

## Botho as a Way of Enhancing Problem Solving in a Community Project: The Case of Moshupa Study Group Project in Botswana

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### Abstract

The paper examines how the concept of *Botho* has enhanced problem-solving in a community project, where it was used to gain entry into the research site. This was undertaken in the village of Moshupa in south-eastern Botswana between April 2011 and August 2014. *Botho* works in a situation where members of the society are held together by common values and beliefs. The paper demonstrates how the principle of *Botho* helped the research team for the Moshupa Study Group Project to gain entry into the Moshupa community and be successful in achieving the intended goal of solving the youth's education problem. The project emerged from Moshupa Development Show held on 18 September 2010, where the residents, including the youth, showcased their works. The exhibition was organised by the then area member of parliament, Mr Mokgweetsi Masisi, the current president of the Republic of Botswana. The principal researcher of the project, Dr Setumile Morapedi, who happened to have been invited in her capacity as an academic, was moved by the artistically created artefacts exhibited by the youth. She responded to the talking desperate faces of the youth exhibitors by preparing a 20 paged proposal and submitted it to the Office of Research and Development at the University of Botswana for the possibility of funding. The aim of the proposal was to have the youthful exhibitors' skills and talents nurtured and hence taken to a level higher than where they were at that moment. The hope was that if assisted, they would be linked with the development of the nation. In particular, the aim of the project was to assist the out-of-school youth to stand on their feet, re-enter the school system, learn more vocational skills and subsequently establish their own businesses. The assistance was going to be in the form of tutorials for academic and vocational courses which were to empower them, and in turn help them to empower others. Instances in which exercising *Botho* typically enhanced progress in the project are highlighted in the paper.

### Introduction

In 1997 Botswana articulated its own national vision for desired goals that should be achieved by 2016 when the country celebrated 50 years of independence from British colonial rule in 1966. The manifesto contained the country's aspirations for transforming the people of Botswana along the lines congruent with rapid changes in global societal attitudes and values. The project came to be popularly known as 'Vision 2016' after a presidential task force produced a document called *Long Term Vision for Botswana: Towards Prosperity for All* (Republic of Botswana 1997). This was the initiative of Botswana's second President, Sir Ketumile Masire (1980-1998). Vision 2016 served as a roadmap that led to a better Botswana. It envisaged Botswana as a prosperous country by the year 2016. That was going to be the time when the country would be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Botswana as a Nation was founded on the four national principles of Democracy, Development, Self-reliance and Unity, collectively known as *Kagisano* ('Harmony'). The fifth principle, '*Botho*', was recommended by Vision 2016 and thus added to the four national principles at the time of the preparation of the National Development Plan 9 (NDP 9) for the next five years. The preparation of NDP 10 was based on the same national principles, with the concept of *self-reliance* being always at the heart of Botswana's development agenda. The document put in place the seven pillars of Vision 2016 through which the desired goals would be achieved. These pillars were:

- i. an Educated Informed Nation;

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- ii. a Moral and Tolerant Nation;
- iii. a Safe and Secure Nation;
- iv. a Prosperous, Productive and Innovative Nation;
- v. a Compassionate, Just and Caring Nation

The Vision principles and goals were expected to inform all future national development plans and midterm reviews, as well as to guiding the formulation of future national policies. The pillars were the duties that Batswana were expected to perform in order to achieve the goals by 2016. It is for this reason that many of the goals and objectives of NDP 10 were in line with this long term Vision for Botswana. The NDP 10 goals are: sustainable economic diversification; employment creation; increased international competitiveness of the economy and export promotion. By 2016 the government of Botswana managed to achieve some of its objectives in different pillars. However, with regard to education, although quality was a priority, there was a higher failures rate in government primary and secondary schools. This could be attributable to other uncontrollable variables that concern the management of teachers' welfare, conditions of service and low salaries which subsequently affect the students' performance. Furthermore, vocational and technical colleges were placed under government control to ensure the production of good quality students who could compete anywhere in the world. This, therefore, fulfilling human rights which state that everyone has the right to education and that higher education, technical and professional skills, shall be free and be made generally available, and be equally accessible to all (United Nations)

