Wikipedia in the eyes of its beholders: A systematic review of scholarly research on Wikipedia readers and readership

Hundreds of scholarly studies have investigated various aspects of Wikipedia. Although a number of literature reviews have provided overviews of this vast body of research, none has specifically focused on the readers of Wikipedia and issues concerning its readership. In this systematic literature review, we review 99 studies to synthesize current knowledge regarding the readership of Wikipedia and provide an analysis of research methods employed. The scholarly research has found that Wikipedia is popular not only for lighter topics such as entertainment but also for more serious topics such as health and legal information. Scholars, librarians, and students are common users, and Wikipedia provides a unique opportunity for educating students in digital literacy. We conclude with a summary of key findings, implications for researchers, and implications for the Wikipedia community.

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Contributors: Okoli, C., Mehdi, M., Mesgari, M., Nielsen, F. Å., Lanamäki, A.
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