

On Moral Development in Education through Experience: Natural and Free Human being in Rousseau*

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Abstract: The universal problems faced by humankind from past to present inevitably drawing attention to an ethical context of and the function of education. These problems, which societies face despite all the advances, lead us to discuss what can be done regarding curriculum studies. These discussions were brought to the agenda through the questions and conceptualizations based on Rousseau's First Discourse (1749) and Emile (1762), and answers were sought in today's context. Rousseau's major works constitute the study group of this research conducted with the conceptual analysis method. Despite the general acceptance of the fundamental place of ethical arguments in the views affecting the philosophical foundations of the curriculum, the abstraction of it in practice leads to a mechanical understanding of education. Needs for comprehension of experience-based education and the creation of new paradigms with ethical grounds that formulates according to local dynamics become more apparent and critical amidst the challenges that our world faces.

Keywords: J. J. Rousseau, experience, human nature, freedom, ethics

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Introduction

Human experience proceeds towards an almost unpredictable point while pushing the limits of nature around the ideas, which are sometimes stimulating and exciting and interest-oriented in other times, regardless of their ethical extent. In this process, humanity frequently faces off against ecological problems on a global ground on the one hand as well as political and social problems on the other hand. Given that the solution efforts for problems specific to the current era could not find a place in practice as necessary, the voices – trying to announce their existence in favor of life to be sustainable along with being 'livable' most essentially – are gradually faded down or could not be heard enough, and the solution-seeking where the economic issues are brought foreground for saving the day almost point to the eclipse of reason within the spirit of the era. Based on all of these, it should not be seen as an exaggeration to say that degeneration has started in a cultural, democratic, and social lifestyle in which the means are taken as goals today. This reminds us that today, we should reflect and discuss the basic problem that Rousseau brought into question in his work *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts/First Discourse* (1749) and *Emile* (1762) once more.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

It is not a coincidence that Rousseau, who contributed significantly to the formation of founding ideas of modern education and the modern age as one of the philosophers of French Enlightenment, is the subject of our research with the projections of his ideas in human sciences, especially in politics, education and law have resonated not only in Europe and the Western world but also in almost every corner of the world. It can be said that Rousseau tried to find answers to the question 'what can be done to create a virtuous character through education in a corrupted society?' essentially by looking at the moral nature of an individual -natural and free- in his work named *Emile, or on Education* [1762] that he wrote to manifest his thoughts regarding the education of the young generation.

Although he met with reactions resulting with burnt of his books due to the ideas he wrote with a great revulsion against the dominant classes -such as the king, aristocracy and church- together with the social distortion and corruption in his era, Rousseau's greatest success is hidden in his path-breaking observations and thoughts regarding his outlook on human nature and experience. As stated by Gutman (1988), "However, it is not difficult to understand, for Rousseau seems to have had a profound effect on almost everyone. Great numbers of people, like Kant, saw Rousseau as the harbinger of great possibilities for human growth and freedom" (p. 100). Indeed, this interest can easily be understood from the fact that the ideas of Rousseau found reflections in the thoughts of many intellectuals, including both the leading philosophers, such as Kant and psychologists, such as Piaget and Freud and the leading educators and philosophers of 20th century - primarily Dewey - as well as in several theories in modern education.

According to the statement over-told for Kant in the Western philosophy, “philosophy can be done against or in favor of Kant, but not without Kant”, we can affirm that educational debate can also be done against or in favor of Rousseau, but the modern education cannot be understood and accomplished without his ideas. The fact that Rousseau, who personally suffered the consequences of the transition to the modern period, kept his thoughts up to date is due to the courage he showed to be the spokesperson of his emotions, inner voice and nature, which is a notion that the modern human has sacrificed for the sake of his mind while equally suffering from its deficiency. After nearly two and a half centuries, today we decided to examine the problem we set forth as essential and settled for this study in contemplation that his approaches may help us point out and find a solution to this problem, which is still a struggle of today’s human being.

Rousseau started off with a benign justification regarding human nature and put childhood as the most important period of human on the contrary to the common point of view with his presumptive anthropological explanations. Analogies, such as ‘educational Columbus’, are drawn about Rousseau since “he discovered the island of childhood and explored the stages of youth” (Gill, 2010, pp. 127-128). It is even said that his idea of education made the “Copernican revolution” as he transforms the teacher-centered education into a student-centered model (Soëtard, 1994, p. 423). It is best to say that these claims have merits and justifications at some points, although they greatly seem to be pretentious.

Rousseau’s works, which have been longstanding till this day and reflect the universal and modern problems regarding humankind, can be approached with a humanistic point of view in just the same way as in the statement of Kant, saying: “Rousseau set me right... I learned to respect human nature...” (Cassirer, 1938, pp. 1-2). From Cassirer’s (1938) perspective, Rousseau’s question is related to “vocation of man” that is to be made susceptible of philosophic solution (p. 6) and Noddings’ (1995) “...we are looking for questions and ideas that arose in philosophical thought and still intrigue or beset us today. Some of the educational ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau certainly fall into this category” (p. 16). In this context, Rousseau’s works are examined in the light of his universal questions rather than the solutions he has offered. With the awareness that it is not possible to find the right answers without asking the right questions. These questions that can be considered in creating a philosophical paradigm for curriculum have qualities as appropriate and fundamental, especially in an ethical context.

The Co-existence of Education and Ethics

In his *Second Discourse*, Rousseau (1913 [1755]) criticized the humans in his age for giving up their freedom as the price of what they achieved with their reasons and being captives of what they assumed as necessary (pp. 217-218). Today, it is possible to talk about the reflections of this situation to different extents and perhaps more widely. In our age, when living has transformed into surviving and the world has

turned into an arena where everything is seen as permissible, it should not be regarded as an exaggeration that our near or distant future would be shaped as dystopic. Based on this, we endeavor to discuss over problematization of ethical foundations through unveiling and revisiting the abovementioned criticism of Rousseau.

It is required that education, which was seen as an obligation by the governments in reaching their goal of ideal society throughout history, should become a mechanism that can actualize a quality life which the governments have to promise to their members. With the words of Rousseau: "Suit man's education to man, and not to what is not man" (Soëtard, 1994, p. 425). "According to Rousseau, making education suitable for human means adjusting the education for the heart of human being" (Savruk, 2019, p. 158). In fact, it is clearly seen in Rousseau's ideas which he put forward in his works that education has no more fundamental goal than raising humans.

Today, when robots with great skills can be produced with artificial intelligence technologies, our failure to raise 'human beings' is an ironic example to show the extent of this universal problem at the present time. As a matter of fact, the biggest difference of human beings from robots should be sought in the former's being an object with moral responsibility. With the 'human being' notion, the need for the people who pivot their lives around the freedom and the responsibility it brings is remarked here. Indeed, as expressed by Freire (2000, pp. 43-44):

...while the problem of humanization has always, from an axiological point of view, been humankind's central problem, it now takes on the character of an inescapable concern. Concern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility but as a historical reality. And as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanization, he or she may ask if humanization is a viable possibility. Within history in concrete, objective contexts, both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities for a person as an uncompleted being conscious of their incompleteness.

The research, equally the discussions, in which the education is analyzed within the framework of morals-ethics-values notions in the literature in our country, increase recently. Unlike others, the prominent issue of this research, by force of the philosophical paradigm, which will be the basis of a contemporary and experiential education program, is to draw attention to the necessity of ethics that will encompass the integration of education and training and to put forward an intellectual perspective on how a moral development can be ensured in children. Thus, the solution offers on what can be done regarding the program development studies in education are brought forward through the questions and conceptualization of Rousseau in our article as a response to the current ethical problems.

