



Gender Differences in Geography Education Extracurricular Activities

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Abstract

Russian educational tradition is based on the idea that classroom learning should be combined with extracurricular activities. There are different types of such activities which are important for teaching geography at secondary school. All-Russia geography competition is one of them. Its aim is to improve knowledge of geography, to motivate learners, to develop self-study and initiative and also to acquire specific skills. Another aim is to help schoolchildren choose a career and consider the possibility to major in geography in the future. Thus, several goals are achieved.

All-Russia geography competition is organized annually. It is held in three stages: a municipal one, a regional one and a final. The qualifying stage winners continue the competition and take part in the following event.

As for the competition tasks, there are special requirements of designing the test. The tasks must be interesting, informative, original, educational and make the participants use their knowledge in unusual conditions, see the cause and effect of the problems. The tasks are both scientific and entertaining and are supposed to test both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The competitors are divided into 3 age groups. In the process of designing the task the contents of the syllabus obligatory for all Russian schools are taken into account so that all children can have equal starting positions.

This paper presents the review of all Russian competition experience with a special focus on gender differences which are revealed on different levels. The questions are how male and female participants approach different task, what tasks they find easy, which tasks boys and girls are good at.

The analysis shows that boys are good at problem-solving tasks and creative tasks and girls have deeper knowledge of theory.

In conclusion, the education process and extracurricular activities which potential participants are involved in can be improved if teachers and instructors take into consideration the gender differences while preparing children for the competition.