

National Gender Policy in Public Education in The Russian Empire in The Latter HALF OF THE 19th - Early 20th Centuries

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the national gender policy in public education in the Russian Empire in the latter half of the 19th - early 20th centuries. In the course of work the authors have used special historical research methods enabling to hammer out the facts and to approach historical sources from a critical standpoint. The comparative method allowed the authors to compare statistical data of different periods and to determine the law of development of the educational system and teaching evolution. The structural method enabled to set forth the school system in the Russian Empire and to establish existing links between different school types. The method of historical retrospection served as a requisite for an objective evaluation of public education and position of a teacher. The research is based upon archive materials, statistical data, legal acts and periodicals resulting in deep analysis of public education, assessment of teachers' position and detection of gender approach in the educational process. For the purpose of this research, the authors have compared the educational process in Vyatka Governorate and modern schools. Along with it, great attention was paid to the study of the teaching staff at those schools and gender peculiarities at selection of teachers. As a comparison, the authors have presented information on implementation of gender principles at selection of the teaching staff at European schools in the latter half of the 19th - early 20th centuries demonstrating that gender education in the Russian Empire was not peculiar only to Russian schools. In the course of work, the authors arrived at the conclusion that principles of gender education had been implemented at schools of the Russian Empire and are implemented at modern schools. At that, differences between schools of the periods under survey they connect to differences for educational purposes.

KEYWORDS

Gender education, education, parishional school, uyezd school, gymnasium, progymnasium, teaching, Vyatka Governorate, 20th century

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Introduction

Quality of education is of key importance under the rapidly changing environment. First of all, it is due to the development of high technologies and communications. It's getting more and more complicated for a modern person to get bearings in the flow of information. Solution to this problem falls upon the education sphere, foremost on schools. Modern scientists – experts in pedagogy search for the most effective teaching methods and educational technologies in order to improve quality of education. Some scientists think that implementation of principles of gender education can improve quality of education.

Methods

In the course of work, the authors have used the special historical research methods enabling to hammer out the facts and to approach historical sources from a critical standpoint. The comparative method allowed the authors to compare statistical data of different periods and to determine the law of development of the educational system. The structural method enabled to set forth the school system in the Russian Empire and to establish existing links between different school types. The method of historical retrospection served as a requisite for an objective evaluation of public education and position of a teacher.

Results

Nowadays, the educational system is under reform in the Russian Federation. Special attention is paid to the problems of gender approach in education. Local and foreign educators discuss the efficiency of general and single-gender education. This article considers implementation of gender principles in the educational system in the Russian Empire as compared to international practices and modern schools.

Gender approach in education was implemented to the full extent in the Russian Empire in the latter half of the 19th – early 20th centuries. School system was based upon the principles of single-gender education. Though, it was not concerned with improvement of the educational process, but with traditional assumptions about sex role. Besides, education had somewhat different goals in the Czarist-era. In the Russian Empire educational problems were connected both with the technical and industrial revolution, and more with the expansion of socio-political movements. Thus, school was to perform not so much educational as preventive goals. It had to “protect” the bulk of the population from the growing revolutionary movement. So, improvement of education became the issue of lower priority.

Today, in Russian schools gender principles remain partially. Handicraft lessons provide for a separate program for girls and boys respectively. In particular, at handicraft lessons girls get knowledge in cooking, sewing, modeling, knitting, etc., and boys learn to make different things, to work wood and other materials, etc. That is, girls and boys learn separately at handicraft lessons for objective reasons. But, at the majority of subjects boys and girls are taught together. In the latter half of the 19th – early 20th centuries such separation

differed essentially from the modern one, because the educational process had totally different goals. For example, girls were taught as future wives and mothers. At schools they got knowledge, which could help them to perform those functions at best. Boys were predicted to be public officers, scientists, doctors, military officers, merchants, craftsmen, etc. depending on schools. So, boys were taught in line with preparation to the future profession. Along with skills of future mothers and wives, the endpoint of the educational process for girls could be the rank of home teachers, teachers at folk schools and women secondary schools, only if girls graduated from women gymnasiums, pedagogical courses, teacher training institutes or seminaries. At the same time, in exceptional cases there could be change of gender roles and acceptance by a woman of male identity enabling professional success and career (Maslova *et al.*, 2015). In this case a woman could become, for example, a scientist or a military officer. But it could happen hardly ever and was a quite exceptional case. This was held true till the First World War. Clear separation of male and female functions in the family, education, professional and routine life was typical for the Czarist-era. Schools in the Czarist-era with their functional peculiarities were a striking confirmation thereto.

