The Dynamics of Mass Interaction

I am ashamed that I am almost one of the people who is actually lurking messages but not really responding that much as I looked up questions that people posted. But I was relieved that I was not singleton user of news group. Anyway, because I am the newsgroup user for most of computer science courses that I have been taken and am taking, I strongly agree to most of the results of demographics this research produced. I have been astonished that a lot of people are actually using this newsgroup system even though they were not students of engineers. And I am also amazed that interactivity and lots of aspects of newsgroups were similar to one another even though topic each newsgroup branch is dealing with is differ one another.

I am interested in the demographics made for FAQs because I never thought FAQs were never related to any portion of newsgroup so that amount of FAQ could be changed by any factor that some change of newsgroup could possibly have. As I expected, the size of newsgroup participate did not change any statistical result of FAQs, but astonishingly, moderation of newsgroup had direct relationship with number of FAQs generated in newsgroup. I am still not certain why this kind of result came out because moderation and FAQ seem unrelated to each other.

I am also interested on cross posting because I never posted in that way at all. Since I used newsgroup only for the occasions when I attend cs courses, it was unnecessary to do cross posting to other newsgroup branches. Because of that, it is hard to understand result that cross posting is quite common in newsgroups and cross posting makes strong relationships among different newsgroups.

Other than that, most of the results came out from demographics and statistics are understandable; I agree strongly that most of people are just lurking (since 27 percent of messages are came from singleton users). Newsgroup still in operation (which means works out) with devoted participants that are not that many so I don’t think existence of lurking is not that critically damaging the mass interaction of newsgroup. More devoted participants can make great mass interaction of newsgroup, but current situation is quite enough to make newsgroup in movement.

I also agree to the result that long messages are not related to the integration of interactivity because I think long messages can make to reader bore rather than passionate to reply back. It is true that longer messages are quite informed well most of the time, but it is also true that it is hard to make people to respond that much long after they read the message. Longer the message smaller the percentage of people reply back.

However, as the research paper implies, it is hard to predict the interactivity of some particular newsgroup that comes out with new figures different to other existing newsgroups. Interactivity also depends on what topic the each newsgroup is dealing with and what moderations exist, etc; such many conditions and figures make interactivity much hard to be assumed. But I believe, if this research paper went to more demographics and statistics to research on, this ambiguity of interactivity could’ve been solved.
Becoming Wikipedian: Transformation of Participation in a Collaborative Online Encyclopedia

Yes, I use Wikipedia frequently in order to get little more understandings of concepts and models when I study at university. And I was surprised when information in wiki had much detail and sometimes more precise than textbooks I had. And when I heard this website was nothing professional but collection of data from voluntary users, the fact made me more interested deeply to such online encyclopedia produced by collaboration of voluntary users.

When I heard that this wiki encyclopedia is purely from users who put their words to describe some particular term without logging in, I just wondered how this notion of sharing could work out. There is no paying or gratitude toward those that put effort to fill out definition of certain terms, there is no writing or editing contents lower bound (requirement) that makes information of data more professional or certainly correct, and there is even no supporting company that manages and controls data written at Wikipedia. Disregarding these minus effects (seems like), Wikipedia has lots of data that has much accuracy as other published encyclopedia, and most important thing is this source and content was totally free to users even if they are just lurking.

Even though this paper doesn’t certainly say why those volunteers do their work in Wikipedia without any profits to them, I would like to say that these editing contents make writers get more information that they are interested. When Wiki users make their first attempt to fix some particular part of contents, they do because they know quite specific information about that certain content and they know because they are interested in that specific topic. People like to know more things of what they knew before. When they edit content from wiki, they might get some feedback or counterattack by someone else who also edits that fixed content. They might fight each other, but most of the cases, they will eventually get informed more of the content which makes the knowledge to get little broader than before, which is good thing. And that plus effect is especially good to students or professors who always seek more knowledge than they currently have.

Anyway, I could learn a lot of interesting approach to wikipedians, and especially the process of being strongly participated to wiki was quite interesting to me. Even though those reasons of becoming participated is quite abstract or ethical rather than realistic, I agree that I could try to edit some of the data that was written at wiki; I am Korean and I also saw some of the contents about Korean cultures, music, etc, and I had strong feeling to edit some of them that seemed unreal and nonsense to me. Only reason I did not try editing is that I was getting more help than figuring mistake and faults of wiki. Wiki is pretty precise and sometimes give more help than contents on published encyclopedia like Britannica, one of the famous published encyclopedias around the world.

Yes it is of course true that many people who are using Wikipedia are just lurking, but it is also true that people who are using Wiki is so many that even the little percentage of users of wiki is many enough to keep diversity of contents of wiki. The diversity of editors also makes the contents more precise and well formed and this fact was kind of unpredictable to me to happen.
Studying Cooperation and Conflict between Authors with history flow Visualizations

History flow visualization tool seems very intuitive and useful at first. It won’t fit in to other types of encyclopedia where the versions and improvements are not made that often as Wikipedia does. But this model is worthy enough to be invented because this analysis of user cooperation and conflicts in wiki made solid result and proves the greatness of Wikipedia.

I was happy to see the reason why the content of Wiki is not worse but equally good and even better than other types of encyclopedia like Britannica. I first thought that not basic requirement of being author of Wikipedia would make serious low grade of information of certain contents (for example, the concept of RPG should be defined by people who has sophisticated knowledge on games, but not defined by boys younger than 10 who does know what RPG they are crazily playing with but doesn’t even know basic concept of RPG). However, as soon as I understood those low grade information of certain contents would be deleted as soon as other user sees this information, I figured out how smart the creator of Wikipedia is.

Yes it is true that this constant endless change can have certain vandalism or low grade information to the contents, but this constant change gives not only repairing of damaged data, but also constant update of data that changes as time goes. For example, History of United States will constantly change if this country doesn’t vaporize at some moment, and also some certain types of computer languages like Java, which is constantly updated and improved till now, has dramatic changes within few years which makes authors of wiki busy to edit.

I was also interested in certain types of vandalism and surprised that these kinds of vandalism were presence at the moment people and I used wiki. I think I witnessed the mass deletion of certain page. I don’t remember what the page was but I remember there was nothing at the page but the word itself and the references to things that were not even presented at the page. And I also surprised that this mass deletion vandalism can be repaired within few minutes which makes most of the wiki user can’t see such vandalism easily (except for the people like me; lucky, or maybe unlucky).

I didn’t understand why this vandalism could be recovered so fast until I read the authorship part of the research paper. The people called ‘watchers’ looked up the recent changes of Wikipedia data and figured out the patterns of users that constantly updates with good intend or bad intend. Again, the voluntarit of Wikipedia saved itself from this malicious vandalism and it makes me think this freeness of users is quite important to future online services.

I felt interesting about statistical result of editing pattern; it was about people tends to delete or insert text rather than moving text in an article and this research analyzes that it is because users do not read the article entirely but some part of it instead. But I don’t think this is true. I think the reason of deleting or inserting text rather than moving text is just because it is unnecessary to move text most of the times. Encyclopedia is to define some particular content precisely and accurately so that it doesn’t give much weight to how well the organization of defining content should be.