

**Exploration in the Educational Perspectives of Jean-Jacques Rousseau**  
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استكشاف وجهات النظر التعليمية لجان جان روسو

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**المخلص:**

فكر روسو اكثر راديكالية من هابز . جان لوك وشارل ديوكواحد من النقاد، نحن نعرف فلسفة التنوير في العالم. في رأيه التخلي عن الانسان عن الحرية يعنى التخلي عن الانسانية و«حق الانسان». احد كتب روسو المهمة، التي تدعى «اميل او التعليم» مكتوبة في مجال تعليم الاطفال. وفقا لروسو فان طريقة تعليم الاطفال والمراهقين لم تكن بالضرورة محدودة بسبب موضوعية المراهق. ويعتقد ان الغرض من التعليم هو تشكيل مخلوق العقل، لذلك اذا لم يات بنتائج تنبؤية فسوف يودى الى تاثيرات جذرية. من وجهة نظر روسو، التعليم هو الحق في تحديد مع الدوافع الطبيعية لذلك من اجل التأثير الايجابي لتعليم المراهقين من الضروري دمج الاسس التعليمية المرتبطة بممارسة السلطة في قضيتهم ولا ينبغي ان يستند التعليم الى افتراض القيم الاخلاقية او ممارسة السلطة او التوقعات العالية للمجتمع. خلاف ذلك فان الطلاب تجنّبهم. ومع ذلك اذا كان هدف التعليم هو تشكيل شخص فلا يلزم الخلط بين الغرض والطريق والطريقة التي لا تكون النتيجة بها غير طبيعية. تبين دقة العمل التربوي لجان جان روسو انه وضع هدفا نهائيا للتعليم وسلسلة من الاهداف الوسيطة من اجل تحقيق الهدف النهائي ويمكن للمرء ان يستمد ويعترف بالوعم الكامل مع الطبيعة كهدف نهائى في نظره.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** روسو، التعليم، الاطفال والمراهقون، الاسلام.

**Abstract:**

Being more radical than “John Locke”, “Charles de Montesquieu”, and “Hobbes”, “Jean-Jacques Rousseau” is known as one of the critics of the philosophy of Enlightenment in the world. To him human’s negligence from freedom is equivalent with his negligence from his nature and human rights. “Emile” or “On Education” is one of the most important books of Rousseau written on child education. Rousseau suggests that the training method of children and teenagers is not the necessity of limiting the young adults’ mind, but since the goal of education is producing a rational creature, if the method cannot predict its results, it leads to extreme consequences.

Rousseau believes that correct education is the one that is done through recognizing the natural motivations, therefore, in order to have a positive educating effect on teenagers, educational foundations related to the legal exercises should be taken into account, and educating should not be based on the inculcation of ethical values, force, or too much expectations of the society; otherwise, teenagers will avoid them. Accordingly, if the goal of education is to train the person, the goal and the procedure should not be confused with each other in order not to have an unnatural result. Educational works of Rousseau indicates that he has an ultimate goal for education as well as he sets some intermediary goals to gain those ultimate ones. Adaptation and harmony with nature are out of Rousseau’s ultimate goals.

**Key words:** Rousseau, Education, Child and teenager, Islam

### Introduction

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Swiss thinker, was living in the eighteenth century -the peak of the Age of Enlightenment in Europe. His thoughts have considerable effects on the political and educational domains of contemporaries. Rousseau had been living in Paris for several years and his intellectual role as one of the facilitators of the Great French Revolution is undeniable. Although Rousseau is one of the pioneers to use the concept of human rights specifically, we can use this concept with specific and narrow meaning for his works.

On the whole, Rousseau thought more radically than “John Locke”, “Charles de Montesquieu”, and “Hobbes”. That is why some of the researchers of thought history know him a critic of the Enlightenment philosophy rather than a promoter of it. He believes that human’s negligence from freedom is equivalent with his negligence from his nature and right.

Rousseau in his book, “The Social Contract”, tries to create a balance between individual liberty and group liberty. One of the most important books of Rousseau on education is “Emile”. This book, he justifies limiting the teenager’s mind, and believes that since the goal is to produce a rational creature, if education can predict its results, extreme consequences will be avoided.

These dangerous effects include the unnatural moral form that show themselves in the passive and hypocritical behaviors. In a nutshell, we should not let the children behave as a result of imposing or advantage taking.