Method

Research Design

This research was a conceptual analysis study based on document review and qualitative interpretation of the knowledge and information acquired from certain resources by considering their historical context. While this study analyzed Rousseau's views on education in a comprehensive sense within the conceptual framework of learning, experience, morality, and ethics, it also aims to examine their repercussions in today's context. Throughout the analysis, the hermeneutic method was also used due to the nature of a conceptual study.

Study Group

In our research, the key concepts, such as education, experience, nature, ethics and morality, were identified regarding the problematic we brought forth based on Rousseau's major works. In this context, *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences/First Discourse*, 1749; *Discourse on Inequality/Second Discourse*, 1755; *Emile, or on Education*, 1762; *The Social Contract*, 1762 were determined as the main sources of the research as well as certain current studies and certain relevant literature was also included in the study group.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

This research was based on a process in which the collection and analysis of the data were conducted simultaneously. In this research, while document review was used in the process of collecting data, conceptual analysis and hermeneutic approaches were adopted together in the process of analyzing data as well.

Conceptual analysis. Conceptual analysis has a significant history in all sciences, both before and during the research as a part of the research as well as an independent research method. As stated (Petocz & Newbery, 2010, p. 126):

Conceptual analysis is analysis of concepts, terms, variables, constructs, definitions, assertions, hypotheses, and theories. It involves examining these for clarity and coherence, critically scrutinizing their logical relations, and identifying assumptions and implications. related to critical thinking. Conceptual analysis is not merely a matter of language or language use; it is also a matter of the content of our linguistic expressions, that is, what we claim to be thinking and talking about.

Hermeneutic. Originating in the study of written texts, hermeneutics provides a theoretical framework for interpretive meaning, giving particular attention to the context and original purpose. Based on the thought that meaning "depends on the cultural context in which it was originally created as well as the cultural context within which it is subsequently interpreted"; in hermeneutics, "...the first priority is to capture

the perspective"; indeed, "nothing can be interpreted free of some perspective..." (Patton, 2002, pp. 113-128). Above all, as Barzun (1992) states, "a note is first a thought" (p. 25). In the light of contemporary approaches, according to Schubert (2010), "in curriculum studies, it becomes the interpretation of various discourses of experiences that give meaning to" one's lived-experiences (p. 234). To Smith (2010), "hermeneutics is particularly relevant to education and curriculum studies" (p. 433). Similarly, to Bramall (1999), who thinks both "educational and hermeneutic theory is opened up to each other", themes addressed with this method include "the aims of education, the tension between authority and emancipation, the nature of the educational dialogue, and the relationship between educational theory and practice" (pp. 463-464).

In this context, our study is a hermeneutical, historical and conceptual analysis as an attempt to reflect Rousseau's views as both products of his milieu and reconstructions through conceptualizations made by him in the light of today. Indeed "all understanding takes place within a horizon of past, present, and future" (Smith, 2010, p. 435).

Findings

Fundamental Dynamics of Education

Whenever the concept of education is mentioned, it is inevitable that the issue is taken to a philosophical context within the axis of ideas as to the human nature independent from time and space. This reminds the nuanced comment of Dewey regarding that the practice of philosophy is only possible through the educational philosophy. What is mentioned here is not a philosophical notion but a complete philosophy of life, which shapes the idea of whole integral life that serves to a better living through experiences just as we have come across since Plato and Aristoteles. Indeed, education cannot be dissociated from philosophy and life.

Today, the world is changing continuously under several popular/dominant factors as a world that is shaped with media tools and recreated ceaselessly. This change affects people in different dimensions. On the other hand, the dynamics, such as the new communication methods changing the social structure and relationships along with the professional areas of expertise emerging recently and being configured continuously according to the dynamics of the changing world should always be in the struggle for adaptation. It is for sure that the institution that falters first due to these effects is education, which puts an effort to minimize the problems through adjustment.

It is a fact that these global impacts that shape people, societies and lives have destructive effects from time to time by leading to conflicts in both individual and social dimensions. Unfortunately, people who are/should always be conscious can stay far from being conscious subjects of the change that occurs due to these impacts. These

situations, which lead daily life to change and transform at a great speed -especially in the cities- bring along many problems, i.e., primarily alienation and differentiation.

Modernism, globalization, alienation

Being maybe one of the most common and biggest psycho-social problems of our age, the phenomenon of alienation can be mentioned as one of the greatest obstacles to the emergence of a healthy personality among individuals. A healthy personality can only be possible in the construction of a life where one can turn his/her potential into reality. Today, it becomes apparent that beyond individual and psychological attempts to address the problem of alienation, there is a need for more general, widespread and accessible social mechanisms of solution. Education is at the top of these solution mechanisms as an initiative that has an obligation to provide an opportunity and environment for the individual to develop in accordance with his/her nature.

The educational institution, which cannot be reduced to raise professional expert, technician, manufacturer, entrepreneur through the acquisition of various skills, unfortunately, moves away from being a quality development and enrichment process as a whole that takes place in accordance with the multi-dimensional and multi-directional -creative, intellectual, moral, aesthetic- nature of the human being. Based on the uncontrollable effects of popular culture and social media today, which serve certain purposes, especially consumption, globalization and new forms of communication, we can characterize it as a universal ethical problem that many cultures are struggling with similar problems. According to Rousseau, the source of the relevant problems, which we can say that arose with Modernism, is the age of reason itself.

Rousseau thinks that there is no improvement in the moral status of the society and the human in the society, which can be called 'progress' or 'development' in the face of all 'progress' and 'development' that human being has achieved with his/her mind, on the contrary, s/he is gradually moving away from the state of goodness. Rousseau feels discomfort with something at the point where humanity has reached with all the scientific developments and various methods as well as means to take control over nature, in other words, in the age of reason -the 18th century- when the victory of the human mind has been declared (Savruk, 2019, p. 144).

This discomfort manifests itself in a romantic point of view that forms a wholeness with Rousseau's personal characteristics. Rousseau has settled to seek for the solution by looking at his personal experiences towards his own problems, which he was tormented with 'the age of reason'. This situation has led to widespread criticism of Rousseau that "This has been Rousseau's personal problem: he made it, irrevocably, that of modern man"(Bronowski & Mazlish, 1960, p. 281). However, it can also be said that the solution-seeking of Rousseau for this problem concerning everyone is universal as much as being personal.

Indeed, Rousseau did not draw a road map as he did not also give a formula. The universal element in Rousseau's answer is that the answers are in people's own life,

which they themselves establish by their own actions; in other words, the answer is to discover one own self, its natural essence -which is inherently good. People have the potential to reach their own freedom to be themselves, their inner world, their emotions, in other words, by returning to their original benevolent nature. This nature can be expressed as a context that enables the ontological reality of individuals to emerge, first as a species and then as autonomous beings.

According to Jay (2005), "modernity was accompanied by an increasing specialization of function and the loss of a more integrated sense of life" (p. 38). The state of *self*, which is the natural and integral form of existence that humans have, with the famous expression of Frederick Von Schiller made famous by Weber, "disenchanted" modern world (Jay, 2005, p. 38), emerges as a process that can be discovered on condition that the individual who keeps aloof from self remembers his/her own nature again. This reminds us, as a universal call, of one of the *Delphi Principles*: 'Know Thyself!', which is the most ancient and fundamental purpose of life in general and education in particular.

Knowing thyself points out ontological wholeness that emphasizes moral consciousness rather than the intellectual act of knowing and puts human beings' relationship with themselves, above all, on the basis of human beings' relationship with the truth. The state of wisdom that Socrates ironically advocates as praise of ignorance points out that a true cognition requires knowing oneself by necessity. In the dialectic of knowing thyself in *Dialog I with Alcibiades*, which is claimed to be written by Plato (1927), Socrates pointed out that the human should recognize and acknowledge what belongs to his/her soul before all *know-what's* and *know-how's*. While the philosopher expresses this situation as a first step to reach virtue, the body and soul elements integrated if only the human is interested in his/her own soul.

