

Role of libraries in Wikipedia content development

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Abstract: Wikipedia offers a lot of opportunities for the academic and research community to develop content collaboratively. Wikipedia and related projects can use for educational activities to enhance the skillsets of the academic community. Wikipedia and libraries are two significant initiatives that seek to open the door to knowledge. Libraries can inspire and guide users to contribute content to the Wikipedia project. This article describes the significance of libraries to coordinate Wikipedia activities for the user community.

Keywords: Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, Content development, Collaboration, Education.

Introduction

Encyclopedias are a collection of articles summarized from primary and secondary information sources. Factual articles on various topics are arranged in alphabetical order in general encyclopedias. There are also encyclopedias focused on just one subject, that is called subject encyclopedias (Hakimi, 2019). Encyclopedias are widely used by the general public and the academic community around the world as a source of reference. Encyclopedias contain collections of articles that provide basic knowledge on a variety of topics.

The fundamental concept of traditional encyclopedia changed with the arrival of online alternatives like Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation introduced Wikipedia online encyclopedia in 2001. The main features of Wikipedia are multilingual, free and open content. Many standards for reviewing encyclopedias had rewritten with the advent of Wikipedia. Traditionally articles for encyclopedias written and reviewed by leading scholars. The selection of subject experts for the writing and editorial work based on academic credentials. Centralised editorial activity is the main highlight of traditional encyclopedias. Wikipedia enters into the scene by introducing revolutionary characteristics like decentralised editorial activity, dependent on volunteers, minimal monetary resources, and free content (Kubiszewski et al., 2011). Vandalism and false information are the challenges facing by Wikipedia community. Wikipedia has devised many effective measures to detect and revert vandalism and other content falsification ("Wikipedia," 2019).

Availability of Wikipedia editions in Indian languages is an advantage for the people who use regional language as a mother tongue and medium for education. As per Wikimedia Statistics India consistently maintains 5th rank in page viewing in the country-wise ranking in recent years (Wikimedia Foundation, 2019).

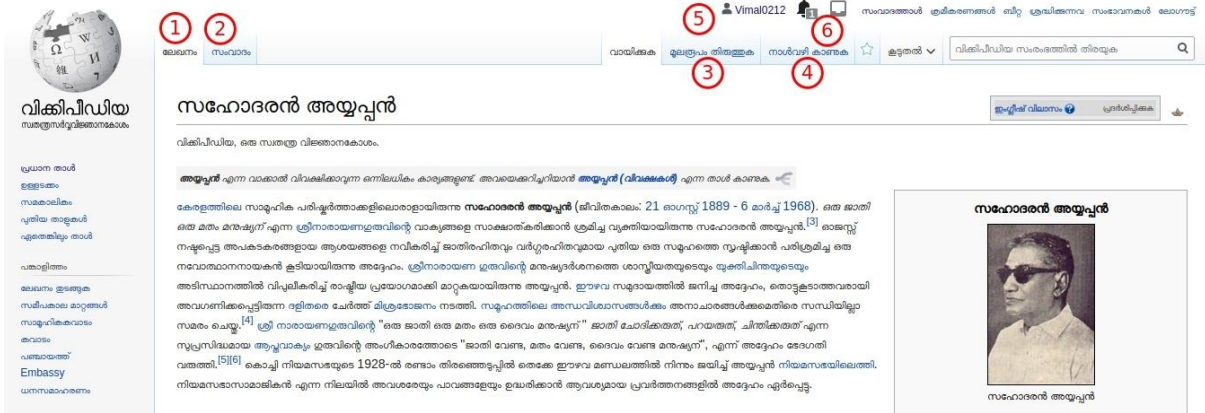
Wikipedia in Indian languages

The main obstacle to the availability of vernacular content on the Internet was the lack of proper standards for the use of Indian languages on computers. The lack of tools to easily type local languages into a computer has slowed down Wikipedia's encyclopedia operations in India. With the development of the Unicode standard, computer-assisted access to content in all Indian vernacular languages was made possible. As a result, the content of Indian languages on the Internet began to increase. The efforts of independent software groups like Indic Project and Swathanthra Malayalam Computing have contributed to the development of fonts and other tools for local languages (SMC, 2019). Such initiatives promoted and supported the use of language computing for education and public administration in the Indian states. Wikipedia's Indian language editions became active after the introduction of the Unicode standard for Indian languages. Wikipedia encyclopedia has 22 Indian language editions available.

How Wikipedia works

The Wikipedia community is the power of this free encyclopedia. There are two groups in the Wikipedia community: Wikipedia readers and content contributors. Wikipedia content editors are known as Wikipedians. The main function of Wikipedians is to create new articles, add new content to existing articles, and make changes to the content. Wikipedians are also responsible for detecting typos in articles, detecting and removing controversial content, and locating disputed passages.