However, Moshupa Study Group Project researchers had observed that the youth in Botswana continued to drop-out of school despite the above-mentioned efforts and progress made in the education sector. Therefore, the hypothetical statement put forward in the study was that numerous youth, who had dropped out of secondary schools, appeared to be a concern to the residents of Moshupa as they just idled about with no jobs or resorted to unbecoming and risky behaviour and other socially related ills which did not conform with the principles of *Botho* as viewed by the community within which they live, and the wider society. Kgosi Oscar Mosielele of Moshupa village raised a concern over the increasing number of robbery cases involving groups of young people. In one of the Kgotla meetings held in Moshupa, on 12 Thursday 2015, he confirmed that they had registered forty three cases ranging from robbery, common nuisance and unlawful wounding among others. He said out of this number, only twenty two admitted wrong doing and had since been punished, while the rest could not be reached because their parents hide them and deny their involvement in such matters. Moshupa Police Station Commander, Superintendent Onneetse Gagogsha, who was also present in that *Kgotla* meeting, said they had, so far, registered cases in which two people were stabbed with sharp objects suspected to be knives at Dladleng Night Club in Moshupa, while seven other youngsters from Thamaga, the neighbouring village, were nabbed for common nuisance at Table Mountain Bar. He said the culprits often lurked around bus stops, bars and clubs under the cover of the night with the intent to pounce on unsuspecting victims.

An observation had been made by Pro-Literacy World Wide that, 'high school drop-outs are three times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested in their life time (Alliance for Excellent Education 2011). Indeed, the majority of people in prisons in Botswana are the youth who had gone against the laws and norms of the society. Such behaviour would no doubt hinder them from meeting the government's goal that all people in the country should be healthy, educated and free from poverty and dependency by 2016.

The paper shows how the concept of *Botho* was used to transform the lives of 300 out-of-school youth; thus contributing to one of the nation's Vision 2016 ideals of achieving an informed and educated nation by the year 2016. The overall objective of the Moshupa Study Group Project was to

provide counselling and tutoring for the out-of-school youth so that they could get their act together, supplement their studies in order to improve their Botswana General Certificate of Education (BGCSE) results. Also, the aim was to provide vocational skills support for youth interested in non-white collar jobs such as electrical courses, art, pottery, tannery, welding, tourism, poultry, catering, bakery hair dressing, photography, project management and business skills. This was done with the hope that they would get places in tertiary institutions to advance their studies, and subsequently, get employment to generate income to help themselves and their families.

The objective of Moshupa Study Group Project was also a realisation of the government's ambitious goal of poverty eradication by 2016, which encouraged the youth and adults to be self-reliant. The ideals derived from goals set in the Vision 2016 document in the NDP 10 and expressed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which strove to improve education and literacy by getting more children into schools enshrined in the (MDGs number 2011:1). The Moshupa Study Group Project sought to build and provide the Moshupa youth with life-long skills and opportunities. So, the youth and the parents' opinions had to be solicited in order to address the out-of-school youth problem appropriately. The study which was conducted in Moshupa and sanctioned by the University of Botswana informed the Ministry of Education, Skills and Development on how the needs of the youth, who have dropped out of the school system could be appropriately addressed.

*Botho* is a philosophy found in every aspect of human life globally. It is fundamental to the structures, functions and relationship that underpin a community. This means that *Botho* revolves around the actions of people living in any community with similar norms and values. For Southern African context, Chilisa and Preece (2005) define *Botho* as a Southern African Philosophy, which always shows respect for human life and older people, generosity, cooperation, harmony and preservation of the sacred. Gaie and Mmolai (2007) view *Botho* as a social contract of mutual respect, responsibility and accountability that members of the society have towards each other. The maxim of *Botho* is found in many African communities. Consider the following examples from Setswana, Sesotho, IsiZulu and IsiXhosa (South African languages):

In Setswana, the word *Botho* derives from the following proverb:

- *Motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe* ('A person is a person with, through and because of other people')

In Sesotho it derives from the following proverb:

- *Motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe* ('A person is a person through other people')

In Nguni languages, especially those spoken in South Africa and other neighbouring countries, *Botho* is often referred to as *Ubuntu*, meaning exactly the same thing in Setswana and Sesotho, and it entails:

Isi Zulu:

- *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabanye* ('People are people through other people')

Isi Xhosa:

- *Ubuntu ungamntu ngabanye a bantu* ('People are people through other people') (Gathogo 2009:170)

In Kikuyu, a language spoken in Kenya, the meaning of *humanity* still revolves around a person being what he or she is because of others.

