPV is a significant problem and that prevention needs to be addressed. There are also great differences highlighted between rates of IPV across ethnic groups. The study provides evidence that a substantial amount of violence is directed at women (Fanslow, Robinson, Crengle & Perese, 2010). Fanslow and Robinson (2004) in an earlier study reported that in New Zealand approximately 1 in 3 partnered women had experienced at least one act of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, whether a current or previous intimate partner. The study confirms that the majority of violence towards women performed by current or former male partners contributes to women's ill-health and lifetime issues.

While violence by men is often the most serious and fatal type of family violence in New Zealand where victims are largely women and children, Schluter, Paterson and Freehan (2007) argued that there is limited data reporting IPV rates in New Zealand (Nash, 2013). The authors claimed that there is a lack of data relating to Pacific families with their experiences of IPV in New Zealand. Fanslow and Robinson 2004, Kazantzis et al. 2000, Koziol-McLain et al. 2004, Whitehead and Fanslow 2005 (as cited in Lievore & Mayhew, 2007, p.29) argued that “the exact figures vary across studies, which is likely to reflect different measurement approaches”. There is little knowledge and information about IPV with Pacific people living in New Zealand. This makes it difficult to implement appropriate approaches through social agencies and policies that will help minimise incidences of violence against Pacific women and children (Paterson et al., 2007).

In 2004, Pacific men in Auckland and Wellington were over represented in male-assaults-female records. In the Christchurch area from February to May 2005, Pacific people were over represented in fears from family violence (Lievore & Mayhew, 2007). Koloto and Sharma (2005) highlighted in their study on Pacific women in New Zealand that 85% of husbands or male partners had assaulted their female partner. In some cases, children tend to be the most affected by violence and got themselves involved in the violence to protect their mothers. According to Semple (2001) “Pacific Island people living in New Zealand often treat abuse within families as private domestic matter” (p.61). Pacific people treat family values as sacred. The study also found that victimised women live in fear of their partners

and remain silent to protect their abusers from the judicial system. Some women want to maintain the family's status and their husband's good reputation and believe their husbands will change. These themes align with the Kiribati IPV issues presented above.

Environmental dynamics in New Zealand make it hard for Pacific families to report violence as living situations become more private and confined. The village life in Kiribati is open-planned where it is more accessible for family members and neighbours to intervene and able to rescue when a child or a woman gets assaulted. In isolated four walls of New Zealand lifestyle, nobody hears what is happening and culturally it is almost inappropriate to intervene. Then, the issue of women generally getting a job sooner than man as they are often prepared to take lower paid jobs and generally adjusting better to New Zealand where man perceiving it as losing power as head of the family or being overtaken by the woman contribute to violence. Children easily adjusted to New Zealand lifestyle too and do not respect their mothers and fathers anymore in the way they did on the islands. These are the main factors Pacific people face when experiencing intimate partner violence (Semple, 2001; Paterson et al., 2007). However, since there has been no systematic research on I-Kiribati experiences of family violence in New Zealand, further research is needed to illuminate more ethnic specific data to better understand the issues and hurdles Kiribati women undertake regarding violence in their families.

Coping strategies and responses to IPV

Coping strategies always refer to a method or plan to solve a personal or interpersonal problem or an achievement of a goal or solution to a problem. It is a specific effort that people employ to control, endure, reduce or minimise stressful behaviour (Education Portal, 2014; Taylor, S. 1998; Oxford University Press, 2014). The two main coping strategies are categorised as:

1. Emotion-focussed
2. Problem-focussed

Emotion-focussed coping is where people tend to busy themselves and focus to keep their mind off the problem. This type of coping strategy is concerning as women who are inclined to ignore or avoid the effects of violence can worsen their coping skills and can affect their ability in establishing a social and cognitive context that enables active coping with violence.

Problem-focussed coping is where people have a habit of concentrating on and manage the problem. Usually, this type of coping is related to positive outcomes that are beneficial to the women (Sullivan et al., 1995; Goodman et al., 2003; Waldrop and Resick, 2004 as cited in Sayem; Begum & Moneesha, 2013). Conversely, research indicates that both strategies are commonly practised by people to endure most stressful events (Taylor, 1998).

Kingi and Roguski (2011) and SPC (2010) report that Kiribati women who had constantly experienced IPV fought their partners back on several occasions with the hope that fighting back will decrease the violence caused by the partner. Some women left their partners and took the children with them for at least one day to avoid drunk and aggressive behaviours. Other women draw to trusted friends to pacify their feelings towards their relationship problems. Some seek medical and police support when the effect of violence is at greater risk affecting their health and well-being (SPC, 2010 & Kautu, 2013). Due to the geographical spread of the islands, women living with violence from their intimate partners often cope on their own where in some cases this can be difficult and risky for these women. In addition, the services or agencies women can turn to for help are located in the main island which minimises the effectiveness of access for those on the outer islands.

According to SPC (2010), coping strategies have worked for Kiribati women. Yet, there is a need for more services in Kiribati for women in need of support versus encouragement of women to access services that are currently available. Alternatively, Koloto and Sharma (2005) commented that, although support services are available in New Zealand for women who have suffered IPV, very few Pacific women seek help or shelter from these services. The authors argued that these women prefer to seek counsel from friends or family members than legal help as they fear the consequences that would impact on their husbands and their families.

Chapter 4

Research Methodological approaches

*“Methods are the tools of trade for the social scientist
and each method is used where and when it proves the most suitable”*

(Sarantakos, 1998, as cited in Alston & Bowles, 2003, pp.67)

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the holistic approach of cooperative inquiry and two other methods that were suitable to conduct this research. As the study targeted Pacific people from Kiribati, I applied processes and methods that enabled participants to fully collaborate with each other in the inquiry process. Cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1996) was chosen as most suitable for exploring the research topic. The process of this method was appropriate to conduct research with people of Pacific descent simultaneously with the Pacific framework *Talanoa* (Vaiolleti, 2006), in conjunction with the Kiribati model context of *Te Itera* created by the author, which both complemented cooperative inquiry as a primary method used in this study. *Talanoa*, a Pacific framework, is discussed further in this section together with *Te Itera* model.

It was crucial to enrich a cooperative inquiry with a Pacific research method and to demonstrate respect for the people of the Pacific who participated in my research. *Talanoa* is a good example of a method which uses formal and informal discussion in Pacific research. *Talanoa* process is a data gathering interviewing procedure which can be used in one-on-one interviews or focus group discussions, and is also a useful method to use across disciplines (Vaiolleti, 2006). *Te Itera* is a Kiribati cultural model designed specifically for this research. Its concepts are appropriate when applied to this research. The three steps of *Te Itera* have flavours that make it easy for Kiribati participants to follow and understand. Further, the three steps of this model acted as guidance for me as I researched with Kiribati people.

Both *Talanoa* and *Te Itera* allowed the researcher and the participants to establish identities, familiarities, understand tradition and speak the language. This procedure demonstrates value and appreciation to our Pacific people. Pacific people and Western people do not always have the same understandings and have different ways of thinking, analysing or interpreting concepts. The methodology of Heron (1996) underpinned by *Talanoa* framework with *Te Itera* model background pertain this research. In addition, cooperative inquiry, a modality of

participatory action research (PAR) also corresponds to this project as it is based on people examining their own experience and action with those who share the same life experiences. It is also concerned with re visualising our understanding of our world as well as transforming practice within it. Participants in the inquiry group who were mothers and IPV survivors created new knowledge from their concrete experiences consequently by forming concepts and by testing the implication of these concepts in new situations (Joyner & Mash, 2012, Heron & Reason 2000, Alston & Bowles 2003). This method was used because this process may lead to possible permanent transformation for those involved. Heron (1996) pointed out that this inquiry style is about researching with people as opposed to researching on people.

The research methodology and methods undertaken in this study produced influential and powerful outcomes as data was generated from real shared experiences, actions and reflections. This study has allowed me to engage with women to share our IPV experiences and to come up with solutions and recommendations from the Kiribati women's perceptions.

Cooperative Inquiry

Cooperative inquiry creates a mutual relationship where all participants work together as co-researchers and as co-subjects. Heron (1996) argued that cooperative inquiry is an open process about discovery and learning. It is not about confirming or validating previous theories or hypothesis but it is about making sense of experimental data which involves interpretation and reflection by those involved. Heron (1996) promoted four cooperative inquiry steps of knowing that entail a complete cycle of reflection and action to pursue well-founded knowledge. These are:

- Experiential knowledge
- Presentational knowledge
- Propositional knowledge
- Practical knowledge

Propositional knowledge is about the knowing through ideas. Practical knowledge, is about how to do a skill or develop competence in the how to do something. Experiential knowledge is about involving or meeting with people and feeling the presence of people and places. This is about a face to face encounter with a person or people. While presentational knowledge materialises the experience to actions such as dancing, movement, verbal and non-verbal,

drawings and other expressive forms. If the four types are congruent, then cooperative inquiry is valid. That is, if our passion supports our experience to carry out a cooperative inquiry, and is acknowledged by our feelings and expressions through making sense of them by reflections, then we would be able to perform actions, changes and transformations (Heron, 1996).

Heron (1996) argued that the different layers of knowledge are logical and can be represented in a pyramid figure where the base is the experiential knowledge that supports and empowers what is above. This can be seen in the diagram below.

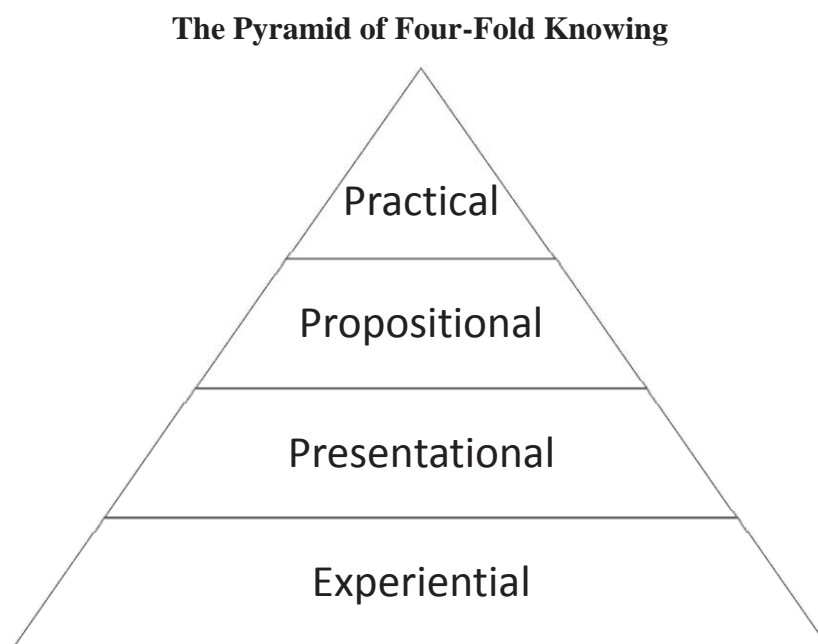


Figure 5: Four-fold knowing (Heron, 1996, p.53).

Given that I am the researcher, according to the main rule of the cooperative inquiry, I was a participant as well. My personal reflections and experience contributed to the understanding and engaging of this research. That is, researchers and research is never a value free activity and there is merit in owning and identifying the insights that we brought to the research. I, as a co-researcher brought the insight of another I-Kiribati woman who had also experienced IPV, had taken steps to end such violence and still lives with her husband violence free. Thus the voice of the researcher is intertwined and identifiable throughout the data collection and analysis processes.

Applying cooperative inquiry in my research enabled the eight mothers including myself as part of the cooperative inquiry group to become co-researchers and co-subjects although it was my intention to carry out this study initially. Conducting research ‘with’ the women and not ‘on’ the women as most research does enabled collaboration among the women in the group to make sense of their lives, and developed creative knowledge and outcomes through sharing their stories and experiences of IPV. The qualitative and participatory action based inquiry methods both contributed to the cooperative inquiry as they both deliberately set out to investigate the human condition.

Action research consists of planned, continuous and systematic procedures for reflecting on professionals’ practice, and for trying out alternative practices to improve outcomes from their own experience, and making this experience accessible to others. As with cooperative inquiry, it focuses on human sensibilities and empowers participants to be able to interpret meaning and get understanding of their world through agreed reflections and actions (Heron, 2006; Alston & Bowles 2003).

Qualitative research on the other hand focuses on how people interpret life. Reality is socially constructed and cannot be separated from experience. It is to understand reality from the inside from other people’s perspectives. Qualitative research however ignores the larger social structures and forces that influence existence by concentrating only on the microcosm of human experience and targeting smaller groups (Alston & Bowles, 2003). A qualitative approach aligns with cooperative inquiry as it provides information about the “human” side of an issue; that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2011).

Cooperative inquiry theoretical stages

According to Heron (1996), the stages of cooperative inquiry allow all participants to work together as co-researchers. It enables those involved: to control the design of the inquiry process; initiate a topic; reflect together; make sense of the actions and come up with ideas and solutions. In this particular instance, co-researchers were part of the inquiry process. Cooperative inquiry is developed through a minimum of four stages of action and reflection cycling. The action and reflection cycling can recur several times to balance and manage

interpersonal divergences in the discussions that enrich and refine the inquiry process and the validity of the findings. An example of the stages of cooperative inquiry is demonstrated in the diagram as shown in figure 6 below:

The Stages of Cooperative Inquiry

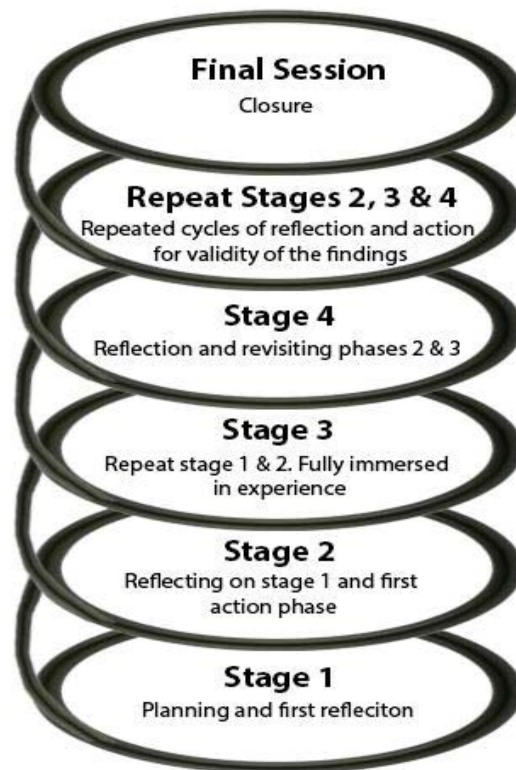


Figure 6: Spiral of cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1996).

Stage one

The first stage of cooperative inquiry is about agreeing on the focus of the study and choosing a topic of inquiry. It includes planning a method of action for the first action phase and exploring the quality of the agreed topic. The first stage is also about agreeing on the duration of the action to take place and establishing ways to examine questions, a timeframe for the inquiry sessions and deciding on a set of methods for gathering and recording data (Heron, 1996).

I appreciated the culture and practices of cooperative inquiry as it has enabled me to interact with participants who I have the same real life experiences of IPV with. Although IPV is

always regarded as a sensitive topic when discussed openly, it is only a person who has lived with IPV and endured the ordeal with her children that can fully understand its impacts and can connect and relate to the experiences of other survivors. As an initiator of this research and a survivor of IPV with my children, I built a strong trust with the participants during my engagement with them. This has allowed the participants and the inquiry to take place in a safe manner. As a result, a significant level of understanding and appreciation when interpreting discussions was formed. Everyone was able to share their intimate partner experiences with emotions knowing that they were safe and that their contribution was taken seriously and acknowledged.

The time allowed for this cooperative inquiry process was limited by the constraints of the ethics approval, so it was important at this stage to decide on how the inquiry would work as cycles of reflection and action can take time depending on the focus of the inquiry. Since I introduced the method of cooperative inquiry to the group, participants were expecting me to be knowledgeable in the structure of the methodology. Being a co-participant in this research, the topic was internally discussed with other co-participants. I was able to launch the topic of inquiry that I had already prepared and then negotiated how we would structure the research. I canvassed participants' opinions to determine if we could have six action and reflection cycles then another follow up meeting after three months. I also talked about the recommended methods of documentation such as electronic recording and maybe note taking if there is a need. I informed participants too that repeated actions and reflections can reoccur during each stage.

Although the participants agreed to go ahead with my suggestions, I acknowledged that I was not completely following the exact cooperative inquiry rules. According to the main rules of cooperative inquiry all participants, including myself, decide together on the structure of the inquiry. Yet I chose to act solely, due to the fact that the chosen participants had never previously engaged in this type of research method. Participants who had been previously involved in other research projects were only familiar with face-to-face interviews and surveys. Despite complications and difficulties experienced during this project, especially with regard to the time factor (all cycles of action and reflection took place in a constrained timeframe of six weeks from 22 July 2014 to 26 August 2014), the women involved managed and handled the situation very well.

When taking part in a cooperative inquiry, two potential ranges of inquiries are possible. These are:

1. Informative inquiry
2. Transformative inquiry

Informative inquiry is seen as more of the propositional and presentational knowing with a form of written report at the end of the inquiry and transformative inquiry is when the discussion, action and reflection aim for a social transformation or change. Mothers in the inquiry group were able to decide on the type of outcomes they wanted to acquire. It was obvious that participants were keen to instigate transformation as an outcome of this cooperative inquiry. However, I suggested that I would like to combine the two types of outcomes as part of this study. Although we were excited to share our inquiry result to other I-Kiribati mothers and to the many Pacific community networks in New Zealand, I was clear that I had to present a report as well, as part of the study in order to complete my Master of Philosophy programme and to achieve a qualification.

Then there were the complexities of the competing cultures of Apollonian inquiry and Dionysian inquiry as part of the cooperative inquiry as stated by Heron (1996). Accordingly, these two inquiry cultures work differently, though they can intertwine in the course of the inquiry. An Apollonian inquiry culture is a more systematic approach between the action and reflection cycle. This type of culture takes information from the last action phase and uses the information in the planning for the next phase. The Dionysian inquiry culture is the opposite as it depends on a more expressive and unplanned approach actions that will take place as a result of the situation.

The terms Apollonian and Dionysian were never mentioned in the inquiry group and participants were not aware of the two terms. Though, participants did implement a culture for the inquiry group which indeed added flavours of both terms. The created culture became part of the process throughout the course of the inquiry phases. Hence, I saw this culture to be more of the Apollonian philosophy as participants engaged in a continuous action and reflection cycle.

Consideration was also given to this inquiry group whether the action phases were to take place inside or outside of the expected place of the inquiry. Then, there was also a question of

whether the inquiry was to be a closed or an open boundary process (Heron, 1996). An inside inquiry occurs when participants work together in the same place throughout the reflection and action phases. Participants stay together and work on the action in groups or separately but within the group setting. An outside action takes place outside the group meetings. Participants only come together to share data and information and to make sense of it. Then, participants plan for the next action phase that will be done outside the group setting again.

