
Assessment of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's educational concept "natural inclination" from a Reformed worldview perspective

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Abstract

After almost three hundred years, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's influence in various fields of science is clearly visible. One field of science in which Rousseau is particularly indispensable is in education. A key concept within Rousseau's ideas on education is his concept of natural inclination. In this article, Rousseau's concept of natural inclination is assessed from a Reformed worldview perspective. Rousseau's anthropological view of man being naturally good makes his use of the term 'natural inclination' different from that of Reformed thinkers, which is grounded in the Reformed confession of man's sinful nature. This further has the effect that the conceptualisation of the different aspects of education takes a different form than the framework presented by Rousseau. As a result, educators working within a Reformed worldview cannot be uncritical towards Rousseau's use of the concept of 'natural inclination'.

Opsomming

Na byna driehonderd jaar is Jean-Jacques Rousseau se invloed op verskillende wetenskapsvelde steeds duidelik sigbaar. Een vakgebied waarin Rousseau besonder onontbeerlik is, is in die opvoedkunde. 'n Sleutelkonsep binne Rousseau se idees oor opvoeding is sy konsep van natuurlike neiging. In hierdie artikel word Rousseau se konsep van natuurlike neiging vanuit 'n Reformatoriese lewens- en wêreldbeskouing beoordeel. Rousseau se antropologiese siening van die mens wat van nature goed is, maak sy gebruik van die term 'natuurlike neiging' anders as dié van reformatoriese denkers. Reformatoriese denkers se antropologie is gegrond in die belydenis van die mens se sondige natuur. Dit het verder tot gevolg dat die konseptualisering van die verskillende aspekte van die opvoeding 'n ander vorm aanneem as die raamwerk wat deur Rousseau aangebied word. As gevolg hiervan behoort opvoeders wat binne 'n Reformatoriese lewens- en wêreldbeskouing werk, krities te wees teenoor Rousseau se gebruik van die begrip 'natuurlike neiging'.

Key Words

Anthropology, Christian Education, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Natural Inclination, Reformed Worldview, Sin

1. Introduction and method

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's educational work *Emile*, can be seen as a landmark in the history of education. In this book, Rousseau discusses two fictional characters, Emile and Sophie. Rousseau uses the two characters to explain his educational philosophy. Rousseau discusses different aspects of his educational philosophy as these two fictional characters, Emile and Sophie, move through the different stages of life. The book focuses on the personality of a child and how to treat a child with dignity. Further educational aspects such as techniques to motivate children to learn, the distinction between boys and girls, their political thinking and the influence on a child's education makes the book *Emile* a relevant and insightful book for any teacher.

In the field of education, a philosopher like Rousseau is unavoidable. His ideas, theories and philosophical framework for education had an enormous

impact on the philosophers after him. From the background of a Christian higher education institution training teachers, the traces of Rousseau's thinking are visible in a multitude of study guides and learning materials (Yang, 2004). When these are not direct references to the works of Rousseau himself, reference is made to authors such as Kant, Pestalozzi, Dewey, Montessori, Freire, and Piaget, who followed in the footsteps of Rousseau (Anthony & Benson, 2011:230). The purpose of this article is to highlight valuable aspects of Rousseau's influence on education, but at the same time, to make Christian academics, involved in the training of teachers, aware of the dangers of Rousseau's ideas on 'natural inclination'.

Rousseau's educational theories have received particular attention over the years, despite giving up his five children for adoption (Brown, 1968:80). In this article, Vollenhoven's (2005) problem-historical method, by which a person's ideas can be analysed, is used as a framework in the discussion of Rousseau's thinking about education with a specific focus on Rousseau's concept of 'natural inclination'. This entails first explaining Rousseau's cultural context (Background), discussing Rousseau's directional or religious thought (Rousseau's view of religion) and a structural or ontic discussion of Rousseau's anthropology. Using this structure as a basis, Rousseau's educational thinking on the concept of 'natural inclination' is assessed from a Reformed worldview.

2. Background

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was born in Geneva. He was the son of a watchmaker. His first interest was music. Rousseau focused his time in Paris (1742-1762) on his music career (Dent, 2005:823). Yet, Rousseau was a son of Geneva (the city in which Calvin spent most of his career). In 1762, Rousseau writes to the Archbishop of Paris that he is fortunate to have been born in the city of the holy reasonable religion of the earth and that he remains irrevocably attached to the faith of his father. This faith of his father was the Christian (Calvinistic) faith. Exactly that same year, the illusion of Rousseau's faith came to an end in the publication of two books, *Le Contract Social* and *Emile*. Both books were burned immediately by order of the Paris and Geneva authorities (Praamsma, 1979:112).

