

Nature Education and “Emile”

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Abstract

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712~1778) was a famous thinker, philosopher, writer and educator during the French Enlightenment. His principal works include "On the Origin and Foundation of Human Inequality", "The Social Contract", "Emile", "Confessions" and so on. Rousseau spent his life researching and writing in philosophy, politics, education and literature. It's advocating deism, social contract theory, children's nature education and romanticism all created a new era in the society at that time.

Keywords

Rousseau; Education; Emile.

1. Introduction

Rousseau's naturalistic educational thought was formed in the 18th century. In his educational philosophy novel "Emile", he vividly expounded the theory of natural education. According to Rousseau's explanation, genuine education is education aimed at developing children's nature and adapting to the natural instincts of human physiology and psychology. This has one thing in common with the people-oriented concept of harmonious education. Rousseau's nature education though not only had a sharp critical role at that time, but also called for a new era of education and has important implications for our modern education.

"Emile" is Rousseau's illustrative work in the field of education. This is a philosophical novel education monograph, divided into 5 volumes. In this work, Rousseau described himself as an ideal teacher and Emile as an ideal student, and described Emile's growth and education from birth to 20 years old. This book strongly criticized the traditional view of education since ancient time, emphasized that education should go with the flow, and advocated that education should be consistent with the nature of children's development.

2. Rousseau's View of Education

The naturalistic educational theory is the main body of Rousseau's educational thought.

2.1. The Connotation of Naturalistic Educational Thought

According to Rousseau's explanation, biological education is education aimed at developing children's nature and adapting to the natural instincts of human physiology and psychology. Rousseau believed that education should obey the laws of nature and develop human nature. He defines the source of education at three aspects: "This education, we either receive from nature, or people, or things. The inner development of our faculties and organs is naturally the education of people; the education of people with others teaching us how to take advantage of this development; the education of things when we gain good experience with the things that affect us." of these three education, the education of nature is entirely beyond our discretion Yes, the education of things is only something we can decide, and only the education of people is something we can really control. Therefore, it is necessary to make the education of human beings and the education of things go hand in hand with the education of nature, with the

education of nature as the main one, so that both the education of people and the education of things tend to the natural goal and revolve around it. Rousseau's nature education focuses on fully affirming the instinctive nature of human beings and cultivating natural human nature and the ideal personality.

2.2. The Basic Content of Naturalistic Educational Thought

2.2.1. Education Should Conform to the Nature of Children

Rousseau believes that human nature is kind, education should conform to the development of children's nature, and in terms of informative effect, only conforming to the progress of nature is the best policy. He said in the first sentence of the opening of "Emile": "Things that are out of the hands of the creator are good. But when they reach the hands of man, they become bad." After human beings are kept separate from the state of nature, they lose their biological nature. Nature wants children to mean children before they become adults. If we mess up this order. "We'll have some young doctors and aging children". He believes that children enjoy their own unique views, thoughts and feelings. If they replace their views, thoughts and feelings with adults' views, thoughts and feelings, it will eventually go against the educational theory of "attributing to nature and conforming to nature". Rousseau advocated that education should be applied according to the age characteristics of the educated. He criticized feudal scholastic education for disregarding the spontaneous progress of children and obliterating the difference between children and adults. This kind of education that sacrifices children's current life experience for the sake of children's future, in Rousseau. It looks like it is tantamount to making children the victims of Education.

2.2.2. Children Should Receive Education in Nature Such as Activities and Life Experiences

Rousseau pointed out that it is necessary to let children acquire knowledge in activities as much as possible to promote physical and mental development. Rousseau gives attention to the function of activities, he especially emphasizes the principle of intuitive teaching, and opposes excessive reading and reading useless books. Reading too many books makes us stop reading the big book of the world. He believes that children can only understand the meaning of things when they have direct contact and observation of things. Rousseau advocates that children should be educated in life experience. For example, when children make mistakes, they should use the "law of natural consequences". After children experience inconvenience or pain, they will discover their mistakes and correct them.

