

**Problem:**  $f: \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ ,  $f(x + f(y)) = y + f(x) \forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}$  and  $S = \left\{ \frac{x}{f(x)} \mid x \in \mathbb{R} \right\}$  is finite.

**Solution:** Let  $P(x, y)$  denote the functional equation.

$$P(0, y) \implies f(f(y)) = y + f(0) \implies f \text{ is bijective.}$$

$$\implies f(f(0)) = f(0) \implies f(0) = 0 \implies f(f(y)) = y$$

$$P(f(x), y) \implies f(f(x) + f(y)) = y + x$$

$$\implies f(x + y) = f(f(f(x) + f(y))) = f(x) + f(y)$$

Let  $|S| = k$  and  $S = \{c_1, c_2, \dots, c_k\}$ . Also let  $a_i = \frac{1}{c_i}$ .

We know for every non-zero  $x \in \mathbb{R}$ , there exists a  $c_r$  such that

$$\frac{x}{f(x)} = c_r \implies f(x) = \frac{1}{c_r}x = a_r x$$

Now let  $Q(x, y) \implies f(x + y) = f(x) + f(y)$

Let  $U = \{a_i \mid \exists x > 0 \text{ with } f(x) = a_i x\}$ . We claim  $|U| = 1$ .

**Proof:**

We proceed indirectly. Suppose  $|U| > 1$ . So there are at least two distinct elements in  $U$ . Suppose  $a_m$  is the largest element of  $U$  and  $a_n$  is the second largest element of  $U$ . (I mean it is only smaller than  $a_m$ . If there are more than two elements in  $U$ , it is larger than all of them, only except  $a_m$ )

Consider  $x, y > 0$  Such that  $f(x) = a_m x$  and  $f(y) = a_n y$ .

So there exists  $a_z$  (not necessarily equal to  $a_m$  or  $a_n$ ) such that

$$f(x + y) = a_z(x + y)$$

Also notice that

$$\begin{aligned} f(x + y) &= f(x) + f(y) \implies a_z(x + y) = a_m x + a_n y \\ \implies (a_m - a_z)x + (a_n - a_z)y &= 0 \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

If  $a_n \geq a_z$ , then LHS of (1) is positive. If  $a_m = a_z$ , then LHS of (1) is negative. In both cases we get a contradiction. So such  $a_m$  and  $a_n$  can not exist. Therefore  $|U| = 1$ .

So  $f(x) = ax$  for some constant  $a$  and for all positive real  $x$ .

Obviously  $f$  is odd because  $Q(x, -x) \implies 0 = f(x) + f(-x)$

So  $f(-x) = -ax$  for all negative  $x$ . Therefore  $f(x) = ax \forall x \in \mathbb{R}$ . Now checking shows  $a \in \{1, -1\}$ . So all the functions are  $f(x) = x$  and  $f(x) = -x$ .