UNIT 6: KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

UNIT STRUCTURE

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6.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- explain the nature of knowledge.
- describe the nature of belief.
- explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

6.2. INTRODUCTION

The problem of knowledge is the corner stone of all philosophical investigation. What is Knowledge—is the central questions to which epistemologists try to provide answers which include also other questions—What is the distinction between knowledge and belief? Which beliefs are justified and which are not? Is knowledge necessarily true? Etc. These are prerequisite primary questions for epistemology.

The word ‘knowledge’ is derived from platonic term ‘episteme’ which may refer either to a body of truth or to the state of someone who knows them. A naturalistic account of the concept of knowledge is that knowledge registers truth just as a thermometer registers temperature. Knowing of

person and objects as well as for propositional knowing when epistemology concentrates on the nature of knowledge, it mainly recognizes factual knowledge which is close to reality.

The term 'knowledge' has various usages such as—

1) Knowledge of people, places and things. For e.g. 'I know the city' or 'I know y'

This kind of use of knowledge is named by Russell as 'knowledge by acquaintance'. It is direct, immediate and pre-judgmental knowledge. Russell pointed out that we do not have knowledge by acquaintance of physical objects. Again we are not acquainted with other people's minds. We obtain the knowledge of these things what is called by Russell knowledge by description. This knowledge by description is judgmental knowledge.

2) Knowledge in the sense of having an ability to do thing. For e.g. I know how to play guitar. Ryle says that knowing how is practical and non-propositional knowledge.

3) Knowledge in the sense of apprehending information or knowing that. For e.g. I know that the 'earth is round' and 'I know that x is the mother of y'. Knowledge in this propositional sense is the knowing that so and so. There is some relation between this last sense of 'know' and the earlier ones. According to Ryle, knowing that is theoretical and propositional knowledge.

The sense of 'know' is elementary to human cognition and is required both for theoretical speculation and practical investigation. The importance of the third sense of 'know' is that, this is not, however, knowledge in the sense that concerns us. It is merely the possession of information. But what is the requirement to know in this third and most important sense. Suppose that the letter "p" stands for any proposition. One believes that p must be true. The moment one has some reason to believe that a proposition is not true; this immediately negates a person's claim to know p. Similarly if

one says 'he knows p, but p is not true, so it becomes self-contradictory. It may be that I thought I knew p; but p is false, I didn't really know it. It means knowing p knows that p is true.

The concept of 'belief' is very central to the epistemology as the ground level epistemological concepts of truth and falsity and justification are applied primarily to beliefs and of derivatively to knowledge. The concept of knowledge is associated with the concept of belief as per Plato's definition. According to the earlier epistemologists, knowledge and belief are terms of descriptive of mental occurrences.

In philosophical tradition we find various ways of conceiving of beliefs. Armstrong put forward three important ways of conceiving of belief i.e.

1) Beliefs are conscious occurrences in believers mind.
2) Beliefs are dispositions of the believer.
3) Belief the state of the believer's mind.

Let us now discuss the nature of knowledge and nature of Belief.

6.3. NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

Regarding the nature of Knowledge philosophers can discuss various views from the very early period. Among them we preferably discuss the views of Plato, Ryle, Austin, Ayer etc. We can discuss them below—

Plato's concept of knowledge:

In his dialogue Theaetetus Plato tried to define knowledge through various concepts. He assumes that knowledge is infallible and of what is. With this assumption he goes to examine different traditional accounts of knowledge and shows them to be inadequate.

Traditionally knowledge is identified with perception. According to Plato, if knowledge had been identified with perception then it implies that what appear to be true for one person is true for that person. Secondly,

perception often gives us contradictory results. The same thing may be perceived by some one as 'x' and some one else as 'y'. Thirdly, if all perceptions are equally true then all proofs and refutations become meaningless. And there will be no criterion for differentiating the perception of an individual from the perception of the other non-human sentient beings. Further he says that perceptions are not even a part of knowledge. We can not really be said to know anything if we have not attained truth about it. Hence it can be said that mere sense perception neither in the whole nor in the part can be identified with knowledge.

