

Humans with  
increased knowledge  
we sometimes learn  
that



Humans have always been in the pursuit of knowledge. It is our curious natures that always demands us to seek more knowledge. But why do we seek this knowledge? What satisfaction would it give us to have increased knowledge? Many people have always wanted to know more knowledge because understanding more gives us confidence. However, there are many times where as we come to have more knowledge, we experience more doubt and end with more questions than we started with, therefore losing the confidence we once had in our knowledge and understanding. There is knowledge that we know, and there is knowledge that we do not know. Sometimes, we are unaware of the unknown, making us confident thinking we fully know the truth of our reality.

Nevertheless, this does not make us any less ignorant. If we knew that there is an unknown, we would not be confident in our knowledge anymore. The famous quote by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German Writer and statesman, “ we know with confidence when we know little” implies we only have confidence in what we know when we know very little. In natural sciences, a main area of knowledge in modern times, with increased knowledge we sometimes learn that everything we once knew is wrong. Therefore, making us realize we knew nothing or simply making us realize our ignorance.

With increased knowledge, we may understand that our whole fundamental principles of a model were wrong and that could leave us with ever more doubt. Therefore, we need to know a distinction between knowledge that is true, and knowledge that we think is true but does not get us closer to the truth nor gives us a better understanding of reality. In other AOKs like <https://assignbuster.com/humans-with-increased-knowledge-we-sometimes-learn-that/>

religious knowledge systems, this is not the case as some of them require complete faith and doubting the existence of the God and the religion is a sin. So in fact, increased knowledge may result in increased doubt and a realization of ignorance in some AOKs like natural sciences, but may result in increased confidence and even less doubt in other AOKs like religious knowledge systems.

In natural sciences, doubt typically results in the conducting of more experiments that result in newer findings which can sometimes get us closer to the truth, or a better description of the universe and ourselves. Scientists observe and collect data to then organize this data into theories. As time passes there is more data, which makes the theory evolve and brings us a better understanding of the data. In this case we can say that we understand what that data means, and we are highly confident in our theory and understanding. Even if scientists have been wrong in creating a new theory, this “ new” wrong can be more accurate and closer to the truth than the former wrong. sometimes, it is the uncertainty and doubt that is the main engine for creating new scientific theories to seek the truth.

But on the other hand, as Richard Feynman said in one of his speeches “ when a law is right it can be used to find another one that by having confidence in this law in this law if something is the matter it suggests perhaps another phenomenon” (PHYSICS). According to him this process of some discoveries and theories leading to others, creates somewhat of an avalanche of new discoveries. For example, the law of gravity helped us learn that it takes time for light to travel from moons to the earth and when we see the moons we see not how they are now but how they were the time <https://assignbuster.com/humans-with-increased-knowledge-we-sometimes-learn-that/>

when the light started travelling towards us allowing scientists to calculate the speed of light. However, increased knowledge in specific times makes us realize that we are not correct, that the knowledge we have is not the truth. Increased data could increase the accuracy of a model, but it could also show us that the whole fundamentals of the model are wrong.

For that reason, more knowledge could sometimes prove to us that we were mistaken about the fundamental principles of something, making us realize our ignorance and increasing our doubts, resulting in a loss of confidence in our scientific model. For example, say an imaginary person moves to a new city. At first, he would be uncertain of his new surroundings but after a while he would learn more about his town. That person is now more confident about the place as he knows more about it; He is more confident in himself. But what if he discovers that his town has an extensive network of underground tunnels, and it is not even the only town in that person's reality, it is one of millions. Would he still have the confidence he had in his knowledge about knowing the world around him? Probably not. In natural sciences the scientific goal is to increase knowledge and decrease doubt through rationalism and sense perception. However, this can result in a paradox where some scientists attempt to lessen doubt and grow knowledge has resulted in his realization of his ignorance.

He who now knows more, considers himself more ignorant than before. Additionally, an intellectual person is more likely to know more about history, and he has seen how in history theories that were widely accepted in the scientific community were debunked. As an example, when people believed

in the geocentric model of the universe, they had no or very little doubt about their understanding of the theory and were confident in believing it.

However, Copernicus debunked this theory by careful observation of the solar system and the planets. This increased knowledge about the solar system created doubt in many, causing them to question what they previously thought true. Knowing that there is a lot that you do not know, makes you know that you know less because knowing what you do not know increases doubt as you now know that there is more you do not know. But when you know what you do not know, in a way or others, you know about it, though you do not know the entirety per se. however, if you know what you do not know, it is paradoxical. The goal of scientists is in fact to decrease doubt and uncertainty, but this process sometimes ends up creating more doubt than before. Interestingly, George Bernard Shaw has once said to Albert Einstein that science is wrong, and it creates 10 more questions trying to answer one.

However, I believe that it is these questions and this doubt that has allowed scientists to have so much progress in the past millennia. In fact, I think we can say that If you know more you ask more questions. Sometimes acquiring or having knowledge in some AOKs can make you doubt the knowledge you have in another AOK making you disbelieve what you once thought true. As an example of this, we see that the more that we have learned about the Big Bang theory and evolution in the past century, the more people that have come to doubt the creationist theory of Adam and Eve where God created them to live in the garden of Eden and we are all their descendants. So indeed, knowledge in one AOK could cause doubt about the knowledge in <https://assignbuster.com/humans-with-increased-knowledge-we-sometimes-learn-that/>

another AOK. As example of this is the quantum mechanics theory and relativity theory. In general relativity, events are continuous and deterministic, meaning that every cause matches up to a specific, local effect.

In quantum mechanics, events produced by the interaction of subatomic particles happen in jumps (yes, quantum leaps), with probabilistic rather than definite outcomes. Quantum rules allow connections forbidden by classical physics. (Powell). Both these have been proven, yet they disagree in certain aspects. The newer quantum mechanics theory made us question the theory of relativity, demonstrating how knowledge in one field can create doubt and uncertainty in another.

Another example of this is gaining knowledge in religious systems which make followers doubt knowledge in other AOKs like natural sciences. On the contrary, gaining knowledge in religious AOKs can often give overall more certainty than doubt. In many cases, believing in the existence of god with absolute certainty reduces your doubts about other beliefs like atheism, which is belief that there is no God/gods. A very religious person does not have doubts about his/her God/gods at all, they essentially cannot as it is required of people in Abrahamic religions to fully have faith in God. Many people are so religious that they do not even consider believing in other AOKs. I personally have a family member who does not oblige to any rules and morals except Islamic ones.

He is most confident in what he believes (his God and religion) and has absolutely no doubt about his knowledge and his main WOK is faith. At the

same time, the belief religious people have makes them doubt knowledge in other AOKs. All in all, different AOKs tackle doubt contrarily resulting in various levels of doubt and confidence depending on the AOK we are dealing with. Religious knowledge systems, especially Abrahamic religions, give a kind of certainty, forbidding the religious followers to questions their holy book.

However, natural sciences are an AOK that require asking questions and attempting to answer those questions through different WOKs like sense perception and reason. The entire process requires some doubt and curiosity, and questions need to be asked for it to begin. Overall, Doubt is necessary for progress as it is the fuel for the engine of further research and discoveries.