

Bridging Research to Practice

An Innovative Approach to Sharing Extension's Work

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Presenting Issue

There is increasing competition for research-informed and trusted information online. Since Wikipedia is so prominent, it is an innovative opportunity for Extension to increase the rigor of Wikipedia articles by adding our research and education citations to make our work more discoverable and accessible.

Extension's Programmatic Response

Depending on the topic, Wikipedia appears in the first page of results 75-80% of the time for online searches, not Extension. However, as the Center for Family Development (FD) explored Wikipedia, it became clear that they have the content expertise to contribute to existing Wikipedia entries or even create new ones.

During the FD's Wikipedia edit-a-thon, they identified topics, and drafted **Wikipedia entries**.

- Members identified Wikipedia topics that align with core program areas, such as financial literacy, disaster preparedness, divorce, parenting, etc.
- Corrected dead links from Extension website redesign in Wikipedia
- Added new citations to Extension publications and seminal research
- Extension staff uploaded reports and other content to the University Digital Conservancy to be linked to in Wikipedia.



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Target Audience

This project makes evidence-based information from Extension more accessible to all audiences, especially those who may not take the time to dig deeper than a Wikipedia page.

Why Wikipedia for Extension Information?

- **Broader Reach:** Since Extension's information is evidence-based, it makes sense to leverage our research and link to it in Wikipedia to make the encyclopedia more accurate and current.
- **Provides Context to Our Work:** Could be used with Extension programming to provide background information to participants

Have you edited Wikipedia?

Yes

No

Participant Reflections

"I believe this can be a great wrap-around tool for the content we provide in classes for both professionals and families and on the U of MN Extension website. It is also another way to put out our research and others as leaders in the field."

"I think it is quite interesting how Wikipedia does not want us to be self-promoting, but at the same time we are the content experts."

"It would be helpful to discuss how Wikipedia contributions constitutes 'scholarship' vs. 'teaching' vs efforts in 'program management'?"



Mn Daily Article 9/13/18

Broader Impacts

- Provides a test case for Extension to share knowledge through a new avenue to the public
- Increase traffic to existing research by linking to newspapers, articles and Extension content in the UDC
- Increase the diversity of Wikipedia authorship (only 8.5% of editors are women) and content
- We tweeted about the day, the UMN Libraries and MN Daily picked up the event and then MN Daily wrote an article about the Wikipedia edit-a-thon

References

- Boden, D. (2014). WikiProject Agriculture: Be an Agricultural Wikipedian. USAIN Conference.
- Pacion, K. (2017). Wikipedia as a Communication Tool. Cooperative Extension Webinar shared via AgNIC.