Secondly, Plato says that knowledge is identified with true judgment. A true judgment can be a guess or a random shot. For e.g. in case of an innocent man under trial, against whom there are strong evidences. A skilful lawyer defending him may elicit the judgment that he is innocent from the jury by manipulating the evidence. Plato here states that someone can be persuaded into making a true judgment without knowing the truth. So knowledge is not just true judgment.

In his third assumption Plato says that knowledge is defined as true judgment with an account. This definition of knowledge actually means— knowledge is true judgment plus an account (logos) or knowledge is true belief with logos. In three senses this definition has been understood—

a) The first sense is 'making one's thought apparent vocally.
b) The second sense is the enumeration of the element that something.
c) The third is 'telling some mark by which the object you are asked about differs from all other things'.

A true judgment is a true belief and a true belief is not true knowledge. If justification is added to true knowledge then true judgment is not identical with knowledge. If justification is taken to be the analysis of the belief into constituent parts, then such justification can not convert true belief into knowledge as the enumeration of parts of an object. There is no scientific account of that object. So this definition can not make a true notion of knowledge.

In Theaetetus he makes a distinction between knowledge and opinion. These are considered to be the two different functions are based on the differentiation of their objects. In Republic, Plato says knowledge as a function of mind may operate in two different ways- either as pure reason or as understanding. The objects of pure reason are Ideas or Forms or Archetypes while those of understanding are mathematical entities. On the other hand opinion (doxa) could also be of two kinds' viz. higher opinion and lower opinion. Their corresponding objects are particular sensible objects and the 'shadows' and images of such objects respectively. So, according to Plato, knowledge and opinion are two different states of mind dealing with different sorts of objects. So knowledge and belief are two distinct faculties as they cognize two different kinds of objects.

Gilbert Ryle's concept of Knowledge:

Gilbert Ryle was a philosopher of ordinary language. He tried to remove lots of myths that resulted from the philosopher's deviation from ordinary usages of language. In order to fulfill this purpose he takes up the concept of knowledge. In his book 'Concept of Mind' he makes a distinction between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'. The former involves some activity while the later involves information. There are some similarities as well as differences between the two.

We can say about how to play an instrument as well as of learning something but we never speak of a person believing or opinion how and though it is proper to ask for grounds or reasons for someone's acceptance of a proposition. Knowing how to do something, according to Ryle, involves ability to give correct and successful performance which satisfies a standard or criterion. One can not say that a well performing clock knows how to show the time because knowing how as an intelligent performance is a predicate applicable to persons responsible for their performances. Hence it can be said that knowing how involves intelligent performance and in our language an action is said to be intelligent. Since knowing how in many of the cases does not involve consideration of principles, maxims or

imperatives and in those cases where it can be shown that it involves consideration of these, their consideration involves knowing how which in its turn does not involve knowing that. Therefore we may say that according to Ryle's interpretation, knowing how is more fundamental than knowing that.

Knowing how consist in the ability to give a successful performance. But in our ordinary usage we do not accept that a person knows how to do a thing in spite of his ability to give successful performance in many cases. We make distinction between things done successfully by chance or blindly and things done from the knowledge of doing that thing.

According to Gilbert Ryle, the verb 'to know' is a dispositional or a capacity verb. Dispositional words like 'to know' are used to describe human behaviour and as a result "sentences embodying these dispositional words have been interpreted as being categorical reports of particular but unwitnessable matters of fact instead of being testable, open hypothetical and what is called 'semi-hypothetical statements'. It is noted that some dispositional words are highly generic or determinable while others are highly specific or determinate. Dispositional words like 'know', 'believe', 'aspire', 'cleaver' and 'humorous' is determinable dispositional words. They signify abilities, tendencies or proneness to do, not things of one unique kind, but things of lots of different kinds. Thus knowing is a determinable dispositional verb which is mistaken to be determinate dispositional word and hence supposed to be like other determinate dispositional word indicating a disposition which is actualized in one definite way. All the different activities that are the exercises of the disposition to know are supposed to be the same, i.e. involving a secret, unobservable etc are called mental state.

Therefore 'to know' as a dispositional word does not describe any secret state of affair going inside one's private chamber called mind, but states a hypothetical assertion that if such and such conditions are fulfilled then the individual concerned will act or react in such and such a way.

