



Human Being and Their Information Needs

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Abstract

A reflection is exposed as the human being is a living being within the taxonomy; but also from another point of view, he is a cognitive being, a psychological being, a social being, a communicational being and an informational being. It is briefly explained how this point of view can be seen from the perspective of the information needs that as a human being has had throughout its evolution.

The question: why does the human being keep their knowledge, their ideas or their feelings?, It is the one that guides the reflections that are presented taking as a starting point the preservation of knowledge and information as part of the human being.

It is also concluded that research on information needs, informational behavior and satisfaction are essential for the development of him as a human being.

The question: why does the human being keep their knowledge, their ideas or their feelings?, can have several answers, of a religious, political, economic, historical, educational or scientific nature, but what can be observed is the fact that this knowledge, ideas or feelings are expressed in different media, such as cave paintings, the form of the burials of their dead, clay tablets, scrolls, codices, papyrus, books, magazines, audiovisual and electronic documents. This type of behavior, of preserving knowledge, has been present in human beings since they emerged as *Homo sapiens*, that is to say, this behavior has accompanied them from their origins to the present day. But human behavior from its origins has a motivation, something that drives it. So, behavior is originated by a need. This need is the information need, which originates an information behavior; that of conserving knowledge by capturing it in drawn, written or recorded information on some medium such as: stone, paper, electromagnetic, etc.

Then, it can be understood that the need for information is “the lack of knowledge and information about a phenomenon, object, event, action or fact that a person (i.e. the human being) has, produced by external and internal factors, which cause a state of dissatisfaction, which the subject is motivated to satisfy by presenting a behavior to seek satisfaction” [1]. Precisely, the satisfaction of that need for information, caused by the lack of knowledge, is what leads the human being to a behavior, which is to seek that knowledge reflected in the information recorded in some

medium or, if he obtains the answer to that lack of knowledge, he tends to preserve it by recording the information that contains it in some medium. But why does the human being have this behavior? because preserve information and knowledge, because transmit that information and knowledge to other human beings, because leave that information and knowledge recorded or engraved on a support such as stone, paper, or electromagnetic media (on the Internet or in the cloud).

The answer to this question can be reflected in several ways, the first of them is obtained from the biological point of view taking the classification of the human being, i.e.: he belongs to the animal kingdom, belongs to the chordates, is a vertebrate, belongs to the class of mammals, belongs to the order of primates, to the suborder of anthropoids, to the family of hominids (humans and their immediate ancestors), to the genus *Homo* and to the species *Homo sapiens*. It is precisely *Homo sapiens* who has exclusively developed this need and this behavior (information need and information behavior), no other species has it now. But also, the second way to reflect on the human being that has these needs and this information behavior is seen from the point of view as a human being in itself and its development through thousands of years as a biological entity in evolution, then it can be seen as: a biological being, a cognitive being, a psychological being, a social being, a communicational being and of the previous ones, therefore

related to its information need and its information behavior; as an informational being. Undoubtedly, the human being in the evolution of his brain developed to the one he has today as homo sapiens, where reasoning, ideas, abstract thinking, and knowledge stored in his brain has led him to identify himself as a cognitive being. But in the same way, the sense of art, its artistic expressions, see cave paintings, sculptures, and other manifestations, make it a being that transmits feelings. This range of feelings is only possessed by the human being.

Feelings of joy, sadness, love, hate, revenge, altruism and others, make him a psychological being, a being with an identity and a personality; also, the human being has been characterized by being in groups, from primitive clans until now social communities of different order, which has allowed him to work in groups to do great things and work together to achieve goals of different order (find a vaccine for a disease caused by a virus or bacteria); living in groups has also meant the development of communication among the members of these groups through sign language (body language) and sounds (for example, teaching other members of the clan how to make stone tools such as flint knives), then a language with structure and later with symbols to record what one wants to say to the others; in this last relationship of communicating, either orally and bodily (or non-verbally) some idea or knowledge, is where the need to preserve knowledge and also to transmit it using whatever they had at their disposal: stone, clay tablets, paper, skin (parchments), etc. Then, derived from the above, it becomes a being that has to do with preserving and transmitting knowledge through information recorded on some medium, that is to say, it becomes an informational being.

This second way of reflecting on the human being seen as a cognitive, psychological, social, communicational being is what allows us to investigate him as a human being who produces and consumes information that when it reaches his brain can be transformed into knowledge and at the same time use that knowledge and with the possibility of generating new information that allows others to generate knowledge and information in turn. But also with the possibility, which could be considered as common, of using that information and that acquired knowledge, by having access to that information, only to be used by the same entity for itself, for its inner development. There are groups of people or human beings that only receive information and knowledge, do not generate new information and only keep it for themselves and with it they carry out various activities that are specific to them, depending on the place they occupy within a society, a community or a group.

But why record knowledge outside the brain in the form of information recorded on a support?, the answer to this question could correspond to the fact that possibly the brain cannot keep all the information and knowledge acquired in the course of a person's life or the life of a community and it is required to leave it for later generations not only to preserve it and replicate it, but possibly to be criticized or repudiated and to serve to develop it and that a new one appears from the previous one. Examples of this can possibly be seen in the writings of Thales of Miletus, Pythagoras, Euclid, the ideas left by Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, or else see the manuscripts of the Middle Ages elaborated by Galileo, Kepler, Leonardo da Vinci, Copernicus, or the world views on the use of reason left by Descartes, Kant or Hegel.

The human being, Homo sapiens, in the long process that led him to the entity he is today, has developed the ability to use the information and knowledge produced by previous generations to be used and generate new information and knowledge, this has been achieved thanks to the development of a structured language and a language not only oral but also written that allows precisely its conservation and consultation for future generations. These high-level needs, once physiological, social, security and esteem needs have been overcome, have led to the appearance of information needs.

Once counting with the time or propitious moments of reflection about their surrounding world, such as questioning what is death? or what is beyond it? or wondering why it rains?, how lightning originates in storms, or wondering why the sun and the moon appear every day and night?, or the movement of the stars in the firmament or what are the eclipses?. The moments in which human beings have had that moment of reflection, of questioning the world around them is what has prompted them to seek answers, which, as mentioned above, correspond to having a need for information to fill those gaps in knowledge, for answers to those questions. Then, these information needs can be investigated in order to be satisfied, since human beings always seek to satisfy their needs by any medium. But these needs that are linked to knowledge are the ones that have allowed human beings to develop and build the current societies we have today. Research on information needs, information behavior and the satisfaction of those needs can be fundamental for the development of that human being, that biological, cognitive, psychological, social, communicational, and informational being.

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