Interview Three – Entrepreneur and Business owner in Ga-Masemola (Pseudo name :Mr Entrepreneur)

Agreed to recording and documentation of interview, and the disclosing of his name, however, for consistency, I’ll call him Mr Entrepreneur.

18 June 2022

Place: His business premises

The interview questions were conducted in both the SePedi and English language. Mr Entrepreneur was free to respond in Sepedi because from the two previous interviews, the researcher found that even when the participants had a good understand and comprehension of the English language, they preferred to explain in Sepedi and to elaborate in English. The interviews would have a natural flow and clear communication between the researcher and participants. If participants are able to speak freely in their mother tongue, the researcher will get deeper answers to the questions.

The researcher then explained what the research study was about and the purpose of holding the interview and presenting the study information documents and interview consent forms. After all ethical matters were addressed, the researcher then begun the interview.

Mr Entrepreneur was a very easy-going young man. The researcher met him on his business premise in previous years when the researcher went to print. Upon asking the researcher about her study and having a discussion about education, from here the relation grew over the past two years. He is a very wise young man and very much interested in the things happening in the community and to the community. The researcher asked him in 2022 if he would want to participate in the research study once it commenced. After two years, the interview below was then scheduled.

**“Aowa, ke dira interview mfana”**

Q1: What is tradition?

Tradition is ‘hlago ya batho’, i.e., people’s way of life.

Q2: What does tradition mean to you?

It signifies where we come from. It is my life because I have learnt a lot from our tradition. I live it every day and it governs my life.

Q3: What is the value of tradition?

Respect, it teaches you to respect everyone. You respect yourself and you respect others.

Q4: What is traditional authority?

‘Bokgoši’ is leadership of and by the people. It is leadership by people of different backgrounds in the community.

Q5: Where does traditional authority come from?

Bokgoši was introduced by war. Historically people fought through wars and those who could defeat and conquer others, was the Kgoši. The history of war, lead people to the system by traditional rule.

Q6: What is the basis/foundation of traditional authority?

It is leadership. Leadership through respect. If people respect and honour you as their leader, then you are a true leader. Like I have mentioned before that the royal position was won through war, therefore, it was the foundation and continues to be the foundation. It is people’s realisation of the type of leadership they want and will respect. The foundation or basis was this battle for the position and the subsequent respect you received from defeating and conquering others. We can live the way we are living now because we defeated many others before.

Q7: What characterises traditional authority and traditional leaders in Ga-Masemola?

Leadership, respect and the people’s will actualized. People are living the way the want because we initially fought for our self-determination. This continues to be our pride today. Where we come from is the foundation of who we are today

Q8: Why do you follow/ obey traditional authority?

I am on their soil, their land. Which means that I am their child. I belong to those who lived here before. I am a manifestation of those who have come before.

Q9: How do you practice tradition?

I went to ‘dikomma’, and every day I obey the rules and laws of the community.

Q10: How would you describe a day in your life?

First of all, I pray and give gratitude for each day. I thank my ancestors for the day and ask them to lead me throughout the day. I come to work every day and focus on the work I do. I notify my family every day when I leave and notify them when I come back. I also follow through with any instructions I am given at home. I am led and guided each day by my ancestors.

Q11: How would you describe Ga-Masemola?

Ga-Masemola is a very calm and stable community. There is coexistence and respect between all the members. Materially, there is a lot that can be done, but the members make the community.

Q12: What are some of the challenges in the community?

We have a water shortage, there is unemployment, and many others that affect the country as a whole.

Q13: How would you go about fixing these problems?

I would go about building infrastructure such as the roads, buildings i.e., shopping centres and other things that would make conducting commerce with the people easier. This is to ensure that people can create jobs for themselves and are able to hire others. I want development according to how we the community see it. We want to create work, as oppose to working for others who are not from here and do not have an incentive to growing the community sustainably and ethically according to our way of live.

Q14: When do you approach a traditional leader?

Q15: Why?

We approach her to voice our concerns for water, food, etc. When there are issues that affect all of us in the community such as crime. We approach her for various things, however, most times we prefer to go to her when we ourselves cannot solve the issue or the issue has escalated to a point where we cannot reach consensus. Or where the police are involved and they too cannot help bring a suitable resolution to the issue.

Q16: Do you want to be governed by traditional leader?

Q17: Why?

Yes, because she is caring and nurturing. Being led by our current Kgošikgadi is best because she is our mother and very empathic. She makes approaching her easy. It’s as if you are approaching your own mother.

Q18: Is it effective in governing the community?

Yes, she has divine power and authority to lead.

Q19: Do you consider yourself a traditional community member?

Yes

Q20: What does it mean to be traditional community member?

To be a respecting and humble individual. To be of assistant to your community members. To be prideful in being a part of something bigger than yourself. I am proud that in the community I get to help young people with their varsity applications, creating CVs and technological issues. I get to teach whoever wants to learn about technology.

Q21: What is the value, if there is any. Of being a traditional community member?

There is a difference between members of Ga-Masemola and other areas because before you even speak, we can see you are from our community based on how you dress and carry yourself. What tradition does is to transform your essence and your outlook to life. The meaning and value of being a traditional community member is the same because it influences you holistically as a person.

Being under the leadership of Bokgoši is the value, the currency which makes us different. Living under rules and laws disciplines you and moulds you better in my option because you cannot be selfish or greedy if you are grounded in our customs and tradition. You won’t easily do as you please because of the implications involved in dong as you see fit. You will be lost.