In Rousseau’s education, the natural progress of teenager should be considered. In his point of view, the correct education is recognizing the motivations that are formed naturally. In order to have a positive educational effect on the teenager, educational foundations related to the legal exercises should be taken into account. This issue is related to finding the correct educational methods and making an ideal educational theory model.

To answer the question of one of his critics who criticized about avoiding the effects of excessive power, i.e., teenager’s turbulences, Rousseau mentions that in order to structure a person with enthusiasm towards liberty, the features and value of the teenager should be recognized and they should not be compared with adults.

Rousseau believes that teenager education should not be based on the inculcation of ethical values, power-wielding, or too much expectations of the society; otherwise, they will avoid them. If the goal of education is to educate a person, the goal and the procedure should not be confused with each other in order not to have an unnatural result.

Argument with the teenagers is exactly like reversing the order of the perceptions and making an acceptable person, so we should get along with the thoughts and emotions of the teenagers to prevent them from being riot and calculator.

According to Rousseau, educating children before puberty should not be based on obligation, obedience, and negligence towards the social rules. Delicacy on the educational works of Rousseau indicates that he has an ultimate goal for education as well as he sets some intermediary goals to gain those ultimate ones. One can recognize adaptation and harmony with nature as one of his ultimate goals. Besides, his intermediary educational goals are as follow:

- Physical health and fitness (Physical dignity)
- Reasoning and thinking (Mental dignity)
- Refinement and fostering excellent moral characteristics (Moral dignity)
- Justice and Equality and having a good job (Economic dignity)
- Correct social relations, cooperation, and sacrifice (Social dignity)
- To love the homeland and its rules and believing the desired citizens (Political dignity)

## Discussions

### 1. The principle of mentality from the perspective of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Rousseau's works show that he takes mentality, as though, wisdom, and cognition as one of the foundations of educational principles into account. After so many discussions over the acceptance of the different existential dimensions of child, Rousseau suggests different procedures of training the child's senses, and tries to apply them properly in child's rational education. Because of that, he introduced his instructor as a "reflective" creature when he was 14 years old (Olich, 1987).

Rousseau believes that the main rule in his method is to not make the child to learn many affairs, but help him to get clear and precise perceptions (Bovid, 1998). Accordingly, Rousseau seeks to enhance the power of scrutiny and precision in the instructor rather than expanding a shallow perception of sciences and knowledge. In this regard, Rousseau's main objective of education is not teaching different sciences to the child and the instructor, but it is to provoke the real depth of scientific research in the instructor and learn the procedures of gaining knowledge through excessive love and enthusiasm towards the sciences. This principle is undoubtedly one of the most important principles of a good education (Bovid, 1998). Therefore, the best education from Rousseau's viewpoint is the one that bring up a "wise" person (Rousseau, translated by Zirakzadeh, 1391).

### 2. Ethics from the perspective of Rousseau

Rousseau believes that human beings are good in nature, and based on this nature it is impossible for him to make mistakes. Rousseau in his "Social Contract" criticizes some special benefits, opposition of which makes the formation of the society obligatory. In this book, he explains ethics based on the social structure, and he believes that establishing a fundamental contract by replacing equality is based on the contract that nature is created between people through physical inequality.

Here, the criticism is first on the current world situation, and second on the reminding of the importance of the moral unit that establishes the society as a unified complex in which law connects people to each other. Rousseau utilizes numerous arguments for defending this theory. Rousseau's arguments are about different subjects such as human nature, religion, ethics, and law, and they have lots of things in common in terms of the main idea and different interests that provide social connection. If there is not anything to which the interests are connected, no societies would be created, and the society is managed based on the common interest.

Social contract definitely has some effects without which it is impossible for society to stay alive. Rousseau's argument starts from the oldest and the most natural society i.e., family traverses a reasonable path; he tries to show that although children are dependent on their father the natural connection changes and family members equally gain independence. He concludes that if the family members stay with each other, it is not a natural phenomenon but a voluntarily one, and family is kept together only through a contract, and this common freedom is the result of human nature.

According to Rousseau, family is the first model of society. The governor is the father, and people are the children, and all of them are born equally and freely. Rousseau suggests that connection is a deal that includes special citizens and creates connection between social classes. It also defined as a social principle: A real foundation for social communications is amplified via the social contract of Rousseau, and is connected to the authorization of the criteria properness of the other individuals' moral features from the sociological contracts is thus far according to the equilibrium of the benefits amongst the social classes. Instead of ethics, the joint usefulness is willing to be on the grounds of sacrifice, materialistic compromise of the joint benefits and specifically the expansion of the elite interests amongst each other. This social and political ethic is based on the priority of special interests.