2.3. Moral Citizens Should Be Cultivated and Receive Survival Education

Rousseau believes that people are born with a conscience, reason and freedom, which give people the basis for obtaining decent morals. Nevertheless, "knowing the good is not the same thing as loving the good". Reason needs the guidance of conscience, the "innate principle of justice and morality"; although people have a good natural foundation, they do not have innate moral concepts, and they still are required to rely on acquired education and practice to develop decent morality. According to these foundations and conditions, proper moral education activities can cultivate students' personal morality and social morality. However, the cultivation of students' morality must have certain stages, and moral education can be made at will. The key to education is to cooperate with the natural progress of students, and the cultivation of moral education should also be in line with the development of students' innate nature. Teachers should grasp the timing of moral education according to the foundation and conditions of ethical education. Put virtuous education in practice, and cultivate children's firm will through various good deeds exercises, that is, the practice of morality. Rousseau's thoughts on enhancing people's ability to survive and live a meaningful life aroused strong repercussions in the entire French society at that time.

3. The Concept of Natural Education in Emile

"Emile" is Rousseau's pedagogical treatise and his classic work on children's education. The protagonist of the book is "Emile", and Rousseau is incarnated as Emile's educator, separated into four stages describes what kind of education in Emile should receive at different stages of growth.

The educational ideas embodied in this book mainly include the following points:

3.1. The Highest Purpose of Education Is Tantamount to Cultivating "Free Men"

Rousseau believes that human freedom includes three aspects: natural freedom, that is, the inalienable freedom inherent in human beings; social freedom, that is, the dynamic process of overcoming the degeneration of human nature in the society and avoiding being socially alienated in the process of growth; moral freedom, that is, the dynamic process of the human nature itself that an individual possesses as a human being perfected in the historical process. Lu Xiao believes that regardless of the fact that people can be released in a natural state, reason and morality will not be developed. Therefore, freedom is relative, but he opposes social education based solely on reason.

3.2. Negative Education and Human Nature

Lu School believes that human nature is good, so education in childhood should not instill morality and knowledge to students, because the moral foundation established only by reason is not solid, and it is only necessary to prevent his mind from being contaminated with sin. Any learning will gradually replace his intimate knowledge of the outside world, and will gradually make him lose the ability to know things.

3.3. Nature First and Natural Growth

Lu school advocates that education should follow the nature of children and make education consistent with the stage of physical and mental development. In order to ensure the natural growth of children, he believes that the best place for mathematics education should be in the countryside, and the most natural number schooling for children is his father came. In the process of education, educators should refrain from interfering with the natural growth of children as much as possible.

4. Problems Existing in Educational Concepts in "Emile"

Ecological education mainly refers to the education of children to obey the laws of nature, to make the best use of the situation, so that the body and mind can develop freely and healthily, without too much human interference.

In this work, Rousseau describes himself as an ideal teacher and Emile as an ideal student, narrating the whole process of Emile's growth and education from birth to 20 years old, expounding his "natural" education doctrine.

4.1. The Goal of "Natural Education"

Rousseau believes that the goal of "natural education" is to cultivate "native persons". In Rousseau's understanding, "nature" is equal to a habit suitable for nature, and "natural man" is the most well-structured animal among all animals. Natural persons are permitted, independent and equal in their natural state, and all their desires are based on the need for survival. This kind of spontaneous person is actually a person with civic character in an ideal society. He is a person who is honest, equal, independent, and can adapt to the free competition of capitalism. Rousseau believed that the purpose of education can only be to cultivate "natural persons". Such a sincere man is not a savage in a state of nature, but a natural man in a state of society.

4.2. The Role of ".Natural Education"

Rousseau emphasized that people are the product of education, and education plays a decisive role in shaping people's personality and changing the impact of harsh environments on people. Rousseau believes that the inherent nature of human beings is kind and pure, and people are born to love freedom and have self-love and compassion. The first sentence of the opening of "Emile" is: "What comes from the hand of the Creator is good, but when it is in the hand of man, it is all bad." He pointed out: the nature of human beings is changeable. Yes, all mistakes and sins are the result of adverse social circumstances. In Rousseau's view, to build a better society, the individual must be processed.