In the Russian Empire there were primary and secondary schools and higher education establishments. We are interested in the first two types in the frames of our research.

Primary folk schools were presented by parished and uyezds schools. In the latter half of the 19th – early 20th centuries both girls and boys were taught at primary folk schools (Regulations on Primary Folk Schools, 1865). During three years of study they provided there rudimentary knowledge. Co-education was not an experiment at such schools. The reason was the lack of separate rooms for each gender. Nevertheless, co-education was considered a deviance in the Russian Empire. This fact permits to understand the reasons of single-gender education, which were probably reduced to ethical ideas and considered developmental physiological and psychological changes of boys and girls. In fact, girls should finish education on this stage. Establishment of women's secondary schools, pedagogical courses, seminaries, parochial schools in Vyatka Governorate in the latter half of the 19th century enabled girls to go on study and predestinated their professional field. Graduates from those schools, first, got knowledge to be future wives and mothers, and, second, could become home teachers, teachers at folk schools and girls' gymnasiums.

As it was already mentioned before, primary folk schools practiced co-education of boys and girls due to the lack of classrooms. Single-gender education was ordered directly by the Regulations on Secondary Schools (gymnasiums, progymnasiums, and women's gymnasiums). Statutes of those schools contained educational goals therein. Gymnasiums, as per the Statute of Gymnasiums and Progymnasiums dd. November 19, 1864, aimed at provision of basic education and preparation of the youth to the universities and other institutions (Statute of Gymnasiums and Progymnasiums, 1864, November 19). Thus, young men were the participants of the gymnasium course. They could enter higher education establishments after successful training and examination. In turn, young men



could become scientists, teachers, public officers, etc., after graduation from higher education establishments. The goals at women's gymnasiums were somewhat different. According to the Regulations on Women's Schools of the Ministry of National Education dd. 1860, training aimed mainly at provision of religious and moral concepts and knowledge needed for each woman, particularly, a future wife and mother (Regulations on Women's Schools of the Ministry of National Education, 1860, May 10). According to the Regulations on Women's Gymnasiums and Progymnasiums dd. 1870, there were no direct orders to educate a future wife. It was only ordered to teach knowledge for domestic life along with the main subjects that were needed for the mental development of a girl (Regulations on Women's Gymnasiums and Progymnasiums, 1870). So, it is hard to escape a conclusion that the main point of female education in the Russian Empire started to change gradually in the last third of the 19th century, and functions of women in the society became wider.

Thus, the Statutes of the above-mentioned education establishments contained direct instructions on pupils and goals. That's why, in spite of changes in female education, it's fair to say that gender approach was applied in education in the Russian Empire.

Single-gender education was not a peculiarity of Russian schools. Similar facts complemented the educational process in other European countries, namely, France and Germany.

The same principles prevailed in Europe in the latter half of the 19th – early 20th centuries. By comparison, we refer to facts from the world history. Female education was rapidly developed in France (Manfred, 1973), as well as in German principalities before unification in 1871, and women's schools were opened and functioned in the German Empire after unification. Thus, in the Berlin girls' school they taught arithmetic, writing, geography, botany, art, singing, etc., and handicraft: knitting, sewing, embroidery, mending (Dolivo-Dobrovolskaya, 1896). Girls attended that school from 6-7 to 14 years, that is, till the confirmation. After graduation they entered the teachers' seminary. Then, after examination and before appointment they worked as assistant teachers (Dolivo-Dobrovolskaya, 1896). In this regard one can draw a parallel with schools in the Russian Empire, which had the same educational process for girls and tasks. Besides, girls learned a pedagogical trade along with knowledge necessary for domestic life. The principle of co-education at all stages existed only in the USA (Mizhnev, 1906), and they got professional education at colleges, institutes and universities.