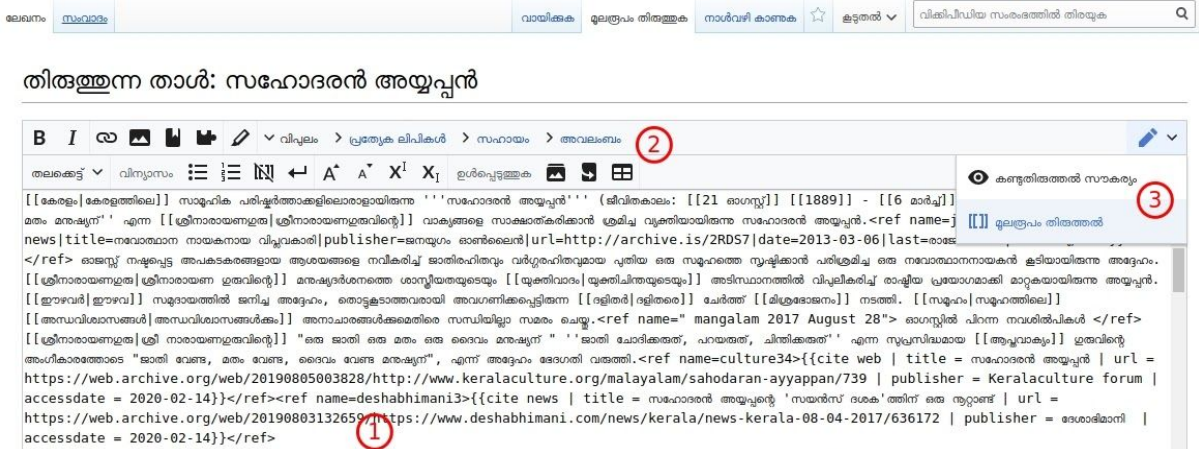
The content of articles can be manipulated by making changes to the content of existing articles or by starting a new article. Editing articles does not necessarily require a Wikipedia account, but there are benefits to starting an account. Each language edition has different websites. English (<https://en.wikipedia.org>) and Malayalam (<https://ml.wikipedia.org>) Wikipedia editions have separate websites. Once you have a Wikipedia account, you can use it to access the Wikipedia website in any language.



Elements in a Wikipedia page.

Let us get acquainted with the different parts of the Wikipedia page.

1. Article: The format for reading the article.
2. Discussion: A place to discuss the content and structure of the article.
3. Source edit: The content of the article can be edited here.
4. View history: Edits made to the content of the article and who made it here.
5. Account name: The name of the person who logged in to Wikipedia.
6. Messages: Messages to the author can be found here.



Editing of a Wikipedia article.

1. The content of the article is laid out using Wikitext markup language.
2. The toolbar has a number of options for creating and editing the content of the article.
3. You can also skip Wikitext and edit the content directly. Perhaps it is easier for beginners to see and edit directly.

The Wikipedia community will intervene if the newly added part of the article needs to be corrected for factual errors, typos, language errors, or formatting of the article. Errors can be detected and fixed by Wikipedia members, and there is an auto-bot system to detect and correct certain actions.

Use of Wikipedia in educational institutions

In addition to reading articles, Wikipedia is used worldwide as part of educational activities. SchoolWiki (<https://schoolwiki.in>) is an IT School prepared for public school students in Kerala based on the wiki. The aim of this project is to develop creative resources through the collaboration of students and teachers to promote learning resources, language skills and wiki usage. *Akshara Vriksham* is an initiative to create student holiday creations and add them to the school wiki. Students can use Wikipedia to learn new skills in the classroom. The following are some of the skills that students can learn from using Wikipedia (*Education/Reasons to Use Wikipedia*, 2019):

- ❖ Get a chance to read more.
- ❖ Gains the ability to describe and summarize.
- ❖ Students can learn to present subjects in a neutral way different from the usual classroom style.
- ❖ Biased content can be quickly identified. Students can decide whether an article is credible or not.
- ❖ Students are trained to find relevant sources to their subject and write summaries from them.
- ❖ Learn to collaborate with others to write articles for the encyclopedia.
- ❖ Students learn how to properly refer to and use authentic sources of knowledge.
- ❖ Learn about copyright and copyleft licenses.
- ❖ You can learn how to work with others online. It will be beneficial to practice working in a new global work environment.
- ❖ Students will have the opportunity to learn about the computer Markup language WikiText, the form of coding, and wiki software.

Wikipedia-based student activities can be more immersive and enjoyable than a regular classroom assignment. The curriculum can include Wikipedia-based student activities, from low school level to university level.

The role of libraries in the development of Wikipedia

As a community partnership, Wikipedia has created many opportunities for everyone to participate in collaborative work. Wikipedia and libraries are two great initiatives that seek to open the door to knowledge. Libraries and Wikipedia can work together to contribute new sources of information to human society. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions outlines what public libraries can do to coordinate Wikipedia's activities (Fenoll et al., 2016).

Libraries irrespective of its nature can provide training to its user community in creating Wikipedia content. Contact the Wikipedia community to find local Wikipedia contributors. Trainers can be found in the online groups of people who work with the Wikipedia project. After the library staff has been trained in Wikipedia, they can organize training programs for others. Special awareness classes and practical training can be

arranged for teachers, students, faculty members, housewives and senior citizens. Training should be conducted at regular intervals under the guidance of the Library.

Selected readers may be asked to add features and highlights of the book they have read to the Wikipedia article about the author and discuss it.

You can create Wikipedia articles about writers in each region and their works. This can draw the attention of writers and invite them to the library. The works of legend writers can be found and added to the wiki library and made available to the public.

Find copyright-expired books, historical documents and photographs in the library and in your region and digitized and made available to the public through various Wikimedia projects. Books can be added to the Wiki Library, and photographs can be added to the Wikimedia Commons website. Take photographs of important sites, buildings, and monuments in the area where the library located can be and added to the Wikipedia article about the geographic location. For this, you can create a team of students who will come for Wikipedia training and assign them.

You can ask various user groups to compile a list of articles that do not exist in the regional language Wikipedia.

Relevant Wikipedia articles in English and Hindi can be translated into the regional language Wikipedia.

Conclusion

Libraries can engage in Wikipedia activities with users and public participation. Libraries can contribute to Wikipedia's content development by using the information collected from various local history, geography, and events. Wikipedia is a large, non-profit organization that relies entirely on public participation. Even the smallest effort and involvement can influence the overall growth of the Wikipedia project.

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