Dispositional sentences narrate no incidents; they assert the hypothetical assertion that if the dispositional assertion is true then it is satisfied by narrated incidents. However Ryle says dispositional expression may imply either capacities or tendencies. 'Know' is a capacity verb and as a capacity verb of that special sort that is used for signifying that the person described can bring things off or get things right. According to Ryle, epistemologists wrongly assimilate knowledge with belief. They mistakenly thought that knowledge differs from belief in the way that it contains all the elements of belief and some elements of itself both of which are introspectible. In reality there is no difference between knowledge and belief. 'Belief' differs from 'know' because it is not capacity verb but a tendency verb. However 'belief' belongs to the family of motive words while know belongs to that of skill words. Hence knowledge is not a mental state. It is a disposition and capacity.

Austin's concept of knowledge:

According to J.L. Austin when we use words, we become engaged in three kinds of activities- locutionary act of merely making some utterance, perlocutionary act of bringing about changes and consequences concerned could be brought about without making the utterance. Again elocutionary act which is performed by making the utterance that could not be done without making the utterances. The meaning of an expression is constituted by its elocutionary act potentials. Austin was attentive to this fact and consequently he brought to light the elocutionary act performed by the utterance 'I know' while dealing with the concept of knowledge. Austin says the utterance 'I know' does not describe a special state of mind. It is a performative utterance. 'To promise' is such an expression. If I utter 'I promise' then the fact of promising is brought about. If one says 'I know' I give a sort of guarantee of the hearer that the statement followed by it has the best evidential conditions supporting it. According to Austin, if I say this, my saying makes the fact of guaranteeing into existence. In order to show the performative character of 'I know' Austin likens it with 'I promise' which is conspicuously performative. Hence it can be said that Austin used

the word 'to know' in a social context. He says by uttering this I become vulnerable as I put my dignity as I put my dignity under stake. If the statement claimed to be known turns out to be false, I am likely to be reproached by those others.

Austin distinguishes between knowledge and belief. He says they are differed from each other as they involve two different kinds of elocutionary acts. It becomes clear when he says, "Saying 'I know' is not saying 'I have performed a specially striking feat of cognition, superior, in the same scale as believing.

A.J. Ayer's concept of knowledge:

Ayer presents a philosophical treatment of the concept of knowledge in his book "The Problem of Knowledge". Like other philosophical problems this problem of knowledge is also not capable of being solved by referring to factual information. What is true of philosophical problem in general should be true of the problem of knowledge in particular. In order to answer the question 'what is knowledge' Ayer makes a distinction between the use of an expression and the analysis of its meaning. The word 'know' has different uses. Some of this are-

- Knowing- in the sense of 'being familiar with
- Knowing something- in the sense of having had the experience of 'it', as when someone says that he ha known hunger or fear.
- Knowing- in the sense of 'being able to recognize or distinguish as when we claim to know an honest man when we see one or to know butter from margarine.
- To know how to swim or drive a car.
- Knowing in the sense of being to apprehend or comprehend as fact or truth.

So there are different uses of the word 'know'. But philosophers are not satisfied with these uses. So Ayer tries to determine the kind of resemblances among the different instances of the use of the word 'knowledge'. Here Ayer has given three alternative possibilities:

1) The resemblance is straightforward. This sort of resemblance leads us naturally to their having an identical quality.

2) The resemblance is merely a 'family resemblance'.

3) The resemblance among different instances in which we use the word 'to know' is such that 'they share a common factor the possession of which is necessary to their being instances of knowledge, even though it is not sufficient.

Ayer, considering the third alternative, says if knowledge were always knowledge that something is the case, then such a common factor may be found in the existence of a 'a common relation to truth. What is true may be believed or disbelieved, doubted or imagined. So truth is not a sufficient condition of knowledge. But it is a necessary condition as what is known can not but be true. Here knowledge is supposed to be always knowledge that something is the case.

Like Ryle, Ayer also says the word 'know' is used to signify a disposition. It is a capacity verb. So if one says 'he knows some facts of ancient history' does not mean actually thinking of certain historical facts but it implies that I have the capacity to give a successful performance in the way that if the subject comes up I am in a position to make statements which are authoritative and true. To have knowledge is to have the power to give a successful performance not actually to be giving one. So the word 'know' is not a descriptive phrase. Its function is not to describe any mental state though it may incidentally imply.

