

ICTs in Rural Education: Let the Game Begin

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ABSTRACT:

Over a period of three years, 255 teachers at 26 schools in Cofimvaba, which lies in the very rural Nciba district of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, have been using mobile tablets in their classrooms to support teaching and learning. The purpose of this paper is to describe the novel gamification approach to Teacher Professional Development in a unique context where schools are deprived of resources but still managed to successfully integrate mobile tablets in their classroom practices. These practices have changed the way teachers teach towards a pedagogy that is more suited to the information age. The success of this TPD model lies in the application of lessons learnt from literature, selected game elements, rewards based on demonstrated competencies, flexibility, innovation, creativity and co-creation. All of the teachers who took part in the project, achieved the 13 compulsory badges, which is noteworthy. This implies that all participating teachers applied all the ICT integration skills demonstrated in the ICT for Rural Education (ITC4RED) TPD course at least once in their classroom, and were able to collect evidence to support that they have gained the necessary competencies.