The second most important issue from Rousseau's point of view is the union of members of the community. He thinks that the government is like a person whose life is dependent on the union between the members of the community; therefore, in order to stay alive, he needs a public power to move each group in accordance with others. Since nature gives the absolute power to the human and its

other members, social contract gives the absolute power to all of the groups. So, if we admit the society as a natural construct, it will be very powerful.

Rousseau takes the very concept of rights into account and divides it to three groups: citizen's rights, governor's rights, and natural rights. All of the rights should be based on the humanistic features; therefore, Rousseau argues that all criminals attacking the social rights are riots and traitors, and they get out of the citizenship, or even they oppose with the society through committing the crime. Rousseau concludes that this kind of enemy cannot be an ethical person. Punishing an offender is a special contract for Rousseau. Rousseau considers this punishment as a natural law without which the society cannot keep living. Therefore, ethics are necessary for a society where people respect each other's rights.

Following this argument, Rousseau brings about the very fact that establishing a community requires the change of its members. Therefore, we must change the partial existence of each human being to the entity that each of us has received from nature.

The cause of irrational attitude in teenagers from the perspective of Rousseau

There is another theory in which Rousseau argues that each person can have a special will oppose or different from the will they have as public will as a citizen. To him, it is better to refrain from using the words - related to moralities suitable for adults - to teenagers. This reminder has a general application and can take the form of a principle; it is pointless to teach teenagers the words and symbols that have no meanings to them. If we don't have an idea of the object, how words can create mental ideas? In fact, words are signs that are related to the objects and/or ideas. For a teenager, Words can be used to articulate objects in their absence, if the words merely show the idea – such as ethical concepts – they are not related to the real world, but they embody a mental world which is not the world of teenager yet.

All in all, Rousseau concludes that in order to not change teenager's mentalities about ethics, it is better to narrow down his understandings to sensory experiences. With an eye to the fact that education should keep the natural rhythm of teenagers' development, Rousseau suggests that teenagers' learning process should not be paced by adult's rush; otherwise, a non-rational and altered attitude towards ethics will be appeared in teenagers. After talking about the dangers of using ethical words prior to understanding them in educating teenagers, Rousseau sums up that teenagers' mentalities are limited to the sensory data. In the process of expanding wisdom, the most elemental essence of the sensory-psychological wisdom is shaped in two ways. Sensory wisdom is shaped prior to the mental wisdom, and the suitable education for sensory wisdom peevs the way for expanding the mental wisdom. The underlying principle moving this educational project is taking the natural order – which starts with sensory wisdom - into account.

### **Educational order from the perspectives of Rousseau**

#### **Beginning of Infancy**

Rousseau offers his disapproval of swaddling the baby because it blocks the blood circulation and the movement and growth of the body and it is against the nature. It is to mother to not evade her natural duty. Giving the baby to a nurse harms his education physically, emotionally, and caringly. The nurse doesn't educate the baby like his mother and even teaches him a sense of ungratefulness. Too much caring and too much negligence are both unnatural, the baby should not be given to a nurse nor spoiled, he should be educated in a way that he becomes strong, at the same time, he is kept away from damages. Therefore, Rousseau claims that baby learns the concepts of mastery and servitude, evil, cruelty, selfishness and grudge from his parents' behavior from the first place, although parents attribute these behaviors to nature.

#### **Father's duty:**

Father is the second instructor of the infant and should educate the baby eagerly. Parents need to cooperate to bring up their child in the family; they should not send the child to boarding schools,

monastery, or ask their servants to be the child's instructor otherwise she brings up the baby as a servant.

**Instructor:**

According to Rousseau, the instructor should be young, healthy, and wise. It is the first and last time for the instructor to educate a baby, doesn't work with more than one student, educate only one student during his lifetime, and choose his student himself.

**Student:**

The student should respect his parents and be obedient of his instructor. He should be healthy, strong, and sport-lover and enjoy a normal intelligence and understanding, considering his climatic and natural condition.

**Choosing anurse:**

According to Rousseau, the nurse should be healthy, vegetarian and interested in consuming vegetables to eat less meat and fries, and does not put dairy on fire...!

**Fear:**

Infants' cry signifies the need for help, so the nurse should not hit the child and should not do anything that the child thinks about gaining the mastery. For example, if the child wants an object, the nurse takes him to it not vice versa, so that the child doesn't learn to command the objects. Let the child do the tasks by themselves most of the times, by doing so they learn to choose their dreams based on their power and won't get damaged in case of failure.