Although Rousseau can be placed among the French Rationalists, he was also a man of heart and emotion. From his educational philosophy, it is clear that he has worked with specific strong empirical ideas. Rousseau was a 'man for people' (*volksman*) who wanted to abolish all the privileges

of the nobility. His ideas were put into practice by Robespierre during the French Revolution, and from there Rousseau was given the nickname the 'storm bird of the French Revolution'. As a *volksman*, Rousseau was able to articulate the feeling of the people in an inspiring way. As Taylor (2003:7) puts it: "I would argue that Rousseau's great popularity comes in part from his articulating of something that was already happening in the culture."

3. Rousseau's view of religion

Rousseau's religious conviction is described by Praamsma (1979:71) as that of a sensitive deist. Rousseau finds no contradiction in speaking of a Good Creator and of God at a distance. Rousseau presents God as an unknowable being that he knows exists but that is not recognizable.

If I have succeeded in discerning these attributes of which I have no absolute idea, it is in the form of unavoidable deductions, and by the right use of my reason; but I affirm them without understanding them, and at bottom that is no affirmation at all. In vain do I say, God is thus, I feel it, I experience it, none the more do I understand how God can be thus. In a word: the more I strive to envisage his infinite essence the less do I comprehend it; but it is, and that is enough for me; the less I understand, the more I adore. I abase myself, saying, Being of beings, I am because thou art; to fix my thoughts on thee is to ascend to the source of my being. The best use I can make of my reason is to resign it before thee; my mind delights, my weakness rejoices, to feel myself overwhelmed by thy greatness (Rousseau, 1962:249).

Rousseau was not against religion, but rather against religious institutions such as the church and orthodox faith. Rousseau broke with orthodox Christian faith, which held on to the confession of Scriptural authority. For example, he explains his rationalist stance on the miracles in Scripture. He says that, earlier, according to the prophets, fire came down from heaven, now children can do the same with a piece of burning glass; further, Lazarus's resurrection by Jesus did not really happen, because Lazarus may never have died (Rousseau, 1829:231).

In Rousseau's time, the Christian faith was the general faith, and because the Christian faith, which, according to Rousseau, did not appreciate the state, but focused on the individual person rather than the person as a citizen, the religion of the state must be different than the religion of the Christian church. The religion of the state must promote the nationalism of the state; it must be a purely civil religion. Rousseau makes room for other religions, but they may not contain anything that is in conflict with the religion of the state. This

type of state is known as a totalitarian state. The state becomes the new ubiquitous, caring god (Nisbet, 2014:137).

Any deviation from the state's constitution or the law of citizens is considered by Rousseau (1829:231) to be a sin. The constitution is the supreme authority, and no religion can be above the constitution. The highest form of morality is the maintenance of the constitution, and this morality must also be taught to citizens.

4. Rousseau's anthropology

Rousseau's anthropological philosophy forms the point of departure for his educational philosophy. The whole way in which he views man affects almost every aspect of his educational theory. According to Rousseau, the goodness of the deistic god remained in the nature of man, and therefore, the point of departure for Rousseau's educational theory is radically different from that of the Reformers. Where the Reformers emphasised the depravity of man, Rousseau emphasised the goodness of man. These differing anthropological views produce two distinctly different educational systems.

According to Rousseau (1962:126), man's natural goodness should be pursued (from now on reference is made to the page number of Rousseau's work *Emile*). Education and instruction should be directed towards the pursuit of the natural person and the protection of the child against the evil of society. It is the nature of man that determines morality. "Rousseau frequently presents the issue of morality as that of our following a voice of nature within us" (Taylor, 2003:27). If one can come into full contact with his natural inner man (*le sentiment de l'existence*), he should, according to Rousseau, become a perfect moral being.

Another aspect that greatly influenced Rousseau's anthropological view is his view of man as an individual. According to Rousseau, human nature is to be a non-bound living being that is not bound by any community. The community is only an adjunct to man, and the true man can only be understood separate from his community (p. 126). These two entities, the individual and the state, dominate Rousseau's political philosophy. In his mind, they are both sovereign. This sounds like a paradox, and Rousseau is also accused of being inconsistent by considering both the state and the individual as sovereign (Nisbet, 2014:130). Rousseau's solution to the problem was to free man from the influence of society. According to Rousseau, man should be protected from the corruption of the community. Rousseau regarded the

community as the church, family, and the community in which man lives as chains that take away the individual's freedom. Rousseau wants to separate the individual from these chains through the state (Rousseau & May, 2002:27).