An open boundary inquiry is when the inquiry group interacts with outsiders during the action phases as part of gathering raw data or information. The inquiry group could also invite a speaker or an expert to join them during the inside action phases (Heron, 1996). A closed boundary inquiry is only concerned with what is going on in the inquiry group during the action phases and do not include anyone from the outside (Heron, 1996). The women in the inquiry group decided that they will collaborate in an inside closed boundary inquiry as this was appropriate considering the topic of this research. The women chose to meet every week on Tuesdays from eight o'clock to ten or half past ten in the evening, in order to keep following up their data and reflect on it before the next action week.

Stage two

The second stage of cooperative inquiry is reflecting on the first action phase and applying actions and a range of different inquiry skills to observe and record the outcomes. It is also a method of reflecting on the actions, inquiry skills and outcomes (Heron, 1996).

Women in this inquiry group agreed to work on a closed and inside inquiry. They chose to remain together at each action phase for several times to generate and to record data. During the week apart from the meeting days, each participant was encouraged to have time to reflect and record their own data and then shared the data with everyone at the next week's session.

Stage three

This stage is a 'bedrock, the touchstone of the inquiry process' according to Heron (1996, p. 84). This is where participants become fully absorbed in their experience. They also become more open to what is going on and give meaning to experience in new ways as part of the inquiry practice. This is also a stage where participants become fully engaged with investigating, inquiring and experiencing new shared knowledge or insights into new personal growth or awareness through their actions and reflections (Heron, 1996). Although

this stage can lead participants to be fully involved, their involvement can also lead them away from the centre of the inquiry or there may be a crisis that caused them to simply forget the process. This may not be the case with an inside inquiry as participants get together at each phase to discuss, remind and support each other.

Stage four

The fourth stage of cooperative inquiry is the reflection phase of stage two and stage three. Modification of inquiry, data and observation method was needed at this stage. The cycles and reflections repeated several times in order to get best results from the questions that were being explored before the final agreement on actions and outcomes take place. At the end of stage four, cycles of reflection and action were repeated several times so ideas and discoveries enhanced the validity of the findings. Heron (1996) suggested that a minimal number of four to eight cycles would provide adequate time for quality outcomes without being too demanding on time.

In this stage also, participants find ways to share their data with each other. This can be done in different ways such as verbal, visual presentations or dance and storytelling. The women in this inquiry group decided to verbally share their data only. After each participant shared their data and reflections, all the information was assembled for similarities, patterns and even differences to make sense of the data collated. Participants were empowered and enabled to work out logical information they have produced and this was transformative for them. Participants were able to identify meanings from the data which enhanced their skills, attitudes and knowledge towards key outcomes. Once reflection and action cycles were repeated several times, participants were satisfied with their key findings and decided to end the inquiry. This was the time to study the data and make sense of the outcome through the final reflection phase.

Ending an inquiry group marked the completion of the work participants have taken through cooperative inquiry. It was both a triumph and a sad moment for us all. We celebrated a huge transformation for everyone in terms of our ability to collaborate in an inquiry to bring out new practices and personal transformations which can be shared to other social networks. It was sad in a way to end our group as we have formed bonding and attachment with each other. Through cooperative inquiry, the women blended well together and have formed a group where relationship matters were discussed and celebrated with confidence, respect and

trust. The women decided to maintain connection through this group and have worked out how they will continue to meet on regular basis to keep up with the outcomes of this cooperative inquiry research. More details will be discussed in chapter 7. However, we did close this enquiry group formally by having a small feast with words of thanks and appreciation from all the women who took part.

***Talanoa* – A Pacific Framework**

An example of a practice of *Talanoa*



Figure 7: Village ‘matai’ (chiefs) meet inside a ‘fale’ (Samoan guest house). Courtesy of the National Park Service US Department of Interior (n.d.).

Usually, in other research methodologies, research does not always require a personal relationship between the researcher and the participants to gather information needed. The interactions are guided by a set of ethical rules which are indeed different from that of the Pacific people’s thinking. The involvement between researchers and Pacific participants will always be different depending on hierarchy, age, sex, statuses, circumstances and so forth. These factors may significantly affect results.

Pacific people have different ways of living their lives and how they perceive knowledge about themselves and society. Research methodologies that are designed from Western views do not necessarily fit when applied to the Pacific people’s issues to gain new knowledge. There is a risk in believing that all Western and Pacific knowledge are the same so the same methods can be applied in the collection of data, analysing and creating new knowledge. For

a Western researcher, it is crucial to have values and respect life experiences to understand knowledge and ways of who you are in order to share the real life morale of Pacific people in research. However, there has been a change of research approaches that are much closer to the Pacific ways (Vaiotei, 2006). Bishop and Glynn (1999 as cited in Vaiotei 2006) stated that “integral to this movement has been the realisation of the importance of meaning and interpretation of people’s lives within their cultural context” (p.23).

Talanoa is a Pacific framework that has been employed to resolve some government issues in Pacific countries. According to Vaiotei (2006), “*Talanoa* is a derivative of traditions. Under the control of appropriate researchers, it allows contextual interaction with Pacific participants to occur that creates a more authentic knowledge, which may lead to solutions for Pacific issues” (p.23). *Talanoa* means talk or discussion in Tonga, Fiji and Samoa. *Talanoa* is a general philosophy that promotes open discussion and respect among people. It brings people together to share views through dialogue at any location. For any *Talanoa* to function in a positive and productive manner, all those involved must respect and understand the space and the people that are around them (Robinson & Robinson, 2005). Halapua (2007) claimed that *Talanoa* is talking from the heart which allows diversity, our ways of living, our lives and our culture as Pacific people. He also argued that *Talanoa* is not a solution method but a process that is likely to achieve or create improvements in the social system. Vaiotei (2006) further explained that in Tonga, *Talanoa* is made up of two words. *Tala* means to talk or discuss and *noa* means without thought or of no value. So *Talanoa* is indeed a form of discussion or dialogue between people that do not have a hypothesis or theory to prove. *Talanoa* is about requiring a researcher to partake deeply in the research rather than just being at the top and control without really being involved. *Talanoa* then is collaborative and inclusive and in that sense compatible with cooperative inquiry.

Pacific people passed knowledge through dialogue or oral communications from generation to generation. Our ways, knowledge and beliefs are spoken not recorded in writing but can be recorded through storytelling, practices and skills, singing, chants or dancing. Pacific cultures are based on oratory and have deep traditional stance verbal negotiations over our own issues. For example, resolving conflicts or *Ifoga* (Samoan way of formal apology in serious matters) can be resolved through traditional action of *Ifoga* and *Talanoa* and does not need to reach the Judiciary as families always reconciled through the rites (Filoiali’i & Knowles, 1983). In the Fijian community, the way that indigenous people most often settle their decision-making

is also through *Talanoa*. This is where the whole village or elders come together and talk over issues in a traditional manner where the chiefly herald acts as chairman of the discussion (Robinson & Robinson, 2005).

Robinson and Robinson (2005) argued that *Talanoa* takes the form of a Pacific-style forum where all voices are heard, not just all views, as often occurs in many Western forms of deliberation. As there is no agenda, people are free to discuss what they want without feeling that they have lost their way from the topic of discussion. This means that the session does not focus on just one or two people, everyone is involved. Everyone involved has the right to express their views and opinions openly and it is implicitly understood that those around them will respect what they have to say. *Talanoa* removes the barrier between a researcher and the participants allowing research participants to feel involved and to be part of the discussion until new knowledge is found as a result of the discussion. Nevertheless, *Talanoa* has to be facilitated (Vaiioleti, 2006).

I-Kiribati also use dialogue as a way to manage lives through relevant cultures on each island. Our values and beliefs are also strongly guided by our actions through expressions of storytelling, talking, imaging, visual, practical, dancing and singing. In this concept, I use *Bowii* as a name for *Talanoa* in Kiribati due to the fact that there are other names that can be used to imply *Talanoa* in our vernacular. In *Bowii*, usually, men and *Unimwane* (old men) partake in this forum to make decisions for everyone in the village. *Bowii* comes from the two words which are:

1. Bo – means a coming together, to meet, to unite, to agree (Trussel & Groves, 1976)³.
2. Wii – means a tooth, the mouth (Trussel & Groves, 1976).

For that reason, *Bowii* signifies the meeting of mouths which relate to the getting together of people formally to talk or discuss for specific reasons. Not everyone can be a part of the *Bowii* unless an individual is connected to the issue, invited to attend to share information and views or the *Bowii* takes place informally at home or at social settings. Never will someone participate in the *Bowii* at *te mwaneaba* (a local meeting house) but *Unimwane* when it comes to village matters as *Te Unimwane* or elder men holds the title of decision makers for the village (Resture, 2012; Chung 2005).

³ Trussel and Groves compiled the Kiribati – English dictionary in 1976 based on the work of Hiram Bingham, D.D. and Father Ernest Sabatier, MSC.

It was fundamental for me as a researcher to reconnect with my fellow Kiribati mothers through talking and discussions regarding our own experiences as immigrants in New Zealand who have experienced IPV and overcame it. The notion of *te rikia ni Kiribati* (mainly girls/women in this case) which is laughing or giggling over any matter whether minor, critical or sensitive has immensely allowed me to rebuild trust and rapport with the people I belong to. We spoke and we laughed to soothe feelings that came with our sharing, we even joked about our relationships. We felt strong and equal in the cooperative inquiry method through the *Talanoa /Bowii* process. I chose *Talanoa* to support cooperative inquiry with the underpinnings of *Te Itera* as guidance when doing research with I-Kiribati. These cultural methods are the most appropriate to assist in re-establishing the relationship, trust and support from the participants.

I used the term *Bowii* throughout the inquiry meetings with the reference to *Talanoa* at the beginning. This was an authentic Kiribati inquiry and I found it more beneficial to use Kiribati terms with the participants. I believe by using familiar words as a substitute to English terminology helped to enable the women in the group to feel more comfortable throughout the process. The women seemed to value the meaning of *Bowii* rather than ‘meetings’ and/or ‘discussions’.

***Te Itera* – an emergent research model**

It was imperative for participants in this research to understand and to be fully informed of the stages and prestige of a research and what it means to them as Pacific or Kiribati people. In addition to this, it was crucial for them to be fully aware of the protocols involved in research as a means to value their contribution. Therefore, I adopted the concept of making *Te Itera* as a metaphor and relating it to the cooperative inquiry process in this research to enable clear and coherent knowledge while taking part. Research approaches and steps which involved recruitment of participants were all well explained to the women in the inquiry group through the stages of making *Te Itera* and its meanings. I found this model to be appropriate in this area of research. It instructed the participants to grasp the knowledge of research and influenced their full partaking of it effectively and efficiently.

This is *Te Itera*



Figure 8: The Kiribati special flower head wreath. Photography by Tokataake (2015).

Te Itera is a Kiribati name for a flower head wreath which involves a special art form of plaiting to make it. The philosophy of *Te Itera* is sacred as it holds the values of peace, acceptance, love, friendship, mutual respect and blessings to the wearer. *Te Itera* is always regarded as beautiful, attractive and exceptional. It is mostly worn by guests or very important people at certain occasions, events or gatherings. *Te Itera* is very colourful and fragrant. Its pattern is never changed and it is arranged in sequence order to maintain beauty and exclusiveness. In the process of making *Te Itera*, women who do the plaiting have to check regularly how well the flowers and leaves are placed and weaved together according to its standard. The more a woman checks her plaiting and gets feedback from other women about her work, the prettier and more outstanding the result will be.

Te Itera, an art work of an I-Kiribati woman who plaited selected leaves and flowers together, also represents local knowledge and skills that are very unique. Every woman is taught at a younger age on how to do *te bibiri* or weave the flower head wreath as part of the Kiribati woman's work but unfortunately, not all women are adept to weave *Te Itera*. Only a small number from a larger population of Kiribati women can piece together *Te Itera* perfectly and outstandingly. Alternatively, most women know how to do other types of *te bibiri* which are not so popular or as distinctive as *Te Itera*. *Bibiran Te Itera* or the plaiting of *Te Itera* demands precise skills and knowledge and it is always the women who are expert in this and can participate in the procedure. This Kiribati method engages women from the beginning of making *Te Itera* till the end. This is where dialogue and sharing of ordinary lives and family experiences evolve among the women. It is also a safe place to share stories as only selected women doing *Te Itera* are present in the making of *Te Itera*.

I-Kiribati perceive gifting away a flower head wreath a fundamental aspect of their culture as it is meant to honour visitors and greet special people on particular occasions. It is a way to show appreciation, gratefulness and gratitude to people. This traditional practice plays an integral role in the lives of the I-Kiribati and it is highly considered in *te mwaneaba* before any formal events take place. Culturally, all unique occasions will be started off by the presentation of a flower head wreath *Te Itera*, presented by young girls who would dance and then placed *Te Itera* on each guest or special person's head. Then the function will continue as the guest or a special person has been acknowledged and welcomed as part of the function. The recipient has to acknowledge or appreciate *Te Itera* by wearing it throughout the celebration or occasion.

The metaphor of *Te Itera* with its procedure as a Kiribati cultural model in this research is correlated with cooperative inquiry and the *Talanoa Pacific* framework. *Te Itera* with its three distinctive steps clearly has the Kiribati flavour and can be easily transferred to language and culture. Kiribati people also use similar methods to treat different kinds of flower head wreaths so the steps of this research will be easily understood by the participants. The three steps of *Te Itera* taken for consideration in this research are described below.

Step one - *Taani Bibiri*

Taani Bibiri is the initial step of *Te Itera*. *Taani Bibiri* is the name for women who do the making of *Te Itera*. This step involves employing women who know how to plait *Te Itera* perfectly. By recruiting *Taani Bibiri*, a host or hosts always ask the favour of skilled women who are known in the village to be the experts in doing *Te Itera* to take on the role. This is done in a respectful manner of courtesy so weaving of *Te Itera* would be carried out accordingly. Normally, *Taani Bibiri* would voluntarily agree to and are free of charge. The number of women or *Taani Bibiri* to participate in the making of *Te Itera* is always more than one and it depends on the number of *Te Itera* to be made.

With regard to a traditional research approach, *Taani Bibiri* relates to a stage where a problem/issue has been recognised. Research is then conducted with people being invited to participate in the research and the procedure of getting written consent forms from the participants. From the cooperative inquiry context, *Taani Bibiri* represents participants who consented to the research and had the same passion and experience to carry out the inquiry among them. In the *Talanoa Pacific* framework, the selection of information through

discussion or dialogue was made available and effective right from the beginning when consent is given.

Step two - *Bibiran Te Itera*

Bibiran Te Itera is the actual process of making or plaiting *Te Itera*. There are two parts to this. The first part is the gatherings of specific flowers and leaves required for making *Te Itera*. The method also involves skilful hands to create shapes to the leaves and flowers so when plaited or put together in the process, they will bring out beautiful patterns that are necessary to complete *Te Itera*. The second part of *Bibiran Te Itera* is combining the necessary components together. While in this process, a woman has to double check or reflects on the previous piece of work done to ensure leaves and flowers are put together according to *Te Itera* procedure and are continually constant. Not just the woman who does the plaiting worries about her performance but all other women who take part in the making of *Te Itera*. They all contribute to the checking and reassuring of the work in order to gain a desired outcome. Relationship and good rapport has already been built during the flower and leaves gathering.

This stage signifies the process of selecting raw data, weaving data together, reviewing the data and the preparation of data analysis. In a cooperative inquiry group, *bibiran te itera* relates to everyone who is involved in the design and management of the inquiry. They plan a method for exploring the inquiry topic, reflection and action through practical experience and drawing conclusions and solutions together. The *Talanoa* Pacific framework acknowledges Pacific peoples and their specific ways of doing things. In this project, the protocols of *Talanoa* must be based in *te rikia ni Kiribati* or the Kiribati rationale way of thinking although the framework perceptions are seen as Pacific or based on Tongan, Samoan and Fijian perspectives which encourage appropriate protocols to be carried out.

Step three – *Te Katoka Bau*

Te Katoka Bau marks the completion process of *Te Itera* and the gifting away of *Te Itera* to the wearer. While *Te Itera* approaches its final stage, the villagers or a group in the village rehearse songs that will harmonise *Te Katoka Bau*. This is because the presentation of *Te Itera* always involves celebrations with singing and dancing by a group as well as feasting. The dancers are normally young beautiful teenage girls who wear attractive and colourful dancing costumes.

This stage symbolises the final process of the research and signifies the presentation of the report to those who participated in this project. The gifting of the report to participants was a way to thank and appreciate the people who had gifted their time in a research setting and shared their life stories in order to achieve the best output of the study and for the Kiribati community.

I honour the metaphor of *Te Itera* as part of me weaving my Kiribati heart with cooperative inquiry and through *Talanoa*. We (women in the group) pleat relationships and find creative solutions to problems that IPV brings. The completion of *Te Itera* in this inquiry marked the victory of the eight women who courageously committed themselves to the research. With gratefulness, I accepted the women's contribution, and would pass it on enriched with my experience. For visualisation, I have added some pictures to demonstrate the whole process of *Te Itera* from the weaving to *Te Katoka Bau*.

The practical steps of *Te Itera*



Figure 9: '*Te Itera*' is carefully weaved. Photograph taken by Tokataake (2015).



Figure 10: 'Te Itera' in its completed form. Photographed by Tokataake (2015).



Figure 11: 'Te Katoka Bau' inside a contemporary 'mwaneaba'. Photography by Sam and Sally (2011).



Figure 12: I-Kiribati girl presents a traditional garland (Te Itera) to Commodore, Task Force Forager Capt. James Meyer during a ribbon cutting ceremony in Tarawa. Courtesy by Diekemer (2015).

Chapter 5

Methods and the Sample

“Research itself provides an important long-run perspective on the issues we face on a day-to-day basis”

(Bernanke, n.d., as cited in Lloyed, 2015, p.1).

Characteristics of participants

A selection of participants for this research was based on the following criteria:

1. Mothers married in Kiribati and migrated to New Zealand with their husbands and children.
2. The mothers have been subjected to IPV in Kiribati and in New Zealand and are now living violence free for at least two years.

I purposefully wanted to do research with a group of mothers who are living a violence-free marriage including mothers who have left a violent relationship, have re-established life with their children and are not in a relationship at the time of the research. I chose to work with mothers from Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati and mothers from outside Tarawa as well. As Kiribati is mainly dominated by two Churches which are the Roman Catholic (RC) Church and the Kiribati Uniting Church (KUC), I chose to work with mothers who belong to the two religions only. Appended below is an ideal diagram on how I planned the selection prior to the actual recruitment process.