The issue is discussed by reflecting on the context of human nature ontologically by Rousseau. Similarly, Rousseau pointed out the knowing, remembering, rediscovering, and practising the state of natural goodness as necessities for humans. Nature is not isolated from human existence; it designates the relationship of the individual with truth through his/her actions as a part of ontological integrity. Thus, the character of the individual that was formed the basis of the act of knowing becomes before every other quality.

In fact, true knowing firstly requires gaining in sound reasoning that can distinguish the true from the false. Neidleman (2013) comments that "As in the ancient tradition, it was, for Rousseau, the character more than evidence that determined the truthseeker's access to truth... For Rousseau, the truth was less a function of reflection than character, less a function of learning than of... one's ideas and inclinations... Rousseau cherished sincerity above skill, knowledge, and expertise" (pp. 818-819). Accordingly, it can be said that reaching the truth is not only a scientific issue but rather an ethical matter for Rousseau.

In this state, knowing thyself points out to a development process that the individual grounds his/her genuine relationship with life only on his/her genuine relationship with his/her ego. Indeed, as accepted in today's perspective of experience, an experience, including the history and tradition (daily or educational, conscious or unconscious) always turns towards the future while referring to a historical past. In this context, Rousseau's point of view towards human nature is neither composed of a nostalgic longing nor an approach that is only essentialist and idealist; it is an improvement-oriented, contemporary and existentialist approach in terms of advocating that the human can reach the high virtue with his/her own efforts.

The approaches, which still survive and in which the learning and moral development is presented in various stages, are inspired mostly by Rousseau in terms of presenting the human as a living creature that develops physically and mentally. Therefore, knowing thyself in the modern world can be considered a principle in constituting the ground on which the individual will build his/her life through taking care of himself/herself in a continuity that lasts lifelong contrary to being a static case and that involves change, transformation, development and liveliness. This situation can be positioned against the alienation problem that we have faced.

This existential purpose, being the primary goal of life, reminds that the educational efforts to raise wise people beyond bringing information in them should come to the fore again. In fact, revealing and developing the moral and aesthetic within an individual as a lifestyle is one of the essential duties of education. Human, with the dichotomies emerging with the modernism, forgets his/her relationship with his/her own nature in a sense due to the relationships with the outer world, which increasingly getting more complicated and had to build it on new grounds and faced with the problems of our time. Kısa (2015) indicates a point that we assume to be associated regarding the mentioned problem which the individual was faced with (pp. 756-757):

The modern individual is at a rather disadvantage compared to his/her primitive ancestors in terms of the ability to experience and make sense of his own inner processes and structures.... Although as well as s/he has increased the control over the outer world, s/he has had to become alienated from his/her inner world. Thus, the modern individual faced the difficulty of experiencing the vital processes that his/her primitive ancestors directly experienced and made a part of his/her conscious life, indirectly and sometimes even use without experiencing them at all. Whereas primitive human had the opportunity to experience a process that many people today feel but could not express, immediately without exactly knowing what it is and what its meaning and s/he even achieved an existence by reflecting it to the outer world.

The fact that Rousseau brings up again some notions, which were ignored due to the certain obligations of the scientific method or unloaded conceptions, through the senses raises the experiential dimension of knowledge while underlining an ontological context in the relationship of concepts with reality. Rousseau (1979 [1762]) criticized humankind by saying: "In wanting to turn everything over to reasoning, we have reduced our precepts to words; we have made no use of actions" (p. 321). In this context Rousseau (1913 [1749]) argued that "before the time humans were satisfied with the practice of virtue; they were undone when they began to study it" (p. 138).

Indeed, according to Rousseau, the corruption of society is because people pretend to have values they abandoned under the mask of virtue. This issue that Rousseau emphasized especially in his *Second Discourse* [1755] led him to identify human nature with nature and on this occasion, starting from the initial states of humanity – pre-social – to construct the process of transition to social life – and the corruption in this process – through a thought experiment.

Although Rousseau accepts that humans are social beings, he criticizes the fact that the humans in urban life and the social institutions created by them are built on many laws that are incorrectly grounded instead of natural laws. He pointed to the differences between people living in nature and those living in society (Rousseau, 1913 [1755]; 1913 [1762]; 1979 [1762]), he also advocated in *The Social Contract* (1913 [1762]) the idea that a life in which the individual as a citizen can be based on both his own existence and benefit to society, can only be realized through laws, that bind him to society and are the obligatory means of his social-freedom. Rousseau went one more step ahead of Locke's *tabula rasa* and placed the benevolent human nature idea and, on the center of it, the freewill of human as well as the responsibility born by this freedom against the justifications, such as malevolent/evil human nature within the framework of Christian culture he lived in, which were set forth by his predecessors like Hobbes and others. He also grounded this benevolent/natural law with the notions of self-love and compassion (sensitivity to other creatures) which are common, fundamental and primary in all human beings as he claimed (Rousseau, 1968, p. 82) by pointing out the moral nature combining the sensory and mental existence of the human being.

The problem of corruption, which "reaches its peak in the society characteristic of Rousseau's time" (Noddings, 1995, p. 16) that stems from urbanization according to Rousseau, can be evaluated in the context of globalization in the current axis. In both cases, situations, such as conflict and alienation that the individuals go down under contradictory circumstances in the process of individuals re-establish themselves as a subject within society. Indeed, according to Rousseau, the ambitions, which are intrinsically well-intended and disrupted due to the faulty education and the degenerated institutions in urban life, lead to a kind of illusion among people.

An individual, in the face of conflicts, opened up for discussion by Rousseau in the axis of issues like individual-society and sometimes science-ethics, slowly move away from his/her own nature and the reality, then s/he feels unhappy in the end. In this way, in a world where the fake takes the place of truth, the human becomes alienated from him/herself since s/he move away from his/her nature. According to Rousseau, this illusion which replaced reality leads to a superficial and fake lifestyle as well as degeneration and serve for people to protect their status quo. Rousseau brings a fierce criticism to this, so to say, masquerade ball.

This degeneration, unhappiness and alienation spiral brings forth a reality problem that grows day by day and yet moves away from a human if it is not solved. This

situation can be defined as a problem which could put humanity into the danger of supposing the illusion created by the shades as the epitome of reality, just like the cave allegory of Plato. In that case, according to Rousseau, a human being needs his/her emotions, intuitions and feelings; in other words, his/her total existence for the real enlightenment comes true. However, such enlightenment that requires not only knowing but also feeling and reasoning as well as minding for conscience can pave the way for a human to the reality and happiness.

Nevertheless, modernity has significantly contributed to the emergence of the current understanding of modern education despite all the dichotomies and certain problems it has created. In fact, we should confess that modern education has opened many opportunities for all and the doors for modern practices and research in many realms of life, such as freedom, secularism, anti-dogma, mass education, education of women, education of adults, individualized and differentiated education, theories of feminist education, critical pedagogy, and it has ensured the institutionalization of experiential education, the impacts of which shape today's educational understanding in the methodological context. On the other hand, the transformation from passive learner to active learner, which is seen as a revolution, has also come true thanks to modern education. The instruments emerging and developing through the technology also contribute -when used relevantly- to the dissemination of education and thus, becoming a fairer and equalizer factor.