**Next stage; the end of the infancy and the beginning speaking**

**The first lesson of courage:**

In this stage, the child should use words to get help rather than cry. If he wants to call someone by crying, you should not go to the child until he calms down. Rousseau thinks that the child should experience falling down, injuries and etc. along with care; but the child doesn't need a scooter to walk, he should learn to walk by himself.

**Beginning of an ethical life**

In this stage, the child forms a stable and specific personality and his happiness or misery is recognized. We should consider an ethical personality for him and behave with him based on the current situation rather than future. To put it another way, we should not make him happy in the future to the cost of making him miserable now.

**Will formation**

The child should be educated to obey nature not society and he should be brought up determined. He should not feel that he is a commander or a slave. Let him to feel free, when he makes a mistake there is no need for punishment, behave in a way that he doesn't make the mistake again. Not be lenient or strict towards him. We shouldn't educate him through punishment or spoil him. In this regard, the best way to make a child miserable is creating a situation in which he gets whatever he wants by force. When the child becomes proud and dominant, the society won't meet his needs in the future, so he will suffer for sure.

**Do not give children reasons**

According to Locke, we should provide the children with reasons; on the other hand, Rousseau pits against this idea, since he believes that it is out of sequence. He thinks wisdom is the last power that grows, so giving rational reason looks like as if we do a task from bottom to up. Giving reasons make the child to pretend that he accepts the reason but, in fact, he will do whatever he wants, and if his work is disclosed, he would confess as he is afraid of punishment. Therefore, we would have a flattering child, a liar and a hypocrite one.

**Ethical principles of Rousseau in this stage**

**Avoid outcasts:**

According to Emile, if the child is away from outcast people, he will not learn their bad habits.

**Justice:**

Justice is understood by the child as soon as his right is violated rather than he himself oppresses someone. So this principle should definitely be taken into account.

**Depravity:**

According to Rousseau, if glass breaks, we should let wind bothers it to see the consequence and understand the meaning of deprivation.

**Lie:**

Rousseau believes that the child should see the consequence of telling a lie as well.

**Acquiring language, history, and legend:**

Before 12, the child cannot learn more than one language, he merely can talk in several languages and he translates words from for example German to French. Every custom, culture, and attitude has its specific language, and the child can think in one language.

**Legend:**

To Rousseau, legend is not appropriate for the children. The truth should be told to the children directly, otherwise child doesn't bother to learn it. For example, fox and crow: flattery, chicken and ant: harshness and cruelty, lion and donkey fly: cruelty and abuse, lean wolf and chubby dog: lampoon and sarcasm.

**Use senses to cure fear:**

The aim of sense nurturing is not merely to use them; we should learn to understand things through the senses. In order to nurture the senses, sports such as swimming, running, jumping, and etc. are suitable, but these sports don't enhance the power of recognition and judgment in the child. It is to the child to use other senses to measure something he had felt before. In order not to have a coward child, he should get accustomed to darkness so that he will have good memories from darkness when he grow up and the fantasies do not make him afraid.

**Intellectual nurturing:**

To Rousseau, the senses must be changed to concepts gradually, but we should not jump from senses to rationale. The book should be the world of existence and the teacher is needed to be the events. The teacher must set the bed for the child to find the answer to the problem himself. In this stage of education, child should not be told the things that are not understandable for him, or describe him the scenery, but the child's curiosity must be aroused so that he seeks to find the answer and will only come to the teacher to solve the problem. The quantity of the material learned by the student is not important for Jean-Jacques, but correct ideas should enter the student's brain and the entry of false ones should be prevented. Rousseau believes that the child's curiosity should be provoked, he should be thought about the ways of learning to learn everything himself.

**Conclusion**

This study shows that comparing the educational ideas of Rousseau in terms of the principles and procedures of education with the principles of Islam indicates that both Rousseau and Islam consider thinking as one of the most important elements in education, and it is a tool for increasing the power and cognition in human beings. Rousseau also added some important thoughts to the development theory. To begin with, he believes that development is happening based on an intrinsic biological schedule, therefore, at first, he presents an image of development that is relatively independent from environmental effects.

Secondly, Rousseau claims that child development is being done through stages, in which the child experiences the world differently. Children are different from adults, not because they are white plates, but because at each stage, the child's intellectual and behavioral pattern has its own characteristics.

Rousseau presents a new educational philosophy that is called child-centered philosophy nowadays. All the above-mentioned ideas have become the guiding principles of many growth theories.

**Resources**

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