Pre-plan of participants' selection

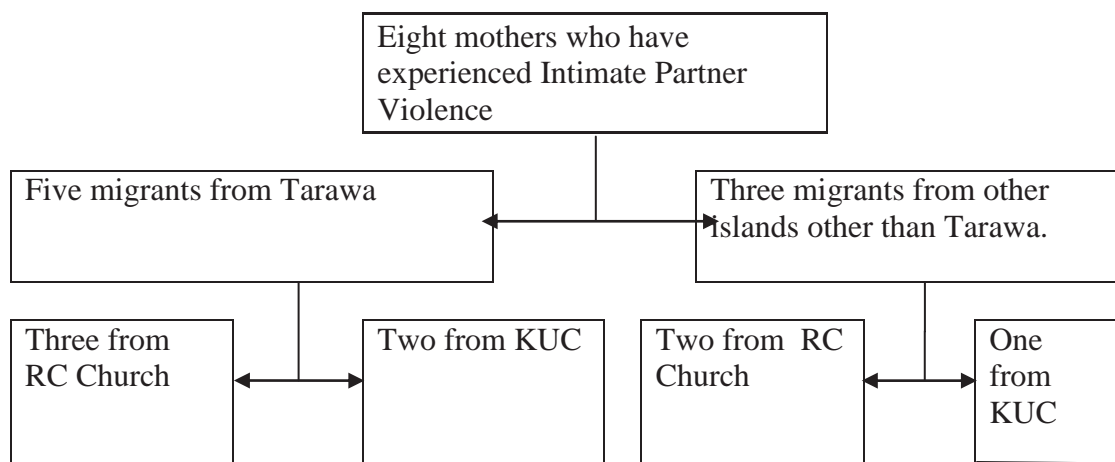


Figure 13: Selection plan for participants.

Method of recruitment

The Kiribati community in New Zealand is small. Statistics New Zealand (2013) reported that about 2,115 Kiribati people live in New Zealand with the largest concentration in Auckland. Mothers were recruited through the Kiribati network groups in the Auckland region only. I have had the privilege to meet and share migration experiences with few a Kiribati women specifically in relation to IPV concerns and interests. Recruitment was not seen as a challenge in this project due to the rules of the cooperative inquiry methodology.

Cooperative inquiry is about working with other people who I hold the same interests with. Initially, I met with two ladies to go over the possibility of carrying out a cooperative inquiry with some Kiribati mothers. The two ladies belong to the Auckland groups with whom I had dialogued with in earlier meetings about our IPV experiences and interests to provide some advice and help to other Kiribati women who might be still going through the same experience. When the two ladies supported my idea and showed strong interest about my research, I was empowered to initiate my research. I then contacted the executives of the Kiribati groups to express my passion to do cooperative inquiry with the women in their groups. Once I got the approval, I approached the whole Kiribati women's groups during their respective meetings in Auckland to talk over my passion to carry out the cooperative inquiry with mothers.

I introduced myself as a student of Massey University wanting to carry out a study to investigate the strategies of mothers who have managed to stop or leave IPV and how their lives and their children's lives have been restored. I went back to the groups again after one week to meet up with mothers who were willing to participate in my project. To my surprise, there were many mothers interested to take part in the project but I only allowed for eight to enable all voices to be heard and retain the focus of the project. There were discussions and checking out between the women of who really fit the criterion. I drew their attention to the participant's information sheet as in appendix 4 and appendix 4a. The two forms were written in English and in Kiribati for the purpose of those who needed more clarity in their own native tongue. As a result, an agreed number of eight mothers including myself volunteered and were ready to commit to the study.

At the end of the selection, the sample appeared to be very different than expected as in figure 13. From the five participants who migrated to New Zealand from Tarawa, four of

them were from the RC Church and one was from the KUC. It was expected that there would be three women from the RC Church and two from the KUC. From outside Tarawa, I planned to work with two RC Church women and one KUC woman but it turned out that two women from KUC were willing to take part in the research while only one from RC Church. This was understandable as recruitment depends on the availability and willingness of participants. More importantly, I had participants that engaged and committed themselves truly to the inquiry. The ages of the participants range between 30 years old to 55 years old. The outcome of the recruitment process is clearly laid out in Figure 14 below.

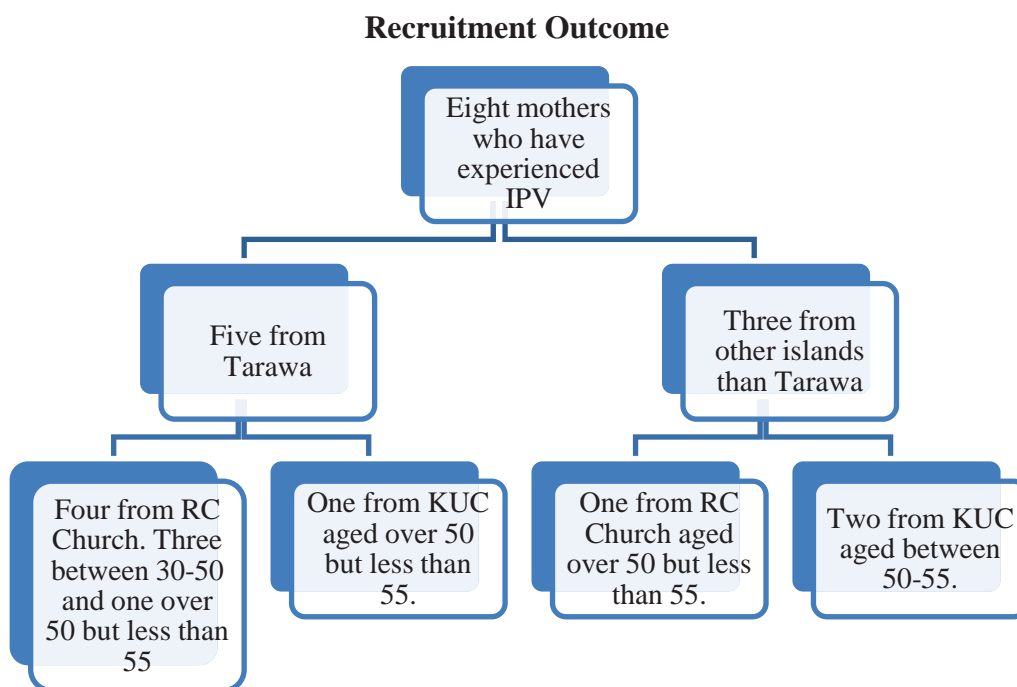


Figure 14: Outcome of participants' recruitment.

Culturally, Kiribati people believe that it is imperative a husband and wife both give consent to participate in any matter. This is regarded as an open and honest relationship. In this respect, I believed that acknowledging the other part of my participant would help support the successful outcome of this project. I sought advice from the women precisely those who are still in a relationship if they wanted their spouses to be informed of the project. This was to support the women to fully participate in the project knowing that the husbands had consented to share the life stories they had both experienced. This approach was also a sign of appreciation and respect to the husbands; for them to understand the importance of the cooperative inquiry process and to prevent ambiguities or risks that may be directed towards

the wife or me. I was able to do this with the help of the advisory committee I had set up. Further discussion on the advisory committee's role is discussed in chapter 5.

Design of research

I visited the seven mothers in their respective homes instead of sending an invitation letter as this was more culturally appropriate. During this visit, I handed over both the participant's information sheet and the participant's consent form again to the women although they have sighted the forms earlier in their group meetings.

I went over the purpose of the meeting and aim to achieve the goals. Explanation on how to carry out the cooperative inquiry group and how it works were also covered as in appendix 6. Mothers were also informed that group discussions would be conducted in both Kiribati and English languages and would be recorded. I made it clear that the purpose of recording the discussion was:

- For my benefit when I did the writing at the end of the inquiry process.
- The recording aimed to capture all information shared in the group so crucial points will not be missed out.

Mothers were also advised that I would be note-taking to ensure I captured precise information and transcripts would be translated into English for the purpose of the thesis. Originals and transcripts would be available for participants to read if they wished to. The mothers were not expected to sign the form straight away after being fully informed both verbally and in writing. I left the form with them at their houses to allow time to process the information shared with them. I also advised that if they want to participate and commit themselves to the project, they needed to bring the form with them to the introduction meeting. From there, we would be able to go over the information again and give informed consent before proceeding.

Meeting arrangements and reminders were confirmed through telephone calls and phone text messages. Prior to the introduction meeting, I went from house to house again to remind the women that the cooperative inquiry was about to start. To effectively start the inquiry group, I initiated a venue, date and time of the first meeting in which the women all agreed to. The first meeting took place at my house as there was enough space to accommodate eight

women in the lounge. We went through the information again although it had been communicated earlier. This was to ensure that everyone had the same understanding before the process began. A consent letter to take part in the inquiry group was presented at the time of the meeting. When the women were fully informed about the research, the consent form was signed by the participants. Participants' rights were included on the informed consent form.

At the end of the first meeting, my house was confirmed as a meeting place. The women regarded my house as a safe place for the group to discuss and share their life stories as my husband is hardly home due to his job. My husband is employed as a marine engineer on a tanker boat where he works two weeks away from home at a time. I made sure that my husband was not around when the group operated although he was aware of the meetings and fully supported my research. This was due to ensuring the participants' comfort and autonomy. My two teenage children were also aware the inquiry group would take place at home so they made sure they were out during the sessions. Both my husband and children were very supportive toward the research.

I proposed to the group that we could have six meetings, two weeks apart. The time between each meeting would be a time for reflection and to come up with possible action plans in the following meeting. The women, however, preferred to cover the six meetings weekly. This was also possible as the inquiry was a closed and inside type. Facilitation roles were taken in turns to enable all members to share the role of facilitation. The first meeting included introduction of members, an agenda, roles and expectations of each member. This initial meeting challenged each participant to:

- Take part in the discussion to come up with an action plan
- Develop a method to gather and record data from their experiences
- See each member as equal in the cooperative inquiry process.

As a first facilitator, I was interested in hearing stories from the participants and engaging with them while demonstrating a non-judgmental attitude. I allowed the respondents time to think and to feel relaxed and settled (Barker, Pistrang & Elliot, 1994). This was stage one of the cooperative inquiry. Participants were encouraged to share their life experiences with each other in the group and to record progression and outcomes of their own experiences. It

was important that I recorded every discussion in each meeting as I did not want to lose vital aspects of the information shared. The participants' own record helped with informing data collection and analysis as well. This was step 2 of the cooperative inquiry.

Cooperative inquiry is a cyclical process designed to ensure group participants reach a decision on their course of actions and reflections in this activity. Mothers agreed to engage in actions regarding their ideas and answers. Repeating stages 1 and 2 was possible to make sense of their experiences, interpretation and analysis to the topic of interest. This was stage 3 of the cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1996). At stage 4 of the cooperative inquiry, I suggested revisiting stages 1 to 3 to ensure all co-researchers were ready to share their data from these phases. We checked and developed ideas to validate the findings and developed new themes of actions from the cycle of reflections. Data analysis through reflection had already started in phases 1 to 3 that combined series of grasping and formulating characteristics relating to specific distinctive ideas, relevant to the results that we wanted to promote.

Before the report was written, I confirmed with members the actual meanings of their reflections and asked for comments, corrections and confirmation. In the first draft, I gave everyone a copy for perusal and verification, or to amend where necessary. Data was stored on my laptop and external drive: only I knew the password. However, each member was aware that they are free to access their information on request. Prior to delivering the report, all participants had a chance to view and comment on it.

Advisory committee

A small Kiribati advisory committee combined three members including a mature violence free male, a female elder and me. Our job outside the inquiry group was to make sure the protocols of working with Kiribati mothers were upheld. The advisory committee also helped to ensure the themes and conclusions were appropriate and supported how I presented my findings in a constructive way in the written report (thesis). I utilised the two people to ask questions that led to improving my interactions and understandings with the women. For example, I come from the central part of Kiribati and since there are three parts of Kiribati which are the northern, the central and the southern, some of the dialects or meanings to some words might differ from what I know so I had to seek clarity from the women and from the advisory group as well to make certain I did not confuse any meaning shared in the inquiry group. I found this advisory group an advantage as it steered my work in an effective and

logical manner. To protect confidentiality, the content of our discussions was not disclosed to the advisory committee but they were useful to support me in terms of protocol and cultural issues I may have been unaware of during my work with the mothers.

The male that I selected to be part of the advisory group is well respected in the Kiribati community here in New Zealand and in Kiribati. He has served as a civil servant with the Kiribati Government and in some local council on the outer islands of Kiribati as well. He migrated to New Zealand with his family and he is an active member of the Kiribati community and also acted as a cultural advisor. The female who is part of the advisory group is also well known and popular in our community here in New Zealand. When she was living in Kiribati, she engaged herself with some church groups of women and stood up against violence to women and children. While in New Zealand with her family, she has had lots of input to support our people here in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Since she had already lost her husband before she migrated to New Zealand, I could not invite her as part of the cooperative inquiry but have the honour to include her in the advisory committee in which she played a big part.

Ethical considerations

Although I originate from the same ethnic cultural group as the participants, I used the expertise of the advisory committee to ensure proper cultural protocols and approaches were considered when working with the Kiribati mothers. This was very empowering when conducting the inquiry as the advisory committee got me to focus and to use my analytical thinking in a Kiribati way not influenced by foreign theories. Cooperative inquiry relies on the inter-personal skills of the facilitator, the ability to establish relationship and rapport and emotional competence (Heron, 1996). Throughout the inquiry process, I was transparent and engaged with the women in the group to carefully monitor the changes in emotional and personal feelings that may be experienced by the group. The women were astonishing as none of them needed emotional support throughout the inquiry process but me. The women have their own coping mechanisms that worked for them such as taking a quick smoke or asking for a five minute break. As an initiator of this inquiry, I considered some important aspects of the participant's background. Coming from the same cultural upbringing, it was fundamentally important to understand the necessary protocols when dealing with different ages and statuses. In essence, I needed to know which part of Kiribati the women originated from so I could engage effectively, not offending their dignity.

Consideration was also specifically drawn to the Ethical Principles of Pacific Health research as this study involved research with Pacific people. According to the Health Research Council of New Zealand (n.d.), “Pacific research will be underpinned by Pacific cultural values and beliefs, and will be conducted in accordance with Pacific ethical standards” (p.1).

This study was designed in conjunction with the main ethical principles as follows:

- Informed and voluntary consent
- Respect for rights and confidentiality and preservation of anonymity
- Minimisation of harm
- Cultural and social sensitivity
- Limitation of deception
- Respect for intellectual and cultural property ownership
- Avoidance of conflict of interest
- Research design adequacy

The afore-mentioned ethical principles are very imperative in my line of work too as a social work practitioner registered with the Social Work Registration Board (SWRB) and a member of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers in New Zealand (ANZASW).

Informed and voluntary consent

Informed and voluntary consent is important in research as it allows people to decide to take part in a research setting. It is also critical that the information shared about the research will be clear and well received from the subjects so consent given represents a permission to intervene on a person’s private sphere. Informed consent is usually a person’s decision making and voluntariness prior to joining any particular subject (US National Library of Medicine, 2008).

In terms of this project, information about the research was fully explained in the invitation letter and to the participants when met in person. In the first gathering, the order was again discussed. It was discussed too that confidentiality is highly acknowledged as participants were encouraged to create a space to share their experiences of IPV and to talk between each other. The women were aware that participation is voluntary and they can withdraw anytime during the process.

Respect for rights and confidentiality and preservation of anonymity

As a community registered social worker and a member of the ANZASW, I work with families in a holistic way to address their social issues empowering them to reach their potential and aspirations. Respecting families or clients' rights and confidentiality and preservation of anonymity is intensively part of my everyday role and key to my practice. Iosis Limited, the organisation for which I work, upholds the dignity of every client, therefore, I have attended many trainings and workshops to up skill my knowledge and understanding around this. It is also paramount when involving human beings in research, their rights and welfare must be protected and respected at all times (US National Library of Medicine, 2008).

Participants were informed that although personal questions would be asked and personal experiences would be shared in the cooperative inquiry, their names would be suppressed and would not be mentioned in the report. Identifying information provided by participants was completely confidential and was not to be shared outside the group. Participants were aware too that they were expected to practice confidentiality as well to safeguard releasing information to others outside the group. The women in the inquiry group reported that although it was a must to protect their names from being exposed or released in the report, the eight women did not see it as an ethical issue for them in this case. However, it was agreed by all participants that what was discussed in the group would stay in the group. One participant commented:

I am not worrying as it will not affect me if my name is quoted in your report. I am proud to share my strength and ability to leave my husband because of his violent behaviour that has affected me and my children (Reebeka, July 22, 2014).

The two members of the advisory committee I have set up were also a part of this section. I fully informed the committee members that as supporters for this inquiry group, they too were expected to respect the rights and confidentiality and preserve of the anonymity of participants. It was also decided in the first session that when quoting the women's sharing in the report, their names would be replaced by made up names as agreed by the women and followed by the American Psychological Association (APA) reference style. They would be quoted or expressed as 'mothers', 'participants' or 'women in the group' throughout the

writing. This was to ensure that the women's anonymity and confidentiality was regarded highly in this research.

Minimisation of harm

Not wanting to stigmatise my culture, I made sure men especially the participants' husbands understood and accepted the need to undertake this research by promoting the benefit of this work for our people living in a new home Aotearoa, New Zealand. Some men did not fully comprehend the importance of the topic. After an in-depth discussion with them about the aim and the purpose of the study, they became interested and asked if they could join their wives in the study. To stay loyal to the application of the study, I declined their requests as men are not part of the study this time. However, I did tell them that there might be someone in the future interested to do this type of study with men.

Participants were aware that they would have agreed to talk about sensitive issues. However, I did not ask for a detailed description of specific violent events. I was looking for an outline only. The women and I acknowledged that sharing life experiences could possibly affect us throughout the duration of the inquiry interventions. I encouraged ongoing communication and networking between us such as phone calls or text messaging each other via cell-phones between the meetings. Participants were fully informed about the counselling and social services available to them should they need it along with their contact details. None of the women in the inquiry group felt the need for extra support or time-out during the course of the project. I believe this was due to the women being fully informed of the research ethics and that they made fully informed decisions to partake in the study. They were also informed that withdrawal from the project was possible at any given time but their information would not be removed from the data collected if they wanted to withdraw after reflecting analysis took place. The women were all clear on this part and no one left or withdrew from the inquiry until the end. Only one participant missed the second session due to family commitments but subsequently continued.

Cultural and social sensitivity

As cooperative inquiry encourages an open and honest discussion among participants, everyone was told that their values as Kiribati people were to be maintained throughout the project. Each participant was advised that they had the right to raise their concern if they felt

their dignity had been overstepped or disrespected. It was my duty to address it in an honest approach with the help of the advisory committee.

I also introduced the advisory committee to the women at the start of the inquiry session. This was for the mothers to know that there was another small group operating alongside the group. I explained to them that the advisory committee's role was to make sure all cultural protocols were met when working together as I-Kiribati and that I would receive expert cultural guidance for this study's sake. However, given the maturity age of participants (30-55 years old), I encouraged the group to provide a spirit of respect, trust, love, compassion and friendship among them during the course of the inquiry meetings, which they did. This was addressed in the first cooperative inquiry meeting held at my house.