The way in which man submits himself to the state is through the General Will. The General Will is today considered a democracy where the majority vote is the General Will. However, this is not how Rousseau understood the General Will. For Rousseau, the General Will is an analogue of the human mind, a type of universal law written on all people's hearts. As such, the General Will must be uniform, just like the human mind. The General Will requires every individual to have unqualified obedience to the state. Only through total obedience to the state will the individual be free. "The individual lives a free life only within his complete surrender to the omnipotent State" (Nisbet, 2014:134). Even the family must pursue the requirements of the state. Because morality is the essence of civil society health, the family should not be given the vital task of education. According to Rousseau, the responsibility of education is too great for a family. The educational task must, therefore, be transferred from the family to the state (Nisbet, 2014:139).

All areas of society (church, family, the community in which man lives) must be geared towards the General Will of the people, as Nisbet (2014:138) explains: "Hardly less than religion the family itself, as a corporate entity, must be radically adjusted to meet the demands of the General Will." Rousseau regarded the community as an adjunct to the individual, and that man is "naturally" a free-spirited individual. The real and genuine person can only be understood separately from his community. The real person is a person who precedes his own community. This understanding of man as a free-spirited individual separate from his community was a radical redefinition of man. Rousseau brought forward a new anthropological view of what man sees as a cosmic unified being. This new anthropological view made it possible for Rousseau to look at education in a new way.

5. Natural inclination as a fundamental principle in Rousseau's concept of education

The above discussion of Rousseau's cultural context (Background), directional or religious thought (Rousseau's view of religion) and a structural discussion of Rousseau's anthropology serves as the basis for the discussion of Rousseau's ideas about education. When Rousseau writes about the purpose of education, he writes about the importance of knowledge about

life. Education for Rousseau is not a fragmented transfer of content, but a process of learning about life and through life. All situations in life offer the opportunity to learn, and education is therefore not just limited to the classroom or training for a profession. The primary purpose of education is to teach a boy, like the fictional character Emile, how to be a man (p.125).

Rousseau's view of education's purpose as learning through life brings him to his familiar idea of the natural development and discovery of a child's natural inclination. It is crucial to understand Rousseau's concept of "nature" to understand his thinking about education. Rousseau (1962:124) does not see nature simply as habit. A habit can also be learned from specific circumstances. For example, a tree could learn a new habit of growing because it was forced by circumstances to grow differently, but it is not the natural growth of the tree. By nature, Rousseau (1962:124) refers to the tendencies of man from birth: "We are born capable of sensation and from birth are affected in diverse ways by the objects around us. As soon as we become conscious of our sensations we are inclined to seek or to avoid the objects which produce them: at first, because they are agreeable or disagreeable to us, later because we discover that they suit or do not suit us, and ultimately because of the judgments we pass on them by reference to the idea of happiness or perfection we get from reason. These inclinations extend and strengthen with the growth of sensibility and intelligence, but under the pressure of habit they are changed to some extent with our opinions. The inclinations before this change are what I call our nature. In my view everything ought to be in conformity with these original inclinations."

In his educational purpose, Rousseau combines the two ideas of learning about and through life and the development of man's natural inclination. According to Rousseau, the purpose of education should be the discovery of true happiness. True happiness can only be discovered by living according to one's own nature or, acting according to one's natural inclination. The purpose of education cannot be to lead a person to financial wealth, but to lead one to do the things he is naturally good at (natural inclination) (p. 151). As discussed above in Rousseau's anthropological philosophy, Rousseau believes that there is no original sin in man and that the inclination of human nature is always right (p. 128). Only when a person does things according to his natural inclination will the person find true happiness.

Because the child was not born in sin and the child's natural inclination is only good, the 'self' and the child's focus on the 'self' is of great importance. The child's 'self' is at the centre of its existence and from the 'self' the child must learn to look at the world. Rousseau's political ideas on the promotion

of equality among all people also played a role in his view of the child. The child is thus not subordinate to the adult, but occupies a unique place (p. 123). This place is to be a child and act according to the natural inclination of being a child. Rousseau's emphasis on children who should be children and not adults brought a new focus on childhood. Rousseau placed a magnifying glass on childhood that opened up the possibility of rethinking the stages of development of a child (Eby, 1964:354; Moore, 2001:200).