Kikuyu:

- *Mundu ni Munu ni undu wa andu* ('A human being is a person because of the other people' (Gathogo 2009:170))

All the interpretations of the above proverbs tally with Bishop Desmond Tutu's view of *Ubuntu*. He asserts that *Ubuntu* according to the black people of South Africa means 'I am human because I belong'. He further defines the African Bantu philosophy as follows:

A person is a person through other persons. None of us comes into the world fully formed. We would not know how to think, or walk, or speak, or behave as human beings unless we learned it from other human beings. We need other beings in order to be human (Tutu 2004:25).

The interpretation of *Ubuntu* from the perspective of the Bantu languages above is that people are people through other people. Mbiti's (2008:106) view is that humanity means '*I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am*'. The interpretations of all the above quotes mean that one cannot be human in isolation. People become human only when they have entered into relationships. Therefore, in all the African languages cited above, the concept of *Botho* involves interdependency and communal belonging, which is part of the essence of traditional African life. It means approaching people by respecting their culture or the way visitors normally greet and behave among their hosts. It is a process of earning respect, where one gives it before one receives it. The benefit of exercising such an approach is mutual understanding, trust and respect between members of a community. In Botswana, *Botho* has been added to the four national principles of Development, Discipline, Self-Reliance and Unity. The five principles bind Botswana together, and make them responsible citizens, who are caring and compassionate.

Gathogo (2009) argues that *Ubuntu* is a philosophy of life that has been there and has sustained the lives of Africans in Africa for centuries. Alvestad (2012) shares the view. He says that *Ubuntu* has been there in African traditions and is transmitted orally. Alvestad (2012), who believes in the same view, adds that the community is usually based on family, focusing on humanness, caring, sharing, respect and compassion. He goes on to say that everything a person thinks, says or does is influenced by *Ubuntu*. He believes that this is because *Ubuntu* has been transferred orally from generation to generation, which is a means of educating the nation about its culture. Alvestad (2012) also believes that *humanity* is the backbone of many African cultures. Hailey (2008) says *it* has what qualifies a person to be human. Eze (2009), who is also of the same view, adds that *Ubuntu* is something that emanates from oneself or with society. Tutu also deeply believes in the views by all these scholars. Indeed, he applied the principles of *Ubuntu* through the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) in South Africa and achieved positive results. His take was that *Ubuntu* could be an asset in rebuilding the communities of post-apartheid South Africa that had been derailed from their norms and values by whatever ill social groups. People were asking for forgiveness for those that they had wronged and all the bad deeds that they had committed no matter how horrible they were for the sake of peace and progress.

Teffor (1998) gives a completely different view from the other observers who say that *humanity* is unique to Africa and thus ethnocentric. He believes that the philosophy of *Ubuntu* is enshrined in all the philosophies of the world but that it is not coded in the same way. So, unlike Alvestad, and Tutu who claim African ownership of *Ubuntu*, Teffor asserts that *Ubuntu* is universal.

### **Conducting Research in Moshupa**

*Botho* was the cornerstone in making the Moshupa Study Group Project largely a success in the sense that it

was impactful in the call for the youth to regroup and go back to school. *Botho* was employed in this study as a framework that was first used for forming the Moshupa Study Group Project and second, for gaining entry into the research site. The approach resulted in mutual understanding, trust and respect between the researchers and the Moshupa community. Data were provided freely by members of the community with minimal inhibitions. Consequently, the research team first met with the village Kgosi Oscar Mosielele of Moshupa and then his *Dikgosana* (headmen), elders, regional education officers, school heads, parents, the out-of-school youth and lastly, and tutors, in order to explain the team's intentions.

Kgosi Mosielele welcomed the initiative and went to the village's traditional *Kgotla* forum to consult his *Dikgosana*. They welcomed the idea and expressed their concerns about the deteriorating behaviour of the village youth who idled about and caused lots of problems that threatened the norms and values of the community. Kgosi Mosielele also requested the *Dikgosana* to spread the message to the youth by word of mouth in funeral gatherings during the weekend asking them to converge at the *Kgotla* the following Monday to hear what assistance the University of Botswana research team had on offer for them.