I also made sure I explored how the women would commute to the inquiry meetings. I offered to provide transport for them as a way to show care and respect especially given that I had involved them in my study. Food and cold or hot drinks are vital when interacting with Kiribati people. Food creates a hospitality approach between people, signifies friendship and builds safety and peace when shared. Therefore, at every inquiry session, I provided some form of nourishment to my participants whether it was a full meal or just drinks and biscuits. At the end of the project, I concluded the sessions by hosting a small feast to mark the completion of the work and as a token of appreciation to those who had participated. My husband and children supported me with this small feast.

Limitation of deception

Participants were informed that they could check the transcriptions of the recordings before they were used. Transcripts were also available for the mothers to check to make sure no deception of purpose and that autonomy was maintained throughout the research.

There was no budget or funding available for this project and it was my responsibility to obtain funding for this work. A work colleague supported me in advertising my project in the local newspaper with the aim of getting some form of financial support from the community. Unfortunately, no assistance was received. I catered for all expenses related to this project.

Respect for intellectual and cultural property ownership

All the members that participated in this project contributed to the research findings. I explained to the group that even though they had participated fully in the inquiry process, I would claim ownership of the completed work. The women understood and accepted this as it had already been explained to them at the beginning of the process. The overall research collected was part of my studies. The knowledge, support, outcomes and shared experience as a result of the enquiry belonged to the group as a whole. One participant mentioned that if it had not been for me and my passion on the subject, we would not have been able to come together as a group to talk about our IPV experiences.

Avoidance of conflict of interest

When cooperative inquiry is employed, there are no theories or hypotheses to prove or disapprove. Cooperative inquiry is based on people who work together with a group of people with similar concern or interests to understand and change themselves or their world. A reflective analysis throughout the action and reflection phases and continuous cycles of inquiry serve as validity measures with the justification of truth-values which excel the celebration of cooperative inquiry valid outcomes (Alston & Bowles, 2003; Heron & Reason, 2000; Heron, 1996).

The four-fold knowing illustrated in figure 5 and discussed in chapter 4(2), allowed participants to develop their attention to critically focus on themselves and their actions. This had improved the quality of living knowledge in search for objectivity, which participants were able to build on and develop during the inquiry phases. Participants were given a time at the first meeting to discuss any form of conflict they may come across in the meetings. For example, if they were related to someone in the group, any personal relationships and so forth that may affect the collaborative work was explored before participants consented to join the study.

Research design adequacy

Cooperative inquiry as a transformative agent for social change suits this research topic with the support of a Pacific Framework called *Talanoa* and a Kiribati cultural model called *Te Itera*. *Talanoa* which uses formal or informal discussion in Pacific research and *Te Itera* which guides research knowledge with Kiribati participants complement cooperative inquiry as the primary method for this research.

In order to achieve the best and appropriate outcome of the inquiry with the advisory committee's contribution, a two-paged handout entitled 'A short guide to cooperative inquiry' (Reason & Heron, 1997) was given to the two committee members to read and to familiarise themselves with the methods I planned to use in the research. It was important for these two members to gain an understanding of how cooperative inquiry operates as they were part of it in a way. An outline of how the meeting would take place was also presented to enhance the Advisory Committee's understanding of my role together with the participants.

Data collection

The method of data collection is essential in maintaining the integrity and the ethical principles of research. I made sure that I chose the right method when collecting data during the inquiry meetings. As the inquiry involved lots of sharing through dialogue, it is important to utilise most appropriate techniques to capture data that are necessary for this project. Appropriate data collection instruments utilised in this project were:

- Participants' demographic data
- Recording
- Note taking

Participants' demographic data

A brief survey was conducted with the women on the first session of the inquiry group. The survey as in appendix 7 was not part of the cooperative inquiry method but I felt that obtaining some personal information from the participants would assist when discussing or interpreting data. The questionnaire asked about age, job, religion, marital status and number of children, island of origin and length of stay in New Zealand. When the survey was completed, it showed that the participants' ages varied between 37 years to 54 years old. Three of the ladies were unemployed and five of them had jobs. Two of the unemployed participants were divorced while one was divorced and had a job and the rest of the participants had jobs. The number of children these participants had ranged between one to nine children. They had been in New Zealand for ten years and more but less than 19 years. Five participants were from Tarawa. Four of them belonged to the Catholic Church while one belonged to the Kiribati Uniting Church. For the three participants who were from outside Tarawa, one of them was a Catholic while the other two were from the Kiribati Uniting

Church. The divorced participants have been in a relationship for 21, 16 and 10 years before they left their husbands. Those who were still in a relationship had celebrated wedding anniversaries ranging from 13 to 29 years. The demographic information is presented in the table below.

Table 1: Participants' demographic information

Participants	Reebeka	Miita	Akineta	Eren	Ameria	Akata	Monika	Tania
Age	53	52	54	51	45	38	37	44
Job	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marital status	Divorced	Married	Divorced	Married	Married	Married	Divorced	Married
Number of children	4	9	6	7	6	1	1	3
Length of stay in NZ	18	10	13	12	14	11	15	18
From Tarawa				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Catholic					Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kiribati Uniting Church				Yes				
Outside Tarawa	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Catholic		Yes						
Kiribati Uniting Church	Yes		Yes					
Length of relationship	21	17	16	29	23	13	10	24

Recording

Throughout the inquiry phases, all six sessions were recorded. Participants were told when the recorder was on. The recorder played a major part in the inquiry meeting as women did not seem to be distracted or worried about the device. This enabled me as a researcher to be fully engaged as one of the participants. This device was beneficial as it captured everything that was said in the inquiry groups and was handy when elaborating on discussions and drawing out citations. At the end of the inquiry sessions, I transcribed all the recordings as this was the primary method of collecting data.

Note taking

Note taking was part of the data collection during the inquiry sessions also. I did the note taking through the five meetings. There were times that I did not need to note down any information due to all information because everything was clear and well said. Note taking was of assistance as it filled in gaps that might not be able to be expressed well through dialogue such as a diagram or a sketch. Heron (1996) promoted the use of a journal by all participants. The journal was meant for participants to record their own reflections, actions

and reflections or learning. The women in the group did not see the need to use journals in this research as they preferred to share their thinking and learning together as a team.

Chapter 6

Cooperative inquiry processes

“Their story, yours and mine – it is what we all carry with us on this trip we take, and we owe it to each other to respect our stories and learn from them”

(Williams, n.d., as cited in Christensen, 2004, para. 31).

Introduction

This chapter is the essence of the project as it enabled us to understand each other in terms of the impact of IPV on each of us and to make meaning of the experiences we carried with us. This section is significant to the women who were part of the inquiry sessions, as it was ground breaking for them to connect positively as a group where they openly shared their life stories while listening compassionately and valuing each other’s input. The journey through different stages of action and reflection in the sessions empowered the eight women. The experience helped them critically reflect on their IPV experiences. Some of the mothers described these encounters as being both productive and honouring. The journey also uncovered ideas that lead to transformative acts at the ending stages. The inquiry indeed became truly cooperative during the process.

This chapter rests on two values; the epistemic participation and the political participation. This means that participants who were co-researchers and co-subjects consented to share their experiential knowledge and participated fully to draw out a propositional knowledge which was the outcome of the two principles (Heron & Reason, 1997). I will discuss the six sessions undertaken in this project and how the women concluded the inquiry with creative strategies that aim to restore and endure strong intimate relationships in a family. In the action phases, women recalled and noted their life experiences with IPV and revealed them as data in the reflection phases. I conducted the meeting by launching two statements that indeed let the discussion flow. The questions were:

1. I would like to hear your stories of experiencing and overcoming violence in the family home. We need not go into detail of parts that are distressing to you but it is important to get the outlines. When did the violence start for you? We will be considering our IPV experiences in Kiribati and in New Zealand – how often, how

bad, for how long, causes, involving the children, support (talking to others, agencies, interventions, and so forth).

2. Looking at what has happened, has Kiribati culture in any way influenced the trouble and/or a solution? (We will be taking into account role/expectations of Kiribati men and women, role of the churches/government, your emotional state, family history of domestic violence, cultural strengths and differences in New Zealand).

Building rapport and safety

The first task that I had to undertake in this project was to create a space where women can connect and create positive relationships with each other to ensure everyone's safety whilst sharing in the group. I began by asking the women to come up with a pseudonym they preferred to use while taking part in this inquiry to respect the confidentiality of everyone in the group including myself and to protect our identities. Choosing a pseudonym meant a great deal to us. Some mothers adopted biblical names and some took on names that are unique to them. I then initiated a discussion around what do they think of living in New Zealand compared to living in Kiribati in terms of quality of life, family orientation and lifestyle? While the emphasis of this study is not mainly about the women's migration experiences in New Zealand, it does provide an insight into the impact of living in a new homeland and whether IPV was part of the experiences.

The women shared similarities in the way they perceived ideas around living in a new homeland, New Zealand. Reebeka, commented that:

My main idea when migrating to New Zealand was around longing for a better life for my children. I had no idea of how to live in a strange country at first. It is not easy to live and work in New Zealand for the sake of a good education and health care for my children but I tried hard. Yet, it was very tough to live in this country in terms of cultural practices and language but as time goes on, I started to understand and appreciate the lifestyle here (Rebecca, July 22, 2014).

For Monika, getting a job is also difficult especially working long hours on farms and factories with limited English. She further added:

My relationship with my husband became harder because of the long hours I worked with people from different ethnicities which my husband was furious about. I had no

choice but to continue working which had affected my husband and child as I spent more time away from them (Monika, July 22, 2014).

Akata also added:

I am fortunate to be able to raise my child here in New Zealand in terms of its clean atmosphere and people are well looked after. The New Zealand Government is caring for its people by paying support through Work and Income and Inland Revenue departments for low earners. Being the sole worker in my family, this support is great as I am getting some extra money from the Government to support my child's basic needs with which is not offered in Kiribati (Akata, July 22, 2014).

The rest of the women commented that New Zealand is a place to live and to raise children. New Zealand catered for family needs especially with personal issues. They shared how grateful they are to be in a country that supports the rights of women and children. They praised the school for looking after their children while they work in terms of after school care, the government for providing extra help to cater for financial issues and the health care that is far beyond what Kiribati could offer to support the health and well-being of its people. Nevertheless, the women shared a common concern that their husbands were the barriers for development in New Zealand as culture and attitude were the biggest challenges to them.

It was very interesting to share this topic together as all of us were grateful to be living in New Zealand despite some complications of which our husbands were a part. I then brought their attention back on track to the purpose of the cooperative inquiry. All of us agreed to start off the inquiry by exploring what IPV means to us as Kiribati women who have been impacted by IPV with our children. From there, we were able to continue with the inquiry by exploring the two questions I mentioned in the introduction section. This was done through discussions, storytelling and reflections as we proceeded.

Making sense of IPV through our experiential knowing

Our discussion covered topics that corresponded to IPV and its influences. We encouraged each other to share a general understanding and description of IPV and why it has occurred. Our journey into making sense of our experience of IPV produced critical information which was quite unique to each participant according to the details we shared and its content

referring to us as Kiribati women. Recalling on our IPV experiences has strongly connected us together to dig deeper into our exploration to analyse our position as wives and as mothers.

For Tania, IPV is a sign that the husband does no longer love his wife. Tania's understanding of IPV is that when the man is having an affair, he uses violence as a way to escape his infidelity. She expressed her opinion as:

Like any other wife, I always thought my husband loved me very much as he did not allow me to visit places without his approval. He expected me to tell him my plan each day, such as my whereabouts and what I will be doing. If by any chance [he] found out that I went shopping or visited another village without his awareness, he would get angry and would beat me up. At first, I thought he was so caring and deeply in love with me because of his actions so I had to apologise for not following his requests. I blamed myself for making him angry (Tania, July 22, 2014).

Tania further explained why she thought IPV is a sign of no love:

When I found out later from my cousin that my husband was having an affair, I realised then that he only wanted to know my whereabouts to avoid being seen with someone. I also realised too that he forbid me from contacting the community to escape his unfaithfulness (Tania, July 22, 2014).

Reebeka supported this sharing by stating that:

Yes, some men are violent to cover up their wrong doings. My husband was like that. He always criticised me for having affairs with several men even women! If he knows that I enjoyed participating in a community group or with some people, he would accuse me of having an intimate relationship with either a male or female from that group. He did not allow me to have friends as he reckoned, my only friends are my children. If he had loved me, he would not be treating me with violence. Lucky, I have left him (Reebeka, July 22, 2014).

Ameria expressed her explanation of IPV as something that makes men proud of their masculinity. According to Ameria, being poor is not a reason why husbands get angry and violent to their wives. It is because of who they think they are. Having grown up in a family where the brothers were violent to their wives, Ameria's understanding towards IPV is

normal as part of the relationship and the love. Her husband was violent too. Her perspective on IPV changed when she had her first child. She further commented:

He would punch me if I talked back to him or did not do what he wanted. When my baby cried because of our situation, he would yell and smack our child. He would never be apologetic or remorseful of his behaviour. I got sick of his attitude and had enough. To me he just wanted to be like other males in our family (Ameria, July 22, 2014).

IPV is complicated, said Akata. She drew upon her experiential knowing as:

I often heard from our elders that women especially wives got beaten because they have sinned against their husbands or they did not uphold their roles in the family. I proved this theory wrong as I always obeyed my husband, corresponded to his desires, followed the family's requirements, and raised my children accordingly. Yet I received unwanted treatment from him such as heavy punches on my thighs or shoulders which continuously left a bruise or mark. He justified his actions by saying that I was exposing myself by the way I dress, sat, laughed or any excuses that he would come up with. It was hard to please him. I got confused on how to act as the real me (Akata, July 22, 2014).

Eren voiced her meaning of IPV as it is like living in a suffocating home. Eren's husband used to work abroad so she had to stay with family – in-laws. They acted as spy agents for the husband and would convey assumption stories about her to the husband. This is what she said:

After a month or so, my husband would return home and usually, our very first night together was a like a cold war that would end in battles. My in-laws turned my husband into a violent spouse. He was inclined to believe all the tales about me. If I justified my situation, he would punch or beat me so strongly that I would not be able to walk the next morning. My body would be covered with bruises or I would have a black eye! I think my husband loved his family more than he loved me. I used to wish that one day we will be living alone without family around (Eren, July 22, 2014).

Miita was widowed before she married her second husband. She stated that marrying a second husband is always the hardest.

It is like sleeping with an enemy. He would love you as much as you could possibly think and next minute, he would beat you as though he wanted to kill you. I regretted that I got into a second relationship and re-married again. Reflecting back to those days, it broke my heart when I recalled how he had hurt me and called me names with my children. He was jealous of my first husband who had passed away. I am happy now that the violence is over (Miita, July 22, 2014).

Two of the women, Monika and Akineta defined IPV as men being jealous of their wives. Their experiential knowledge about their husbands was that men have to be successful in providing for the family but not women. These two women had been successful with jobs in Kiribati and in New Zealand, which their husbands have been resentful about. Their husbands would get angry easily when their wives initiate financial discussions. These issues usually precipitated the physical violence.

In exploring our distinctive understanding of IPV based on our own experiences as women and wives, some of the women described IPV as a way of controlling, a cover up and a form of discipline while others thought that IPV is the only way men or husbands sort out their relationship issues. After the discussion, with thoughtfulness and respect of the women's perceptive around the causes of IPV in their own experiences, I carefully combined all the points that has been articulated at this stage of the inquiry and presented them in figure 16 as per appended below. The women confirmed that in the next meeting, we will continue our sharing about the violence we have gone through with our children.

The women's explanation of IPV



Figure 16: Factors that contribute to IPV

Cooperative inquiry proceeded deeper

Our discussion from the introduction meeting immensely brought awareness of how the women have courageously shared the hidden secrets of their lives. Repeatedly, the women stated in the first meeting how surprising the inquiry in the first action phase was. It had enabled them to draw back deeply into their experiences of IPV, make sense of the issues and weave their understandings with each other. They comprehended that their perspectives around IPV were similar and touching. For Reebeka, she did not believe that she had actually shared her view on her relationship.

This is funny because after the first meeting last week, I kept recalling my sharing in the group which I felt proud of. I felt good that I had shared my view on IPV. I had learnt too that I was not different from the group's experiences. It encouraged me more to fully engage in the process. I was also thinking about women who are still experiencing IPV, my heart goes to them (Reebeka, July 29, 2014).

Miita also shared how surprised she was when she left the meeting. She said:

I was a bit mixed up when I recalled what I have shared in the meeting. I was a bit scared and nervous as I never told anyone how I felt about IPV. It is only discussed within the family or kept secret but I have done it and I am happy about it. Maybe it is

time to come together as women to discuss this issue which has affected our lives and the children (Miita, July 29, 2014).

All of the women commented on how the first meeting has enhanced their courage to talk about their personal relationships with each other. The women also noted that society has changed in terms of enabling women to express their views on their relationships (referring to this inquiry), as in Kiribati, relationship issues are no one's business. It is always a matter of sorting it out on your own.

The check in confirmed that the women were eager to carry on with the inquiry. To begin with, we explored our meaning making of IPV that were drawn from our last action meeting. Then in the second part of the session, we agreed to share our situations that led to IPV and our attitudes toward violence which have provoked change in our situation, family circumstances and our views around the children.

Our IPV experiences in Kiribati and in New Zealand

Each co-researcher was eager to talk about her own experiences of IPV while reflecting on how she felt as a victim of IPV.

Akineta, a mother of four children explained her marital life as follows:

After our first baby arrived, my husband slowly changed. He would complain that I spent more time with our baby. In his view, I isolated myself from him. He then started going out with friends and partying a lot. He would get angry easily and beat me if I did not listen to him. Luckily, we were living with some family members so they would intervene to make peace. I had to come up with a solution to his anger when drunk. I treated him more like a Prince. I even fed him when he wanted food. After we had our fourth child, I learnt that I have to leave the house before he came home drunk. Yet, I would go back home again the next day.

In New Zealand, he continued his drinking habit whenever he could. He would come home from work drunk and yelled at me at the top of his voice if I ignored him. He would find a way to cause trouble so he would beat me up. My neighbours reported the incident to the authorities (Akineta, July 29, 2014).

Ameria shared that in Kiribati, her husband has been violent since they got married. When they came to New Zealand, the husband slowed down with his violent behaviour because they were living with family friends. When she got a job and rented their own house, the husband resumed his violent behaviour again. This is what she said:

He controlled me from the time I should arrive home after work. If I am late, he would get angry and became mad. I tried to explain the reasons for being late but he would not comprehend. He said that I acted like a man as I have a job but he has not. He also thought that he was belittled by staying home while I provide for the family. His accusations lead to physical abuse. Our children would get involved in our fights (Ameria, July 29, 2014).

Miita recalled:

When I married my second husband, he made a commitment to my family and me that he will love my two children as his own and will treat me with dignity. But after a while, he changed. He started to hate my children and he would beat them when (they) disobeyed. When I intervened, he beat me instead of the children. We have separated several times in Kiribati. On one occasion when living apart, I got news that my application for the PAC to migrate to New Zealand was successful. My husband learnt about it and asked for forgiveness so he would come with me and the children to New Zealand. I did not want to bring him here but because I was pregnant with his child, my family accepted his apology and asked him to never beat me and my children again (Miita, July 29, 2014).

