Wikipedia Thanker Study IRB Supplementary Materials

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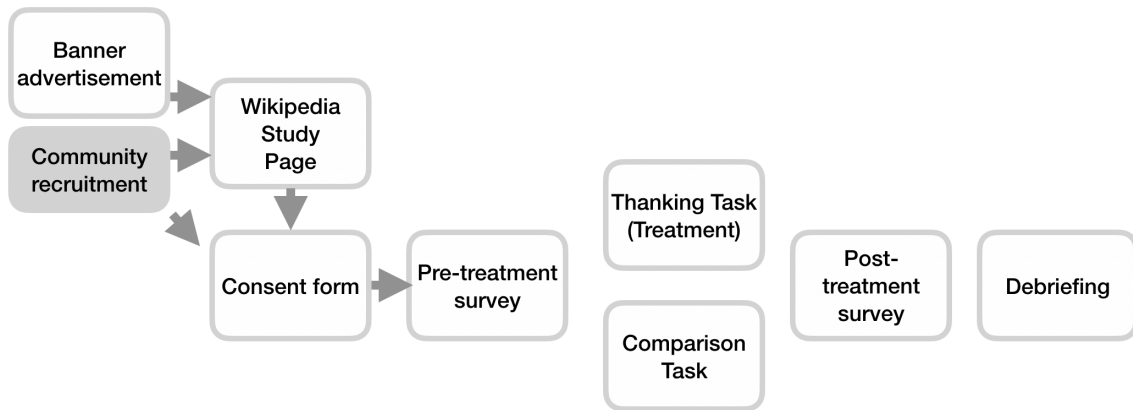
Summary of emendments to supplemental materials May 2019

1) We made a number of small edits to clarify that the study is being conducted by CivilServant researchers, not by our partnering Wikipedian colleagues who are acting instead as "liaisons" between researchers and the community, not as researchers themselves. You can see those changes primarily in the "Wikipedia Study Informational Page" where "we" is often changed to "the researchers". We also changed the "sender" of emails to CivilServant researchers.

2) Similarly we clarified that CivilServant researchers are the point people for questions about the survey, not the community liaisons; although those liaisons can act as translators for questions.

3) In the consent form we thought we should be more transparent about our statement that subjects were invited to participate due to their experience. We now more clearly state that banners and other recruitment messages were targeted to experienced editors.

4) On the informational page and consent page we added a link to the GDPR statement.

5) We altered the instructions on the Thanking task, to ensure that subjects both had the ability to "skip" thanking a specific editor while also giving them the chance to thank 4 editors and thus receive the full treatment.

6) We may several other minor adjustments to the text in order to maintain consistency and remove redundancy.

Chart of Experiment Flow

Note to IRB: The following chart illustrates where in the experiment procedure each of the following materials are encountered by study participants. We include in our flowchart community recruitment, which we expect respective communities to engage in. We will encourage them to use language from the Wikipedia Study Page.

Banner advertisement → Wikipedia Study Page

Community recruitment → Wikipedia Study Page

Consent form → Pre-treatment survey

Thanking Task (Treatment)

Comparison Task

Post-treatment survey

Debriefing

Legend

☐ Sections in the supplementary materials

▨ Not included in the IRB

Banner Advertisements

Arabic

<div dir="rtl">

ساهم في بيئة أفضل للمشاركة الويكيبيديّة العربية!

كن جزء من دراسة عن تحسين بيئة المشاركة الويكيبيديّة العربية!

</div>

Translation of Arabic

Contribute to a better environment in Arabic Wikipedia!

Be a part of a study on how to work towards a better environment for Wikipedia participation!

German

Hilf mit, die Wikipedia zu erforschen!

Nimm an einer Studie teil, die die Beteiligung in der Wikipedia untersucht.

Ich möchte mehr erfahren

Translation of German

Help us to understand Wikipedia better.

Participate in a study to help us investigate contribution to Wikipedia.

CTA: I want to learn more.

Persian

<div dir="rtl">

برای یک ویکی‌پدیای دوستانه‌تر

در یک تحقیق برای بهبود جامعه ویکی‌پدیای فارسی شرکت کنید. برای کسب اطلاعات بیشتر اینجا کلیک کنید.

</div>

Translation of Persian

Contribute to a better environment in Persian Wikipedia!

Be a part of a study on how to work towards a better environment for Wikipedia participation!

Polish

Wesprzyj rozwój Wikipedii!

Weź udział w badaniu naukowym, które pomoże naszej społeczności stać się bardziej życzliwą

Translation of Polish

Help Polish Wikipedia be more welcoming / kind.