According to Ayer, there are three conditions which are necessary and sufficient for knowing that something is the case. These are

- What is known should be true.
- One must be completely sure of what one knows.
- One must have the right to be sure.

Ayer states these to be the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge as definition of knowledge is not possible. The first condition of the three necessary and sufficient conditions is the truth of the statement concerned. Secondly one has to be completely sure of what one knows. But these two conditions are not in themselves sufficient.

According to Ayer, an intentional definition of knowledge is not possible in terms of these conditions. Of the three necessary and sufficient conditions the first is what is known should be true. The truth condition does not imply that what is known should be infallible. The third condition for knowledge is having the having the right to be sure. In most of the cases we concede the right to be sure to one who can give appropriate evidence in support of what he claims to know. But if the statements given in support of the belief give the right to be sure, then these statements themselves shall be justified by others statements. Otherwise they would remain unjustified and will not be able to justify other statements and thus this process of justification will go on ad infinitum.

6.4. NATURE OF BELIEF

The concept of belief is one of the important concepts of epistemology. Belief may be characterized as stronger than mere under grounded opinion but weaker than full knowledge. For Descartes, belief is an active state of mind in which assent to some proposition is granted or withheld; it is a passive state that occurs or fails to occur in respect of some propositions. The objects of belief are propositions.

The belief states themselves possess a sentential structure, that they are maps in some literal sense. In P.F. Ramsey's phrase a belief is viewed as "a map of neighboring space by which we steer". Ramsey attributed two characteristics to the belief-it is a map and it is something by

which we steer. D.M. Armstrong supposes that Wittgenstein's comparison of sentences to pictures inspired Ramsey's formula gives us the solution to the problem of Hume. Hume in his 'Treatise' asks marks of believing something from merely entertaining the thought. Ramsey shows that beliefs are maps by which we steer. So unlike entertaining propositions, beliefs are action guiding. Armstrong argues that Ramseyan account of belief is satisfactory only in cases of belief concerning things at particular times and spaces.

According to Robert Stalnker, though beliefs have sentential characteristics it does not imply that beliefs themselves must have a sential structure. Stalnaker hold that beliefs are attitude directed, not towards propositions, but towards the world. Belief states are best characterized by sets of 'possible' worlds, alternative ways the world may be.

Some thinkers view that belief like meaning, is indeterminate. According to him, it makes no sense, to talk of beliefs or meanings independently of a particular linguistic context. Again for Quine there is no translation independent fact of the matter as to what a given sentence means, there is no non-contextual fact of the matter as to what a given agent believes. In case of beliefs, agents are in a position to decide on their beliefs, yet believing appears not to be voluntary. According to Descartes, believing depends on some prior act of will. Ryle also regards belief as tendencies to say and do various things. Ryle argues that mental states like belief are not causes of behaviour. On the other hand they are dispositional states triggered causally.

Some contemporary accounts of beliefs try to state that beliefs try to state that belief is 'semantically indifferent' in nature or 'standard infirmity of belief'. A. N. Prior says that 'belief can not be a relation since there is no actual relation or objects of belief to be related with the subject or the belief. This can be considered as a stepping stone to distinguish knowledge from belief on the grounds of their respective objects. But so far as the objects are concerned in case of belief it does not seem there is any real difference.

One's believing is always one's believing something. There is always an object in believing.

One believes a proposition contrast with one believes a proposition with regard to an object. In the first case, the object is just a proposition and this kind of believing is 'de dicto' In. the second case, the object is not merely propositional or conceptual that believing is 'de re'. This kind of believing involves an 'absoluteness relation' to an object that is not found in 'de dicto' believing. But believing 'de re' is related also to a propositional object where the 'objects' is denotatively defined through a referential absoluteness relation. So the vital point is that both 'de re' and 'de dicto' believing have propositional objects that are either true or false. So belief is an attitude one can have towards a proposition. There may be three kinds of propositional attitudes of belief.