Turning to Nature as a Remedy

With his solution call that we can express as “turning to nature”, Rousseau emphasized that individuals should turn to both their own nature and to nature away from the urban life, which is the countryside. Throughout Western intellectual history, which is the heritage of ancient customs, the ritual of turning to nature shows itself to us as a reflective activity that helps a person turn to his/her inner world, discourse upon his/her thoughts and actions, and reason on them to remember the most correct and appropriate one. Foucault (1988) reminds another Delphi principle – *epimelestai soutou* – which means concern with the self (take care of self), which was mostly forgotten as the predecessor of “know thyself” – *gnothi sauton* – principle, stating that the philosophers were engaged in rural activities alongside intellectual activities and favored nature since it helped them get in touch with themselves (pp. 19-27).

Similarly, Rousseau frequently emphasizes the idea of turning to nature as part of warning towards oneself and he occasionally points out the ancient period's practices of life. According to Rousseau (1913[1749]), “We cannot reflect on the morality of mankind without contemplating with pleasure the picture of the simplicity which prevailed in the earliest times. This image may be justly compared to a beautiful coast, adorned only by the hands of nature...” (p. 145). Rousseau refers to the *Delphi Principle* while mentioning his purpose of writing the work in the preface of *Second Discourse* (1913[1755]) and underlines that he set to a challenging work (p. 168).

In this context, Rousseau (1913[1755]), who sees the investigation of the natural state of humankind as a necessity, thinks that it is required to distinguish between what people have in the state of society and what they have initially – the state of nature. Thus, he thinks this can only be achieved by examining the fundamental human principles, needs, and duties of the natural state (p. 172). He also points out the deprivation, which can only be fixed through the examination of nature with the following statement (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 469):

The closer nations are to nature, the more their character is dominated by goodness. It is only by closing themselves up in cities and corrupting themselves by means of culture that they become depraved and exchange a few defects that are more coarse than harmful for appealing and pernicious vices.

As a radical philosopher, Rousseau tried to draw attention to the necessity of grounding the laws of social and civic life properly (i.e., nature), like his effort to ground the human nature with the self, similarly to Descartes' method, that being isolated from all external factors as much as possible. Rousseau felt the need of reminding the human who lost his/her way between the tensions that could be described through dichotomies, such as natural-artificial, real-fake, material-spiritual, need-passion, his/her own nature. In other words, the state of division and dichotomy in the modern world led Rousseau to make a choice in a sense. Essentially, Rousseau's pursuit, which we can express as the effort of creating a balance or enabling integrity in the spirit of the time that involves dichotomies, such as emotion-mind or mind-body and subject-object, drove him to investigations on human nature and based on this, the existential emotional area of human being, which was mostly ignored or excluded. Thus, the grounding of inner – moral – elements related to the emotions became inevitable for Rousseau.

The moral nature

For Rousseau, we can affirm that emotions are the main source of morality and the first stop of the journey of knowing thyself. The fact that Rousseau considered the human being – who was glorified with his/her mind – as a relatively holistic creature, especially in his time, and through the recognition of his/her emotional competencies, is one of the important developments which pave the way for human to be accepted as a historical object having his/her own history, value judgments, and experiences. On the other hand, this situation is a breakthrough development that allows individuals to get on the stage of history as the most important moral objects in the formation of their autonomous presence independent from the whole society.

According to Gutman (1988), whilst “the roots of the valorization of feeling lies in the Reform, with the modern approach that emerged through the rise of the individual as the ultimate hermeneutic authority first comes clearly into view with Rousseau” (p. 101). Although Descartes' *cogito* that questions the authorities except his own reason as he owes his existential presence to thinking, triggered the first lights of the Modern Age,

Rousseau founded the existence with its utterly different dimension: its feelings. He was blamed for being irrational because of his contradictory and romantic approaches in the age of reason he lived in. The fact that firstly the thinking human of Descartes and secondly the feeling human of Rousseau are placed in the center of human experiences points out two different approaches which allow human to become an object for directly reaching the truth. This journey, which leads to the denial of all kinds of authority in reaching reality, came true by way of reliance on the mind in the former and on the emotions in the latter.

Human as a final authority does not mean to describe human with a subjectivity that goes to nihilism or cynicism through making truth 'the extent of everything' in a sophisticated way. This situation should be understood in a way that human can reach the truth by building his/her life with hearty tasks along with his/her benevolent nature and by taking his/her freedom and responsibility in his/her own hands. An individual can directly reach the truth only by his/her knowledge. This knowledge is the cognition of life, in other words, the encounter with life as a praxis.

This cognition occurs in a process when the encounter of an individual with other individuals, a presence of society or an item takes place as a real way of communication, i.e., interaction. The interaction that the individual attends as body and soul and, at the end of this process, arises from that experience as a new individual – historically and mentally – has a mutual transforming effect. At this point, neither knowledge from experience and individual from knowledge nor experience from the individual can be abstracted and merely addressed. For this very reason, reality requires the individual to be directly involved in the process to reveal his/her own existence. Ultimately, it is not the subjectivity of the reality, but the diversity, transformativity and the unique nature of each experience that bring one to reality.

Based on Neidleman's (2013) explication that "the Cartesian transformation severed the question of truth from ethical considerations" (p. 819), the importance of Rousseau's emphasis on feelings becomes mostly understandable. Indeed, regarding ethical issues, Rousseau (1979[1762]) argues that emotions can be a more reliable guide than reason; that conscience can indicate the truth better due to its immediacy – that utter the voice of nature –, although the reason may mislead the individual (pp. 290-291). Therefore, suggesting that the mind, by itself, cannot be effective or become a guide in determining the truth and/or good as well as reaching the truth, Rousseau tried to bring the ethical context into question again through the emotions, which was ignored in the reality problematique.

According to Rousseau (1979[1762]), action draws its strength and constraint from emotions. "Reason alone is not active. It sometimes restrains, arouses rarely, and it has never done it anything great. Always to reason is the mania of small minds. Strong souls have quite another language" (p. 321). Here, it is the language of nature that is effective. Nature speaks through our emotions which we can only comprehend the way that will bring happiness to an individual.

Speaking the language of nature refers to the activity of a human being with reference to his/her emotions that are initially good and not spoiled yet by the activity of thought i.e., prejudices. Such an existence constantly requires alertness, awareness, immediacy and activity. In addition, this situation which expresses a direct knowing in which anything or anyone comes in between an individual and the truth is in constant relationship with the conscience of the human and requires a responsibility that always keeps the fair one on top of the other options. In fact, justice, according to Rousseau, is the virtue that a person owes to himself/herself first and foremost.

Human, as required by his/her nature, tends to keep away from situations that are detrimental for him/her while getting closer what serves to protect himself/herself and his/her own benevolence. Thus, the human is initially supposed to protect his/her own existence. According to Rousseau, the happiness of human is his/her final form of existence in which s/he can contribute to total happiness and come closest to the truth. The truth, on the other hand, appears as an ethical issue that can only be reached through praxis rather than pure knowledge. In this context, we can say that in terms of Rousseau, nature was addressed in integrity with truth and happiness.

According to Rousseau, conscience is the only and the absolute human quality that ensures justice and is common to all people. With the statement of Rousseau (1979[1762]), "There is in the depths of souls, then, an innate principle of justice and virtue according to which, despite our own maxims, we judge our actions and those of others as good or bad. It is to this principle that I give the name conscience" (p. 289) referred not only to the reason but also to soul and heart as the source of conscience, and he argued that reason gives us what is good or bad in fact stems from the conscience that brews us the love of the good. Kisa (2015), expressing that the concept of conscience is associated with the concept of morality in both society and individual life, referred to Jung's statement "conscience is a judgement which is founded on emotion and emotional processes to a large extent rather than the rational mind" and he stated that the etymology of the word -Lat. *conscientia*- always emphasized the state of conscious and consciousness (pp. 759-760), then he criticized the prevailing thought of the era as follows (p. 757):

The word 'conscience', used in many languages to express the inner feeling, voice or the strength that ensure one to separate the grain from the chaff, is one of the limited ancient words that the humanity possesses... Conscience which was harshly criticized in the scientific societies and has become an unfounded notion theoretically in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when the rationalist thinking has declared its dominance, has lifted its severity together with its new derivatives such as 'corporate conscience, public conscience, social conscience' as days pass.