On that Monday morning, the research team found the *Kgotla* filled up with the youth who sat down quietly waiting for the team's arrival. Both sexes were dressed appropriately for the *Kgotla*. The females wore *doeks* or *dituku* (traditional head gears) and dresses with the length below the knees, and the young men wore jackets. Initially, the team only thought of counselling and encouraging the youth to supplement their BGCSE subjects. But upon hearing of the initiative, some of the youth came up with a variety of ideas as to how they could best be assisted. Some of them suggested that they wanted to do vocational courses, while others wanted to improve their results. The vocational courses that they suggested included electrical engineering, baking, catering, tourism, hair dressing, tannery, jam making, basket weaving, carpentry, welding, poultry, agriculture, photography, art and drama. Their ideas were taken on board. Respecting and welcoming the youth's views on exactly what they needed also enhanced the success of the initiative.

During the meetings, the researchers respected the voices of the community and in the process, gained a lot of knowledge which informed the decisions made throughout a series of processes as the project unfolded. These strategic consultations with the different target groups and mutual respect between the researchers and the members of the community enhanced the progress of the study; thus satisfying the Setswana proverb which says, '*Mafoko a kgotla a mantle otlhe*' ('All words, comments and suggestions made in *kgotla* are welcome).

The overall objective of the project was to apply the principles of *Botho* in assisting the already derailed out-of-school youth to get their acts together, improve their grades and continue with their education, with the hope of increasing their prospects of getting employment or becoming self-reliant. It was hoped that this would alleviate and subsequently eradicate poverty in the community at large.

The results of the preliminary research were anticipated to provide information through a questionnaire on the nature of rehabilitation of the youth as well as the assistance needed to provide them with remedial and vocational education. Data were collected in Moshupa from Bakgatla Baga Mmanaana between April and June 2011. The village is situated in the Southern District of Botswana. As already indicated above, the target population for the study was the youth who had dropped out-of-secondary school and were roaming jobless in the village. Their parents were also selected for the study. Adults who were not parents of the youth were also interviewed as they were possible sources of relevant information, since at one point in time they might have had children who were in the same situation.

Some 115 informants were chosen through random sampling from five different major wards in the village. The informants were the youth whose ages ranged from 18 to 35 years while the parents' ages ranged between 36 and 70+ years. The main issue was on the youth who seemed to be idling about in the village, and thus, resorting to deviant behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse and other socially related ills. It was explained to them that the rationale behind soliciting data from them was for the purposes of

assisting them to either supplement their BGCSE results or get training in basic vocational skills, which had potential to help them establish their own small businesses. Parents were assured that the initiative was aimed at disbanding the groups which had been roaming around jobless, and thus going out of the norm by terrorising members of their families and other members of the community. They were told the hope was that if the youth's social problems were solved, they would soon shift into reading groups in preparation for their studies. The informants were assured of the confidentiality of the interviews. They believed the researchers and consented to participate in the study.

There were five researchers who had received training on the ethics of conducting surveys. The training involved issues of confidentiality, purpose of study, benefit of the study to the informants, as well as administering questionnaires conducting interviews and patience in eliciting information from the informants.

The study was qualitative and quantitative as data were recorded in non-numerical as well as numerical form. The multi-method (triangulations) was used to investigate the phenomenon from different perspectives, for the achievement of validity and reliability. The research tools include the questionnaire and unstructured interviews. The questionnaire solicited demographic information such as gender, age and length of time the youth spent out of school. This was done to create a clear and complete picture of the characteristics of each member of the out-of-school group for proper assistance in terms of tutorials. The unstructured interviews were conducted for both the youth and parents, to get in-depth information about the experience of dropping out-of-school, and not engaging in any occupation. Note taking method was also used to collect information that may have been missed out in the questionnaire.