1) Belief that P (take p to be true)
2) Disbelief that P (take p to be false)
3) Suspend judgment as to p (neither belief nor disbelief)

6.5. RELATION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF—TRADITIONAL VIEW

The term 'knowledge' and 'belief' are two important concepts in the philosophical investigation of knowledge. These two terms sometimes used interchangeably as there is no radical difference between knowing and believing. Knowing could properly be regarded as specific variety of believing. Yet again on some occasions someone may not know so and so but merely believing. And on some other occasions someone may not know so and so but merely believes that here knowledge contrast belief. But the general agreement is that what we know can only be true whereas what we believe may be true or may not be true. So it may imply that truth or falsity does not apply to what we know but apply to what we believe.

Regarding the relation between knowledge and belief philosophers have given various views. Greek philosopher Plato started the discussion

of distinguishing knowledge from belief with the problem concerning the possibility of false logos. In his dialogues Meno and Phaedo he gave clear distinction between knowledge and belief with the theory of recollection. It is assumed that we do have knowledge which is distinct from certain cognitive states particularly from belief and opinion. Plato holds the view that knowledge and belief should distinguish both by their objects and by their different faculties employed. What is known is unchanging and by contrast what is believed is in flux and allows of contradictory possibilities.

Plato distinguishes between the intelligible world and the physical world. The first world consists of

a) The objects of pure thought and
b) Physical objects used for the purpose of mathematical reasoning.

The second world or the physical world is sub-divided into

a) Physical things and
b) Shadow and images of physical things.

Corresponding to these four classes of objects, there are four levels of apprehension. Knowledge may be either

a) Pure thought or
b) The abstract reasoning of mathematics.

While belief includes

a) Opinion
b) Illusion.

So according to Plato, belief is clearer than ignorance and more obscure than knowledge and secondly belief is an intermediate state and it is neither ignorance nor knowledge.

In Theaetetus Plato also discusses the relationship between the knowledge and belief with the problems concerning the possibility of

meaningful falsity. Plato set before himself whether knowing can be identified with sense perception, failing this, against whether it is true belief with an account. But he fails to accept any satisfactory definition of knowledge. Ultimately it has been established that knowledge is neither perception nor true belief with an account.

The above stated Plato's view is most important as well as significant in the analysis of knowledge. He keeps knowledge, thought and intelligible objects on the one hand and beliefs, sense and sensible objects on the other. Thus we find the concept of two-world in Plato's epistemology.

6.6. KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF—CONTEMPORARY VIEW

Akin to Plato other epistemologists also give the views that the concept of 'knowledge' is completely different from that of the concept of belief. Concerning the relation between knowledge and belief as put forward by different philosophers, some epistemologists concise the relation under one roof.

Russell makes a divergence between knowledge and belief. He says knowledge has facts for its objects and knowledge is a relation between two genuine objects: the knower and the fact known. But there may not be any fact as is believed by the believer. For e.g. we may believe that there is a lotus blooming in the sky, which actually not existent in nature. So belief is not always a two-termed relation between believer and the fact.

Regarding belief, the believer is personally involved and so beliefs are subjective. On the other hand knowledge is not a personal affair. Though knowing and believing are cognitive activities yet the two terms are different in nature. The verb 'to know' is not a proper psychological verb. Hence no empirical science can study the logical or paralinguistic behaviours of 'know' which is a philosophical term. Again the adjectives like true, false, justified, unjustified are applicable only to belief. But they can never be applied to

knowledge. It is possible that justified and unjustified belief can be true by chance, but knowledge can never be true by chance.

Hintikka also put forward an important elaboration between knowledge and belief from the point of modal logic of epistemic concept. Knowledge can not be lost simply as a result knowing something new. But it is quite possible that we can change, modify or give up our beliefs in the presence of new information. It refers a person knows all logical consequences of what he knows.

Chisholm also gives analogous views in this respect. He says, “If a man knows that a proposition is true, then he is justified in believing that there is no truth that could disturb the case that he has for that proposition. He remarks that a man can be said to believe firmly or hesitatingly. He claims an important distinction between knowledge and belief. He argues, “We often speak of what a man ought to know but seldom. If ever, of what a man ought to believes”. In other words one can not know the faults but, one can only fail to know the right thing. The believer on the other hand can believe what is false and he can also fail to believe what is true. So both ‘error of commission’ and ‘error of omission’ are possible in the state of belief. The process of knowing is radically different from the process of belief. There are ways of knowing but there are no ways of believing.

