

Educational apps boost KZN learners

After three years of intervention at Zilungisele Primary in KwaDukuza, KwaZulu-Natal and several similar schools, a principal's survey showed a reduction in absenteeism and a higher enrollment, reportedly thanks to the Xander educational apps.

Learners, who had a below-average grasp of concepts like body parts, shapes, colours, and numbers, experienced a huge improvement through practising with Xander, according to teachers. And, not only in their understanding of concepts but also in their confidence levels.



photo credit- Mna Ewees, Breteau Foundation

Educators found the apps to be very helpful to support concepts that are taught and, importantly, encourages learners to practice and master concepts at a self-determined, comfortable pace.

The teachers' time saved in planning lessons, and the accelerated progress of learners' vocabulary and language reinforcement as well as their second language acquisition, meant that teachers had more time to give individual attention to learners during class time.

The Xander Wardrobe app is first used to learn body parts in isiZulu, and then in English for the second language lesson. It allows for pronunciation practice and reinforces through repetition, and is delivered in a manner that keeps learners engaged, teachers said.

Measuring the impact of technology in the classroom

Measuring the impact of technology in the classroom requires time, material, and willing participants. When technology is rolled out, it should be done according to sound methods, the effects monitored and results evaluated to determine the impact.

It began in 2015 when a curious team at the MRP Foundation set out to revolutionise the education system in rural KZN. Through harnessing technology the project strives to find innovative solutions for challenges faced by rural schools. And the results have been encouraging.

The Foundation Phase was supported by means of preload tablets with sound, curriculum aligned apps in collaboration with the Breteau Foundation.

The creators of Xander Apps have a shared passion for early learning and partnered with MRP Foundation in 2015, creating award-winning educational apps for young children in local languages.

The company says it embraces evidence that mastering new concepts in the child's mother-tongue at a young age builds a more solid foundation for future learning.

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