The researchers distributed the questionnaires to the informants, while the research assistants went back to collect them at a later date. This was done to avoid intimidating the informants. Where the questionnaires were not yet filled, the researchers exercised patience and went back at a later date to collect them. Regarding the interviews, the research assistants sat down with the informants (youth and parents) for about 30 minutes to interview each of them. The research assistants made follow-up interviews where necessary. Observed gestures and other body language were captured through note taking. *Botho* was at the centre of the exercise. Where the informants said they were not available for the interviews, the researchers would leave and go back at a more convenient time for the informants. At the end of each working day, the research assistants collated and analysed the data.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

As earlier indicated, data were collected from 115 out-of-school youth. The analysis of the questionnaire data revealed that 70% of the participants were female and 30% were male. This result suggests that the majority of the school-drop-outs were girls. On the question that asked why the youth had dropped out of school, 87% did not answer the question; 5.2% cited teenage pregnancy; 3.5 poor performance; 1.7 disobedience; 0.9 drug abuse and another 0.9 said they were disturbed by boyfriends. The fact that 87% of the youth did not answer the question shows that they had something to hide and, therefore, decided not to be open. When each of the out-of school youth was asked about the level of education at which they left school, 56% stated that they dropped out of school at the junior secondary level, while 34% dropped out at the BGCSE (senior school) level. The remaining 10% indicated that they did not complete either the junior or the senior school. On the question that sought to know whether they were working because they were out of school, 95% revealed that they had no jobs at all, while 5% said they were engaged in casual work. This result confirms that the majority of the out-of-school youth were just idling about in the village. The findings clearly show that the youth were in a serious predicament and that there was an acute problem that needed to be addressed urgently.

When the youth were asked if they would take the second chance, if given one, to finish their

secondary education, 71% said that they would take the opportunity by going back to school. When asked if they would attend classes during the week, 88% said they were willing to attend classes and be tutored during the week. The participants were also asked to indicate their individual learning needs if they were to attend remedial classes. The majority of them indicated that they needed materials to augment the recommended texts. The participants said that they also needed assistance in getting past test and examination papers for revision purposes.

Regarding the question on what career paths they would like to pursue when they completed their courses, the youth had various answers. Some of them indicated that they wanted to supplement their BGCSE subjects, while others said their interests were in the vocational courses such as electrical work, welding, art, poultry, catering, tourism, fashion and design, pottery, horticulture, sign language, tannery, hairdressing and beauty therapy.

The researchers, with the help of research assistants, transcribed the interview data collected in Setswana language into English. Data were analysed according to the themes that emerged as follows:

- 1) The youth who wanted to supplement and upgrade their scores in BGCSE results. The subjects involved were: English, Setswana Mathematics, Science, Biology Chemistry, Physics, Commerce, History, Social Studies and Development Studies.
- 2) The youth who wanted to enrol for a variety of courses according to their interest and ability in the vocational field, namely catering, tourism, poultry, journalism, tannery, fashion and design, beauty therapy, hairdressing, sign language, plumbing, carpentry, farming.

Like Tutu said on how the concept of *Ubuntu* was an invaluable asset in rebuilding the communities that have been derailed from the norms and values in South Africa, the concept of *Botho* has been very instrumental in regrouping and rebuilding the lives of the targeted youth in Moshupa through this research. It being an action research, all the participants, be they researchers, tutors or the project participants used the mechanism of *Botho* to try and penetrate whichever group they interacted with to get information or achieve whatever activity they wanted to embark on.

### **Workshops and Meetings**

In keeping with the concept of *Botho*, which was the driving force for the project, the research team embarked on a series of workshops for the different target groups to sensitise them about the need to get involved in solving the identified problems. The workshops for the different categories of people (youth, parents, tutors, stakeholders and chiefs) ran for four weeks concurrently. The workshops addressed the special needs of the participants.

#### *The inaugural Kgotla meeting*

As already indicated above, the research team also exhibited the principles of *Botho*, especially in the area of dressing, each time they addressed the members of the community. When they addressed the youth's parents, for example, the women, wore dresses of the length that went far below the knees. They had 'doeks' on their heads and shawls on their shoulders in line with tradition and custom. The male members of the team wore long acceptable trousers and long-sleeved jackets.