4.3. Basic Principles of "Natural Education"

Depending on the laws of the natural tendency of children's physical and mental development, proper education based on children's instincts, needs, abilities and hobbies can make children develop healthily. This is the basic principle of organic education. According to the basic principles of natural education, Rousseau opposes that adults ignore the characteristics of children, blindly force children to receive so-called education that violates nature according to tradition and prejudice, interfere or restrict children's free development, and oppose strict discipline and rote teaching methods.

He strongly advocated: before children's understanding is not yet developed, children should be kept away from society, return to nature, go to the natural environment to see and listen, and not accept the influence of human beings; Natural life, because children's physical and mental development has its own fixed sequence and stages, and each stage has its own unique task. If you violate it, it is a substandard education. The most geographical education is the best education.

5. Rousseau's View of Education and the Enlightenment in "Emile"

5.1. The Subject Status of the Child Is Ignored

Rousseau rarely mentions Emile's education for himself in the book, and his education comes from outsiders. The contemporary educational concept holds that there should be two types of education: external education and self-education, and self-education has received more and more attention. In the novel, Emile seems to have become a blank piece of paper for anyone to build upon, without any autonomy. Education is intended to children, and the ultimate beneficiary is also children, so children are the center and subject of education. Perhaps this defect is caused by differences in time and concepts, but in today's view this weakness is very fatal and needs our attention.

5.2. The Existence of A Discriminatory View of Women

Female discrimination is an essential problem in Rousseau's "Emile". Most of the writing in the full text are about the education of boys, but little about the education methods of girls. There is only a minor point of view on women's education in the fifth volume, but this point is also mentioned by Rousseau. In addition, in the division of age groups, Rousseau has excessively separated women's education into two stages: before the age of ten and after the age of ten. This was due to the patriarchal environment of the society at that time, but it was also a self-contradiction of Rousseau in "Emile".

5.3. The Rigidity of Educational Means

Education is a great systematic project, and it is also a refined and targeted project. However, Rousseau's "Emile" is suspected of treating education as a production line, stylized and simplified. The first is the educational method of stage division. This kind of stage division can make our education more purposeful and pertinent. This is the place for its development.

However, under this stage education mode, children's independence and special sex is neglected. The highlights of each child are obliterated, resulting in the rigidity of education. Our current education also focuses on stages and gradual progress, but it also gives priority to specificity and differences. In contrast, Rousseau's ideas are relatively backward. The second is a single education method. In the book, Emile's education is expected to be finished in the hands of the family and tutors, and there is a lack of descriptions of learning education. This sole teaching method will definitely limit the children's vision. Therefore, Rousseau's educational method seems to be only an idealized setting.

6. Rousseau's View of Education and Enlightenment in the Emile

6.1. The Main Body Is Prominent, Teaching Students in Accordance with Their Aptitude

After studying "Emile", the author believes that our current education still needs to be learned from its concept of state education, and educate children according to the characteristics of children of different ages, so that children can receive greater benefits. However, in view of the differences of children, we must also establish the dominant position of children, highlight the role of children in education, and cultivate children's self-education ability. In addition, on the basis of differences, we should also teach students according to their aptitude, not stick to stating goals, but should fully understand the characteristics of children, so that children can receive more targeted education.

6.2. Multimodal Teaching

The main purpose of education is to cultivate children's quality and ability, broaden their horizons, and ultimately enhance their social adaptability and value realization ability. Therefore, we should avoid the single-family education that Emile received, and let children benefit from home, school, and self-education, so as to enhance children's cognitive ability in all aspects.

6.3. Interested Teaching

In "Emile", Rousseau more than once mentioned the importance of interest. Without interest, education will become a burden for children, which will not just take difficult to produce didactic effects, but will also make children rebellious and lead them astray. At this point, we can utilize game teaching methods to enhance children's interest, and multimedia technology under modern technology can also lead to more education.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, in "Emile", Rousseau cultivated a "natural man" with all his own enlightening theoretical guidance and practical education. These educational concepts, ideas and methods have both positive and negative sides. It should be analysed from a dialectical point of view.

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