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**A Comparative Study on Hume, Lewis and J. L. Mackie`s
Views on Causation**

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Abstract

Causation is one of the most important philosophical issues criticized by Hume's analysis and caused many philosophers to find solution and explanation. Lewis and J. L. Mackie, as analytic philosopher built the foundation of their theory upon the critique and modification of Hume's theory. The aim in this paper is to deal with, the issue and the authors attempt to present a comparative study by logical explanation on these approaches and introduce the "ambiguity in causation" as one of the most important factors of failure in these approaches. Although, according to Lewis, as the authors hold, Hume's approach only implies sufficient causes and so is not comprehensive, Lewis's own approach only involves the necessary reasons, and therefore it envisages a charge of the same challenge. Finally, the authors explained the complex view of J. L. Mackie and accepts it as a more favorable view and also emphasizes that It is inevitable for scholars used of counterfactual conditions to obtain the necessary conditions., But in such cases it is necessary to define the type of causes.

Keywords: Causation, Counterfactual Condition, Regularity Theory, Lewis, Mackie.

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Problem Statement

The three following western significant philosophers' theory on the issue of causality is the aim of investigation in the present paper: Hume's regularity theory of causation, Lewis's Counterfactual Theory of Causation & Mackie's INUS Conditions. Since these three approaches form in connection with each other and it is possible to consider the approach of Lewis and Mackie as an answer to the flaws of Hume's theory, it seems that, a comparative study on these approaches display their strengths and weaknesses. This study deal with the main following question and responding to the following two sub – questions:

Is it possible to defend all of the three definitions given by Hume, Lewis and Mackie about causality with The rules of logic? Do they all have the necessary logical conditions?

In the comparative study of these three approaches, What criticisms each of them encounter with?and Which approach is more closely related to the comprehensive definition of causality?

Method

A comparative study with a logical approach to the subject.

Findings and Results

The comparative and logical review of the above approaches indicate that neither Hume nor Lewis, in the definition of causality, adhere to the necessary logical conditions. In fact, A typical formulation of Hume's definition of causality reveals that it is equivalent to sufficient counterfactual condition. This form can be stated as: “c is a cause of e if and only c belongs to a set of conditions that are jointly sufficient for e ” but confining the definition of causality to sufficient conditions is not exclusive and includes some non-causal cases. as in cases that the cause is necessary too. This might also be true when c is an effect of e .In other words, the cause can be deduced from the effect or it might be true when c and e are joint effects of a common deterministic cause (Though indirectly way), Because the existence of each of them represents the existence of the cause, and the existence of the cause definitely implies the second effect. Lewis's definition is also a specific definition and is not comprehensive. Because ,with respect to logical form of counterfactual conditionals: “If A had not occurred, C would not have occurred”, It must be admitted that Lewis's approach is actually the same as that of necessary condition Which is a common strategy in explaining specific events and case studies. Because the logical expression of the necessary condition: “If there is not p (cause), then q (effect) will not be either” Precisely conform to logical form of counterfactual conditionals. As a result a causal relation in terms of counterfactual conditionals only involve the necessary condition of certain effect and will not denote to sufficient conditions and this is a critique of Lewis's counterfactual attitudes. Therefore, the comparative study of these two approaches demonstrates that the lack of attention by some philosophers, such as Hume and Lewis, to various types of causes (the necessary, sufficient, necessary and sufficient cause), and the limitation of the cause to one of its types, has caused their approach to fail to achieve a comprehensive and exclusive definition, namely that neither relying on sufficient causes in defining causality leads us to the correct definition of the cause, nor the causality approach to the necessary condition provides a precise way to define causation, but paying attention to different meanings of the cause, can bring a more comprehensive explanation of causation. As Maki, in view of different meanings of the cause, constructs his view based on compound causes which, while sufficient, are not necessary for the realization of the effect, thereby

providing a better explanation of causation, while taking into account sufficient causes, It also specifies the role played by causes as well.

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