Take part in a scientific research project which will help our community become more friendly.

Wikipedia Study Informational Page (English)

Note to IRB: Wikipedia's research guidelines require us to post a public webpage on Wikipedia as the landing page for any banner ad. This page links to the consent form. This page does not include email addresses because the appropriate form of contact information on Wikipedia pages are links to user pages.

Sign up to participate in a study and help us learn how to improve [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia!

Click to sign up for the study

We - [liaison] and [liaison] are liaising between Wikipedians and the research nonprofit CivilServant and Princeton University on a project to help us learn how to improve [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia.

The researchers are looking for Wikipedians to volunteer just 20 minutes of their time. Here's how it will work: if you volunteer to be a participant, in [timeframe] they will send you an email asking you to complete a 10 minute task. That task will ask you to contribute to [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia in some way, for example reviewing content, rating a revision or interacting with other Wikipedians.

Researchers will also ask you to complete two brief surveys - one as soon as you can and one after you complete the task described above. That's it! At the end of the study they will send you the results and what they learned with your help. Those results will also be made public.

We hope you volunteer because you, like us, want [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia to continue to thrive. If you sign up, you can stop participating in the study anytime. If you complete the study, you will be eligible to receive a [barnstar / certificate of completion] if you choose.

Note on data and security: This study includes two brief surveys, which will ask you about your experience on Wikipedia. Researchers will also collect publicly available information from Wikipedia. All your data will be de-identified and stored in a secure server only accessible to the CivilServant team. Survey results will be stored separately from public wikipedia data, and separately from your Wikipedia username. The researchers will never share your email or username, and these identifiers will be deleted at the end of the study, within a year after we finish. At any point before then, you can ask that any or all of your data be removed from the study by contacting Juliakamin(CS) [link to Wikipedia user page]. Please click here to find out more about our GDPR policy.

To volunteer for the study, please click here to fill out a brief form:

Click to sign up for the study

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to ask Juliakamin(CS) [link to Wikipedia user page] in English. You can also ask us, [liaison] or [liaison], and we will translate for you. To learn more about CivilServant you can visit their website [link to civilservant.io].

Consent Form

Thank you for your interest in our helping us learn how to improve [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia!

The research nonprofit CivilServant is working with researchers at Princeton University to help us better understand how to improve the experience for editors at [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia. We sent emails and advertised on Wikipedia to experienced editors. If you saw the banner or received an email, you are eligible to participate.

If you consent to participate, we will ask you to take two brief (5 minute) surveys and to complete a 10 minute task. That task will ask you to contribute to [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia in some way, for example reviewing content, rating a revision or interacting with other Wikipedians.

You will not be compensated for your participation, but if you complete the study you will be eligible to receive a [barnstar / certificate of completion] if you choose. Your participation will also help [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia learn how to improve the experience of editors like you.

Note on data and security: This study includes two brief surveys, which will ask you about your experience on Wikipedia. We will also collect publicly available information from Wikipedia. All your data will be de-identified and stored in a secure server only accessible to the CivilServant team. Survey results will be stored separately from public wikipedia data, and separately from your Wikipedia username. We will never share your email or username, and these identifiers will be deleted from our dataset at the end of the study, within a year after we finish. At any point before then, you can ask that any or all of your data be removed from the study by emailing julia.kamin@civilservant.io. Please click here to find out more about our GDPR policy.

At the end of the study, we intend to publish the results based on what we learn. **We will never name your account, email address, or any personally-identifying information** in any public report or in any of the aggregated, anonymized data that we publish alongside the results.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with us, please contact the Princeton University Institutional Review Board (IRB), Phone: (609) 258-8543, Email: irb@princeton.edu. This board oversees our compliance with U.S. requirements for research ethics.

This research is only open to people who are 18 years or older. If you are eligible and you consent to participate, please complete the form below. By submitting the form, you agree that you are 18 or over and that you consent to participate in the research study.

Principal Investigator: J. Nathan Matias <jmatias@princeton.edu>, Princeton University Center for Information Technology Policy, with Julia Kamin, Max Klein, and Eric Pennington. Nathan is also the founder of CivilServant, which is managing the software for this study. If you have questions about this relationship, please ask Nathan.

My Wikipedia userid is: _____
My email is: _____

Thanks again for volunteering. Once you click the button below, we will forward you to the study's first survey. (If you choose not to take it now we will email you a link in the next few days.)