Miita told the group that in New Zealand, they both worked on a farm. Her husband began to get jealous towards one of the farm owner's sons and accused her of having an affair with the man. His jealousy led to disputes and physical violence.

Akata reported to the group that her husband is a very good man who is lovable, caring, quiet and hardworking. Once drunk, he would verbally abuse her and some family members. This would often lead to physical abuse towards their child and her. The family would get involved to stop him. Akata said that her husband's behaviour was similar both in Kiribati and in New Zealand.

Reebeka shared that she had been experiencing physical abuse from her husband since they settled together. Reebeka reported that the main issues that led to violence in their relationship were sex and jealousy. This woman explained that there were times she loved to sleep with her husband but there were times that she had to focus more on the children rather than the husband. She also felt that her husband's sexual needs were a priority in their relationship as she would be punched, and hurt if she refused to take part or, he would accuse her of having an affair. Reebeka also said that in New Zealand, her husband's demand for sex increased as the opportunity of being alone in a closed home is high. However, she could not tolerate the husband's behaviour and she rejected his demands. This led to physical violence and later she rang the police for help.

Tania shared how her relationship was like in Kiribati and in New Zealand. She said:

When we were in Kiribati, my husband was very controlling. He wanted me to follow his rules and to obey them. There were times that I failed to abide his rules therefore, I got punished physically. On several occasions, my face was swollen as a result of being punched which then left a dark mark on both my eyes. He has also threatened to kill me for a number of times. I had left him with my children on several occasions to go and stay with my family but once he came to apologise and take me home, I always gave in and forgave him as I blamed myself for not listening. I lived my life like that with our three children. When we arrived in New Zealand, my children asked their father not to cause any more violent acts on me. He promised them that we will live our life according to what they wanted. Not long after we settled well in our new home, my husband returned to his old ways again. That was how the authorities got involved in our lives (Tania, July 29, 2014).

Monika with one child also recalled her time with the husband and said:

When you are blessed with one child, you will not allow anyone to ruin the life of that precious child. My husband was like your men, he controlled me and he was jealous at the same time. I was extremely captivated in my love and I tried every avenue to please him so he would not get angry and beat me. Although he had beaten me badly at times, I never thought of giving up as I did not want my baby to grow up without a father as it is shameful. In New Zealand, I learnt that a child is better off to live with a single mother without violence. That is why I am living alone with my child now (Monika, July 29, 2014).

Eren shared that her husband had a bad temper where he would get angry physically and most of the time he would hit her or push her to the ground then started kicking her hard. She told us that her husband did not change at all in Kiribati but she was able to find ways to escape his violent anger sometimes. In New Zealand, he has changed because their children came home from school one day and told them that if they (dad and mum) fight in the house, they will call the police as they were told they could by the school. That was how the husband has learnt to control his temper.

It is evident that sharing our experiences together and reflecting on our journey through IPV in the action and reflection phases have seemingly voiced the women's strengths within. Although they accept that being I-Kiribati meant that a wife is expected to obey her husband, take good care of him, make him happy, and be loyal and faithful to him and his families. These are seen to be unfair to some extent in married life but the women also value the cultural differences between man and woman in Kiribati society (SPC, 2010). Unfortunately, this distinction cannot be served accordingly or maintained when living in a new home like New Zealand. The women's sharing also drew out factors that trigger IPV according to their experiences. I have carefully collated these significant factors together and display them in a chart which is articulated below in figure 17.

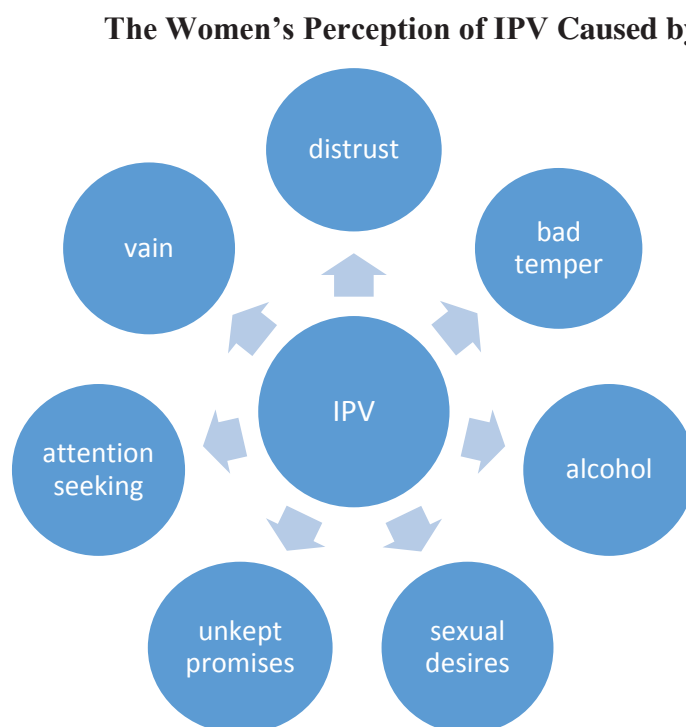


Figure 17: Underlying factors that contribute to IPV

The Change: Courage versus culture and our coping abilities

At every session, the women would arrive appearing energised and eager to continue with the inquiry. At this phase, I report on how the women in the group managed to effect change in their relationship in order to gain peace and a stable life as mothers who take care of a family. The women gracefully acknowledged that as I-Kiribati, our culture lives within us but in order to gain a better life that our children and we deserve, cultural practices need to change when and where necessary. The changes that impacted on improving our lives did not revolve inevitably but the benefits of the help and support received from relevant bodies and people who saw the need to do something, helped us transform into better persons.

As for Reebeka, she shared that she went into a refuge home with her children. This is her story:

He (the husband) came back home late. He had used up all the money on the bank card. When I questioned him about the card, he started to be aggressive. Our children rushed in to see what was happening. I told them to stay in the lounge but because they were terrified at the same time, they cried out and the neighbours could hear them. I think the neighbours rang the police as not long after the incident; the police cars arrived and spoke to us. I told the police what was happening and they took my husband away. Then they took the children and me to the women's refuge home.

In the women's refuge, I felt alone but I was determined to stay positive for the sake of my children. I did some programs about violence which has built my confidence now as a mother. Later on, I was offered a home through Housing New Zealand Corporation. I stayed with my children and got my sister from the islands to stay with me for nine months, this was a way to gain moral support. It was hard for me to realise that I was actually separated from my husband. At times, I would think about my husband and wondered about his whereabouts. I engaged myself with the Church and worked long hours so I will not feel alone or missing my husband. I guessed the courses and programs that I did in the women's refuge gave me courage, strength and confidence to raise my children alone. I have seen my husband but I have made informed decisions that we are better off like this (living without him/violence). He is now in a new relationship and I am still single living happily with my children and four grandchildren. I am pleased that my children are now married and happy in

their relationships. I believe it is a result of the help and support from the women's refuge (Reebeka, August 5, 2014).

Tania shared that she did not separate with her husband but went through lots of counselling and court proceedings to ensure the safety of the children in their care as parents. She told the group that:

It was hard for me to seek help as I did not know what to do with regard to my husband's violent behaviours. I knew it was unhealthy for us [her and the children] but I was too shy and scared to approach the police or any place that could offer support. I also did not want my husband to get in trouble too. I really did not know how and where to turn to with regard to domestic violence. I just carried on with my life as it seemed normal to me. It was my manager who acted on my behalf to report the incident I had with my husband on one occasion. The police came to see me at my workplace and took me and my children to a relative's home. Then they arrested my husband and put him in court. After that, we both received lots of support provided by the community services. From the learning gained around establishing a stable and healthy relationship with our family, my husband and I were able to implement the skills and knowledge we have learnt in our everyday practices as a couple. We are grateful that we are now able to address our relationship issues or conflicts in a civilised way and we are settled well with our children. I know our children are happy too (Tania, August 5, 2014).

Eren, felt that her relationship with her husband changed when their children came home one day from school and asked their parents to stop arguing, fighting or yelling at each other as it is not allowed in New Zealand. This mother reported that she was already aware of what the children have asked but it was hard to make changes as her husband has a different perspective of life and family functions in his own mind. However, despite their differences and opinions, the couple both agreed that they will find better ways to function within their family life. As a result, Eren and her husband agreed to communicate more effectively and to build trust and understanding with each other. The plan was if one has an issue, it would be discussed calmly away from the children whether in the room or in the car. Eren also said that her husband decided to work extra hours and Eren worked short shifts to be home for the children. She also shared that they engaged in church functions to help them to focus on their faith and Christian practices. According to Eren's sharing, the change has been working well

for them where she has experienced less and less violent actions until it completely stopped. She confirmed that anyone can change especially when there is no one else for the children to rely on.

Calling the police is the last thing on my mind said Monika. Then she continued:

But I have no choice as he (the husband) started to cause trouble again while my cousin and partner were with us. He was drunk and wanted to beat me but he kept missing me and continuously hitting my cousin instead. The cousin's partner rang the police straight away. When the police arrived and took him away, my cousin demanded that I went with her. I gathered my child's gear and mine and left to stay with my cousin for several days. My husband tried to reach me on my phone but I have already blocked his number. He wrote me a letter that he was sorry and wanted to come to us but I ignored him. I felt safe when I finally left him. Although it was hard for me and my baby to live in someone else's home, I appreciated the support and later on I was able to move on with my life. I have a job and engaged with the Church to keep myself busy (Monika, August 5, 2014).

Akineta shared that she used to stay with friends and family when she had a fight with her husband. However, she could not afford to continue doing this as she felt sorry for her children. Sometimes she would take the children with her but most of the time; she left them with their father. On one occasion, she had to ring the police because she could not tolerate her husband's jealousy over her job as she had to work overtime occasionally. The husband got removed to a different address by the police and he was not allowed to see the children and their mother. The woman shared that it is arduous to be separated from the husband. She also felt sorry for the children being separated from their father as well. Some significant friends offered support to get through her grief. She focussed more on the children and herself and as time went on; she became confident in herself and was pleased that she finally ended her relationship. The children contacted their father anytime they wished.

Ameria shared with the group that she found help through work colleagues. She often shared with her friends about her husband being unemployed and that he nagged a lot about her being the provider for the family while he stayed home. This led to violence in the home and family suffering. One day the employer asked Ameria to take her husband to work for an interview. The husband got the job as a kitchen hand. Since then, there has been no violence

in the home due to the husband being tired from work, Ameria was busy and tired with the children and the children never experienced problems between their parents. Ameria reported that her husband confessed that he should have known better about the hard work his wife went through and the long hours she spent at work.

Miita reported that her husband's violent behaviour changed when she went to seek help from the Kiribati priest who visited New Zealand one time. Miita stated that it was hard to share her relationship problems to the priest as he was a man and he might think negative towards her. She was grateful that the priest was able to visit the husband in their home one day to discuss ways to improve their relationship in New Zealand for the sake of the children. At first, the husband was reluctant but he gradually changed. Miita believed that seeking help from the priest has made a huge impact on her relationship. She confirmed that it took a while for her husband to change from being a violent man to a passive man. According to Miita, her other strategy to maintain peace in the family was to get involved with the Church and commit their spare times to the services and activities of the Church with their children. The plan has been working well for the whole family.

Akata added that she did not separate with her husband but went through lots of strategies to change her husband's behaviour. This is her story:

I knew that my husband liked his beer. He cannot say no to friends when they ask him to party. I found a way to stop him from drinking. I asked his friends to stop visiting us. Although I knew it was offensive to do so but I explained my reasons to them. I also forbid my husband to purchase alcohol or drink beer. I advised him that I will leave if he continues to drink as I cannot tolerate his behaviour (Akata, August 5, 2014).

Akata also said that she did not share her issues with anyone as she was too embarrassed about her husband's behaviour as he was known to be a good person. Akata just worked with him to ensure that he did not consume any form of alcohol. Akata told the group that she was determined to do what she was doing as the couple were waiting for their 'New Zealand Permanent Resident Visas'⁴, and she did not want to ruin everything. They even moved to live away from the Kiribati friends to prevent her husband's drinking habit. As time went on,

⁴ The New Zealand visa that allows people to remain in the country indefinite. There are criteria to this type of visa.

Akata's husband committed himself to his job as a fruit picker on farms and hardly drank alcohol.

Personal transformation that encourages change in families

It was through the sharing of IPV experiences that the call for transforming family life for good began to emerge. As we explored ourselves deeper, we felt that something has to be done so we questioned ourselves as follows:

1. What can we do as a group to help mothers eradicate violence in their relationships?
2. Are we able to provoke change in families from our own experiences that have shaped us to be the mothers we are now?

As the women critically examined the two questions which emerged as an outcome of sharing their experiences and strategies of IPV, the women all agreed to create pathways of change to help and support the families who are still struggling with IPV. For instance, the following are some discussions from the women around their eagerness to produce some form of assistance to the community in relation to IPV.

Reebeka reported:

I do not know how we will help but I do know that gender equality for I-Kiribati has to be utterly improved so women and children are treated fairly and accordingly. I am eager to learn some tactics to this wonderful idea (Reebeka, August 12, 2014).

Akineta commented:

Although it is known to us that IPV is a norm in a relationship to correct undesired behaviours of wives especially for us I-Kiribati, I cannot comment on the other Pacific countries but my heart cries out to the mothers who are stuck and struggling to stabilise this kind of behaviour in their relationships. It is not okay, it is time to take some action. Who knows, our initiative might be effective in a way (Akineta, August 12, 2014).

Then Miita:

We are privileged to be able to free ourselves from such violence. I would suggest that we share some of the positive practices we employed at home or embarked on to eliminate IPV. From the recommendations we offered or shared, we would be able to empower mothers and fathers who are extremely keen to end or diminish IPV in their

family. Then the children will be nurtured and flourished with love without living through violence and unstable families. This is all about working together to improve family relationships. Any ideas will help change a family in a way and help children grow into better persons (Miita, August 12, 2014).

The rest of the group confirmed that it was a great idea to work together to design a kind of help or support that would contribute to the positive livelihood of a family taking into consideration the young families and their children. The women in the inquiry group were also mindful that what was about to be shared to the community particularly to the I-Kiribati has to be generalised so no specific sex characteristics or tradition beliefs is targeted or demeaned. The group was aware too that the passion they were about to share was to be positive and empowering as well as optional. One of the women in the group argued:

People or I-Kiribati has different perceptions on how each family should function according to the beliefs and values in their own kinship cultures. Let us encourage peace and harmony in a family. Our passion and ideas in this group cannot meet each family's needs but at least we provide some kind of assistance among a series of other possible means to avert IPV (Akata, August 12, 2014).

Invaluable commitment to ease IPV

It was remarkable that the women in the group came up with a passion to work on planning the strategies to help break the cycle of IPV that might still be occurring in Kiribati families. The women contemplated various ways to address the issue based on all four dimensions of their knowledge gained through their experience and this inquiry. They were keen to construct a potential outcome as a result of engaging in this type of inquiry. The women reported that they were fully immersed with the idea of producing some kind of assistance to families who have children where violence between husband and wife is still common. For some, they perceived this suggestion as a process of creating the unknown because they have never thought nor believed they were about to influence change to others. For others, it was like creating possibilities from the impossible as no one ever held the responsibility of others' behaviours or problems in particular, the affairs of a married couple. For the rest, they challenged themselves to have a voice in the community so someone or many could benefit from the support provided. After a long discussion on reflections and sharing of ideas and feelings together about this endeavour, the group agreed to brainstorm appropriate points and

thoughts to initiate the work. The women wanted to target their work with the Kiribati groups and Churches in Auckland first and were also keen to spread their help to New Zealand as a whole including Kiribati.

One of the participants proposed:

How about producing a flyer or brochure to the community to encourage peace in families, with certain approaches that would help families to live without violence?
(Monika, August 19, 2014).

Another participant added:

How about providing simple approaches to mothers and couples who needed help?
(Eren, August 19, 2014).

While another participant suggested:

List down ideas on a piece of paper and then everyone will go over each point to ensure that what is about to be shared in the community is relevant and appropriate to the Kiribati people (Akata, August 19, 2014).

All eight women consented to the idea and then asked me to note down the points as well as participate in developing the work. The eight women added lots of thoughts and reflections in this type of propositional knowledge. As a result, the women in the inquiry group confirmed their eagerness to produce informative knowledge that will enhance positive relationships in a family. They were also happy to share their passion to the advisory committee for confirmation.

The flyer - a strategy to help families

The women in the inquiry group committed to lots of extra work into designing the flyer. The women encouraged specific and clear messages to appear on the flyer so it would be easier for people to read and absorb. The women also wanted the flyer to be printed double sided with English information on one side and Kiribati information on the other side with the aim that all I-Kiribati respect and values be included as part of the information provided on the flyer. Our group acknowledged that no one can change a person but we can offer options, share key information and recommendations from our own experiences to strengthen intimate relationships in a family yet, it is the individual's decision and choice. The women also

believed that a small change in the family can construct huge positive impact on a family to become violence free.

In the subsequent paragraphs, I discuss the determination and successful penchant of the women in opting to design a flyer with relevant information that specifically targets families in general. The women were willing to share their aspirations on the flyer that seeks to prevent violence and promote peace in a family. The flyer articulated five points written in Kiribati and English. It is important to note that both the Kiribati and English versions of the information do not complement each other but stand-alone to stipulate information that are paramount to strengthen and sustain a family. With the Kiribati bullet points, I explained the meaning of the ideas in English to eloquent messages the women in the inquiry group wanted to promote and connect to the community. Alternatively, the written explanation did not appear on the flyer as the phrases quoted are straight forward and easy for the Kiribati people to grasp. Likewise, the English information was listed in bullet points too. The women used the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (Soanes & Stevenson, 2006) to find appropriate words and interpretations. The significance of the terminologies used on the flyer for the English part was also discussed so that the viewpoints of the women writing the flyer were accommodated.

The women in the group also wanted to give the flyer a name to attract target audiences. Hence, the flyer itself is named *Te Kaunganano nakon te Utu* which means empowering families. Then the flyer's Kiribati section designated as, *Reken te Rau ao te Kabwaia n ana Utu te I-Kiribati* which can be taken as 'Sustaining Peace and Blessings in the Kiribati Family'. Followed by the following quotes:

- *Te boraraoi ae riai ao te maroro ae itiaki man mataata imarenaia taanga ao ataei*

The women believed that clear, reliable and honest discussions, promises, understandings and agreements between husband and wife that include the children would promote good health and stable relationships in a family.

- *Karinean ao kakawakin te mwakuri bon boutokaan te maeu raoi iaon Nutiran*

We also believed that valuing, maintaining and prioritising our employment/jobs in New Zealand would secure and maintain our family wellbeing, construct positive relationships and identity.

- *Te uaia ni babaire ao ni ibuobuoki n kawakinaia ataei ao tibwangara n tatabemaniira nako*

The group also acknowledged that sharing of roles, responsibilities and commitments in caring for the children would retain peace and optimistic relationships in a family.