The stages of a child's development play a key role in Rousseau's ideas about education. Rousseau sees the stages of development as the natural development of a child, and every phase should be appreciated. In these stages of development, children should be left alone, and interference should be avoided. The best thing to do in education is nothing (p. 124). Rousseau compares the growth of a child with that of a tree that bears fruit. The child should not be depressed, but the educator should wait with patience until the child reaches a new stage of development (p. 127). Every phase of human existence has its place, and so also the phase of childhood has its unique place. We must regard the man as a man and the child as a child (p. 126).

According to Rousseau, the natural course of the child is that children should be loved and helped, but not that children should be feared, nor should the children fear the educator (p. 126). Rousseau expresses himself vigorously against authority structures that must be obeyed. Rousseau's ideas regarding authority and relationships are radically different from the old traditional view of the educator who, hierarchically, has higher authority than the child. According to Rousseau (p. 127), a child should never do something out of obedience, but rather out of necessity. According to Rousseau, the words "obedient" and "command" must be banned from humanity's vocabulary. Children must be disciplined without issuing orders. Children should instead understand the implications of their behaviour. For example, if a child breaks the window of their room, the educator should not fix the window. Instead, they must let the child experience the consequences of their behaviour by keeping the hole in the window and let the child experience the cold. In this way, they will better understand the error and consequences of their actions (p. 130).

As the child is forced to learn through experience and the necessities of life, so should the child's curiosity be stimulated to find out more about a subject. The most important rule in education is not to save time, but to waste time (p. 128). Part of learning through experience is the importance of the child's experience by getting in touch with nature. Rousseau believed in a Creator, but the personal involvement of his Creator in man was lacking. He

writes about man's relationship with God, but rather in rationalistic or even naturalistic terms. In the child's study of nature, he comes to the knowledge of the Author (God) (p. 142). Learning takes place primarily through the child's experience of nature and the experience of other people. Two further concepts that can be emphasised from Rousseau's ideas about education are his conceptualisation of the distinction between teaching boys and girls, as well as his social or political philosophy's influence on his ideas on education. In this article, however, the focus is only on Rousseau's concept of natural inclination.

6. Assessment of Rousseau's concept of natural inclination from a Reformed worldview perspective

From the rich content of Rousseau's ideas about education, only one core element, namely natural inclination, is going to be assessed from a Reformed worldview perspective. In this article, Reformed worldview refers to the broad framework for a worldview as it developed from the historical tradition that originated from Calvin and Calvinistic thinkers (Van der Walt, 2014:20). Reformed worldview in this article also refers to specific Reformed confessions of faith, namely the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dordt and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

C.S. Lewis (1967:13) refers to the term "natural inclinations" as "dangerous senses of words because they trick us into misreading". The use of the words natural inclination is indeed dangerous because of the variety of meanings attached to them. Furthermore, it is also the blending of the two words 'natural' and 'inclination' that further complicates the concept. For example, Mill (1874:64) refers to the two most dangerous notions of the concept of 'nature' in English: Nature means 1) "the entire system of things. . . [and] all their properties" or 2) "things as they would be, apart from human intervention". In this light, Mill (1874:84), as an Englishman, says that the South Europeans have a natural tendency to be 'cruel', and this cruelty must be restrained by reason.

The natural inclination of man is a crucial concept in education. The natural inclination of man is found in concepts such as a person's talents or gifts. One can also refer to people's natural ability, or natural skill. Natural inclination also refers to the things one loves to do. Inclination can be seen as a choice between two issues, such as a person who is more likely to read than jog, because their ability, talent and development in reading are better than jogging. Human inclination can change or develop. A person who has

received more exposure in a case tends to do that thing more easily (Gorski, 2017:61). For example, a child who received more exposure in playing with a ball tends to have better ball skills than a child who has never touched a ball.

It is precisely in this aspect of the child's natural inclination that a clear paradox emerges within Rousseau's thinking. On the one hand, Rousseau believes that the best method of education is the method of doing nothing. "What can be done to produce this very exceptional person? In point of fact all we have to do is prevent anything being done" (p. 125). By this, Rousseau explains that the child must be left to discover his own natural inclination and that all instruction must be in line with the natural inclination of man. From this, his idea arises that children should be taught less and given more opportunity to play, to discover themselves and the world around them.

