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The Source Base for Studying the Children's Everyday Life in Post-Reform Orenburg at the Turn of the 20th Century

Abstract

The article presents an analysis of the sources applicable to study of children's everyday life in the post-reform period on the example of the city of Orenburg. The relevance of the study lies in increased attention on the part of state and society to the creation of a comfortable environment

for life and health of children. The past experience can help in solving contemporary problems of childhood. The novelty of the study is explained by the fact that at present there are no historical works containing a comprehensive analysis of the sources' potential for studying children's everyday life. The work is to systematize and analyze the available sources on children's everyday life at the turn of the 20th century on the example of post-reform Orenburg. Its methodological base is comparative method for comparative analysis of the sources and their data and critical method for determination of the data reliability. The article provides a brief historiographical review of studying the problem. The author divides all sources on children's everyday life into written and material ones. Written sources are represented by unpublished materials (parish registers) and published materials (regulatory documents, statistical data, periodicals, and educational literature). A group of material sources is represented by photographs and portraits depicting children. The article details the value of parish registers as a source for studying children's everyday life. Along with high information content, parish registers have a number of disadvantages. The article presents an analysis of the normative provision on situation of children in the 19th – 20th centuries; conclusions are drawn about degree of freedom of children and limits of parental authority. The article details research potential of statistical materials and highlights their shortcomings. It explains what a good textbook is and what its mission is. It formulates the peculiarity of periodicals as a source on children's everyday life. The author gives a comparative description of portrait and photography as historical sources. The author concludes that each source reveals a certain aspect of children's everyday life. Therefore, in order to create a comprehensive picture of everyday life of children at the turn of the 20th century, the researcher should consider all sources as a complex.

Keywords

Children's daily life, sources on children's daily life, unpublished sources, published sources, children, childhood, metric books, Orenburg.

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