According to Rousseau (1979[1762]), the conscience that innate and vital instinct can only show itself due to the sound reflection of self-love – *amour de soi*. With the concept of sound, sensory improvement in harmony with nature is meant. Emotions originating from self-love, which is the mediator in the function of one to protect his/her own life and being, are both available and restricted in human nature. These are also the instruments of individual freedom (pp. 212-213). It is precisely these

feelings that will contribute to human happiness and interest. Thus Rousseau pointed that the individual directs and expands his/her self-love to the outside – other beings – with the improvement of his/her sentiment over time as a process of healthy growth of feelings. On the other hand, selfish love, which is directed only inward but not outside in a healthy way, turns into dignity (self-esteem) as a feeling related to one's pride i.e., *amour propre*. In other words, it leads one to mould himself/herself in accordance with the expectations, opinions and judgements of others. Rousseau describes esteem, ambition and greed as the spoilt, corrupted urges/passions causing unnatural desires for human. "All those which subject us and destroy us come from elsewhere. Nature does not give them to us. We appropriate them to the detriment of nature" (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 212). This case finds its meaning in Rousseau (1979[1762]) as the inability of the individual to balance the power between his/her passions and his/her own capacity (pp. 80-81). In a sense, passions bring themselves up as a chain in which unnatural desires shackling the individual's will and freedom -by making the individual a slave to his false needs.

According to Rousseau, one of the things that distinguish human from other living beings and values him/her is that s/he has willpower. Unlike other living creatures, human beings can avoid being under the yoke of their passions with this willpower that produces responsibility and enables human beings to make a choice consciously and freely. On the contrary, the state of acting on the basis of these destructive passions indicates destitution of ethical context, which leads one to happiness and truth.

The purposeful actions of a human being should not only be beneficial but also aesthetic. In other words, a human should be able to garnish his/her actions with his/her behaviors. Just as in the example of a needly constructed building lacks aesthetics, human being's every action that s/he will do free of emotions when s/he stays on the track of his/her mind, leads him/her to a mechanical existence, making him/her nothing less than a robot. This mechanical existence mentality is unnatural at first and appears due to human being's detachment from nature and his/her own nature and is supported consciously or unconsciously by wrong educational methods. Finally, the gap between human and nature grows day by day, and human sensitivity and freedom are under threat. Then, how will natural emotions be preserved? This becomes a current issue as an important and controversial question.

Natural development of sentiments

According to Rousseau, it is a dangerous situation if the thinking is activated more intensely and more particularly than feeling in the natural development of a child. In this case, an individual learns to produce ideas and make judgements before coming to his knowledge. Rousseau (1979[1762]) refers to this situation as the danger of prejudice in his statement: "All our wisdom consists in servile prejudices" (p. 42). The

fact that judgement on things is ensured indirectly but not through the immediate experience of an individual and his own reasoning constitutes the basis for fallacies.

We can say that prejudice takes the individual away from reality in contrast to active knowledge acquisition. With reference to the statement of Rousseau (1979[1762]), "...the less of myself I put in the judgments I make, the more sure I am of approaching the truth. Thus my rule of yielding to sentiment more than to reason is confirmed by reason itself" (p. 272), it follows that reaching the truth can only happen if things come to our cognition as what they are- yet it is not possible to achieve this ideal state. In this context, the necessity to minimize all kinds of prejudice to reach the truth emerges.

According to Rousseau, the mentioned prejudices are constantly developed through social institutions. Emphasizing that the situations, such as making inventions rather than teaching science, creating environments of discovery through experiences rather than focusing on knowledge memorization and creating a desire to learn rather than transferring information, Rousseau thinks that a rote learning education aimed to feed only mental processes leads to the suppression of the critical, creative and active nature of children. In such education, there are big obstacles for one to develop and practice his/her ability of thinking. Here, the one gives up the acquisition of free-thinking only by not questioning the information s/he has gathered from others and contributes to the state of social degeneration with his/her own existence that s/he has not yet realized.

Reality in terms of Rousseau, who emphasizes that in interaction with things, feeling through the senses occurs before the activity of thinking, is not something that can be accessed through abstraction but production of the original experience that can come to light. Although the senses are known to be misleading, experience points to a unique and conscious thinking situation in which knowledge is created by the individual himself/herself, taking place in a context that includes himself or herself. The individual is part of this experience process, and knowledge cannot arise without him or her; therefore, one cannot mention an abstract reality, in other words, abstract knowledge of reality. This knowledge, according to Rousseau, is the closest to reality; in other words, it is the praxis. Thus, according to Rousseau, the intertwining relationship of reasoning with reality, which is accomplished by the senses, is based on the quality of experience. Here, the active role (free nature) of the individual in the acquisition of knowledge: learner-centeredness, the state of interpretation of knowledge by the individual through employing senses and mental processes together: the foundations of learning through discovery/invention, constructivist approach and experience-based contemporary educational theories are clearly visible.

According to Rousseau, the fact that the mind is in a disproportionately more active position than the soul and body by constantly making judgements causes the feeling existence of human being to become passive. Indeed, "the letter kills, and the spirit enlivens" (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 196). As Freire (2000) points out, "... reflection

and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed – even in part – the other immediately suffers. There is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis... When a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well; and the word is changed into idle chatter, into verbalism, into an alienated and alienating 'blah'" (p. 87). This situation leads to doctrinal, shallow, abstract, materialist, and cliché in which words rather than actions, having knowledge of virtue rather than trying to be virtuous, acquiring knowledge of truth rather than reaching it are preferred. On the other hand, "the mind, no less than the body, bears only what it can bear... whereas, by overburdening memory without the participation of understanding, one runs the risk of never withdrawing anything from memory suitable for understanding" (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 207). Thus, while the concepts fill the memory, intellectual activity increases; on the contrary, the autonomy of human cannot develop because of the decrease in the act (praxis) in which morality came up with it. In this case, the elements that form the basis of the moral nature of human beings, whose natural freedom is damaged, are also destroyed. Indeed, it becomes meaningless to mention a reason that has disabled itself as the only criterion for the accuracy of information. Thus, Rousseau's case of prioritizing the sentiments over reason, which is perceived as "irrationality", becomes clear.

In parallel with his related views, an individual's approach to truth is only possible through action and concrete efforts (i.e., having a vocation). These efforts point to the form of existence in which the individual can be closest to his/her state of nature, and most fundamentally, they appear as professions aiming at the benefit of humanity. As a matter of fact, "a man and a citizen, whoever he may be, has no property to put into society other than himself... To work is therefore an indispensable duty for social man" (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 195).

In this context, Rousseau (1979[1762]) argued that human needs to perform a decent useful profession that he will choose; indeed, "... there is no decency without utility" (p. 197). With decency, Rousseau meant that concrete jobs serve humankind and make an individual independent from harmful passions and revive his soul; thus, the importance of experience-based education come into presence once again here. A simple and sincere life, which would make a person susceptible to knowing the truth appears as principles for achieving the truth and happiness at Rousseau's thought (Neidleman, 2013, p. 819). According to Rousseau, the shortest distance towards the truth passes through the ways of sincerity and simplicity. Thus, there are neither mere actions nor thoughts that direct the actions in terms of Rousseau.

Ultimately, the measure should be sought in the activity presented with emotions and thought by the human, but this requires distinguishing the natural emotions that will feed the thoughts from the ideas acquired later. Therefore, it becomes a primary issue that emotions develop in line with the nature of education. Thus, the mentioned moral nature of an individual reveals itself as an issue that can be developed only through experience-based education. One can become sensitized towards others only through

such education and s/he can be connected to society through his/her common emotions, which come to light to this sensitivity extent.

