



**Opinion**

Volume 7 Issue 3 - January 2020  
DOI: 10.19080/JPFMTS.2020.07.555715

J Phy Fit Treatment & Sports

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# Causes and Consequences - Key Concepts Ignored (or Hidden)



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**Submission:** December 16, 2019; **Published:** January 22, 2020

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**Keywords:** Trivial; Huge confusion; Engine; Mass; Acceleration; Mobile phone; Gadgets; Mobile phone; Criminals; Goals

## Opinion

The causes, the motives, will naturally give rise to the consequences, the effects, which these causes have. It is basic. It is, therefore, about the causes that we must act to modify the consequences. It may seem trivial, but huge confusion revolves around this theme. And it is not only because there is a successive articulation between causes and consequences, since a consequence results from a cause and, in turn, becomes the cause of a subsequent cycle and so on. The problem is much more serious than a simple confusion between relating a cause to its consequences. Is that:

- a) It is hardly linked to such a problem as it is considered minor;
- b) But at the same time, the difficulty that we point out here means a deficiency in understanding what science is and how it works.

Let's look at some achievements to make it easier to identify what we are saying.

### Examples:

- i. When it is said that: "the car drives because it has an engine", can we ask: "but do you take off the engine when you want to stop it?" Of course, the meaning is: the car is running because the engine makes a force and considering  $\text{Force} = \text{Mass} \times \text{Acceleration}$ , the car will gain a speed.... [Note: automatic translations, computerized, make (still) big messes with situations of this type, indicating a... communication difficulty]. But so far so good;

ii. When someone ask, "how does the mobile phone work?", the answer is usually: "press the x button, then the y button, dial the number...". And usually the instructions for using gadgets, from the huge number of gadgets we've got used to, follow the same logic - that is, it tells us a sequence of steps that must be followed. As for the causes and their consequences nothing. [Note: some criminals have been arrested because not understanding how their mobile phone works do not realize that they are being followed by their call, even with their mobile phone turned off. So far so good. But it won't be so good if we are all being controlled by a Big Brother through the phone we use];

iii. In a school when we want to prepare students "to be more creative" ("for the 21st century" is the term used), they are given 'creativity exercises' that they must follow. As for the causes that lead to students being more creative... nothing;

iv. When you say to a footballer: "you have to score more goals", the effect is identical to the one obtained in the previous point, nothing is said about the causes that allow, that will result in scoring more. Nothing, often. And the same in many other situations: education, health, respect, attention... and even pleasure.

v. But we calmly go over all this, because "they are nothing but detail".

But it is hoped that in science none of this will happen. At least, surely, there will be more care. Perhaps...

In this sense, we begin by drawing attention to the difficulty of talking about science as something homogeneous and generalizable. It is not worth talking about in search of the “truth”, the pure and applied sciences and... the “scientifically demonstrated”. These are discussions that were once and only serve to see how those who use them are really outdated. But we have dominance of the empirical, experimental situations, the predominance of data collection... and even Einstein, the gentleman who “had his lab in his hat”: for the “thought experiments” performed and because... wore a hat. This is a long debate about science and about who wins and who loses (sometimes temporarily).

Plato and Aristotle “disputed leadership”, with advantages for the last until the end of the Middle Ages (Middle Ages that some extend almost until today, because there are always those who stand still in time). The one, with the well-known “Plato’s cave”, with Platonisms almost always misunderstood, well known and often cited, often, almost always incorrectly, which gained advantages when certainties ceased to have the weight they had when speech (Aristotelian) was king and lord. Paradoxically discourse lives (needs) more certainty (erudition, and oratory capacity need security to be implanted, which means they have little solidity) than the ability to confront facts. Hence, for example, the need for positivists to see “the soul at the tip of the scalpel” to believe it, if it exists and in what form. Today relativity and quantum physics, in particular, have recovered insecurities and uncertainties that once again drew the Zeno of Elea, practically contemporary of Plato and Aristotle, but which confronted their positions with their paradoxes reduced to the absurd certainties and assurances that many wanted to take as refuge in dogmas

and positions of faith that could not be contradicted or even questioned. Say so Giordano Bruno, killed at the stake in the 1600, for the sin of speaking publicly about infinities that are current today. Fortunately, times have changed... but habits and insecurities are less so. In science the boundaries between existing causes and resulting consequences are not always clear. One even talks about nearby causes, distant causes and... ultimate causes (these usually refer to future debates... or where faith positions -not to be confused with the religious, because in science there are also a lot of those believers). We hardly hear “I don’t know”, talking about science, where the delimitation of the paths not to follow is assumed to be important.

However, the scientific demonstration, which some considered (and some still do) as undisputed dogma, gave rise to the refutation of conjecture (Karl Popper, of course), not to be confused with denial, which sometimes allows its use to be extended until “the most convenient solution” can be found. Thomas Kuhn claimed that a paradigm is only replaced when there is an alternative solution. Newton has developed a physics that today is no longer capable of supporting the trite GPS locators, which today rule so many people’s lives. We have expounded on causes and consequences, central or collateral, concepts ignored or hidden by those who still want to live in a world of events (today’s event that tomorrow will be forgotten and replaced because those we use are neither important nor useful and just passing fads which we share with Facebook ‘friends’ or similar) without being able to embrace the processes that structure the lives of some who know how to make the most of what is available (and there are so much). Matters of influences, as in science.



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DOI: [10.19080/JPFMTS.2020.07.555715](https://doi.org/10.19080/JPFMTS.2020.07.555715)

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