- *Kakawakin ao kateimatoaan te itangitangiri, te rau ao te bonnano n te utu bon ngaia kabwaiara*

The women wanted to promote that it is paramount to maintain genuine love, care and honesty between a husband and wife and their children to promote peace, togetherness, solidness and strength so every Kiribati family in New Zealand could achieve full potential and aspirations.

- *Kateimatoaan te marurung, te ikarekebai ao te ikarinerine imarenara n ara utu*

The group acknowledged too that our health and our significance would be sustained and supported in this country so together; we maintain respect and the goodwill of each individual in a family.

The English section of the flyer is titled as One Team, One Dream. Miita recommended the one team, one dream title for the flyer. She elucidated her vision as working in a team environment is like functioning or coordinating a family to achieve a common goal for everyone. She referred her vision to the aim of the flyer as when a family works in a team following proper protocols and characters, the family will result in journeying together positively and willingly to accomplish a common aim which in this case is peace and alleviating IPV. The rest of the women in the inquiry group approved the flyer's title. Then the following quotes followed:

- Honesty

The group perceived that being honest and open-minded in a relationship will avoid conflicts and disagreements that may lead to violence in a family.

- Communication that is Effective, Reliable and Honest

The group also believed that communication is one of the core concepts in a relationship. Where there is fair and appropriate communication between family members, the lesser trouble will happen in a family.

- Trustworthiness

The women also confirmed that being truthful in a relationship will build trust between husband and wife. If trust is acknowledged and practiced in the family, the children will grow into human beings that are responsible and acceptable in the community.

- Allowing Equality of Love

Culturally, Kiribati people value the differences and statuses of man and woman in society especially with responsibilities and roles, and in *Te Mwaneaba* (meeting house) setting. The women in the inquiry group wanted to promote that if a wife corresponded well with the husband, their journey as a family will enhance love, appreciation, respect and less violence.

- One Love, One Heart

Reebeka referred to the famous reggae singer Bob Marley from Jamaica in his song ‘one love, one heart let’s get together and feel all right’. According to this woman, there is a powerful message in the song that can be applied to any situation in life whether it is oppression, war or relationship problems. She told the group that this song inspires her whenever, she feels down or sad. The women in the group loved Reebeka’s sharing so they adopted the phrase as an empowering message to the families. According to the women, they claimed that love and heart produces life. Love is symbolised as a heart figure and love coordinates a family in a peaceful way. So if a family live life with a heart full of love, there would be no violence or violence would be limited in a family and family members would live happily together.

Once the women were satisfied with the messages to be displayed on the flyer, a discussion followed as how and who will be responsible for technically supplying the flyer. We explored every avenue with friends and family members that could help in producing the hard copies of the flyer. One of the mothers offered to ask her nephew who has a qualification with a Bachelor of Science majoring in Computing Science and Biology. The women also suggested that the background of the flyer incorporates a mat pattern as a Pacific symbol, and the ink colours are black and white to represent the colours that are dominantly used in New Zealand. The women felt that using white ink in the writing on the flyer also represents the colour that is used in white ribbon day, a campaign to eliminate violence against women. The colour black is also worn in Kiribati by Government officials every Thursday to also support the elimination of violence against women and children.

When reflecting on the two questions presented to the group that directed our reasoning to IPV experiences and the actions we took to overcome the violence, it is evident that the women went through violence and relationship issues not long after they married and when they started a family. It was common in the sharing that alcohol was a contributing factor to IPV including family issues and jealousy. The women did not mention in their sharing that they sought support from agencies nor that they received any interventions from the Kiribati Government as there were no support systems to address these problems and IPV is regarded as normal in Kiribati. Their only solution to IPV in Kiribati were to leave their husbands to stay with other families but would return the following day, husbands apologised for their actions to make peace, or they just normalised IPV problems. However, there were changes with the women's strategies when they migrated and lived in New Zealand. Although some women did not know where to seek help or were too vulnerable to make informed decisions for their children and themselves, they went ahead with the help that was arranged by others for them. The mothers in the group shared that they needed help and were willing to engage with the professional supports provided to them. For the mothers that did not engage in any type of support from the authorities or the agencies, it was easier for them to work with their husbands to correct their way of living as there were no influences from family members as there was in Kiribati.

Ending the inquiry – A way forward

On the 26/08/2014 the group met to complete the cycle of cooperative inquiry. The Kiribati migrant mothers did their final reflection on their journeying together to discuss strategies to rebuild their lives as a result of IPV in Kiribati and in New Zealand. I have carefully summarised the action and reflection aspects that emerged during the cycles of cooperative inquiry in figure 19 below to reveal the four ways of knowing exercised by the women throughout the inquiry. As an initiator of the research, I asked the women to meet again after three months to reflect one more time on the whole process and we would be able to look at the completed flyer which would be printed by the person who had volunteered to do it. We would also be looking at a way to introduce the flyer to the Kiribati communities and Churches and our approach to distribute them. The women confirmed for an additional meeting on November 18, 2014.

Summary of Cooperative Inquiry series with the Eight Women

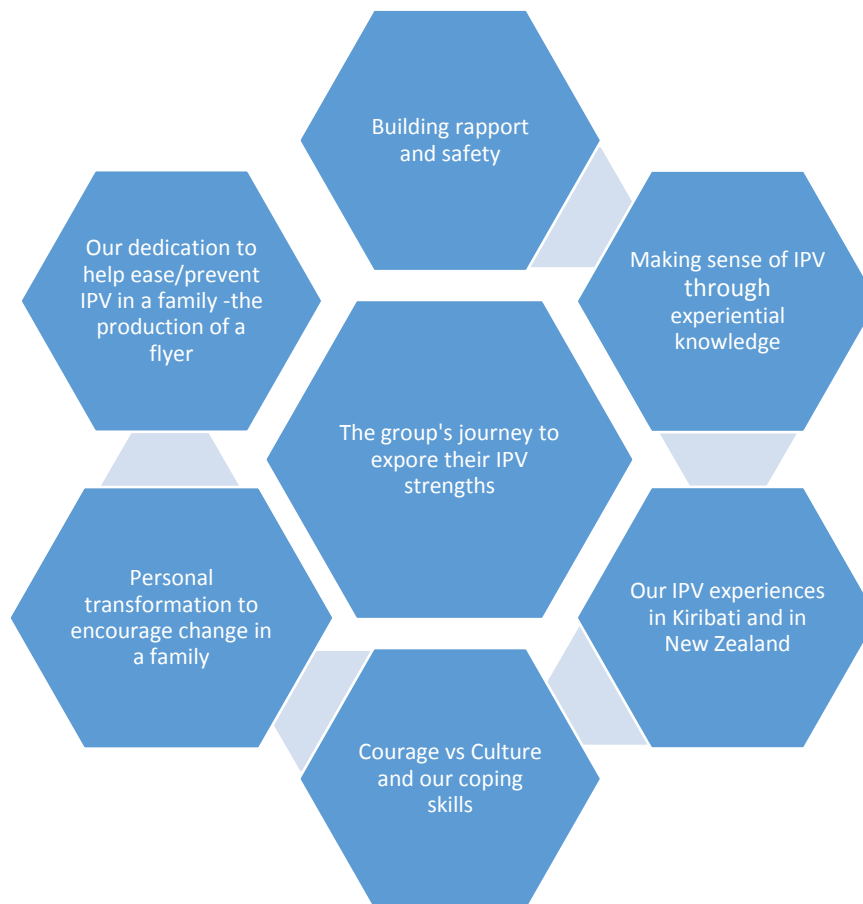


Figure 19: Overview of the process women in the inquiry group engaged with.

Three months follow up meeting

The follow up get together meeting was mainly to discuss how each of us felt after completing the cooperative inquiry, and to view and approved the flyer that had been produced. I also created five questions in English and in the Kiribati language (see appendix 8 and 8a) for the women to answer as a way to get an overview of the women's feelings and ideas about the research we had just completed together. In the questionnaire, I asked the women if they could kindly describe their understanding or experience of the inquiry followed by questioning them about their feeling towards cooperative inquiry research, the most important outcome (if any) for them when taking part in the cooperative inquiry, were there any changes for them regarding IPV since we finished the cooperative inquiry, their confidence about the effectiveness of the 'Kaunganano nakon te Utu' (Empowering families) flyer and if there was anything else they would like to discuss.

Not all the women from the focus group attended this last gathering at my house, only five of us turned up. Of the three women missing, two were working on the night of our meeting and one had moved out from Auckland. The two members of the advisory committee were with us at this meeting, all participants consented to this. The group decided that we would continue the meeting with just five of us plus the two committee members. The women were satisfied with the outcome of the flyer as their messages were all clearly presented. They then decided that the flyer should be launched formally so it would be accepted and recognised by the Kiribati communities. I explained to the group that since the flyer is part of my study, it may be better to wait until my thesis is passed by Massey University. We would then be able to launch the flyer so if questions were asked I would be able to refer them to the thesis for more information. I also informed the women that I would be submitting my thesis to the University very shortly, and that I will attach the copy of the flyer as an appendix (9) in honour of their hard work and dedication in wanting to break the cycle of IPV as a consequence of the inquiry.

Reflections from the whole process of the inquiry

Engaging in this kind of inquiry has been a huge transformation for all women. For each mother, hearing the others' stories enabled them to gain a deeper meaning, understanding and a realisation of how detrimental the impact of violence was upon them before they actually sought help and transformed their family life for the better. The women became aware in their action and reflection phases that the information shared demonstrated common behaviours toward IPV. These were the hardest times the women in the inquiry group have had to survive their relationship as Kiribati wives, which is certainly saddening but also empowering. More importantly, the discussion highlighted that once these women were helped and supported by appropriate services according to their needs, they were able to make informed decisions for the good of their children and themselves. Some of the mothers left their relationships after sorting out support for themselves and their children. Some of them worked out effective ways with their husbands to change how their relationship operates to reduce the IPV and to restore peace and harmony in their family lives especially for Akata as the couple were working towards obtaining a New Zealand permanent resident visa. After the women explored these strategies together in a group, they decide to come up with ways to help improve the prevention of IPV.

The women's coping strategies shared in the inquiry group



Figure 18: Common strategies shared by women in the inquiry group.

Chapter Seven

Cooperative Inquiry Outcomes

“For any inquiry, transformations of personal being are foundation outcomes”

(Heron, 1996, p.104).

Introduction

The above statement is aligned and pertinent to the outcomes of this inquiry work. Women in the inquiry group transformed personally through lenses of sharing which has provided a chance for transformation in their inner being when they deepened their knowledge through the action and reflection phases. This chapter discusses mainly the outcomes that the women in the group have shared together during the six phases of inquiry in chapter six. Throughout the process, a shift occurred when the women were able to share their strategies in overcoming IPV in their own relationships with others. The women acknowledged and appreciated cooperative inquiry as it has encouraged change, strength and commitment as they felt united together in completing the inquiry process. As a result, the women were empowered to arise with a passion to help women, wives and husbands who are still stuck in their violent relationships. Heron (1996) believed that an outcome of cooperative inquiry can have four interrelated types which are transformative outcomes, presentational outcomes, propositional outcomes and practical outcomes. In the discussions below, I outline each of the four sorts of outcome this inquiry embraces.

Transformative outcomes

The process of cooperative inquiry in itself is the transformation of being through engaging with the focus and process of the inquiry. It has influenced transformation in the way we perceived and felt about ourselves and our strengths towards IPV. At the initial start of the inquiry, the women already knew each other but were never connected in this type of inquiry before. In the earlier action and reflection stages of the inquiry, the women acknowledged that family relationship issues were genuine and were never discussed in an open forum. The women in the group considered and recognised IPV experiences to be clandestine that comes with pride and shame in each relationship or family so no one talks about it. While cooperative inquiry deepened, the process had changed the perspectives of these Kiribati women and has converted them to unite seriously together to build rapport and safety to tell their own stories. Each individual mother was able to trust the group and felt protected to reveal her own journey as a wife, how she managed IPV in her relationship and her strategy

to overcome the impacts of IPV. In other words, the women were transformed from being silenced about their relationship hardships to being open minded to share their experiences on IPV and their coping skills to the group. These transformations within each participant have initiated a practical consideration to help couples who are still living with violence in their marriage. I believe the transformation that occurred within each participant in the group is a successful outcome of the interactions of co-researchers and co-subjects in this research inquiry. Heron (1996) confirmed this by stating that:

The inquirers' experiential gains, transformations of inner being, can only be conveyed at their own level, through personal meeting, through being with the inquirers in their presence. We need to meet them face to face and experience through intimate fellowship, resonant attunement, how their being has been transformed through encounter with the presences and qualities for the inquiry domain, and of the group inquiry process (pp.105-106).

As an initiator of this inquiry group, I also felt a sense of gain through these outcomes as I intuited a huge shift in the group's strengths and passion towards a newly social transformation as a result of the women's engagement in the inquiry process.

Propositional outcomes

During the inquiry phases, women in the group described and explained how IPV came about and how it has affected their family relationships, until it was mended with the support from friends, work colleagues families and from professional services. The women gained knowledge and ideas by telling their own stories to each other in the group. This has strengthened their knowledge about IPV. Their experiences of IPV were kept untold; they were not interested in sharing it. The informative outcome of IPV deepened our understanding for this inquiry which then created sensitiveness and a concern for other Kiribati family's relationships. Although we cannot be sure what each family are going through or experiencing in their lives, our engagement in this inquiry group has caused us to worry and be anxious about couples in their intimate companionships. As one mother, recalled:

During the process of the inquiry, I became concerned and sensitive as well when I am around the Kiribati couples. I made sure that I will not see any kinds of tension between the couples or become involved in their issues. I always instil in myself that

once I witness any form of violence, I will call the police straight away. This is new; I never had this thought before (Akineta, August 26, 2014).

Another woman commented:

It is true; once we started this inquiry I became defensive of women when they are belittled by the men. Sharing our experiences and telling our life stories together have made me strong towards women especially wives. I am continuously reminding my children that violence in a relationship is not acceptable. I kept reminding them also (older children) that violence is not a way to correct behaviour or discipline a person. I also told them that if they ever violent to each other, I will call the police (Eren, August 26, 2014).

Another woman also said:

After being able to connect with you ladies to share our IPV experiences and our thoughts and passion together, I became curious wanting to ask some women at work about their relationships if they have ever experienced IPV. I know it is not my business to ask but it is just that with the ideas stimulated in my mind from this inquiry, I wanted to share some help to others. This is a positive influence of this inquiry group (Miita, August 26, 2014).

Then another commented:

Now being aware of each one's perception of IPV in this inquiry group, I am wondering about women who have not shared their IPV experiences. I just wish that they could understand the importance of sharing their issues so they could be reassured that their situation can be improved through professional support (Tania, August 26, 2014).

The rest of the participants agreed to the comments stating that sharing ideas and knowledge together regarding IPV and the actions taken towards stopping it along with rebuilding lives after its impacts, have influenced the women's insight towards the families with IPV. The women saluted cooperative inquiry as it has enriched their being with confidence and readiness to report on their perception regarding intimate violence in a family, and how to encourage positive approaches to alleviate causes of IPV and its impacts to the children, community, families and friends.

Presentation outcomes

Presentation outcomes refer to the presentations of insight about the focus of the inquiry. The women in the group did not use any forms of graphic arts, plastic arts, moving, musical arts or metaphors to express or evoke their story of IPV during the inquiry phases. Instead, they verbally expressed, discussed and shared their feelings and understanding of their past experiences of IPV and the strategies they used to revive their lives through storytelling. As the focus of the inquiry was mainly to distinguish strategies the women in the group utilised to rebuild them from IPV, and in order to elicit information needed for the purpose of this research, the women were encouraged to define what IPV means to them as Kiribati wives who have experienced IPV in their married lives. During the reflections and actions periods, the women were empowered by the quality of cooperative inquiry. There was a change in the women's perception around silencing their personal relationship issues.

As the inquiry deepened, the women continued to share and reflect on their journey as wives, mothers and women who have taken the courage and strength to do the right thing for them and their children. The women presented their knowing around how they were treated with IPV in Kiribati and in New Zealand before they sought help or someone asked for help on their behalf. One of the mothers recalled that she did not report the violent behaviours of her husband, but the neighbours. Then she further explained that once she got engaged with services that offered support to her and the children, she was able to make the right decision in leaving her violent relationship and live alone with her children. She confirmed too that the help she received has given her the strength to break out from the violent situation. The rest of the women shared that they all changed as a result of the appropriate supports offered from outside their family. As for one participant, she commented:

The children were present and witnessed our behaviours. If the children had not come home from school telling us that we have to stop our usual behaviour of yelling and fighting in the home, then there would be no change or we might have ended up separated. Thanks to the school for providing information about families and domestic violence. We listened to our children and have worked out how to improve our relationships and home life (Eren, August 26, 2014).

Other outcomes occurred as a result of the inquiry including the women's ability to agree together to work out an approach in order to reach the community to share some means to

reduce violence in families. This amazing presentational outcome was not at all expected as part of the cooperative inquiry. The inquiry has empowered the women to produce collective ideas to tackle the problems women and children are experiencing with IPV. The women acknowledged that they were able to shift their way of thinking from being shut down to owning their issues, to wanting to share ideas with the women who had a passion to help others, and wanting to see change in families. This presentational outcome was presented on a flyer designed by all women in the group (see appendix 9).

Practical outcomes

Our inquiry composed of informative and transformative knowledge which then produced outcomes that were informative and transformative to the women in the group and to other social connections. Some of the practical outcomes produced as a result of the inquiry, were primarily the personal transformation within the women, how they communicated with each other through respecting, listening and appreciating each other's sharing, and how they work together to maintain confidentiality and autonomy in the group. These practical skills contributed to the production of an effective and resourceful intelligence/campaign to the public yearning to maintaining peace in the family for the sake of the children and the women/wives. The most daringly practical outcome was the women's ability to portray their passion into a flyer. The flyer is an example of an inspiring tool for change; the inquiry group ends, but the flyer keeps whispering its messages in the community to husbands and wives who want to improve their relationship. Another practical outcome achieved from this inquiry was the women's hope to maintain the group together after the end of the inquiry. The women were so passionate about the results and outcome achieved by cooperating together in this type of research so they committed themselves to keeping in contact for support and follow ups regarding creating the flyer mainly. The women also wanted the Kiribati community to become aware of the group, with the aim that it would benefit families in terms of supporting them to resolve IPV. As this academic research is not about providing services for domestic violence or relationship issues, the group agreed to start a peer support group so we could refer women or families to appropriate services that are already available in the community. We would introduce the support group when we launch the flyer. The women also committed that they will continue catching up with each other to sustain relationships and to care for one another.

Other outcomes – Participants feedback from the questionnaire

I have listed some of the feedback women gave as an insight to the outcome of the inquiry we all participated in. I have only listed what the women wrote in response to the question about the most important outcome from taking part in cooperative inquiry as follows:

Of course, I have found myself to be assertive about the need to look after the mothers as they are the key for the family. I have shifted my mind from viewing men as the masters of the family. Women are, because we run the household and raise children. I am strong with this view now. I am continuously reminding my children who are in a relationship to treat their partners equally not minimising another's strengths. This is about equality as human beings.