Experience-based Education

Rousseau put forward that human existence can only be developed through experiences, with several cases in *Emile*, and for the very reason, he frequently underlined the senses and emotions. In fact, the interrelated phenomena of emotion and experience are among the most controversial historical notions of philosophy. The fact that experience has been ignored for a long time in history arises from deep-rooted ideas, which also have theological dimensions, such as the unreliability, speciousness and even sinfulness of senses. In this way, the western philosophy world, which has brought the mere mind and rationalism disproportionately into the forefront in time, has paved the way for dissenting opinions that make room for senses and experiences again ascendingly with Renaissance and Reform.

It can be said that Rousseau is the first person that radically emphasizes the experience issue after John Locke, which has become prominent in a context that points to the emotional and physical aspects of a human being as well as his/her rational quality, through senses and associates it systematically with the education. In this context, we can say that Rousseau, who put forward his perception of education prioritizing the moral development within the experiential extent, is the greatest actor in the fact that the phenomenon of experience started to be recognized in especially modern educational theories. Moreover, the fact that three temporal dimensions of one's lives – past, present and future – have an important place in modern educational theories is undoubtedly closely related to Rousseau's placement of individuals at the center of their own history as unique objects.

Rousseau put forward his thoughts on education from the time he thought we were closest to reality – from childhood. Indeed, it will be seen that everything in childhood is simple, needs-based and close to nature. Then, the human should take this situation into consideration and adopt them as a principle in his/her life. Rousseau's efforts against some of the difficulties of modern life that push people away from nature and reality can be described as a pursuit for how a person can realize himself/herself by preserving the inborn ideal.

Arguing that one can be human without being a scholar (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 290), Rousseau built the understanding of education, which rather aims to be virtuous, on the basis of moral development. In this way, in terms of Rousseau, it becomes the essential aim of education itself to do no harm to moral nature, which is decent innately. Rousseau put forward a negative understanding of education with the idea of preserving the innate nature of human instead of the second nature of human, which has been managed with the idea of habitues until that day. Contrary to the ideas of adding something outside and shaping it, this understanding is against making

children memorize any conceptual or moral information and/or have them acquire habits in order not to spoil the children's nature.

While Rousseau (1979[1762]) stating "the education of children is a vocation in which one must know how to lose time to gain it" (p. 141), argues that anything has given from outside before the time of their natural maturity damages their natural freedom and emotions. Emphasizing that children should experience life in every aspect and allow for their own discoveries, Rousseau also affirms that the child who explores with sensory interactions will act in the way that nature and his/her nature guide him or her. Indeed, the principles to be learned are already within nature. "I, therefore, closed all the books. There is one open to all eyes: it is the book of nature" (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 306). This book can only be understood with the primal language we have learned or used, namely, the language of nature.

Since senses are the first to develop in human beings, the first abilities that need to be developed in education are also the senses. However, "to exercise the senses is not only to make use of them, it is to learn to judge well with them. It is to learn, so to speak, to sense; for we know how to touch, see, and hear only as we have learned" (Rousseau, 1979[1762], p. 132). Rousseau, who identifies existence with feeling instead of thinking, thinks that the real nature of human can only emerge by emotion. Here, the thought and the act of thinking are not excluded; it is pointed out that reasoning can develop with emotions and this can only be achieved through action.

Rousseau (1979[1762]) argued that education should be based on practices rather than rules: "To live is not to breathe; it is to act; it is to make use of our organs, our senses, our faculties, of all the parts of ourselves which give us the sentiment of our existence" (p. 42). On the other hand, this situation, being aware of life, can be regarded as the expression of being able to experience spontaneity, freedom and openness not to avoid confrontation with it and to show the courage to "say yes to life" in Goethe's famous words. In the context of education, these thoughts, which can be interpreted as making room for experiences, indicate that the individual reveals himself/herself as a whole with what s/he does, knows, feels, understands and believes.

Noddings' remark about the "emphasis on the child's own motivation and direct action" (1995, p. 17) can be observed in Rousseau's (1979[1762]) statement: "our first masters of philosophy are our feet, our hands, our eyes. To substitute books for all that is not to teach us to reason. It is to teach us to use the reason of others. It is to teach us to believe much and never to know anything" (p. 125). This also highlights the importance of effect on learning on the one hand and first-hand experiences on the other. As an experience, such an educational activity point to an experiential method in which knowledge is discovered by the individual.

The act of knowing in this method is a genuine and authentic intellectual action, and it requires the senses and reason to work together in every activity. Just as in the phrase 'an unexamined life is not worth living' attributed to Socrates, Rousseau expresses his

anti-dogma while encouraging people to break their chains that have been shackled their thoughts. Thus, it can be said that he argued an active and experiential education in which the processes, such as attention, reflection, reasoning, examining, discussion, dialogue, communication, critical thinking, trial and error, stand out as important actions in education.

The act of memorization, which fills the memory only with notional and mental information instead of being discovered by one's own through his/her experiences, is only a praxis suitable to the capacity of a mechanical creature, not a free being. Such education, in which human is passive, restrains the freedom and creativity as it leads individuals to suppress or ignore their own nature. In such a case, the state that a human, who is inevitably alienated from his/her own existence, can become a happy person, at peace with society s/he lives in and nature, can become possible through only an ephemeral coincidence.

Starting from the idea that freedom evolves into slavery in society through various complex processes, Rousseau's justification for taking nature and freedom as a whole emerges at the very point here. The existence of external authority in the relationship of the individual to reality is a dangerous issue as pointed out in the dystopic predictions that have been experienced under the reign of dogmatism and scholastic thought in the past and that have been manipulated by certain power groups through technologies and brought under control by totalitarian regimes. As stated by Michael W. Apple (2013), "The denial of personhood enabled enslavement and commodification of other human beings, which in turn was dialectically connected to a further process of murderous misrecognition", in this context, the philosopher reminds us that "we definitely need to be appropriately biting about the destructiveness of the neoliberal restructuring and commodification of all that we hold dear" (pp. 152-153). Rousseau is one of the early pioneering thinkers who pointed out the danger in question.

In the education, which is founded on nature and freedom extent by Rousseau, a person will become an individual in a context in which s/he is enabled to act according to his/her own mind, emotions, conscience, individual characteristics and willpower in a way that does not harm primarily the integrity of his/her body-mind and the moral development and is allowed to prove his/her potential. This individual will not seek an authority other than himself/herself and a conscience other than his/her inner voice; s/he will be able to experience life through his/her own freedom as a whole. Thus, being able to preserve freedom – such as a child has – in adulthood and continue human experiences based on such freedom becomes an aim of education in the thoughts of Rousseau.

It is understood that the issue of human nature and freedom emerges as a moral-based problem. In this context, the principle of 'know thyself' constantly reveals its importance without deviating from its position of being a universal principle in education, but the discussions on how it can be realized grind on evenly. Human can

naturally assess and grasp the meaning of the highest virtue. As also stated by Gill (2010), “nature offers each individual the ability to access and act on a higher form of virtue, which cannot be instilled through habit. Virtue is not merely a matter of well-directed self-interest; it is a particular human achievement” (p. 131). The fulfilment of such a phenomenon can only be achieved through educational experiences concluding with the improvement and enrichment of humankind.

It is certain that the culture of living together can be transformed into grace instead of an obligation and that a solid understanding of ethics as well as law and statutes are needed in the foundations of the construction of modern and tolerant culture. This situation reminds us the *common/good sense*, which was defined by Descartes (2006) as “the power of judging correctly and of distinguishing the true from the false... and the most evenly distributed thing in the world” (p. 5) despite all the emphasis he put on the mind and thought. Similarly, it also reminds the real common needs of human beings, which were described by Rousseau (2017b) as the ornament of society in general and the food of the soul in particular (p. 130).