On the other hand, Rousseau says that man must be formed by other people, people who are capable of educating others. He says when one is left alone at birth to grow up, one will be the unhappiest creature. "Plants are fashioned by cultivation, men by education" (p. 123). The task of educators is to protect the child from social institutions on earth. The educator must form the natural inclination of man and not allow man's nature to be corrupted by the examples of society. These two ideas, on the one hand that the child should not be left alone like a plant to grow on its own, and on the other hand, that the child should be left alone to discover and develop their natural inclination, lead to a lack of coherence in Rousseau's ideas on natural inclination.

Thomas Aquinas (2002:ST II – II, q. 85, a. 1.) explains that man has a number of natural inclinations. He includes, among other things, that man has the tendency to protect his life and the life of others, or to seek the truth and that the best way to do so is to live in peace with society. This creational law Aquinas calls the natural law. By natural law, Aquinas does not mean a law that is separate from God, but a created law, as referred to in Romans 2:14-15 "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."¹ Unlike Aristotle, who detaches the natural law from the law of God, Aquinas also binds the natural law to the law of God (Cunningham, 2012:185). Aquinas shows that the law of God (the Bible) guides man's idea of the law of nature. Part of the nature-grace debate in which Aquinas is

1 For an analysis of Aquinas's concept of 'natural inclination' refer to: Cunningham, S.B., 2012, July. Aquinas on the Natural Inclination of Man to Offer Sacrifice to God. In Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association (Vol. 86, pp. 185-200).

quoted as the main figure is the view that the law of God (the Bible) is a higher grace than nature, with the result that nature and grace are being separated. Cunningham (2012) argues that this is a misunderstanding of Aquinas and that, for example, Aquinas would have added natural inclination to grace, within the nature-grace classification.

According to Van der Walt (2014:98), the Reformed position on the nature-grace distinction is that grace renews and restores nature. The need for the restoration of nature is because nature, which includes creation and man, has fallen into sin. Carson (2012:55) shows that the danger of the concept of natural inclination as a natural law is that, in the case of Rousseau, it is detached from God's Word. The Reformed view, however, holds that natural inclination is part of God's creational order, but once it is detached from God's Word it becomes a law without a source. Without the authority of God's Word, man's natural inclination loses its value. To exalt the natural inclination of man as an all good, self-contained law, separate from God and God's Word, causes self-justification. Man becomes the judge of his own unknowable inner natural inclination. With each person as his own judge, the enforcement of law and order is a difficult task, and this makes the application of discipline in, for example, the classroom even more difficult. This is why Rousseau's view of discipline in education is highly criticised by Reformed thinkers such as Berkhof and Van Til: "Though it is generally admitted that the teacher is clothed with moral authority, which is no authority in the strict sense of the word, it is frequently assumed that he has no judicial authority. Modern pedagogy, while avoiding the extremes of Rousseau, has imbibed all too much of the views of the erratic Frenchman" (Berkhof & Van Til, 1990:108).

In contrast with Rousseau, Rosenstock-Huessy explains the dangers of natural inclination within human beings. Huessy (2001:95) shows that a good teacher cannot be left to act within his natural inclination. He says that the purpose of a teacher's development is precisely to overcome his natural inclination. Huessy explains that every part of society strives to follow the path of least resistance because they act within their natural inclination. According to Huessy (2001:100), the only thing that can save man from natural inclination is rebirth. Huessy explains that this rebirth is the death of the evil and a beginning of the good. "This is none other than the Christian faith in death and resurrection". Huessy says that this is not a popular thing to say today, but death is the only way man can come to real life. "Something bigger than ourselves must lift us beyond ourselves and our natural inclination. People who eliminate the end of the world from their thinking cannot do anything about the world's resurrection. But this resurrection is

our daily task. To die to our natural inclination and begin over in time; that is the secret of timing, of presence of mind." What Huessy points out is that Rousseau's idea of developing a person's natural inclination also poses the danger of aimlessness. Development, change and renewal lie in the death of an inclination and the development of a new person.

As already shown, Rousseau regards man and his natural inclination as good. According to Rousseau, education should be aimed at the pursuit of the natural inclination of a child and the protection of the child against the evil of society. According to Rousseau, it is the nature of man that determines morality, and when one can come into full contact with his natural inner man, he becomes a perfect moral being. However, Taylor (2003:63) indicates that this assumption of Rousseau is false. The demands of self-truth, contact with myself or peace with myself are entirely different from moral action towards others. Self-love can also lead to wrong actions towards others. Therefore, knowledge and contact with my natural inner self do not make me a perfect moral being.