I consent to participate in this study

Pre-Treatment Survey Materials (English)

Email inviting to take survey, sent to consented participants

Subject: Wikipedia study: First survey
From: julia.kamin@civilservant.io

Hello [userid],

Thank you again for volunteering to be a part of our Wikipedia study; your participation will help us better understand how to improve [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia.

To start the study, please take this -- minute survey [link] which will ask you several of questions about your Wikipedia experience.

We ask that you complete the survey by [date].

Thank you for taking this first step toward helping us learn how to make Wikipedia better for editors like you!

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact julia.kamin@civilservant.io in English, or write to [liaison] and [liaison] and they will translate for you.

Pre-Treatment Survey

Thank you again for being part of our Wikipedia study.

In this survey, which is the first part of the study, we ask you several questions about your experience on Wikipedia.

A reminder about data security: All of your answers are confidential and will be stored in a secured server independently from your contact information. At any point in the study you can ask to stop. You can also email julia.kamin@civilservant.io to request that your data be removed.

There are no right answers to the questions. We thank you for answering them thoughtfully and honestly.

[Question 1]
How would you rate your overall experience as an editor on Wikipedia?
[Likert scale 1 ("Poor") to 5 ("Excellent")]

[Question 2]

Editors contribute to [language] Wikipedia in different ways. About how much of your time contributing to Wikipedia do you spend on the following activities.

[Likert scale 1 ("Never") to 5 ("All of my time")]

● Adding substantive content to article pages
● Correcting small errors on article pages related to style or formatting
● Monitoring and correcting potentially damaging content
● Answering newcomer questions or mentoring newcomers in other ways
● Working on projects and tools to support Wikipedia's work

[Question 3]

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements

[Likert scale 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree")]

● Most newcomers (registered for less than 90 days) on [language] Wikipedia are capable of making valuable contributions.
● Most experienced editors on [language] Wikipedia are capable of making valuable contributions.
● Most newcomers on [language] Wikipedia would not knowingly do something to damage [language] Wikipedia.
● Most experienced editors on [language] Wikipedia would not knowingly do something to damage [language] Wikipedia.

[Question 4]

How often do the following statements describe how you feel when contributing to Wikipedia?

[Likert scale 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always")]

Contributing to [language] Wikipedia is emotionally draining.

I feel positive about the contributions I am making to [language] Wikipedia.

Submit Answers

Completion message

Thanks for completing the survey - and the first part of the study! We will contact you soon to complete the second part of the study.

Intervention (Treatment): Thanking task

Thanking Task Instruction Page

Title: Wikipedia Study Instructions

Thank you again for participating in this Wikipedia study.

In this part of the study we ask you to contribute to [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia by "thanking" up to four editors for their contributions.

As you may know, Wikipedia editors can "thank" other editors for specific contributions. When you thank an editor, they receive a message that says "{user name} thanked you for your edit on {article name}."

In the next pages, we will show you lists of revisions from different editors. For each editor, look for a revision that you think is worthy of thanks and then click "Thank edit" for that revision. The user will then automatically receive a notice of your thanks. It is not necessary that you choose the revision most worthy of thanks; we do, however, ask that you use your judgment in deciding if the revision you choose merits thanks. If for any editor you do not see a revision worthy of thanks, you may click "pass" and go on to the next editor until you are able to thank four editors (you may have to "pass" more than one editor).

Since this study involves sending thanks to other Wikipedians on your behalf, we need to confirm your identity. To begin, please authenticate your account on the Wikipedia website. We will never post anything without your permission, and you can end that permission at any time.

Next

[Participants see Wikipedia authentication form and log in]

Thanking (Treatment) Task (website example)

[Notification when the "thank" button is pressed]

Great! The editor will receive your Thanks in a few seconds.

[End of task page]

That's it. You have completed your task and are now two thirds of the way through the study. You will receive one more email from us asking you to complete the study. Until then, thanks again for your participation! You can now close this browser window.

Comparison task (Placebo Group)

Comparison Task Instruction Page

Thank you again for participating in this Wikipedia study.

In this part of the study we ask you to contribute to [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia by participating in a specific task.

As you know, there are many ways to contribute on Wikipedia, including adding content, correcting formatting, monitoring for vandalism, etc.

On the next page you will see a timer and three activities which will be randomly selected from a number of possible ways to contribute to Wikipedia. We ask that you engage in one of those activities on [Arabic/German/Persian/Polish] Wikipedia for 10 minutes. Once you have selected an activity, please click "Start timer" to start the timer and open a new browser window to engage in the editing activity you choose. When the 10 minutes is up, the timer will alert you.