Observing the dress code in the *Kgotla* was a mark of respect for Bakgatla's cultural values. All the research assistants who collected data as well as the principal investigator were Bakgatla Baga Mmanaana from Moshupa community, except for the co-investigator who was a Mongwaketse from Kanye. The approach in itself made the team acceptable in the *Kgotla*. Also, the manner in which the team explained the nature of the problem experienced by the youth in Moshupa was very appropriate in the sense that they

used a persuasive language rich in Setswana culture was used. The research team informed the audience that the University of Botswana was willing to assist 'their' children. Parents shared their concern on the problems of the youth and showed appreciation of the offer made by the University of Botswana to help the local youth. Overall, the kind gesture of the University of Botswana in funding the project and the research team in undertaking the initiative were expressions of the principles of *Botho*. The gesture was humane in the sense that the project identified human needs, interests, and dignity as fundamental to human existence.

#### *Stakeholders' workshop*

The next target group to be work-shopped was the stakeholders. These included the prisons and the police station commanders, district office officials, HIV/AIDS officials, the *Kgosi* and *Dikgosana*. There was mutual respect in the exercise as the participants and the organisers came formally dressed, a gesture which showed the seriousness that was attached to the initiative. The research team prepared full breakfast and lunch for the workshop participants as a sign of hospitality and to give them a befitting welcome. The team assisted the guests with water to wash their hands before they were served with food at lunch time. This was a real gesture of *Botho* which showed respect to the guests in Moshupa community culture. The team also served out food for the guests at lunch time, thus showing sensitivity to the culture of the community, where guests are often served during meal times. They were not expected to serve themselves as it is the norm nowadays in urban areas.

They were served with traditional beer as a mark of respect. This was meant to show them that they were a very important in the society with the potential to influence the youth to take advantage of the initiative, which was geared towards changing their lives for the better. The treatment of the workshop participants in such a humane manner yielded the desired results for the project. The chiefs or village leadership always reminded the youth to take advantage of the initiative in almost every gathering that they were part of. In turn, the youth grew fonder of the project and got more committed to it.

#### *Youth workshop*

During the youth workshop, the concept of *Botho* was at hand in making their attendance overwhelming. They felt very much welcome. In the morning, the youth were served with tea and *diphaphatha* (home-made bread in Setswana culture). During the talk, all members of the research team, including the patron Mokgweetsi Masisi, the then area Member of Parliament and also Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, as well as the elderly people addressed the youth using persuasive language. They explained the usefulness of taking them back on the educational track.

They were all dressed formally to show the youth that they were respected. The youth appreciated and applauded the initiative taken by the University of Botswana to identify and address their problems. There was evidence of mutual respect since everybody in the youth's workshop displayed a befitting behaviour acceptable in their community and society.

#### *Tutors' workshop*

In line with the principles of *Botho*, consultations were made with the relevant authorities to ensure that the initiative was not only accepted and supported by members of the Moshupa community, but by the education authorities as well. Therefore, a permit as sought from the Ministry of Education, Skills and Development, while permission was gotten from the Director of Education, South Region, to use their resources in terms of personnel and facilities such as classrooms in the secondary schools in Moshupa.

Also, the problem of the youth was explained to the tutors to enable them to decide on how best they could tutor the youth and get them to pass their courses. It was agreed during the tutors' workshop that remedial teaching strategies were crucial given the fact that the youth had been taught many of those subjects

before, but still had not done well in them. An agreement was reached that the project participants be given portfolios, where they would not only be given individual assignments, but also group assignments. It was also agreed that hands-on strategies should be used for the benefit of the youth as they would not easily forget things they did in class. It was anticipated that the endeavour would benefit the youth; especially that the vocational groups were scheduled to go for attachment in work places after six months of training.

In all, *Botho* was the underlying factor at all the levels of consultations with stakeholders before embarking on the project. Both the tutors and the participants were given the opportunity to express their views and make suggestions regarding the smooth running of the project. This proved beneficial in the achievement of the objectives and the overall success of the project.

### **Attachment of Youth in Work Places**

The research team ensured that the project participants went on attachment as required by the professional ethics. Relevant organisations and businesses were approached to source places for the students. Here again, *Botho* played a significant role in getting the different work places to accept the students for attachment. First of all, humble negotiations were made with the organisations, and these discussions were followed by letters once agreement had been reached. The letters formally introduced the aim of the project to the organisations as well as making the project participants known to the management in the workplaces. Secondly, the team visited the offices as a follow-up to the applications. Once the officers understood the nature of the project, they offered places to the students for attachment. They saw it as their contribution in assisting the participants realise their goals.