Oh yes, the inquiry has strengthened me more in my relationship. I am grateful for the fact that there is no physical violence between my husband and me. I am even stronger in making sure that emotional and verbal abuses are not part of my journey as a wife now. The outcome of this inquiry has given me more courage and power towards IPV and relationship issues.

Thank you, the style of cooperative inquiry has taught me to incorporate my husband and my children in the planning and discussion about our family. I normally dictate everything or I only asked my husband his views after I have made the decisions. The outcome of this inquiry has empowered me to appreciate my family more.

The main outcome for me after taking part in this type of inquiry is the ability to understand and open up and listen to others who want to share their issues with their husbands in terms of domestic violence and so forth. Before joining this group, I kept myself away from these as I did not want to be involved with anyone living with violence. To me it is their own issue and why listening to their story? But now, I am willing to listen to wife sharing so I would be able to share my experiences and to share my strategies that have changed my life. Thank you for this inquiry.

Thank you for doing this inquiry with us. It has helped me heaps to shape my way of thinking towards my female friends. The result for me after taking part in this inquiry is that I am now an advocate for supporting mothers who experience IPV. I just don't think about the mothers but about the husbands as well. I am keen to walk with them confidently and to direct them to our flyer as it is a useful resource. I can talk over the flyer fluently and I truly hope that I will

create change in a family so children are raised without witnessing the violent behaviour of their fathers. I feel that I can share my strengths with them regarding IPV without being shy or embarrassed about my past relationship issues. Thank you very much. You have influenced change in me.

Critical or Reflective Analysis

Part of the requirement for academic research is to critically analyse data collected from research using logic, theoretical and methodological principles, and to refer to scholarly articles or literature to make sense of the data. Cooperative inquiry, the research method employed in this study does not employ outside critical analysis, however, the critical analysis is deeply embedded in the actual process of the inquiry. In addition, there is no theory or hypothesis to prove or disapprove with different points of view to weight up the arguments or to identify their strengths and weaknesses as in traditional research. I found this part to be particularly challenging in complying with academic requirements of thesis writing at a master level, simultaneously to stay true to the notion of cooperative inquiry. Bruning (2009) and Nedungat (2015) also encountered the same issue when doing research using the methods of cooperative inquiry. Bruning applied reflective analysis to a degree of maintaining consistency with the process of the inquiry while Nedungat chose to prohibit the use of critical analysis in her writing to honour and uphold the work of those participated in her research, and to be consistent with cooperative inquiry as well.

Queen Margaret University (n.d.) defined ‘critical’ as “questioning the information and opinions in the txt [text], in an attempt to evaluate or judge its worth overall” while ‘evaluation’ is “an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a txt [text]” (para. 3-4). I agree that my work with the seven Kiribati mothers who have offered their time as a group to share their experiences of IPV and strategies to rebuild their lives after living with the act of violence cannot be critically analysed from someone else’s view point. Although I was part of the group in the focus of this cooperative inquiry, I cannot critically analyse the data from the inquiry alone in order to provide alternative meanings as I was also a co-researcher and a co-subject at the time of the inquiry. Each person’s story is her own. Hence, all women in the group have to be part of critically analysing our own stories, which is not a position of cooperative inquiry. Yet, the continuity of actions and reflections occurred during the cycles of the inquiry by all participants were to make sense of the outcomes and its validity. Heron and Reason (2006) asserted that in cooperative inquiry, all co-subjects and co-researchers are

fully involved in research decisions, making sense of the inquiry and drawing conclusions of the process.

External critical analysis is opposed to a participative inquiry paradigm as cooperative inquiry is central to people and their situations, and enables people to collaborate together in the living world with “all the rights and obligations that implies” (Storm, 1972, as cited in Heron & Reason 1997, p.276). Traditional approaches to research endeavoured to collect facts and evidence through researchers detaching themselves from the culture being studied (Dharamsi & Charles, 2011). Cooperative inquiry is about mutual relationship which places people at the core of the research to work together to address matters that are important to them (Heron & Reason, 2000). It is important in this research that the eight Kiribati migrant mothers have substantiated change on how they communicated IPV experiences with one another in a group setting. IPV was known to be a personal and a shameful issue which had been silenced by IPV survivors. Cooperative inquiry implanted a shift of thinking in the hearts of the participants so an evaluation based on critical analysis rather than the transformation that has occurred, would only further demean the women’s strength and change - the very evidence this research aims to bring forth.

I also declare that I cannot judge or question the value of the women’s sharing of IPV experiences in the group as they were unique to themselves and cannot be compared or argued against someone else’s experiences of IPV. I argue that real life experiences of IPV are embodied and cannot be analysed or assessed as the sharing in the inquiry group were expressed with emotions and with in-depth feelings by the women. I experienced this myself when I collaborated with the rest of the women while sharing in the group. Munhall (2012, as cited in Burnett 2015) argue that “findings from any qualitative study are not meant to be generalised but they may translate across many contexts” (p.16). In this cooperative inquiry, real life experiences are not investigated or studied but shared in a group setting with expressive beliefs that have hugely transformed the participants’ personal lives. Therefore, engaging in the academic form of critical analysis would imply we are making conclusions about another person’s experiences without their participation or contribution.

There are also issues related to critical analysis as researchers are capable of devaluing information that participants contributed to research or they can misinterpret participants’ data given at the time of the research. Vaioleti (2006) claimed that for Pacific people, outside

researchers gather stories, make sense of data from the stories collected then they retell the stories from their own perspective. The participants often felt that their knowledge has been misinterpreted and misused. Bishop and Glynn (1999 as cited in Vaioleti, 2006) believed that “the researchers will become the tellers of the researched stories, the narrators and the persons who decide what constitutes the narrative” (p.22). Smith, in her view towards research on indigenous people of New Zealand claimed that:

They have the power to distort, make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions based, not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgements and often-downright misunderstandings. They have the potential to extend knowledge or perpetrate ignorance (1999, as cited in Vaioleti, 2006, pp.23).

This research is with Pacific people and although I am also a Pacific person, cooperative inquiry is inquiring into the human condition therefore, attempting to critically analyse the women’s stories from the outside to develop a truth is a way to deceive that reality. Heron (1996) powerfully stated that cooperative inquiry “is an incarnate condition and is known only by insider knowledge...to inquire into it is a matter of our insider knowledge” (p.200). I can confirm that “our inquiry is a shared culture of dialogue mediated by language, agreement in the use of which presupposes and is grounded on a non-linguistic context of shared experiential meaning” (Heron, 1996, p. 200).

On the contrary, it can be argued that undertaking critical analysis does not devalue or dehumanise an in-depth description and analysis in which culture-sharing groups interpret their experiences and create meaning from their interactions but support and backup the group findings. Our inquiry through cycles of reflection and action has provided a balanced set of phases undertaken by the women to ensure validity of the four ways of knowing explored and outcomes obtained. In that sense, the literature review provided earlier in this writing contributed to my personal interests and analysis on the subject and process of this inquiry.

In light of these, I support the purpose of cooperative inquiry claimed by Reason (1999). These are:

1. To articulate and offer democratic and emancipatory approaches to inquiry - relinquishing the monopoly of knowledge held traditionally by universities and other

institutes of 'higher learning' and helping ordinary people regain the capacity to create their own knowledge in the service of their practical purposes...

2. A complete revision of the western mind set – to add impetus to the movement away from a modernist worldview based on a positivist philosophy and a value system dominated by crude notions of economic progress toward an emerging 'postmodern' worldview (pp.207-208).

I argue that since cooperative inquiry is chosen as a methodology for this project where critical analysis is not part of the method, but reflective actions incorporated from the start to the very end of this inquiry with the eight mothers including myself, I chose to exclude critical analysis to value and uphold the outcomes already produced as a group. Alston and Bowles (2003) asserted that "qualitative researchers does not have a set of rule for data analysis and do not follow standardised rules of data analysis" (p.204). I argue that this is in line with cooperative inquiry methods.

Chapter Eight

Validity: Reflections on the quality of the Inquiry

'Validity itself, concern with the justification of truth-values, is interdependent with that which transcends it, the celebration of being-values' (Heron, 1996, p.158).

Introduction

To ensure validity of this inquiry, I adopted Heron's (1996) procedures to assess the validity of our inquiry reflecting on the action and reflection phases completed throughout the inquiry phases. Heron (1996) suggested that in order to achieve truth values of our inquiry, a set of measures needs to be taken into consideration. These measures are research cycling, divergence and convergence, challenging consensus collusion, addressing chaos and order, managing unaware projections and sustaining authentic collaboration. These procedures will enhance the validity of the inquiry process and its findings. Heron (1996) claimed that validity procedures "seek to free the various forms of knowing involved from some of the distortions of uncritical subjectivity" (p.131). Such procedures also allow us to challenge our personal view and feelings so we would be satisfied with the outcomes confidently. I may not say that our inquiry was free from uncritical subjectivity as it would be unrealistic and idealistic. So, in the subsequent sections, I carefully explored the quality of our inquiry using the procedures proposed by Heron (1996).

Research Cycling

As discussed in chapter 4, cooperative inquiry enables those involved to control the design of the inquiry process by initiating a topic, reflecting together, making sense of the actions and bringing together a conclusion. Everyone is involved from the initial stages until the end. Cooperative inquiry is operated through a cycle of reflection to action and back to reflection, the cycle can reoccur as long as everyone is satisfied with the outcome. From a personal perspective, I would suggest that our group deserves to have had operated three or four more cycles of reflection and action phases before we actually ended the inquiry. I felt that our group did not have enough time to allow us to carefully reflect on ourselves regarding emotional effectiveness after sharing all we have and know about IPV. The cycle of reflection and action phases we operated were for the purpose of the inquiry only but we did not have time to consider our personal feelings and needs at the end of the inquiry. This was evident from one of the participants when she questioned:

So next week is the last day of the inquiry? I wish we can have several more
(Reebeka, August 19, 2014).

Reebeka did not elaborate more. These were my only worries however; the research cycling was completed in a limited timeframe and was managed and handled well by the group.

Divergence and Convergence

In order to bring balance to our action and reflection phases, women were encouraged to diverge individually during the reflection phases so when the group comes together, everyone will converge in the action phases. In light of our plans, the women reported that during the reflection and action phases, the two phases concentrated on the same issue which was around their IPV experiences. It was apparent that during the sessions, women focused on the same issue several times but with much more intense detail each time. This type of research cycling is convergent. Convergent is a systematic thinking that brings together information focussed on solving a problem which seems realistic given the very Apollonian method of inquiry we had taken on. If it is to be divergence then researchers will look at different issues in a cycle of actions and reflections (Heron 1996).

Challenging Consensus Collusion

The role of the devil's advocate was to test our thinking critically and systematically towards our statements or information we shared. I believed that the group did apply the devil's advocate during the reflection and action phases. Each participant's claim was shared and challenged by the group to ensure no false assumptions were implied that would influence the focus of the plans or actions. All the seven mothers in the group including myself corresponded well with our sharing and claims around IPV and the actions taken as a result of the violence. There was only one sharing that was not in harmony with the rest, so it was omitted as part of the plan and action. This was when one of the participants shared some of her strategies against IPV as doing the exact thing her husband did such as she would go out and get drunk with friends or commit adultery without being caught. This was her way of revenge although she knew that her relationship would turn worse if the husband finds out. The devil's advocate process supported our inquiry group to ensure no aspects of conspiracy are exercised that can put the group into confusion and disorder.

Addressing Chaos and Order

Heron (1996) affirmed that “if chaos sets in when such creativity and divergence start to get out of hand and overstep the bounds of everyone’s conceptual tolerance, then they can learn to recognise the chaos, stay with it and accept it” (p.148). In the earlier stages of the inquiry, I believe our group was about to collapse into confusion and uncertainty of what was expected of us as survivors of IPV in this research inquiry. In the earlier stages of the inquiry, the women shared their experiences of jealousy towards their husbands and how they felt about them. They also shared how the husbands set rules that they have to follow and how the husbands reacted if the women do not comply. This is a common norm with some of the wives expressing how their husbands love them in this way or how they love their husbands by getting envious.

As the initiating researcher, this in turn caused significant divergence of thought for me personally. This type of sharing sent me into my own personal worrying and chaos in mind that the inquiry may go in a different direction or get out of hand. I was also worried that if I addressed my concerns, I might cause chaos in the group and may lose my group for giving the wrong impression. I therefore brought my concerns to the advisory committee where I was asked to let the women share what they wanted to divulge as part of a healing process for them, especially that it is foreign for the women to be in a group ambience like this. In return, the women will be settled, build trust and autonomy and my needs would be met once I redirected the research topic again with more clarity. I also referred to John Heron’s (1996) book of ‘Cooperative inquiry: Research into the human condition’ for reassurances. The advice was of great importance and liberating to me personally. The advice has allowed me to reflect, accept, and be open and cognisant that collaborating with other women will have a degree of challenge and perplexity in a way. I came to understand too that we all have different views and ideas on the subject brought to the table for discussion and exploring, and “accepting chaos, facilitates the emergence of order” (Heron & Reason, 1981 as cited in Heron, 1996, p.148).

Managing Unaware Projections

Heron and Reason (2006) claimed that examining the life and experience of a person can cause fear and defensiveness in researchers, where they can be defensive in their own experiences. This fear and defensiveness could affect the results or the inquiry culture. I never anticipated that our inquiry may stir up any form of anxiety or stress in the group. In

our third meeting, I was not aware that one of the women in the group was stressed and upset. This particular woman was asked to do a prayer and that was when we realised she was not okay. She expressed her anger through her prayer and the group allowed her to do so. This was a difficult state for the rest of the co-researchers but we allowed the upset participant to address her emotional anxieties through praying. My personal chaos within came back again so I stepped in to take the role of the facilitator instantly. We took a five minute break and then carried on adequately. I was disappointed that I had not encouraged the opportunity to the group to reflect on the first and second meetings. From there after, we applied the ‘devil’s advocate’⁵ method to ensure that all co-researchers and co-subjects were able to challenge each other and agree on the outcome of each meeting and to soothe any surfacing and processing of repressed distress.

Sustaining Authentic Collaboration

Heron (1996) explained that authentic collaboration is the relationship between group members and the initiating researchers and the relationships among group members themselves. Heron (1996) further explained that if initiating researchers and members of the research work together to design a research topic and method, and make the inquiry their own in a dynamic way, then it is authentic collaboration. If the group members are just followers of the initiating researchers and are merely the ‘go along people’ and are not guided rightly in the process, it is not a real inquiry and the agreement concluded is likely to be forged. Collaboration then is false.

So how much did I collaborate with the seven mothers and how much did I lead or direct? Cooperative inquiry was foreign to the women in the inquiry group and my position of being a student, initiator of the inquiry and title of research, and aiming to achieve a qualification out of the inquiry will always be perceived as influential to the inquiry. As I addressed and explored these worries with the women in the group, the inquiry was conceded with open-mindedness. Collaboration was real with the women taking ownership of the inquiry in a dynamic way that the quality of our findings and reflections rested on the participants including myself, engaging collaboratively. Collaborating together by rotating the group facilitator in pairs and by using Heron’s (1996) validity procedures in this type of inquiry, have allowed us to think deeply about ourselves and the experiences we went through to

⁵ One who argues against a cause, not as a committed opponent but simply for the sake of determining the validity of the cause

where we have recognised ourselves and the power that has transformed our beings. The learning for us here is that when collaborating effectively with each other in the group without being influenced by several controls or directions, we were empowered in our key decisions where we have produced a flyer as a powerful tool to help support families to maintain and restore their relationships.

In the three month follow up meeting, I got a chance to reflect together with the women regarding the process of cooperative inquiry and how we felt when collaborating together. The answers I received were:

When working together in that inquiry group, I felt that it was not a research but a discussion group as you were all part of the group contributing our being together. You (Lydia) did not stand out as the one who started off the group and I did not feel that you were leading the group or that we had to follow and accept what you wanted. The way the group ran encouraged me to keep coming back weekly to carry on with the discussion. I felt involved, heard and challenged as well. This type of research is very good. Thank you.

Taking turns to facilitate the group was a bit challenging at first but it was good that we agreed to do the facilitation in pairs. We utilised the skills we have to run the group with. I always felt that everyone was equal in the group when we gathered together and did our discussion and sharing. I was part of the decision making which was very real and empowering. Thank you.

The fact that we all know each other and being engaged in this type of inquiry made it easier to collaborate with the rest of the women. It worked well too with the devil's advocate as we were able to challenge each other's thought, sharing and meaning so we all produced a valid outcome. It has allowed us to be open with a good heart towards each other.

The rest of the women commented that there are often issues and misunderstandings between each other when working in a group. These can trigger anger and confusion. However, the group was managed well with all the women taking part as facilitators.

Challenges when using cooperative inquiry

Cooperative inquiry operated in this research was a success according to how we were able to handle the pressures and some stimulating issues such as timing and unaware projections; I personally encountered challenges as a result of using cooperative inquiry in my research as a student. These are some reflections of my own weaknesses:

- Being a student using cooperative inquiry in my academic research has put a lot of pressure on me to ensure that the eight mothers who volunteered to participate in this study developed the skill of self-reflection that would enhance the validity of the outcomes.
- I kept reminding myself that cooperative inquiry equalised co-researchers. My problem of having led the Kiribati community for some time usually resurfaced my power issues where I have to control and allowed authentic collaboration throughout the inquiry process.
- Being an initiator of this inquiry, I need to be skilful to empower co-participants. My limitation in this skill has affected me mentally.
- Addressing and managing emotional and unaware projections is a must to be skilful at. Although I used Heron's (1996) book as my bible in this inquiry, I still failed to notice any interpersonal conflicts and interpersonal projections or maybe there were none.
- Disagreements, debates and challenging consensus collusion in the inquiry caused me stress and worries and would have affected my interaction and relationship with my families if I did not take time for healing before the following meetings.
- There were lots of disagreements and debates whether wives should leave their husbands because of IPV. I observed that the body language from the women who had left their husbands to be quite dominant in the discussion. Those who remained defended their positions as wives who managed their situations. My internal chaos resurfaced over and over but I controlled myself by letting the facilitators manage the meetings.
- Lastly, the skill of facilitation is crucial in cooperative inquiry which I was struggling with. It took a while for me to fully understand the process of cooperative inquiry. If I had not studied the book of Heron (1996), my inquiry would not have been successful.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

“You have to start with the truth. The truth is the only way that we can get anywhere. Because any decision-making that is based upon lies or ignorance can't lead to a good conclusion”

(Assange as cited in Goodreads Inc., 2015, p.2)

Cooperative inquiry in this research was a journey of exploring strategies that Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand implemented to restore their lives as a result of experiencing IPV in their relationship. Cooperative inquiry is an action research with people incorporating participants as co-researchers and co-subjects inquiring into the human condition. I was once a victim of IPV and have lived through the impacts of hierarchy as a woman and mother from a patrilineal society. Eight Kiribati mothers including myself who have been violence free for at least two years and have been in New Zealand for over two years with our husbands and children embarked on a focus group using the innovative method of cooperative inquiry supported by the Pacific framework *Talanoa* and the Kiribati model *Te Itera*. The inquiry was initiated by launching two questions that aimed to engage the group to focus on their experiences of IPV in Kiribati and in New Zealand.

