

Microsoft releases results on South African education survey

At the annual British Education and Training Technology (BETT) Middle East 2017 event, held in Abu Dhabi on 25-26 April, Microsoft released the findings from a new education survey of nearly 50 educators in South Africa.



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The survey revealed 88% educators in South Africa have a clear vision for technology implementation in the classroom, including the challenges and opportunities in optimising technology for the classroom as well as the skillsets required to succeed.

The survey, commissioned by Microsoft and conducted by market research firm YouGov, was shared with over 1600 leading educators from across the region. BETT has established itself as a global meeting place for the education technology community. Through its ongoing series of events, it promotes the discovery of technology and knowledge to enhance lifelong learning.

Survey results

Educators in South Africa see themselves as highly tech-proficient and are most interested in apps that help students collaborate in team projects. The findings revealed that 48% of educators reported that technology was used in their classrooms and 70% said that virtual collaboration and working with others remotely is a key skill required by students. When addressing the absence of technology as it affected the student body, 36% believed students would find it hard to adapt to the future workplace with their low digital literacy.

However, 52% educators surveyed lack proper training to understand and implement the integration of technology (computers, software, online resources) into the way they teach. The study revealed that the biggest factor needed to successfully transform teaching and learning experiences was educator skill sets – in particular, knowing how to make the most of available resources and tools.

“Over several decades, the corporation has worked with institutions and educators around the world, and gained a deep understanding of how technology in schools can transform the learning experience,” said Anthony Salcito, VP, Worldwide Education, Microsoft Corporation.

“We continue to bring our products, services and programmes to bear on this challenge, always taking into account that technology is not the lone agent in such transformations, and can even complicate or slow down the process if not implemented with due diligence.

“We recommend that education leaders take a curriculum-focused approach to technology adoption, keeping in mind their educational goals, and then integrate those technologies that facilitate tangible benefits for students and teachers.”

“Lack of digital proficiency is the biggest challenge facing the youth, especially in the Middle East. It is crucial to take the steps for equipping educators with the right tools and providing them with trainings that will help address the technological challenges in the classroom; empowering students with key 21st century skills to deliver immense change,” said Claudia Johnston, Education Sector Lead at Microsoft South Africa.

Teachers’ training

The company’s collaboration with BETT, introduced educators in the Middle East and beyond to generational leaps in classroom-enhancing technologies and methodologies. They were able to attend Microsoft Teacher Development Track, the School Leaders Track and the Education Digital Transformation Track to unlock fresh approaches with tools such as Office Mix, ‘Creative Coding through Games and Apps’ and drive improvement within their own schools and systems.

In addition to its in-depth tracks, the corporation, along with its partners, also demonstrated its latest solutions and devices to enable digital transformation in classrooms. The company also imparted some of its expertise on device management, covering Windows 10, the Microsoft Educator’s Community and Office 365 Education.

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