

How does the largest online databank stack up against the well-established Britannica Encyclopedia? The answer relies on focusing the narration to Bengali poet and first non-European Nobel Prize in Literature winner, Rabindranath Tagore. An in-depth look at Wikipedia's entry will help establish the accuracy and credibility of Wikipedia in comparison to Britannica Encyclopedia.

Wikipedia Summary: Rabindranath Tagore (May 7, 1861 - August 4, 1941) is a Bengali poet from Calcutta. He was instrumental in India's quest for independence from Britain. India's national anthem Jana Gana Mana and Bangladesh's Amar Shonar Bangla were both his compositions. The Tagore family were well-known for their wealth and scholarly contributions to India. Tagore spent some time studying at East Sussex, England under his father's wishes that he becomes a barrister. Although Rabindranath did not finish his degree, he got exposed to foreign music and found inspirations in a variety of folk tunes. In 1880, he returned to Bengal and later on married Mrinalini Devi, together they had five children. His most famous work is a collection of poems called Gitanjali. His verses and poetic skills were recognized in 1913 when he became the first non-European Nobel Prize in Literature winner. He also was awarded knighthood by King George V which he later on renounced, in protest for 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Though somewhat critical of Gandhi's activism, he became a moderator of the Swaraj protests. Moreover, he used poetry to campaigned against the casting of untouchables and successfully opened Guruvayoor Temple to the Dalits. Most of Tagore's work revolves around economic injustices; his poems were famous among the working class. Tagore's legacy also includes the founding of Visva-Bharati University; the proceeds of Gitanjali and his international appearances helped establish the school. Rabindranath Tagore reshaped Bengali literature by introducing it to the world and vice-versa. Unfortunately, Tagore passed in 1941, few years before India's independence in 1947.

Comparison with Britannica's (BE) Content: Common knowledge like names, birthdays, and honors are the same in both sources although some time periods are slightly different. BE is more general with the timeline while Wiki appears to be more detailed. For example, BE mentioned that in the late 1870s, Tagore went to England for school; Wiki's entry was more specific, "Tagore enrolled at a public school in Brighton, East Sussex, England in 1878." BE's general timeline makes it hard to dispute because 1878 is the also late 1870s and East Sussex is in fact, in England. On the other hand, Wiki's specificity triggers curiosity and further research. According to Wiki, Tagore's nephew and niece lived with him during his time in Sussex; the

footnote for this data prompted Tagore's biography book, "Rabindranath Tagore: The Myriad-Minded Man" by Dutta and Robinson an added value to the research. With enough skills and resourcefulness, the leads from Wiki entries can elevate the quality of one's work. Another significant difference between the two entries is the length of data. Wiki gave a broader scope by mentioning Tagore's travels and meetings with notable personalities like Gandhi, Einstein, and more. Britannica's summary is much shorter and more focused on basic facts that are hard to dispute.

Contributors Credibility: The editing process and standards affects the accuracy of information on both sources. As of 2017, there are 2.36 million contributors around the world (Statista), who shares expertise in many languages and cultures for free. While Wiki retains few employees, most of its content and updates come from the community. On the contrary, BE has a long history of scholarly and distinguished contributors. The contrast in the process does not discount the attributes if Wiki contributors. For example, Andrew Robinson is the editor of BE's Tagore entry, evidently, a Wikipedian himself. Robinson and Dutti co-authored Tagore's biography and their more detailed contributions to the article were cited in Wiki but not in BE. Wiki contributors are given more liberty; very different from BE's traditional and regimented standards and verification process. The result of editors' freedom or lack of makes BE's entry more correct but dismayingly incomplete. Another example of how Wiki contributors can affect the data gathering process is the constant update or "edit wars" as knows to the Wikipedians. The talk tab on the Wiki page provides insights to the recent updates done in November 2017; a debate between two contributors about Tagore's nationality since he passed before India's independence, one editor argued that Tagore should be classified as British-Indian. The constant updates in Wiki are confusing to follow, but such collaboration can arguably end up in a more accurate result.

Both sources provided a good starting point on the subject; BE's information on Tagore is short and more focused on facts while Wiki has significantly more data available for further examination. Wiki gives more interesting leads and fosters critical thinking skills. The information sharing concept of Wiki is relatively new compared to Britannica and would require more time to develop and establish its credibility.