But, the gender principle was observed not only in education of the younger generation. It was also observed in teaching staff recruitment at Russian and European schools. For example, in the Russian Empire there was no such collective term as "a teacher". There were masters and mistresses, and their male and female assistants. The purpose was to underline differences between male and female teachers, for example, social status and salary. Statistics on zemstvo schools of Vyatka uyezd for 1887-88 academic year shows that number of masters amounted app. to 24% and mistresses – 76% (Statistics on Zemstvo Schools of Vyatka Uyezd for 1887-1888 Academic Year, 1889). Teachers at such schools were

financed by uyezd zemstvo. Masters earned the highest salary amounting to 325 rubles per year, and mistresses earned 240 rubles per year. The highest salary at the lower and secondary education establishments was at men's gymnasiums. And only men could teach there. So, mistresses contented with smaller salary than masters. Female teachers and assistants working at lower and secondary education establishments were half-starved. The newspaper *Vyatskaya Rech* dd. 1911 reported that a mistress from a folk school in Yaransk uyezd, Vyatka Governorate, was hospitalized due to anemia resulting from starvation at intensive lessons at school (In the Governorate, 1911). The same newspaper for 1915 reported that salary of mistresses amounted to 26 rubles 20 kopecks per month, that is, 314 rubles 40 kopecks per year (Daring, 1915). The author of the article said that it was impossible to survive for this salary due to expensive domestic goods and food.

Besides, mistresses found themselves in worse situation than masters, because they were continuously subjected to spot checks by the folk school inspector, who came to school at nights without notifications and carped up to dismissal threats (Correspondence, 1908). According to *Vyatskaya Rech* No. 206, 1912, married women became victims of the folk school inspector in Nolinsk uyezd. "Some married mistresses of zemstvo schools were suddenly dismissed. The Nolinsk school council ordered on its session, held on the 28th of August, to dismiss all married mistresses of primary schools, except those, who had maximum 2 years left to pension. The teaching staff was knocked over by the news, as at the beginning of August the Nolinsk folk school inspector Mr. Kutepov did not tell anything to the married mistresses, who visited him. But in a month the mistresses, who worked with him, were dismissed from the school" (In the Governorate, 1912).

In the early 20th century both masters and mistresses were often dismissed due to political unreliability. Mistresses were frequently among politically unreliable people. For example, the newspaper *Vyatskaya Rech* No. 238 reported that mistresses were dismissed "due to political unreliability" (In the Governorate, 1908).

Mistresses had the same difficulties with the residential population. The above-mentioned newspaper *Vyatskaya Rech* No. 9, 1911, reported the following, "The zemstvo mistress Y.M. Benevitskaya wishing to improve behavior of one naughty child at her course left him after classes. Having learned it, his father P.P. Bugrev came to the school and cynically scolded the mistress, and after that he took his son home. The mistress Y.M. Benevitskaya was frightened and got ill" (Kurchum Village in Nolinsk Uyezd, 1913). Such cases were not exceptional and clearly illustrated low social status of mistresses.

At the same time, folk mistresses had complicated working conditions in Vyatka Governorate. Work in rural smoky huts is the most striking instance of mistresses' working routine. One village school in Urzhum uyezd was located in such peasant's log hut. A mistress working in such hut described it as follows: area – 5.4 x 5.4 m, height – 2.1 m, "pig-eyed" windows – 0.7 m, capacity – 58 persons, natural ventilation – a door (In the Governorate – Urzhum uyezd, 1909).



The mistress reported that it was unbearable to work and learn under such conditions, moreover, “last lessons came with mass vomit, dizziness and other consequences of intoxication with ill-air” (In the Governorate – Urzhum uyezd, 1909). Here is another example according to the ex-mistress of the Nizhne-Boyarskaya school in Vyatka Governorate, “My class was located in a rented room heated and serviced by the owner. It was a big hut with three tiny windows. We needed to put the desks closely to have enough place for 50 pupils. It was dark, stuffy, dirty in the classroom. The owner did not want to make even one window leaf, “I am not going to humor your fancy, to damage a frame and to cool the hut.” Twice a week the owners baked the bread in the room and closed the oven early. They did not care a bit: they lived in another hut, and all charcoal fumes were left for us. “Close the door! Otherwise, we stop heating! Why do you let the heat out?” shouted the owners, when we opened the door. There were plenty of cockroaches in the hut. They fell from the ceiling to exercise-books, crept over children’s heads and clothes. I asked the owners, “Let’s freeze cockroaches in winter, even if we miss lessons on day one.” “What are you talking about! We will not cool the hut for you.” We had visitors from the zemstvo council. My requests to make window leaves and to ask the owners to bake the bread in their hut and to heat the classroom with zemstvo firewood got the following response, “You may go, if you don’t like” (A Folk Teacher in the Czarist-era, 1957). It was a common case, as due to the growing number of school-aged children there was the lack of classrooms. Zemstvos were forced to rent such peasant’s log huts as classrooms. Probably, the rent was not high and peasants provided the rooms unwillingly and did not try to maintain comfort for mistresses and children. It was one more indication of segregation between masters and mistresses.

