

P8. POSTER

The Pedagogy of Hygienism in Santiago de Compostela (1891–1923)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The social distinction derived from adopting, or failing to adopt, hygienic behaviors deepened the divide between social classes. The upper classes assumed the responsibility of instilling proper habits. In Santiago, this process took place in private schools connected to the economic kitchen.

2. OBJECTIVES

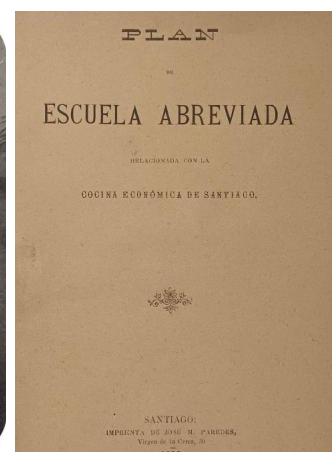
Clarify the role of education in promoting hygienic behaviors and assess its impact.
Identify the model implemented in Compostela and the pedagogical methodology applied.

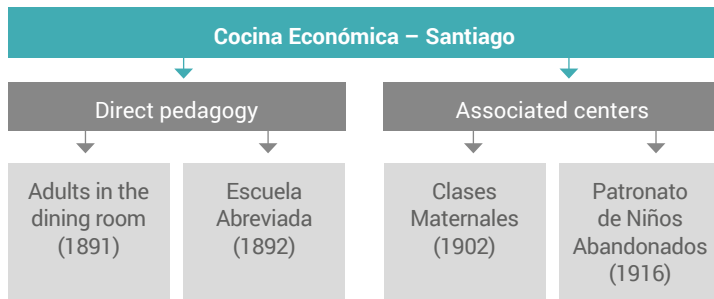
3. METHODOLOGY

Data collected from USC Historical Archive, Diocesan Historical Archive and Economic Kitchen Archive.

4. RESULTS

The emergence of private educational initiatives at the end of the nineteenth century played a key role in spreading habits of cleanliness and hygiene among laborers and the poor. Most of these initiatives were linked to the Cocina Económica de Santiago from 1891 onward.





Constructivist methodology (Pestalozzi and Froebel):

Arrangement of materials: The *Escuela Abreviada* included among its equipment a heated bath, sponges, towels, and washbasins. To learn how to use them, children first had to become familiar with these items and grow accustomed to their presence. The same occurred years later in the *Clases Maternales*, which introduced toilets at a time when most private homes lacked them.

Guided use: Teachers not only modeled proper behavior but accompanied students as they practiced hygienic techniques. The *Clases Maternales* dedicated time before meals to going to the public fountain and teaching proper hand-washing. Instruction also covered the use of utensils and table clearing. Childcare guidance for first-time mothers was included: newborn hygiene and proper feeding.

Establishment of routine: Continuous repetition, gradual withdrawal of teacher support, and explanations on the sanitary benefits and social implications of hygienic practices.

Generalization: Once hygienic behavior was established, students were encouraged to transfer these habits to their family environment.

Positive reinforcement: Annual awards were given to those who stood out for personal and domestic cleanliness.

Second phase:

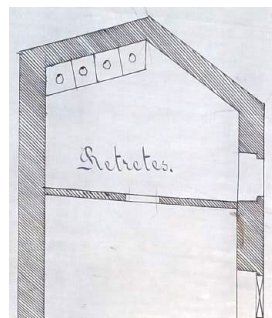
Mandatory application to avoid regression, the Patronato de *Niños Abandonados* prohibited entry to anyone who did not observe proper bodily and clothing hygiene, installing a wash-room at the classroom entrance. Some schools created their own “little clothing rooms,” where students could periodically replace worn garments.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Private pedagogical and charitable initiatives in turn-of-the-century Compostela instilled the importance of personal and communal hygiene as a means of improving health and quality of life.

Through the planning of specific teaching strategies, the behavior of the lower and working classes was progressively shaped.

Growing social concern for hygiene and cleanliness led these topics to be incorporated as subjects of study, taught according to new learning theories, unlike public schools, still anchored in outdated models.



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