

# Philosophy

Q Discuss the skepticism of Hume in depth; how it has effected his idea regarding : cause & self? (12)

## ① Introduction:

Hume is regarded as skeptic by many. Which is true based on his philosophy. ~~(He agreed with Berkeley regarding materialism, but not material)~~<sup>\*</sup> He was skeptical regarding many subjects that concern philosophy. Regarding the external material world, he shared Berkeley's view that material objects are not real. His skepticism extend to the prime theory of causation, on which the foundation of Science and philosophy are based. He also questioned the 'self', saying that there is no self instead the successive perception is known as self.

## ② Skepticism of Hume in depth:

Hume was skeptical of many key concepts, whose truth was not questioned by any of his predecessor. He is recognized by many as a total skeptic. According to Hume, "a true skeptic will doubt his doubts too"

— Philosophy: Power of Ideas

This quote underscores Hume's view regarding

The importance of skepticism

2A) Basis of skepticism: Limitation of knowledge:

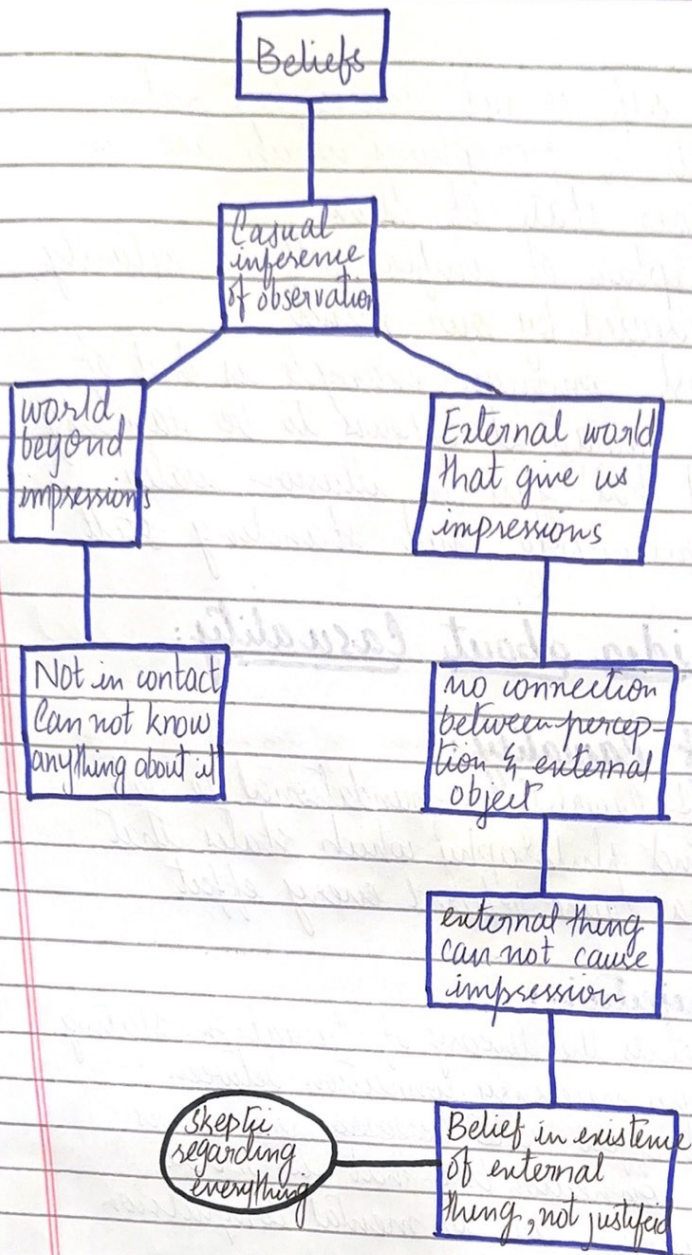
Hume's skepticism arised as a result of his belief that human can not know anything for sure. limitation of knowledge lead to skepticism

When humans believe something exist. There belief is based on causal inference of their observation. which, in other words, can be called impression.

However, humans can never experience anything beyond their impressions. Neither they come into contact with anything beyond their impressions. This limits the knowledge of things beyond human observation.

Now, about the impressions human have, They don't observe direct connection between their perceptions and the external object, which they believe have caused the impression. Therefore, they can not claim that a thing caused the impression.

Consequently, their belief in the external object is not justified.



2B **Illusion of unity: Corroborated Hume's Skepticism:**

Hume further ~~corroborated~~ corroborated his skepticism with theory of illusion of unity. Hume argued that our mind is series of successive perceptions. which leads to conclusion

that our self is not static but rather a bundle of perceptions which are in continuous state of flux.

Our perception of unified self is actually illusion created by our mind.

The most common example is that of River. To human it appears to be standing still but that's just an illusion. water flows continuously, not standing still.

### ③ Hume's idea about Casuality:

#### 3A. Theory of Casuality:

Theory of Casuality is foundational to both science and philosophy which states that there is a cause behind every effect.

#### 3B. Hume's rejection:

Hume rejects the theory of Casuation. stating there is no necessary connection between cause and effect. ~~just because~~ There seems to be a connection but that is made up by humans due to mental compulsion.

#### 3C. Demonstrated through example

we perceive X causing Y but there is actually X and Y. it is the constant conjunction of X and Y that we take for causation. There is no guarantee that future experience will show a similar conjunction.

### 3d. Hume's ideas regarding Causation:

- (i) Hume believed that cause and effect must be distinct existences, with each conceivable without the other
- (ii) The causal relation is to be analysed in terms of contiguity and conjunction
- (iii) It is not necessary true that every beginning of existence has a cause

### (4) Hume's idea about Self:

#### 3a. Hume rejection of idea of self.

Hume believed there is no such thing called 'self'. He said, "we are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity; and are in perpetual flux and movement."

— David Hume.

#### 3b. Mind: bundle of perceptions.

Hume argued that whenever he tried to catch himself, he is unable to do so. What he instead finds there is particular perceptions like pleasure or pain.

He thus describes mind as theater where several perceptions successively make their appearances, in a constant flow that one perceives it to be ~~in~~ a unity.

## ⑤ Conclusion

To sum up, Hume was very skeptical regarding virtually all subjects. This skepticism arises from his ~~his~~ theory of knowledge where he concludes that human can know nothing for sure. This view of his is further corroborated by his theory of illusion of unity. His skepticism extends to most foundational concepts in philosophy which are theory of Causation and self. Although not widely accepted, his theory did indeed paved path for questioning widely held beliefs.