Q22: Do you have a say in the governing of the community?

Yes, because I can participate in community meetings. I can approach her with concerns. Approaching her is approaching the community at large because of the protocols involved before having her audience. A lot of people are involved in trying to find solutions to issues that arise in the community.

Q23: How do you perceive the relationship between traditional leaders and councillors?

I want to point out that there is a relationship between our Kgošikgadi and councillors, however, it is not a good relationship. Councillors are very deceitful people. They are dishonest and only remember us when it’s time to vote. They will promise you the whole world, but actually do nothing at the end of the day.

Q24: What problems do you encounter when working with a traditional leader?

I would say that we sometimes do not listen to each other. We do not hear where we are coming from because of the difference in education and age gaps. It is sometimes hard for them to understand where we are coming from with some of the issues we rise because we were born at different times, under different circumstances.

Q25: What problems do you encounter when working with councillors?

They never deliver on their promises. Councillors represent the state and further the interest of the state and not the people.

Q26: From your experience, is the partnership between traditional leaders and municipal officials effective? Why do you say so?

The problem is that councillors and traditional leaders get their powers from different places and unlike councillors, traditional leaders are the rightful heirs to positions of power and authority in our community. Councillors believe because they represent the state, they are superior than them, which is not correct. Our leaders are traditional leaders and councillors should respect that. They do not have people who voluntary follow and obey them, but traditional leaders do.

Q27: According to you, how can traditional leadership play a more significant role in the

community?

Traditional leaders need a budget in order to do this. They are our leaders and as such should be recognised by the state as such. We do not recognise the state, but we recognise our traditional leaders.

In our current reality, state officials have to have a serious reflection of their roles so that when they do, their jobs, they may do and fulfil them with intention and consciousness of the people who they are to serve. If they can change their current mind-sets, then I believe we would be able to see this change through service deliver and how they deliver these services.

Q28: What are the factors that have hindered the effective cooperation between

traditional leaders in this area?

Disagreements and not being able to see things the same way. Sometimes as leaders they have disagreements between them that affects certain decisions to be taken in the community for the community.

Q29: From your experience, to what extent does traditional authority play a role service

delivery and development in the village?

The municipality is tasked with service deliver, not Kgošikgadi. She can only advice and lobby our interests, but her hands are tied by law.

Q30: How can a more meaningful and dynamic relationship be created between traditional leadership and the relevant role players in local and rural governance?

Localise all initiatives in Ga-Masemola to suit the needs and aspirations of the people. Include people in matters that involve them. The municipality currently does not involve us in their projects and this has had terrible consequences for us the community. As a result, we do not get anything done from the municipality because they want kickbacks and give their friends and family tenders to enrich themselves.

The problem will be that some of our other leaders are educated and believe they know more or are Christian and believe that they are closer to God, but it’s all nonsense. Makgoši are a stand-alone and work with everyone, people of different backgrounds and ways of life, therefore, they are better positioned to mediate between people of different ideas, backgrounds and outlook. If the other leaders can understand that there is no competing with Makgoši, we would get far. You cannot and will not overthrow the Kgošikgadi even if you wanted to. We as her follows, will not allow anyone to disrespect or undermine the Kgošikgadi. Whether as a health, education or religious leader.

Christian religious leaders think Bokgoši is devil associated because of their bible, which is very wrong. They need to respect us in Ga-Masemola, because we respect and allow them to lead their lives as they want. However, Kgošikgadi always maintains coexistence between us all, even with those that undermine her leadership. At the end of the day, she is our mother whether you are religious or not, whether you are educated or not, she is your mother.

Q31: Do you know about the Native Administration Act of 1927?

No

Q32: Are there any apartheid or colonial legislation you know about?

No

Q33: Is there anything you would like to add?

Only that people in Ga-Masemola are in need of employment sources for their livelihoods. The people are very resourceful and try where they can to find means of providing for their families whether by creating small businesses such as my business, the taxi industry, selling small chips and sweets. Others have left the community to Lebowakgomo or in the big cities in Gauteng. We are not underdeveloped because the community has progressed in this way from where we come from especially apartheid because I remember the magistrate system trying to entrench on our community, but we remained the same people. We did not receive any assistance, Kgoši Tseke VI(four) raised money from members of the community back then and built our clinics and other infrastructure you see in the community. But, not this not current building of the clinic. When the municipality was introduced, they tore down the clinic the community built and build a new one there. Why tear it down, why not make it a room for other social services or a maternity room?

We as a community can do it ourselves, the problem is that we do not have any resources or money. The cost of living is expensive and we cannot expect our people to contribute right now because things are hard. Everything is expensive. They have to support their families. They have their lives, but God and the ancestors will provide. I wake up every day and come to work. I know the see.

The problem is the constitution because it has changed things and allows people not living in Ga-Masemola to come and live in Ga-Masemola. It allows people from not Ga-Masemola to decide what Ga-Masemola needs, instead of us who work here and know the people. We know our problems and what stops things from happening in the community. So, it’s better if we can have a say in these things.

You also find that the municipality can allow people from other places to come to leave in Ga-Masemola but, you find that most times those people do not respect the community and how we live together. You cannot blame them, because they are not from here, but the problem is that they do not inform the Kgošikgadi, but take kickbacks to allow people to come to our community without informing the Kgošikgadi or us. People can take money for rent from people who want to start business or live here, but they must respect the community. You must coexist with your environment and keep it clean and respect your neighbours. The children must not be exposed to the wrong things.