It is necessary to pay attention to the needs of the soul as well as the needs of the body, and these needs show themselves, in terms of Rousseau, as virtues that hold society together, with the element of conscience at its source. Descartes’ common-sense notion and Rousseau’s conscience conception point to the trust in human nature as innate faculties in all human beings, without discrimination. In fact, these elements have the potential to direct human tendencies in a healthy way – as long as there is no external influence – as internal rather than external and based on intuition rather than learning. As “the sublime science of simple souls”, virtue’s principles are graven in every heart; and to learn the laws of it, it is enough for every person to look at inner self, listen to their voice of conscience when their passions are silent (Rousseau, 1913[1749], p. 33). The issue that the construction of education using allowing it to reveal the potential of human towards virtue by taking the true and authentic values to the forefront, in line with the mentioned spiritual needs, shows itself again as a problematic area due to improper education today as it was in the time of Rousseau.

According to Rousseau, the existence of the moral nature of human becomes independently the most important proof of human freedom and that life cannot be left up to a chance. The assurance of this freedom can only be provided by a modern- and experience-based education that has the power to equalize people. As Geiger (1955) stated, “Education in the broadest sense can be nothing less than the changes made in human beings by their experience” (p. 144). All faculties that are potentially natural in human beings can only be brought out through appropriate education.

It will be possible that individuals, who have lost their integrity both internally and externally, can develop an existence that they can feel in integrity again with education supporting wholistic and multi-directional development. In particular, modern education, which is based on the conceptualizations of constructivism and experience-based education within the extent of the idea of uniting education with life, is in a

position to re-examine the problem of ethics and value to ensure the wholistic development it committed. The thought of Rousseau (1979[1762]) in which he referred to the essence of education by saying "...man must be fashioned in keeping with his fancy like a tree in his garden" (p. 37) can also be seen as a solution to the following problems he mentioned: "man is born free but everywhere he is in chains" (1913[1762], p. 14); humans become slaves of their unnatural passions as well as of their fellow human beings, cause of their dignity i.e., *amour propre* (1913[1755], p. 147). In terms of Rousseau (1979 [1762]), who argues that everything is naturally good in the beginning but later deteriorated in the hands of human beings (p. 37), the idea of raising the human for himself/herself is a contemporary thought that emphasizes both the principles of moral characteristics of the human being by species and the natural potentials of individuals' own existence.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research was conducted in an effort to discuss Rousseau's views on concepts of nature and morality surrounding his educational philosophy within the framework of an experiential education approach. Here, the concept of morality refers to a judgement ability that can separate the good from the evil, and willpower that should be at the basis of that ability. In this research, Rousseau's educational views were also examined as the education of human being without discriminating as male or female nature. Thus, a thematic constraint is sought in our research, in which Rousseau's -who referred to many issues through his several works- thoughts that we consider as exceeding the scope of the relevant context is included contextually to form a wholeness.

It should be kept in mind that despite the problems specific to the mentioned modernism, the understanding of contemporary education has also been shaped within the milieu of the modern world. As one of the most important cornerstones of modern educational thought, Rousseau's thoughts are benefited as elements of experience – within the effort of avoiding the risk of evaluating them detached from the the age they were brewed while their projections on the extent of today's reflections – have been brought into question to indicate the wholistic educational understanding. Comprehending the nature of the wholism in question necessitates pointing to a historical context, both due to its own universal nature and the nature of science and experience. Without this ground, it is clear that neither the credibility of science nor the value of experience can be mentioned. The past as a living, dynamic whole in experience, functions not only as a finished history but also as a ground that encompasses the present and as scientific data that allows us to predict and shape the future.

Among the important developments that opened the doors of modern education; when the concepts of 'thinking' individual who declares his/her freedom with his mind and the 'natural' individual who experience his/her feelings are addressed together

rather than with a dualist approach, a consistent and wholistic understanding will be achieved. This wholism can only be realized if on the one hand, knowledge and culture transfer, which is the most ancient occupation of human beings, and on the other hand, the progressive and critical approaches focusing on the goals of shaping the future are evaluated on the verge of an experience, which finds its meaning in the concept of education institutionalized in the modern world.

As a necessity of the age, in the current circumstances where life is becoming more and more sophisticated, it is obvious how sensitive the balance of life is. It is observed that modern human being experiences a dichotomy in which s/he remains to be an onlooker to himself/herself -become passive- in the pressing multiplicity of increasingly numerous external factors. However, the individual must remain unique, and an indivisible whole, as the origin of the word – Lat. *In-dividuus* – indicates.

It is possible to say that Rousseau, in his pursuit to build a universal solution, is trying to reveal the natural, sincere and authentic relationship with the truth, with reference to the idea of simplifying life as much as possible. Indeed, the fact that human, who creates new values, also remembers the missing values seems to be an action appropriate to the nature of the experience. While mentioning the pre-modern period as an experience, putting the missing values forward by looking back at human nature with the current consciousness and re-evaluating them as required by the scientific method can be seen as an appropriate and worthy effort.

It is seen that Tombak's study reached similar results to ours that with Rousseau's thoughts both on the meanings of concepts, such as justice, compassion, and self-love, which are explicated within the concept of nature, and that he also created a philosophy of education based on this paradigm. However, she stated in the results of her research that 'this triangle of freedom-equality-justice by Rousseau was formed without social life; moreover, it implies that the development of human over time is unnatural'; in this context, she pointed to the criticism of Adler that the faculties of "justice, equality, responsibility, openness, honesty, loyalty" originated from human nature according to Rousseau, are yields of civilizations. (p. 174). Here, it should be stated that Rousseau seeks the fallacy (in unnatural sense) not in the civic life or the concept of the civilization itself, but in the inaccurate founding of the statutes of civic life (e.g., malevolent human nature and original sin). This issue becomes clear in his *Second Discourse* [1755]. In addition, while stating the people's natural freedom is replaced by social freedom in *The Social Contract* [1762], the state of the individual's submission to the general will is also the choice that best suits his/her nature.

In fact, according to Rousseau (1913[1755]), "if it is to be a law, not only the wills of those it obliges must be sensible of their submission to it; but also, to be natural, it must come directly from the voice of nature" (p.171). Although one can mention a new nature within society now; however, there is only one nature for laws: The nature that "the human and the nature are subject to it" (Savruk, 2019, p. 155). Therefore, the notions of social and natural freedom for Rousseau associated with the element of

conscience, which is present in human's natural existence. In fact, Rousseau (1979[1762]) is in the opinion that "independent of conscience, no natural law can be established" (p. 235). Ultimately, the idea arises that the natural freedom of an individual with the competence to reach the virtue cannot conflict with the laws of civilization.

In this context, one cannot mention the unnatural; in fact, social laws created based on justice neither exclude the idea that justice is a natural/inborn element nor mean that it is an element brought by civilized life; on the contrary, it indicates that laws should be created in compliance with nature. To Rousseau, justice has been needed since the exact moment injustice arose as a problem with civilized urban life. Therefore this natural element can, of course, be a requirement or yeild of civilized life as a notion, but not as a phenomena. According to Freire (2000, p. 44):

Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human. This distortion occurs within history; but it is not an historical vocation. Indeed, to admit of dehumanization as an historical vocation would lead either to cynicism or total despair...

