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Title: An Exploration of the effects of an Inquiry-Based Learning Technology Workshop on Post Leaving Certificate students' ability to evaluate the credibility of online information sources.

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Abstract

The ability to effectively evaluate the credibility of online sources is part of a suite of information literacy competencies that are necessary to enable learners to fully and effectively use online and digital media.

A review of the literature suggests that the key abilities required to effectively assess credibility are those encompassed in the skills and aptitudes at the cognitive domain levels of Understanding, Applying and Evaluating in Blooms taxonomy.

The affordances of the internet which allows for rapid recycling of content, means that the ability to compare, critique, justify, and make judgements about online information sources are important skills in contemporary learning. These abilities are part of both the connectivist and constructivist narratives that see the sources of knowledge and the ability to locate these as being a critical part of the creation of multiple meanings and points of view.

This research sought to explore how a small group of Post Leaving Certificate students approach the assessment of the credibility of online sources and what are the effects on this approach of an Internet oriented, inquiry based learning workshop.

Following the intervention, participants reported improvements in their knowledge and understanding of the skills required for evaluating credibility as well as the function and operation of search engines. The learning intervention was less successful in effecting practical changes in the behaviour of respondents in relation to establishing credibility of online sources.

This study is limited in scope so generalisations are not possible, however given the scarcity of research on information literacy competencies among students in further education and training in Ireland this study may be viewed as a prelude to more substantial work in this area.