1. INTRODUCTION :

If the equations $a_1x + b_1 = 0$, $a_2x + b_2 = 0$ are satisfied by the same value of x, then $a_1b_2 - a_2b_1 = 0$. The expression $a_1b_2 - a_2b_1$ is called a determinant of the second order, and is denoted by :

$$\begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 \end{vmatrix}$$

A determinant of second order consists of two rows and two columns.

Next consider the system of equations $a_1x + b_1y + c_1 = 0$, $a_2x + b_2y + c_2 = 0$, $a_3x + b_3y + c_3 = 0$

If these equations are satisfied by the same values of x and y, then on eliminating x and y we get.

$$a_1(b_2c_3 - b_3c_2) + b_1(c_2a_3 - c_3a_2) + c_1(a_2b_3 - a_3b_2) = 0$$

The expression on the left is called a determinant of the third order, and is denoted by

$$\begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

A determinant of third order consists of three rows and three columns.

2. VALUE OF A DETERMINANT :

$$D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} = a_1\begin{vmatrix} b_2 & c_2 \\ b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} - b_1\begin{vmatrix} a_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} + c_1\begin{vmatrix} a_2 & b_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 \end{vmatrix} = a_1(b_2c_3 - b_3c_2) - b_1(a_2c_3 - a_3c_2) + c_1(a_2b_3 - a_3b_2)$$

Note : Sarrus diagram to get the value of determinant of order three :

$$D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} = \begin{matrix} & & & -ve & -ve & -ve \\ a_1 & b_1 & c_1 & a_1 & b_1 & \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 & a_2 & b_2 & \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 & a_3 & b_3 & \\ & & & +ve & +ve & +ve \end{matrix} = (a_1b_2c_3 + a_2b_3c_1 + a_3b_1c_2) - (a_3b_2c_1 + a_2b_1c_3 + a_1b_3c_2)$$

Note that the product of the terms in first bracket (i.e. $a_1a_2a_3b_1b_2b_3c_1c_2c_3$) is same as the product of the terms in second bracket.

3. MINORS & COFACTORS :

The minor of a given element of determinant is the determinant obtained by deleting the row & the column in which the given element stands.

For example, the minor of a_1 in $\begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$ is $\begin{vmatrix} b_2 & c_2 \\ b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$ & the minor of b_2 is $\begin{vmatrix} a_1 & c_1 \\ a_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$.

Hence a determinant of order three will have "9 minors".

If M_{ij} represents the minor of the element belonging to i^{th} row and j^{th} column then the cofactor of that element is given by : $C_{ij} = (-1)^{i+j}. M_{ij}$

4. EXPANSION OF A DETERMINANT IN TERMS OF THE ELEMENTS OF ANY ROW OR COLUMN:

Let $$D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

(i) The sum of the product of elements of any row (column) with their corresponding cofactors is always equal to the value of the determinant.

D can be expressed in any of the six forms :

$a_1A_1 + b_1B_1 + c_1C_1$, $a_1A_1 + a_2A_2 + a_3A_3$,

$a_2A_2 + b_2B_2 + c_2C_2$, $b_1B_1 + b_2B_2 + b_3B_3$,

$a_3A_3 + b_3B_3 + c_3C_3$, $c_1C_1 + c_2C_2 + c_3C_3$,

where A_i, B_i & C_i $(i = 1,2,3)$ denote cofactors of a_i, b_i & c_i respectively.

(ii) The sum of the product of elements of any row (column) with the cofactors of other row (column) is always equal to zero.

Hence,

$a_2A_1 + b_2B_1 + c_2C_1 = 0,$

$b_1A_1 + b_2A_2 + b_3A_3 = 0$ and so on.

where A_i, B_i & C_i $(i = 1,2,3)$ denote cofactors of a_i, b_i & c_i respectively.

Do yourself -1 :

(i) Find minors & cofactors of elements '6', '5', '0' & '4' of the determinant $\begin{vmatrix} 2 & 1 & 3 \\ 6 & 5 & 7 \\ 3 & 0 & 4 \end{vmatrix}$.