The dominant outcome identified in this research was the huge transformation we went through during the process of the inquiry. The inquiry has raised a high level of awareness to all the women when we connected and built rapport together in a group. Through this transformation, we were able to share openly and honestly how violence had affected our lives and our children. We also acknowledged that our past lives have been very hard to accept that we live through the hard times due to our positions as women and wives in the Kiribati society's paradigm. Nevertheless, once we sought help from appropriate sources in New Zealand, we never allowed violence again in our lives. For some of us, the strategies against violence were to leave our husbands permanently and for some, they worked together with their husbands to renew their lives which are now violence free. The women also commented that their children were much happier and settled without violence.

Prior to engaging in this cooperative inquiry research, the women held a perception that IPV issues can only be dealt with by husband and wife without anyone else's interference. The transformation that occurred in the inquiry process has enabled women realise that they all share common experiences of IPV. This has drawn us to collaborate together and to identify

solutions to help families to maintain an intimate relationship in a family where children are flourishing and nurtured.

Producing a flyer was another outstanding outcome for the women in the group. The flyer was designed as an approach to promote positive changes for the women/wives and husbands where violence is still occurring in their relationship. The eight women worked together to compile a list of empowering strategies that will help sustain peace and maintain couples in their relationship. The women targeted young Kiribati families in New Zealand hoping that both husband and wife will work hand in hand to create change with the help of the information provided in the flyer. The women also wanted to reach out to other communities to promote these reasons.

The outcomes discussed above are the highlights of this research. My experience in this type of inquiry is very special. Cooperative inquiry has allowed me to be part of the research with the seven women and to collaborate together to understand our world and to make sense of it through learning how to change or to do things better. I have learnt to share my feelings of IPV without fear and shame and I have learnt to listen to other's experiences of IPV with an understanding and acceptance that we all need help with IPV. I truly believe that the aims and purpose of this research have been met through the sharing and collaboration from the mothers who were part of the inquiry and from the outcomes produced throughout the inquiry process. I also agree that the knowledge from the literature review that I personally collected and reviewed out of interest has given a valuable grounding to this research. I would like to state that although critical analysis was not adopted as part of the cooperative inquiry process, the outcome of the women's participation in this research has contributed rich knowledge to families who wanted to strengthen and restore their intimate relationships. Families have been empowered to take action and create change in their relationships, promote considerations for children's well-being, bring awareness to social services and most of all, we hope that IPV be will promptly alleviated in the Kiribati families as a result of this research.

The results/outcomes of this research will not just sit as books or academic papers that become frozen waiting for another scholar to read and re-read to make meaning to it. The flyer is given a life of its own with a corresponding belief that it fosters the truth about the situation being studied and that it will work inside people to transform them and the

communities to create change to IPV tolerance. I also hope that parts of my thesis will get published and made available to the wider audience.

Recommendations

The following are my recommendations which I believe are beneficial to consider for future studies, plans and interventions regarding IPV experiences and problems. These are:

- When using cooperative inquiry to inquire about IPV experiences, allow enough time to complete cycles of reflection and action throughout the inquiry process so the findings or outcomes are acquired with satisfaction not with urgency because of time constraints.
- Future research would be ideal to include men when inquiring into IPV experiences with Kiribati people to bring a balance of knowledge and understanding towards this ethnic group in New Zealand and in Kiribati.
- To consider cooperative inquiry as a useful tool for policy makers in Kiribati to gain better understandings of IPV experiences and its causes so effective laws are implemented to help people with IPV issues.
- Cooperative inquiry to be considered as useful processes in Church communities or with different ethnic societies in New Zealand as a way to identify strategies that will help prevent IPV in families.
- For New Zealand and Kiribati Governments to consider educating future immigrants to New Zealand that IPV is against the law and that the interest of children is paramount.
- For New Zealand Government to include in its migration packages information that educates, informs and promotes New Zealand lifestyle to future immigrants from Kiribati and from other countries.
- For Kiribati Government to provide informative knowledge and to educate future immigrants to New Zealand around IPV support services that are available in New Zealand.

It is important to note that if we work together collaboratively to address our concerns around IPV with those who have been experiencing its impacts, we will be able to heighten the communication process if we incorporate action with it. In my opinion, it is not only the Government level or Organisational levels that hold responsibility to eliminate IPV in

families. We are all part of implementing changes and to stop perceiving IPV as a way to correct behaviours or manage a family. The flyer with its information is a first powerful tool produced from the real life IPV experiences of the Kiribati mothers and let it be more.

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For most students information about changing your programme is available at [Changing your study](#).

Information about the conditions of enrolment in doctoral degrees is available in the [Doctoral WebBook](#).

Please note: The content of this email is confidential and may also be legally privileged, and is intended for the individual or entity named and should be read by the intended recipient only. If you are not the intended recipient and have received this email in error, can you please notify the sender immediately and delete the content from your system.

Appendix 2

RE: Potential MSW student

- **Napan, Ksenija** <K.Napan@massey.ac.nz>
- 04/15/14 at 3:27 PM
- To

- Andreoli, Kylie

CC

- Lyd Tiare (mrj_ilu@yahoo.com.au)

Dear Kylie,

Lydia will contact you soon. I checked with the Human Ethics committee and Merle Turner and Ralph Bathurst have just confirmed that she will not need to go through Ethics approval again, providing she has a copy of Unitec approval. I am delighted as she is a very hard working student and is already at the data collection stage.

All the best

Appendix 3

Authorisation to Begin Research

Dear Lydia,

Ethics application number: 2013-1089

Thank you for completing and submitting the amendments requested. As Primary Reader of your application and under delegated authority from the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I now authorise you to begin your research.

You will receive a formal letter of approval after the next UREC meeting. Note meetings are held monthly.

The dates that must be referred to on the Information Sheet AND Consent Forms given to all participants and appear on your documents are as follows:

Start date: 14.12.2013

Finish date: 14.12.2014

Please note, you must inform UREC, in advance of any ethically-relevant modification in the project as this may require additional approval.

Best wishes for your project.

Signed,

Heather Lens

UREC

Appendix 4



Information for participants

Research title: Strategies to rebuild lives as results of intimate partner violence experienced by Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand.

Synopsis of project

My name is Lydia Teatao. I am a student in my final year of doing a Master's Degree in Social Practice at Unitec Institute of Technology. Part of the Degree Programme involves a research paper on a subject of my choice. I was once a victim of intimate partner violence which has stopped when I took action against it. I am keen to research and find out how Kiribati mothers in New Zealand who have experienced the same ordeal were able to re-establish their lives, move on with their lives and what visions they put in place for their children.

Eight Kiribati mothers comprising of those who have left a violent relationship and mothers who remain in a relationship, but have stopped the violence will be part of the Cooperative Inquiry I propose.

Be informed that I am not going to seek a detailed description of specific violent events in your lives. All you have to share is just a brief outline of violent events you have encountered.

Counsellors and social service contact details will be available should there be a need. Otherwise, participants can withdraw anytime as it is a voluntary project.

By participating in this group, we will together initiate an inquiry of how we have managed to eliminate intimate partner violence in our family in New Zealand and in Kiribati (cultural attitudes, agency support, personal actions, and advice to mothers).

What it will mean for you

I am inviting you to be part of the cooperative inquiry group that I plan to organize in March 2014. There will be six meetings altogether and will be held fortnightly for three hours per meeting from March to May 2014.

Although personal questions will be asked, discussed and reflected, your name will not be mentioned in the written results. Information you give is completely confidential. Your response will provide valuable information about this research topic. You will sign a consent form before the interview proceeds if you agree to participate.

As cooperative inquiry encourages an open and honest discussion among participants, everyone will be notified that their moralities as Kiribati people are maintained throughout the project. Each participant has the right to raise their concern if they feel their dignity has been overstepped or disrespected. I will sort it out in an honest manner straight away.

If you are happy to take part, please give me a call or text me on cell phone number 02102773534 to arrange meeting.

My supervisors are Ksenija Napan, phone 815 4321 ext.5080 or email: knapan@unitec.ac.nz, Fotukaehiko Valeli Fisi'iahi, phone 815 4321 ext.8782 or email: ffisiiahi@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: (2013-1089)

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from (14/12/2013) to (14/12/2014). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix 4a



KIRIBATI VERSION

Rongorongon au reirei/kakaei aei:

Research title: Strategies to rebuild lives as results of intimate partner violence experienced by Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand.

Boto ni Iango: Konabwain te aine ni Kiribati iaon Nutiran ni katoka ke ni kitana te maeu n taanga inanon te kakiriwe ao te tiriboaki.

Kona Mauri,

Iai au bubuti ngkana ko kukurei ni kaaina au kurubu ni kakae, ae kanoan au reirei nte tai aei.

Arau bon nei Lydia Teatao. I reirei nte Unitec Institute of Technology i Auckland. Aio au kabanea n ririki ao iriana bwa Nna karaoa te maroro ma aine aika iai natiia iaon aia anga ni kauarerekea te un ao boutakaan te mweraoi nte utu iaon Nutiran.

Waniman tiina aika a kainanoaki nte kurubu ni kakae aio. Tiina aikai ake a tekateka ni iein ngkai ma buuia ao natia inanon te mweraoi ao te rau n aia utu. A bon tia naba n rinanon te aki rau nte un ma buuia ni irianaki ma te tiriboaki inanon te maan ae uoua te ririki n nako ke n raka riki. Tiaki ti anne ma i kan makuri naba ma tiina ake a tia n kitana tekatekaia ma natiia ibukin naba mwakuri ni kakeru mairouia kain-abaia (buuia).

Oin ara maroro:

1. tina bon ti taraia bwa tera ae karika te un ma tiriboakin te aine nte mwenga iaon Nutiran
2. Tera arora aika ea toki iai te unun imarenara ma buura?
3. E kakawaki karinean ara katei ni Kiribati iaomia taanga ma aia kanganga ao ti bia kona ni waaki ma raora n aine n aki ekanako ara katei ni Kiribati ma karinean te aomata.
4. Tina kaunga kakawin te utu ae akea te un iai bwa aonga ni manga kakairi iai raora tabemwang ao ena wakirake te rau n ana utu te I-Kiribati iaon Nutiran ao taabo nako

Tao ena iai teutana te betanga ma te angamaa n aron te tibwatibwa nte kurubu iaan ae tina bon karakin ke n urungii arora n rinanon te waaki aei ngkoa. E ngae n anne, tibwakin ma maroroakinan ninikoriara ma korakorara ni katokii waaki n ioawa ke tiriboara irouia buura ena bon riki bwa kaungan nanoia aine ma tiina ake a bon mena naba ngkai inanon te kanganga aei i Nutiran ke i Kiribati.

Tina boraraoi ao ni motin-nano bwa kanoan te maroro nte kurubu ana bon aki tibwaaki ke karakinaki itinanikun te kurubu. Tina uringa naba n aki tibwai kanaona te kurubu nakoia ake tiaki kain te kurubu. Tina kawakina kakawakin ana maroro raora n tatabemanira nako nte kurubu. Tina bon maroroakini itera aikai n ara moan tai ni bowi.

Te bowi ena moa man Maati 2014 nakon Meei 2014. Onoua mwaitin te bowi ao ena bon tao wiiki.

Ngkana ko kukurei n kaina te kurubu aei, taitaoka tarebonia 02102773534 ke txt ti aonga n reitaki ibukin te tai ni bowi.

Ko bati n rabwa.

Au matiniwi ni kairan ke kanakoraoran au reirei ni kakae aei bon Ksenija Napan, tareboon 815 4321 ext. 5080 email knapan@unitec.ac.nz, ao Fotukaehiko Valeli Fisi'iahi, tareboon 815 4321 ext. 8782 email ffisiiahi@unitec.ac.nz

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: (2013-1089)

Ea tia n kariaiakaki karaoan te reirei ni kakae aei iroun te UNITEC Research Ethics Committee man (14/12/2013) nakon (14/12/2014).

Ngkana iai am nanokokoraki ke nano raraoma ibukin kainakin te kakae aei, ko kona n reitaki nakon kometen UREC - Tia Koroboki (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Titiraki ma tangtang ni bane a bon bane ni kawakinaki raoi.

Appendix 5



Participant Consent Form

Project title:

Strategies to rebuild lives as results of intimate partner violence experienced by Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand.

I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet given to me.

I understand that I do not have to be part of this if I don't want to and I can withdraw at any time up until the final analysis and written stages of the project (Inquiry Group).

I understand that everything I say is confidential and none of the information I give will identify me and that the only persons who will know what I share will be the field researcher and her supervisors. I also understand that all that is shared is kept confidential by all participants and is not spoken of outside the meeting. I also understand that all the information I give will be stored securely on a computer for a period of 5 years.

I understand that my discussion in the inquiry group will be taped and transcribed and that I will be given a chance to check the transcriptions of the tapes before they are used in the research. I understand that I can see the finished research document.

I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project.

Participant Name:.....

Signature: *Date:*

Researcher: *Date:*

**UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: (201
3-1089)**

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from (14/12/2013) to (14/12/2014). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix 5a



AM KARIAIA NI KAINAKIN TE KURUBU NI KAKAEI

Research title: Strategies to rebuild lives as results of intimate partner violence experienced by Kiribati migrant mothers in New Zealand.

Boto ni Iango: Konabwain te aine ni Kiribati iaon Nutiran ni katoka ke ni kitana te maeu n taanga inanon te kakiriwe ao te tiriboaki.

Ea tia n kamatataaki raoi kanoan te reirei ao te maroro n aron ane e oti ieta ao ia tia naba ni wareware ao I rang ota raoi ni kanoan te waaki inanon te reitaki aei.

I ataia naba ae I inaomata n aki kaina te kurubu aei ao I aki kairoroaki bwa N na kainna. I kona naba ni kainna ao ni manga kerikaki ke ni buuta arau mai iai.

I ataia naba bwa bwaai ni kabane aika Nna maroroakin ke rongorongou aika Nna karakin a rang kakawaki ao ana bon bane ni kawakinaki n akea temanna ae ena ataia itinanikun te kurubu. Arau naba ena bon aki oti inanon te ribooti. I ataia naba bwa au rongorongo ana bon bane ni kawakinaki raoi ke n rokanaki nte kombiuta nte maan ae nimaua te ririki.

I ataia naba bwa ena raweaki te maroro nte kurubu ao ni manga rairaki nte koroboki.

I kona naba n nora muin te maroro ngkana a tia ni bane ni koreaki.

Ia tia n karaua raoi ni iangoa kanoan te reirei aei ao I kukurei ni kainna ao n tibwai au iango ni ibuobuoki nako iai.

Arau:..... *Tiaina*:.....
Bongin namwakaina:.....

Te Tia Kaira te Kakae: *Bongin namwakaina*.....

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: (2013-1089)

Ea tia n kariaiakaki karaoan te reirei ni kakae aei iroun te UNITEC Research Ethics Committee man (14/12/2013) nakon (14/12/2014).

Ngkana iai am nanokokoraki ke nano raraoma ibukin kainakin te kakae aei ao ko kona n reitaki nakon kometen UREC Tia Koroboki (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Titiraki ma tangtang ni bane ana bon bane ni kawakinaki raoi.

Appendix 6

SESSION PLAN:

First Meeting – 22/07/2014

1. Opening prayer: Volunteer
2. Welcome/Introduction from Lydia
 - Explain purpose of the Research
3. Introduction from the group/Advisory committee
 - Names
 - Marital status
 - Number of children
4. Purpose of first meeting:
 - Introduction and Reason for setting up the group
 - What does it mean for me and the group
5. Explain methodology: Cooperative inquiry, *Talanoa* framework and *te itera* model
 - The process of cooperative inquiry
 - Phases of cooperative inquiry
 - Data storage and how to access own information
6. Explain ownership of the cooperative inquiry result
 - To enable Lydia to achieve her master's degree
7. Discussion around support for participants/group
8. Invitation letter read out again by Lydia-both versions
9. Informed Consent:
 - Redistributed for those without a copy
 - Read over again in both versions
 - Group to sign consent form to participate
10. Break – Tea/Coffee, Biscuits
11. Questions/Clarifications from the group
12. Establish Group Culture:
 - Confidentiality - High Priority
 - Respect each other and the information shared
 - Everyone is equal, no power and control
 - Honest discussion and respect everyone's view
 - Rights to share and ask question/clarification
 - No right and wrong sharing
 - No discrimination
 -Suggestions from the group
13. First Phase of Cooperative Inquiry
 - Question 1 addressed and discussed
14. Decide on Actions/Reflections
15. Check in: Feedback on the meeting and on the First Phase of the Inquiry.
16. Discussion for next session
 - Confirm date
 - Place if there is a need to change
17. Closing prayer: Volunteer

Confidential

Participants' Background Information sheet

In order to keep your information private, no names would be asked in this questionnaire. Please answer or tick the questions below that really fit you.

Age

Job (yes or no)

Marital status

Number of children

Length of stay in NZ

From Tarawa

Roman Catholic Church

KUC

Outside Tarawa

RC Church (✓)

KUC (✓)

Length of relationship

Appendix 8

Follow up meeting 18 November 2014

Please kindly describe your understanding or experience of the inquiry.

1. How did you feel about cooperative inquiry research? Did you feel respected, heard and being part of the cycle and outcome?
2. What was the most important outcome (if any) for you from taking part in the co-operative inquiry?
3. Were there any changes for you regarding IPV since we finished the cooperative inquiry?
4. How confident are you about the effectiveness of the 'One Team, One Dream' flyer?
5. Is there anything else you would like to add?

“Thank you for your participation and dedication. Let us travel together hand in hand with our families who want to change their lives for good”

Appendix 8a

Te bowii imuin teniua te namwakaina 18 Nobembwa 2015

Taiaoka kaekai titiraki aikai nakon am kabanea n konaa.

1. Tera am iango n tein ara maroro are ti karaoia inanon te cooperative inquiry?
2. Tera te kabanea n tamaroa ni iango ae reke iroum imuin ara maroro ma kario iango iaon ara waaki ma te utu ae teimatoa iai te kakeru iai?
3. Imuin ara reitaki ni waaki iaon te cooperative inquiry, iai ngkai bitakin am iango ma am kantaninga ke am kataunaari iaon te ioawa ke te kakeru nte mweenga nakoia tiina?
- 4 Tera am kataratara ke iango iaon te flyer?
5. Iai am iango aika ko kan tibwai riki ni irekereke ma ara waaki inanon te cooperative inquiry?

“Ko bati n rabwa ni kaekaan titiraki aikai. Ti bia uaia ni waakirake ni ikarekebai ni buokia utu ake a kan bita maeuia nakon te rau ma te riai”.

Appendix 9 Flyer – Image of a double-sided flyer