According to the sources, the gender-segregation tendency was Europe-wide. The same situation was in German principalities, France and other European countries. In big cities, like Munich, master’s salary amounted to 1980 marks (app. 800 rubles in the late 19th century in the Russian Empire) per year for 28 lessons a week plus 72 marks extra charge for each additional lesson. In provincial schools the salary was minimum 1200 marks. Every five years those figures were increased by 180 marks and plus 90 marks from the government (Peisakhovich, 1898). And in turn, mistresses earned the lower salary, as compared to masters, at equal working hours. Mistresses “started from 1392 marks per year for 28 lessons a week; extra charge was only 48 marks and every five years their salary increased only by 150 marks per year” (Peisakhovich, 1898). French masters earned less salary, than German ones. At the turn of the 20th century the lowest salary amounted to 1100 francs per year (35 rubles per month), at that, the new increase rules resulted in higher figures – 1500 francs, then – 1800, 2000 and maximum – 2200 francs (Karskiy, 1911). Mistresses’ salary was 200 francs less (Karskiy, 1911).

Nowadays, there happens to be the similar gender segregation of teachers in Russian schools, but qualitatively modified. In modern Russia salary is not gender-dependent. It depends on the time sheet and teaching quality.

In the latter half of the 19th century some people calculated educational statistic. A.A. Krasev, director of folk schools in Vyatka Governorate, relied on

statistical data of Vyatka zemstvo and demonstrated some peculiarities of rural teachers (Kazakova, 2008). According to A.A. Krasev, at primary folk schools number of male teachers amounted to 22% , and female teachers – 78% as of 1896 (Krasev, 1900). Primary folk schools to some extent conformed to the primary stage at the modern secondary school. As a comparison, only women teach today at the primary school. Besides, we have analyzed the teaching staff of five different schools in Kirov – one of the biggest cities in Russia, the center of Kirov region. The information was sourced from the official Internet portal Educational Portal of Kirov (Educational Portal of Kirov, 2016). Number of teachers at these schools totals to 312, 23 male teachers inclusive. Thus, percentage of male teachers is 0.07% (Educational Portal of Kirov, 2016). We have not studied the teaching staff at all schools in Kirov, but we suppose that these data are typical of both Kirov region and Russia in whole.

Discussion

Thus, in the latter half of the 19th – early 20th centuries the educational system became more extensive, which was promoted by the net of primary and secondary education establishments. Women's schools were developed in parallel enabling implementation of the gender principle of education to the full extent. This principle is realized at modern schools as well, but with more differential peculiarities. Now, girls and boys have equal possibilities to enter the higher education establishments and to learn a trade. In the latter half of the 19th – early 20th centuries boys had more possibilities to realize personal potential. And girls could professionally learn only a teaching trade that period

Conclusion

In the latter half of the 19th century the government of the Russian Empire paid great attention to public education and teaching staff recruitment. We think that the prevailing principle of single-gender education had more negative than positive features. The principle was restrictive for girls. They could become mistresses or good wives. Their choice was narrow. The present educational system with some gender peculiarities does not restrict opportunities, and in some cases expands them. Experimental institutions realizing principles of gender education are a striking confirmation thereto.

This research enables to establish the guidelines for a future detailed study of the issue. In this context we are interested in the gender principle of teaching staff recruitment at modern schools of the Russian Federation, and we set a goal to study the reasons why modern Russian schools favor men.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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