(ii) Calculate the value of the determinant $\begin{vmatrix} 5 & -3 & 7 \\ -2 & 4 & -8 \\ 9 & 3 & -10 \end{vmatrix}$

(iii) The value of the determinant $\begin{vmatrix} a & b & 0 \\ 0 & a & b \\ b & 0 & a \end{vmatrix}$ is equal to -

(A) $a^3 - b^3$ (B) $a^3 + b^3$ (C) 0 (D) none of these

(iv) Find the value of 'k', if $\begin{vmatrix} 1 & 2 & 0 \\ 2 & 3 & 1 \\ 3 & k & 2 \end{vmatrix} = 4$

5. PROPERTIES OF DETERMINANTS :

(a) The value of a determinant remains unaltered, if the rows & columns are inter-changed,

$$\text{e.g. if } D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & a_2 & a_3 \\ b_1 & b_2 & b_3 \\ c_1 & c_2 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

(b) If any two rows (or columns) of a determinant be interchanged, the value of determinant is changed in sign only. e.g.

$$\text{Let } \quad D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} \ \& \ D_1 = \begin{vmatrix} a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}. \text{ Then } D_1 = -D.$$

(c) If all the elements of a row (or column) are zero, then the value of the determinant is zero.

(d) If all the elements of any row (or column) are multiplied by the same number, then the determinant is multiplied by that number.

$$\text{e.g.} \quad \text{If } D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad D_1 = \begin{vmatrix} Ka_1 & Kb_1 & Kc_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}. \text{ Then } D_1 = KD$$

(e) If all the elements of a row (or column) are proportional (or identical) to the element of any other row, then the determinant vanishes, i.e. its value is zero.

e.g. If $D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} \Rightarrow D = 0$; If $D_1 = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ ka_1 & kb_1 & kc_1 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} \Rightarrow D_1 = 0$

(f) If each element of any row (or column) is expressed as a sum of two (or more) terms, then the determinant can be expressed as the sum of two (or more) determinants.

e.g. $$\begin{vmatrix} a_1+x & b_1+y & c_1+z \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix} + \begin{vmatrix} x & y & z \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

Note that : If $$D_r = \begin{vmatrix} f(r) & g(r) & h(r) \\ a & b & c \\ a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \end{vmatrix}$$

where $r \in N$ and a, b, c, a_1, b_1, c_1 are constants, then

$$\sum_{r=1}^{n} D_r = \begin{vmatrix} \sum_{r=1}^{n} f(r) & \sum_{r=1}^{n} g(r) & \sum_{r=1}^{n} h(r) \\ a & b & c \\ a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \end{vmatrix}$$

(g) **Row - column operation :** The value of a determinant remains unaltered under a column (C_i) operation of the form $C_i \to C_i + \alpha C_j + \beta C_k$ (j, k ≠ i) or row (R_i) operation of the form $R_i \to R_i + \alpha R_j + \beta R_k$ (j, k ≠ i). In other words, the value of a determinant is not altered by adding the elements of any row (or column) to the same multiples of the corresponding elements of any other row (or column)

e.g. Let $$D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3 & b_3 & c_3 \end{vmatrix}$$

$$D = \begin{vmatrix} a_1+\alpha a_2 & b_1+\alpha b_2 & c_1+\alpha c_2 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 \\ a_3+\beta a_1 & b_3+\beta b_1 & c_3+\beta c_1 \end{vmatrix} \quad (R_1 \to R_1 + \alpha R_2; R_3 \to R_3 + \beta R_2)$$

Note :

(i) By using the operation $R_i \to xR_i + yR_j + zR_k$ (j, k ≠ i), the value of the determinant becomes x times the original one.

(ii) While applying this property **ATLEAST ONE ROW (OR COLUMN)** must remain unchanged.

(h) **Factor theorem :** If the elements of a determinant D are rational integral functions of x and two rows (or columns) become identical when x = a then (x – a) is a factor of D.

Note that if r rows become identical when a is substituted for x, then $(x - a)^{r-1}$ is a factor of D.