Again Austin holds the view that the expression ‘I know’ has a special performative function. When one knows something and believes something, the two acts are different. The illocutionary act performed by ‘I know’ is quite different from the illocutionary act performed by ‘I believe’.

According to Ryle, ‘know’ and ‘believe’ are dispositional verbs but the verb ‘know’ is named as a capacity verb of a special sort whereas ‘believe’ is a tendency verb. For e.g. the verb ‘know’ truly signifies something which is a success verb but the verb ‘believe’ signifies nothing of this sort. He says objectives like obstinate, wavering, fanatical, wholehearted, childlike etc can be applied to believes, but the same all not applicable to knowledge.

Hence it can be seen that there is a clear distinction between knowledge and belief. From the nature of knowledge, as explained by Plato, knowledge is defined as justified true belief. But this definition is untenable. So by criticizing the JTB definition of Plato philosophers like A.J. Ayer, R.M. Chisholm, C.I. Lewis and Armstrong try to explain the relation between knowledge and belief. They tried to give answer the question "Is knowledge justified true belief?" with their respective definitions of knowledge. JTB defines knowledge with three conditions viz. the truth condition, the belief condition and the justification condition. The truth condition in JTB assumed that "if one knows that p, then p is true in the sense that p states how things actually are." Here we must have guided by the following two points about the relation between truth and justification.

1. It is possible that p is true although there is no one who has justified belief that p.

2. It is possible for S to be completely justified in believing that p although p is false.

The second is belief condition. A belief is an attitude one can have towards a proposition. An object of one's believing is a propositional truth. It is something that is true or false. One can stand in any of three philosophically possible relations to a proposition one consider. They are

1. Believing that P.
2. Disbelieving that P.
3. Suspending judgment as to P.

So knowledge requires believing or at least asserting or knowing that p requires one's belief or assent to p. That is why knowledge is perspective.

The third condition is justification. In the JTB account of knowledge, knowledge is a true belief which is justified. Propositional knowledge requires justification. It requires that a knower has adequate indication that a known

proposition is true justification. Justification helps to guess facts a true belief in relation to certain relevant facts where truth is not likely out come. Epistemic purification is needed to exclude co-incidentally true belief.

The JTB analysis of knowledge was accepted universally by the philosophers till the middle of the sixties. JTB analysis was considered as giving both the necessary as well as the sufficient conditions of knowledge. From the traditional and modern philosopher's point of view, we can formulate a general account of knowledge where truth, belief and justification are three necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge.

E.L.Gettier argued that the tripartite account of knowledge is not sufficient. He said that in order to have knowledge, one need to have justified true belief. In his paper "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" he presented counter examples to show the inadequacy of traditional definition of knowledge. He claimed that it is possible for someone not to know p, even when all the three conditioned are satisfied. Through his counter examples, he shows the absence of knowledge in the presence of justified true belief. Gettier allows that the traditional three conditions are individually necessary and sufficient condition of knowledge. It is known as 'the Gettier problem' or the problem of fourth condition of knowledge.

Gettier states that the counter examples are created to show that the true conditions of JTB are not sufficient conditions for the claim that 'S knows that p' whether they constitute the set of necessary condition is not considered by Gettier. His one of the counter examples is:

Suppose that Smith and Jones have applied for a certain job. And suppose that Smith has strong evidence for the following conjunctive proposition: a) Jones is the man who will get the job and Jones has ten coins in his pocket. Smith's evidence for (a) is that the President of the company assured him that Jones would get the job and that he, Smith has just counted the coins in the pocket of Jones. Now (a) entails (b) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket. Smith sees the entailment

and accepts (b). He is clearly justified in believing that (a) is true. Suppose that unknown to Smith, he himself, not Jones will get the job and also unknown to him, he himself has ten coins in his pocket. In this e.g. (b) is true, Smith believes that (b) is true. But it is clear that Smith does not know (b). The other potentials are (c) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket. Let us see that Smith sees the entailment from (b) to (c) and accepts (c) on founds of (b) for which he has strong evidence. In this case, Smith is justified in believing that (a) is true. It is the famous Gettier's example.