In order to confirm your Wikipedia id, on the next page we will first ask you to authenticate your account.. (Note: We will not observe your behavior on Wikipedia during this activity.)

Click Next to authenticate your account and go on to the list of activities:

Next

[Participants see Wikipedia authentication form and log in]

Comparison/Placebo Task (website example)

Please select one of activities listed below to engage in on [language] Wikipedia for ten minutes. Once you have selected an activity, click "Begin" to start the timer. Then open a new browser window to engage in the editing activity. When the ten minutes is up, the timer will alert you. Please then return to this window and click to confirm you engaged in the activity.

Your randomly-selected 3 activities are:

- Categorize articles that have no or too few categories.
- Check for and note missing sources on article pages.
- Correct typos on article pages

.

Start timer

10:00

I confirm I engaged in one of the activities activity above.

[End of task page]

That's it. You have completed your task and are now two thirds of the way through the study. You will receive one more email from us asking you to complete the study. Until then, thanks again for your participation! You can now close this browser window.

Post-treatment survey (English)

Recruitment Email

Subject: Wikipedia study: Final survey

Hello [userid],

Thank you for making it this far in our Wikipedia experiment. You have already completed 2/3rds of the study. This is the final part!

Please use this underline link to take the 5 minute survey [link] which will ask you several questions about your Wikipedia experience.

We ask that you complete the survey by [date].

Thank you for helping us learn how to make Wikipedia better for editors like you!

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Julia Kamin <julia.kamin@civilservant.io> in English or write to [liaison], [liaison], who can translate for you.

Post-treatment Survey

Thank you again for being part of our Wikipedia study.

In this survey, which is the final part of the study, we ask you several questions about your experience on Wikipedia. (A reminder about data security: All of your answers are confidential and will be stored in a secured server independently from your contact information. At any point in the study you can ask to stop. You can also email julia.kamin@civilservant.io to request your data be removed.)

There are no right answers to the questions. We thank you for answering them thoughtfully and honestly.

[Question 1]
How would you rate your overall experience as an editor on Wikipedia?
[Likert scale 1 ("Poor") to 5 ("Excellent")]

[Question 2]
Editors contribute to [language] Wikipedia in different ways. About how much of your time contributing to Wikipedia do you spend on the following activities.

[Likert scale 1 ("Never") to 5 ("All of my time")]
- Adding substantive content to article pages
- Correcting small errors on article pages related to style or formatting
- Monitoring and correcting potentially damaging content
- Answering newcomer questions or mentoring newcomers in other ways
- Working on projects and tools to support Wikipedia's work

[Question 3]
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements
[Likert scale 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree")]
- Most newcomers (registered for less than 90 days) on [language] Wikipedia are capable of making valuable contributions.
- Most experienced editors on [language] Wikipedia are capable of making valuable contributions.
- Most newcomers on [language] Wikipedia would not knowingly do something to damage [language] Wikipedia.
- Most experienced editors on [language] Wikipedia would not knowingly do something to damage [language] Wikipedia.

[Question 4]
How often do the following statements describe how you feel when contributing to Wikipedia?
[Likert scale 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always")]
Contributing to [language] Wikipedia is emotionally draining.
I feel positive about the contributions I am making to [language] Wikipedia.

Upon completion
Thanks for completing the survey - and the study!

Once we analyze the results we will email you what we learned in several months.

Until then, you are eligible to receive a [barnstar / certificate of completion], if you choose. Please check your preference.

__ Yes, I would like to receive a [barnstar / certificate of completion]
__ No, I am not interested.

[For Arabic and Persian, if they say "yes" above]
What name would you like to use for your certificate of completion?

Post-Study Debriefing Email

Hello [user] -

This spring you participated in a study that we conducted with CivilServant. At that time we promised we would send you information about the findings from the study. We are excited to present our results below.

In the study, we were interested to find out if giving "Thanks" to other editors for a contribution on Wikipedia had positive benefits for both the editor receiving thanks and the editor that gave thanks. Wikpedians who participated, like you, were asked to do one of two tasks - either to thank a number of editors for a specific edit (using Wikipedia's "thank" button) or to do some other task. We also asked all participants to take the same survey before and after the task.

Our hypothesis was that participants who thanked other editors would have a more positive perception both of their experience on Wikipedia and of other Wikipedians, in particular newcomers. We also thought that when editors' perceptions changed to a more positive view that they would then edit more.

[Present findings]

J. Nathan Matias, Julia Kamin, Max Klein, and Eric Pennington