On the other hand, the Reformed confession proclaims man's nature as sinful. Man is naturally inclined to hate God and his neighbour. Man, according to the Reformed tradition, tends to sin in all moral actions, because man has fallen into sin. Man is born into sin and is therefore naturally inclined to sin (Bavinck, 1954:68). This confession goes directly against that of Rousseau, who sees the nature of man as good. Bavinck (1954:104) points out that the gospel shows two possibilities for man: the man who grounds his being in himself or the man who grounds his being in Christ. The man who grounds his being within himself is left to the "foundations of his own nature". Bavinck points out that the foundation of human nature is bound by sin and the power of darkness. However, the person who finds his meaning in Christ is a person who, in the depths of his lostness, seized Christ, the great Saviour of man's life. Christ is the One who causes the evil inclination of man to die, in order to raise a new human being, with a new inclination.

Coetzee (1939:160) points out that Rousseau's anthropology stands at the core of his educational philosophy and is the driving force behind Rousseau's concept of natural inclination. In antithesis to Rousseau, who regards man as sinless and good, Coetzee (1939:219) says: "The confession of the sinful nature of man determines our beliefs about education. Man is not pure, not innocent, not responsible, he is by nature sinful and corrupt, by nature he goes against the will of God." For this reason, Coetzee explains, one of the main tasks of education is not to guide man in the fulfilment of his natural inclination, but rather to lead man away from his natural inclination, in a path

of justice, the demise of himself towards a new way of knowing God.

Knight (2011:207-109) explains that Christian educators do not deny the created order of man's natural inclination, for example, a natural way in which man develops or a natural tendency of man to act in a particular way in specific circumstances. However, Knight (2011:208) warns that Christian educators cannot detach the natural order of man from the human condition: "The biblical view of human nature has no parallel in secular theories of education and is the main obstacle to the Christian's adopting any such theory wholesale. The elements of a Christian approach to education must always be consciously developed in the light of human need and the human condition." The human condition, according to the Reformed confessions, is sinful in nature. It is for this reason that secular educational theories, such as those of Rousseau and those who follow in his footsteps, should not be blindly accepted by Christian educators by uncritically incorporating these secular educational theories into study material for students.

Christian education works with renewing and restoring nature, to break the natural sinful tendency of man and bring forth a new nature: a nature that has undergone a metamorphosis (transformation). Where Rousseau says that the child must be left to discover his own natural inclination, Christian education teaches that the child's natural inclination will be sinful and that the child must be helped in Christ to renew and restore his natural inclination, and in this way become a new human being.

7. Conclusion

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's influence on educational philosophers after him has become evident over the past almost three hundred years. He is an unavoidable thinker who exerts a significant influence in various fields of science. Similarly, Rousseau's influence within Christian higher education institutions that train teachers is evident. Rousseau's theories have especially made a valuable contribution to the field of education. What is worrying, however, is that Christian higher education institutions training teachers do not always critically deal with the underlying philosophy of Rousseau and those who followed in his footsteps.

What the article shows is that Rousseau's anthropology forms the basis of his educational philosophy and his understanding of natural inclination. In an assessment of Rousseau's concept of natural inclination from a Reformed worldview perspective, it becomes clear that he does not make a distinction

between the creation order of God and the development of man to find true happiness. This lack of distinction can be seen in Rousseau's ideas on the child who must be left alone to develop himself and discover his natural inclination.

Rousseau's notion that one must develop according to his natural inclination must therefore be qualified. If one talks about a child's natural inclination, referring to the child's ability, gifts and talents, that is also a Scriptural principle. The way God created man with different tastes, ideas, brain profiles, qualities, talents and gifts is good and forms part of the diversity of God's creation. These gifts of diversity and variety are found in believers and unbelievers. Christian teaching should make full use of all the different techniques and methods to discover, develop and deploy the variety of teaching methods.

On the other hand, Rousseau proclaims that true happiness lies in the discovery and development of the natural inclination of man. Scripture, however, directs man's thoughts in a different direction. Even though a person could have all the gifts and skills in the world, but the person, for example, lacks the gift of love, he has nothing. The source of true love is God. God is love, and when a person is implanted in Him, they will also experience and share true love. In that sense, a person can also have all the gifts in the world, discover and develop his/her own natural inclination, but that does not mean that the person will experience true happiness. According to the Reformed tradition, true happiness resides only in Jesus Christ and a living relationship with Him. Man is made to develop his gifts and talents to the glory of God, and this brings more happiness than applying those gifts and talents to self-glorification. The task of Christian education is much more than only discovering and developing a child's gifts and talents; it also includes the application of those gifts and talents to the glory of God.

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