The News Evaluator: Evidence-based innovations to promote digital civic literacy

# Details

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## Editors

Andersson Y.;Dalquist U.;Ohlsson J.

## Authors

Nygren T.;Brounéus F.

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Almost 6,000 Swedish teenagers in primary and secondary schools.

## Implications For Educators About

Digital citizenship

## Implications For Stakeholders About

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# Abstract

The News Evaluator is a multi-year project aimed at supporting constructive use of digital news among school pupils and the public. The project includes investigating authentic news feeds, exploring abilities to determine credibility, and developing evidence-based methods, materials and tools for teaching and learning digital civic literacy. In this chapter we describe the first phase of the project, where we collected and analysed empirical data from authentic news feeds with the help of almost 6,000 primary and secondary school pupils. At the same time, we developed a digital tool for scaffolding critical news literacy.

# Outcome

"Almost a third of pupils claimed to encounter unreliable news every day in their newsfeeds. Half of the pupils saw such news a few times per week, one out of five seldom saw unreliable news, while one in 50 claimed to never see such news in their newsfeeds.... [P]upils’ ratings were slightly less critical than those of experts and teachers when we conducted an inter-rater reliability test of 100 items.... Among the news items reported by pupils in the News Evaluator, we find primarily hard news vetted by journalists at national newspapers, indicating that the pupils’ online news environments hold more than rumours and polarized narratives from narrow-minded sources in echo chambers.... [E]ven if most pupils did go directly to news sites when retrieving news items for evaluation, 70 per cent of them claimed to find news via social media in the pre-experimental survey.... [M]ost pupils found the digital tool [developed for scaffolding critical news literacy] to be easy and interesting to use." (Authors, 24-26)