This is how analytic philosophers tried to explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

6.7. CRITICISM

Although Philosophers have given a lots of explanation about the relation between Knowledge and Belief but criticisms arise behind it. M. Clark has immediately and directly reacted to Gettier's paper and suggests a fourth condition to overcome it. His definition of knowledge states that

S knows that P if only if – (1) P is true, (2) S believes that P, (3) S is justified in believing that p and (4) S's belief that p is fully grounded in which from 1 to 4 jointly will give the necessary and sufficient condition for knowing that p. So in this suggestion of fourth condition, Clark wants to say, "if each ground in this chain is true, then I will say that the belief is fully grounded."

Again R.M. Chisholm by admitting the genuineness of Gettier's counter examples tried to repair the JTB analysis. He has changed in definition of knowledge on various occasions, but the changes were made to make these definitions consistent with the refinement in his theory of justification. In the field of empirical knowledge the concept of 'certain' is illustrated Chisholm as 'self-presenting'. In Gettier's counter example, the belief concerned is not cases of evident belief.

Finally, D.J. O'Connor and B.Carr have tried to offer a simple solution to Gettier's problem. Ac cording to them for a justified belief to constitute knowledge appear as that there should exist a connection between the truth of the proposition believe and the grounds on which it is believed.

Hence it can be said that the relation between knowledge and belief is of a kind of weak compatibilism where A knows that p, a may believe p, may not believe as well.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is meant by knowledge by acquaintance, according to Russell?

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Q 2: What is knowledge, according to Russell?

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Q 3: Write Plato's view on 'knowledge is perception'.

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Q 4: Write the name of the book of Ryle in which he makes a distinction between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'

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Q 5: Who is the author of 'The Problem of Knowledge'?

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6.8. LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the concept of Knowledge and Belief. The basic points are:

- Knowledge and belief are two important concepts of epistemology.
- Knowledge is elementary to human cognition and beliefs are dispositions of the believer.
- According to Plato, knowledge is justified true belief.
- According to Ryle, the verb 'know' is a dispositional or a capacity verb. Knowing is a determinable dispositional verb which is mistaken to be determinate dispositional word.
- According to Austin, knowledge is a performative utterance. Knowledge and belief are two different kinds of elocutionary act.
- According to Ayer, the word 'know' is not a descriptive phrase. To have knowledge is to have to give a successful performance not actually to be giving.
- Belief is an active state of mind in which assent to some proposition is granted for withheld.
- Knowledge and belief are differed from each other—

a) What is known is unchanging but what is believed is flux.

b) Belief is subjective whereas knowledge is objective.

c) Knowledge is a capacity verb while believe is a tendency verb.

- Knowledge has been justified with truth and belief has been analyzed by Gettier with a fourth condition

6.9. FURTHER READINGS

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6.10. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1: It is direct, immediate, and prejudgmental knowledge

Ans. to Q No 2: According to Plato, knowledge is knowledge through concepts. He views that knowledge is infallible.

Ans. to Q No 3: According to Plato, traditional philosophers hold that knowledge is identified with perception. But, Plato in this respect views that perceptual knowledge give us contradictory knowledge or results because what one person perceives and holds to be true may be false for another person. Therefore, knowledge cannot be identified with perception, to Plato.

Ans to Q No 4: Concept of Mind

Ans to Q No 5: Ayer

6.11. MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions:

Q.1. what is JTB definition?

Q.2. Define Knowledge by acquaintance?

Q.3. Who made the distinction between knowing how and knowing that?

Q.4. Is knowledge a performative action?

Q.5. Who writes the book 'The Problem of Knowledge'?

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q.1. Write short note on

a) Knowledge by acquaintance and Knowledge by description.

b) Knowing how and Knowing that.

c) Plato's concept of knowledge according to Theaetetus.

Q.2. Explain Truth condition of knowledge.

Q.3. Write Ayer's view on Knowledge.

Q.4. Give the example of Knowledge according to Gettier.

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500)

Q.1. Explain the relation between knowledge and belief.

Q.2. Elaborate the distinction between knowledge and belief.

Q.3. According to Ryle, "knowledge is a dispositional verb"—explain.

Q.4. Explain the nature of Belief.

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