The attachment places included Oasis Motel, Avani Hotel, Girl Guide Centre, Three Art Studios at Bontleng, Gaborone West and Mogoditshane; Kgarubane Gardens in Thamaga, Ntoko's Poultry in Moshupa, Phuthadikobo Museum in Mochudi and the Society for the Deaf in Ramotswa.

During the attachment, the participants all wore the appropriate protective clothing as required in the respective workplaces. For example, the catering group attached to Oasis Motel and Avani Hotel wore chef uniforms when they trained in the kitchen. The electrical group attached to Gaborone Technical College and the electrical contractors that were wiring the buildings during the construction of Sir Ketumile Masire Hospital wore overall clothing and helmets when they entered the workshops and when they carried out electrical duties. This was in compliance with the laid down rules and regulations of the companies. The project participants exhibited *Botho* in these organisations by generally being well-behaved, showing respect, being punctual and committed to their duties. In the end, they all had successful attachment period and acquired the necessary skills where they subsequently went for training at Madirelo Training Centre for accreditation and obtaining certificates.

### **Celebration of Success of Project**

When the project reached its end line, the research team addressed the Moshupa community at the main *Kgotla* to inform them that the project had come to an end, and that it had made enough impact to have its results shared publicly as a potential for future intervention across the country. Members of the Moshupa community were overjoyed with the feedback. It was agreed that the success of the project, would be celebrated on 2 August 2015, especially that the project had just succeeded to source out funds for the celebration after a long struggle to raise finances for the purpose. Some community members pledged to make contributions in the form of money and food for the occasion in appreciation of the compassionate gesture provided by the University of Botswana researchers to the youth in the community.

In recognition of the support given by the Ministry of Education, Skills and Development, and the South Region Education Centre, the then Minister of Education Skills and Development, Unity Dow was invited to officiate at the occasion. The Patron of the Project, the then Vice President, Mokgweetsi Masisi,

was also present. Similarly, the University of Botswana was amply represented. For instance, present at the occasion was, the then Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Otlogetswe Totolo, the Acting Director, Office of Research and Development, Professor Modisi, the Acting Dean of Humanities, Dr Peter Sebina, the Head of English Department, Dr Ndana Ndana, as well as the crew from Educational Technology providing public address system. On that day, the participants of the project showcased the skills they had acquired from the initiative by exhibiting the products which they had made during their training. At the end of the speeches, the invited guests toured the stalls to see the exhibition by the youth.

Food, drinks and traditional beer were served to the members of the community at lunch time. Traditionally beer is considered to be the most humane gesture and the hallmark of happiness during important events such as *Dikgafela* and independence day celebrations. *Dikgafela* is a celebration of the proceeds from a year's harvest by members of the community. Botswana independence day celebrates the success of the country from the time it attained independence from British colonial rule in 1966.

### **Conclusion**

The paper has demonstrated the importance of *Botho* in carrying out participatory activities in a rural community such as Moshupa in the Moshupa Study Group Project. The Moshupa Study Group Project which assisted the out-of-school youth to either improve their grades by supplementing the subjects that they had failed or to acquire some vocational skills is a testimony to the observation of *Botho*. The participants of the project were sensitive to the local culture by showing behaviour befitting the norms and values of Bakgatla Baga Mmanaana in Moshupa, as well as the expectations of experts and officials in the different places where they were attached to during their training. The fitting behaviour brought about the success of the project in which 300 youth, who were initially stranded, benefitted from the project and now have jobs.

The project has turned the youth who were in a deplorable situation into undergraduate students in different institutions in the country, including the University of Botswana. The majority of them have already completed their studies and are working, while the few who have just completed their training have been absorbed in the job market, with some still looking for jobs. Some of those who pursued vocational courses have already established their own businesses, while the others have been admitted into tertiary institutions to continue sharpening their skills in their areas of specialisation. We are happy to say that through being humane and sensitive to the cultural norms of Moshupa community and the different institutions, we have upheld one of the fifth National Principle Bothoo and through it we have been able to realise the Nation's Vision 2016 ideals of achieving an informed and educated nation by the year 2016.

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