What’s Ketso?
A Tool for Researchers, Educators, and Practitioners

James S. Bates
The Ohio State University

Researchers, educators, and practitioners utilize a range of tools and techniques to obtain data, input, feedback, and information from research participants, program learners, and stakeholders. Ketso is both an array of information gathering techniques and a toolkit (see www.ketso.com). It “can be used in any situation when people come together to share information, learn from each other, make decisions and plan actions” (Tippett & How, 2011, p. 4). The word ketso means “action” in the Sesotho language, spoken in the African nation of Lesotho where the concept for this instrument was conceived. Ketso techniques fall into the participatory action research family of social science research methods (Tippett, Handley, & Ravetz, 2007). Ohio State University Extension professionals have used the Ketso toolkit and its techniques in numerous settings, including for professional development, conducting community needs/interests assessments, brainstorming, and data collection. As a toolkit, Ketso uses tactile and colorful leaves, branches, and icons to organize and display participants’ contributions on felt mats. As an array of techniques, Ketso is effective in engaging audiences because it is inclusive and provides each participant a platform for their perspective to be shared.

References


James S. Bates is Assistant Professor and Field Specialist in Family Wellness with Ohio State University Extension. His research and teaching focus on family life education program development and evaluation, intergenerational family relationships, and men in families. Direct correspondence to James Bates at bates.402@osu.edu.