To what extent does the world's knowledge exists in Wikipedia and do edit wars help in the accumulation of knowledge ?

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Introduction :

Wikipedia is the best example of crowdsourcing for knowledge building. It follows the mechanism of democracy. Hence, Wikipedia has the power of improving itself and expanding itself. The following content tries to give an intuition that the edit wars constitute the **constructive clashes** and eventually leads to consensus and development of quality Wikipedia articles.

The current state of any Wikipedia article is the result of series of edits. The article is developed based of several perspectives and different types of beliefs. Though Wikipedia lacks the expert authored content, the quality is improved by aggregating the knowledge of the amateurs.

Let's first address the question of why do edit wars happen. Let's decompose a given article into various layers. If there are any layers that can be judged and if they overlap, the edit wars get invoked. This edit wars are actually coordinated efforts by the community to improve the article's quality. But how ? *The competing views of the editors will propel the Wikipedia further as the editors work toward ensuring their viewpoint and that being accepted by wider social community.*

With this knowledge we would like to propose the theory to predict the percentage completeness of the Wikipedia i.e., how much of world's knowledge is put into Wikipedia. The conflicts happening on Wikipedia are bound to rules and norms put forward by Wikipedia and hence it is a combined effort of the community in developing

the Wikipedia article.

How to study the role of edit war in knowledge building ?

Firstly, it is very important to get convinced that *when the edit wars reach consensus the page covers all the aspects about a particular topic i.e, the page is complete* because the page is improved by collaboration of thousands of people and more or less every related sub-topics will be discussed. Here are few possible ways of edit wars or conflicts reaching consensus :

1. By straight forward acceptance of the editor's argument.

2. By compelling the opposite editor to stop editing by bounding him to the rules and norms of Wikipedia.

3. By harassing the editor which is of course immoral but prevails.

When consensus is reached in this manner, then we can say that the users are satisfied with the content because no one didn't find anything wrong or any content missing and hence we can say that the article is complete. But this doesn't mean that there is no scope of further editing. It is there but the article in this state will definitely satisfy the immediate requirement of knowledge to the people.

The edit wars have the involvement of intense negotiations and hence it covers all the nook and corners of the topic and accumulates the maximum knowledge available with the crowd and hence edit wars are very important knowledge building agents in Wikipedia besides the initial editors.

What about the measure of completeness of Wikipedia ?

Basically, we divide the articles into several categories and all these categories are put in either of the two buckets which are

1. The article which have very less or no future.

2. The article which have huge scope of editing in future.

Few articles like that of Osama Bin Laden, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, some CBI case which has completed its investigation fully fall under

category 1. The edits there happen very rarely and we can say that they are complete. All the knowledge about them present in the world is accumulated in Wikipedia. **The percentage constitution of this category of articles in Wikipedia sets a lower bound of knowledge percentage in Wikipedia.** For example, imagine if Wikipedia had 100 articles covering the knowledge of entire world and 40 articles fall in category 1 then we can say that 40% of world's knowledge is found in Wikipedia. Thus setting a lower bound. *This completion has been done via a series of edit wars in most cases and thus we conclude that knowledge building is by edit wars in Wikipedia.*

Conclusion:

With above observations we conclude that the extent of knowledge in Wikipedia can be measured and edit wars help in accumulation of knowledge. This paper just gives an intuition about it. Every point discussed here will be validated using the wikipedia dump and the results will be published with still more accurate explanation of dynamics of Wikipedia.