While the former means saying yes to life and trusting humanity. Noddings (1995) made an appropriate evaluation in this context: "He (Rousseau) recognized that human beings could not achieve their highest potentials as wild animals. He sought a civilized condition that would optimize self-reliance, compassion, civic duty, love of nature, and connection to God. His was an attempt to balance the needs of conjoint living with those of self-actualization" (p. 14). Therefore, the human is given his/her due for being a historical subject. Imposing given malice on the human or making it an object/means exposed to circumstances only is to deprive him/her of morality, and responsibility, that is, of humanity in general. In private, it is the greatest obstacle before the individual to be both the production (historically) and the creator (voluntarily) of his/her own circumstances.

Ozcan (2019) expressed in his study that morally wrong action might be more preferable for Rousseau than an action exhibited under the influence of others' opinions (p. 81). Indeed, according to Rousseau, cases when one act according to reputation (pride) for the purposes of imitation or external approval although mental capacity is exceeded are obstacle before development concerning the individual's sensing his/her natural existence and practising his/her freedom. However, this should not be understood as removing morals from the individual's actions. Indeed, the notions of freedom, morals and responsibility complement each other for Rousseau, and any one of these notions cannot be discussed without the other. In this context, humans are responsible for general will (society) they submit to with their own will in all conscience, which is the assurance of justice.

Expressing that educational purposes are determined according to economic values in today's information and network societies, just as in industrial societies, Tufenkci and Cetin (2017) point out that today's dominant educational paradigms aim to turn

humans into submissive individuals of popular culture and consumer society; on the contrary, humans have moral, spiritual and transcendental aspects beyond their biological existence. In this context, they express that realization of Rousseau's negative educational model driving forward the individual and aiming liberation would necessitate re-assessment of education within theoretical and practical contexts; however, under the present conditions, at least there are important lessons to deduct from Rousseau's projections in the subjects of arranging educational environments, life-long education, determination of educational purposes, and value or moral education in the axis of trust in human beings (pp. 497-504).

Pointing out the *individual* as the greatest obstacle before turning education into the totalitarian system through manipulation or control is one of the fundamental ethical issues that should underlie the idea of education. However, the notion of progressive education comes to the forefront in the same study, particularly in the expression "Rousseau objects to scholastic education based on rote-learning and dogmatic thinking that limit the individual's free development, as well as to the rational and progressive educational understanding of the Age of Enlightenment that sees the human as a being consisting of reason only" (Tufenkci & Cetin, 2017, p. 503). Despite accepting the fact that Rousseau was against scholastic or absolutely rationalist education, it should be kept in mind that the phenomenon of 'progressive education' here was a notion shaped in the late 19th century with Dewey after Darwin's theory of evolution, much later than the age of Rousseau. Here, the phenomenon of progressivism found its place in the pragmatic paradigm within the framework of continuous progressive understanding, which is self-directed. In this context, the accuracy of the discourse that Rousseau was against the progressive educational understanding is questionable.

Based on Rousseau's investigation in *First Discourse* [1749], it is possible to have the idea that he is against 'progression'. However, keeping in mind Rousseau's tendency towards the purpose of a free, responsible, and morally developed (virtuous) individual through education in the first place, which should be explicated if progression is discussed; one can assume that Rousseau utterly defends it as a spiritual function, but would take a stand against it only in case of a material function. Even so, it should be stated that Rousseau does not have the distinction required by this assumption, and he approached human being with a wholistic view. In this context, to summarize the issue that we think we have clarified in this study, the phenomenon of progressive education does not deserve to be named as such in the first place unless freedom and ethical responsibility underlie it.

We think that Rousseau's concept of nature, which led to a naturalist understanding of education, is a fundamental issue to be reconsidered under the present conditions. Here, nature does not refer to the rural environment pointed at by Rousseau, as if life existed elsewhere or an artificial space to be created by rejecting present conditions. Rather, it designates a dynamic entity of interaction in which human beings may discover through experience the means they claim to have mastery over, defines them

anew when necessary, and utilizes them creatively for sincere and useful purposes in line with needs. This nature, which must be experienced rather than denied or resisted against, is not something which the individual is exposed to only receptively during the process of adaptation; instead, it provides opportunities for the individual to create freely and determines its own limits.

Access to this type of nature is only possible through a natural understanding of education based on experience. As such, observing the battle, alienation, and moral corruption of the passive human being who was alienated from himself/herself and tried to behave according to the wishes of others based on the principles imposed on himself/herself by certain powers, Rousseau searched for ways to recreate the human being for his/her own authentic interest, and the answer he found was a natural education. We may claim that depicting the human being as a unique entity who has his own history, the centre of his own existence along with self-realizing potential, Rousseau tries to build an education model which anticipates the rediscovery of human nature, deemed as benevolent and good by him.

Today, when people complain about social media tools, which keep people busy with instant notifications, claiming that they lead to being passive as well as with some vice habits, it may be a good starting point for educators to ask themselves why children and young people wish to be someone else in "another world". Moreover, instead of complaining about this other world, would it not be better to try and make life more appealing as a function of education so that children may experience spontaneity, immediacy, and sincerity? In that respect, educational and ethical considerations must also include how to categorize scientific and technological initiatives, which were once offered as means at the service of humanity but now only serve to the consumption culture and constantly develop to be the purpose itself, based on certain criteria to reoffer them in a way which would ensure human honour.

Learning may turn into a process of discovery and interaction only through an education system in which learners will make use of their own experience. The human being who comes forward only after silencing authorities other than the reason, as described by Descartes, or after silencing noises other than those of nature, as described by Rousseau, is essentially a being who endeavors to find the truth for the self. In fact, modern education must commit to raising independent and free individuals who do not live up to the design of others, as in the case of slaves defined by Aristotle, but take responsibility for their lives according to their own purposes and future.

Recommendations

As a praxis embodied in an understanding of education through experience, education will be lacking without the context of values. This issue may be interpreted to mean that studies for educational programs must have ethical considerations.

Therefore, we may recommend taking action to reformulate education with consistent and realistic efforts using practical tools offered by the modern world to encourage axiological objectives.

Education may fulfil its purpose only when it is applied by uniting scientific, ethical and aesthetic components with the real-life phenomena as much as possible and liberating it from concerns of keeping up with the “curriculum”, adopting the idea that individuals are active subjects for building their own lives. Within that perspective, we are also obliged to create a starting point that would facilitate acting based on the most fundamental and common human needs without sacrificing and/or surrendering the part of human being which is open to development and benevolence to economic gains or certain ideologies. All of this may be only possible by creating a comprehensive and strong ethical framework. This framework should be created with a structure reflecting the universal as much as the local and with a philosophical perspective in which ethics and science are to be experienced as a whole, rather than discrete or abstract. This process could take place only if societies become knowledgeable about their history and individuals discover about their nature. Indeed, as Tanpınar (1999) said, “experience is the outcome of the whole civilization, not a single individual” (p. 304).

To experience the daily life, which has lost its appeal, as a variety of possibilities open to vibrant and constant adventures once again and to raise creative and productive individuals who are not afraid of experiencing and shaping their daily lives, we must aim emotions as much as the intellect and create wholistic education initiatives. Here, we must admit that nature and the physical world impose certain ethical limits on human beings. Therefore starting from Rousseau's thoughts; we may also have an educational objective as to raise wise individuals who will respect nature and its limits as a fundamental moral principle and, consequently, create harmony between what is inside and outside.

Described as “knowing thyself” in the past and “self-realization” in the modern education system, the existential concern points to the unification of life with thought, emotion, and human nature as a prerequisite for fulfilling the aim of integrating education with life itself. Finally, for the universal solution of this problem, which is also universal, we must not look for a definite formula but rather acknowledge that the solution lies in real values – bona fide – which would encourage individuals to live autonomously without being alienated from the world and themselves. Applying such a perspective to an educational program may be the starting point for solving various problems encountered at different levels to a great extent. Thus, prioritizing intellectual and philosophical studies first and foremost, we may strongly recommend leaning towards programs focusing on human and humane values.

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