Revista História da Educação (*Online*)
2026, v. 30, e147423
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1590/2236-3459/147423.en

REVISTA HISTÓRIA DA EDUCAÇÃO
e-ISSN: 2236-3459
http://seer.ufrgs.br/asphe

Article

EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL PRACTICES OF THE FEMALE SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS OF THE FILHAS DE MARIA AUXILIADORA IN THE SOUTH OF THE FORMER MATO GROSSO

Roselaine Alves Olmo*

Celeida Maria Costa de Souza e Silva*

ABSTRACT

This article aims to understand the educational, cultural and social practices that constituted the dispositions of the female gender *habitus* provided to the secondary school students in the education institutions managed by the Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora [Daughters of Mary Help of Christians] in the south of the former Mato Grosso, in the period from 1942 to 1961. The documentary contribution used the crossing of sources, such as school documents from the school institutions, the school periodicals "Ecos Juvenis" [Juvenile Echoes] and the memorial works "Auxiliadora 70 anos" [70 years with Mary Help of Christians] and "O Profeta do Pantanal" [The Prophet of the Pantanal]. The sources were analyzed using the theoretical notions of Pierre Bourdieu and his interlocutors. The results show the importance of school institutions in the education of women in the south of the former Mato Grosso. Through their educational, cultural and social practices focused on domestic activities and caring for the family and home, they reinforced the female gender *habitus*.

Keywords: History of Education; School institutions; Gender *habitus*.

* Dom Bosco Catholic University, Mato Grosso do Sul, MS, Brazil.

PRÁTICAS EDUCACIONAIS, CULTURAIS E SOCIAIS DAS INSTITUIÇÕES ESCOLARES FEMININAS DAS FILHAS DE MARIA AUXILIADORA NO SUL DO ANTIGO MATO GROSSO (1942-1961)

RESUMO

Este artigo tem por objetivo compreender as práticas educacionais, culturais e sociais, que constituíram as disposições de *habitus* de gênero feminino proporcionadas às alunas que estudaram no ensino secundário nas instituições escolares das Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora no sul do antigo Mato Grosso, no período que corresponde aos anos de 1942 a 1961.O aporte documental utilizou-se o cruzamento de fontes, tais como: documentos escolares das instituições escolares, os periódicos escolares "Ecos Juvenis" e as obras memorialísticas "Auxiliadora 70 anos" e "O Profeta do Pantanal". As fontes foram analisadas a partir das noções teóricas de Pierre Bourdieu e seus interlocutores. Os resultados sinalizam a importância das instituições escolares na formação feminina no sul do antigo Mato Grosso. Estas, por meio das práticas educacionais, culturais e sociais voltadas para as atividades domésticas, e cuidado com a família e o lar, reforçaram o *habitus* de gênero feminino.

Palavras-chave: História da Educação; Instituições escolares; *Habitus* de gênero.

PRÁTICAS EDUCATIVAS, CULTURALES Y SOCIALES DE LAS INSTITUCIONES ESCOLARES FEMENINAS DE LAS HIJAS DE MARIA AUXILIAR EM EL SUR DEL ANTIGUO MATO GROSSO (1942-1961)

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es compreender las prácticas educativas, culturales y ociales que constituyeron las disposiciones del habitus de género femenino proporcionado a las alumnas que estudiaron em las escuelas secundarias de las Hijas de Maria Auxiliadora em el sur del antiguo Mato Grosso, en el período de 1942 a 1961. Elinsumo ocumental utilizo um conjunto transversal de fuentes, como los documentos escolares de las escuelas, las publicaciones periódicas escolares "Ecos Juvenis" y las obras conmemorativas "Auxiliadora 70 anos" y "O profeta do Pantanal". Las fuentes se analizaron utilizando las nociones teóricas de Pierre Bourdieu y sus interlocutores. Los resultados indican la importância de las instituciones escolares em la educacíon de las mujeres em el sur del antiguo Mato Grosso. A través de prácticas educativas, culturales y Sociales orientadas a las actividades domésticas y al cuidado de la família y del hogar, reforaron el habitus de género femenino.

Palabras clave: Historia de la Educación; Instituciones escolares; Hábitus de género.

INTRODUCTION

This investigation[1] aims to understand educational, cultural and social practices that constituted the disposition of the female gender *habitus* provided to students in secondary schools managed by the Sisters *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* (FMA) [Daughters of Mary Help of Christians][2] in the south of former Mato Grosso[3].

The period selected, 1942-1961, focuses on the beginning of the movement of expansion of education institutions run by the Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora in the Brazilian education field. In 1961, Law nº 4,024/1961 (Brasil, 1961) or the *Lei das Diretrizes e Bases* (LDB) [Law of Education Guidelines and Base] was approved. It resulted in the reduction of humanities subjects and consolidated a technical-scientific curriculum, thus decreasing the possibility of acquisition of cultural capital provided by humanities subjects in secondary school (Souza, 2008).

Secondary education here refers to formal education, that is, the course that followed elementary school. At that time, it was organized into two cycles, as follows: junior high school lasting four years, and high school lasting three years. The teaching course was taught in interaction with the junior high school and technical courses (Saviani, 2014).

To analyze educational, cultural and social practices of education institutions, this research employs the of epistemology Pierre Boudieu and his interlocutors. We seek to understand what *habitus* and *gender habitus* are. In this study, educational, cultural and social practices are looked into to answer the following question: How did education institutions managed by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* in the former Mato Grosso from 1942 to 1961, structure their educational, cultural and social practices aiming at providing their students with desirable dispositions of the female *gender habitus* and their role in society?

Seeking to find an answer to the question above, the content of several sources was crossed. Those included institutional documents, religious documents, iconographies, journalistic sources, the periodicals "Ecos Juvenis" [Juvenile Echoes] and the memorialist works, "Auxiliadora 70 anos" [70 Years with Mary Help of Christians], which presents narratives by former students of *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* (CNSA)/Campo Grande, and "O profeta do Pantanal" [The Prophet of the Pantanal], which includes records of Salesian works in the city of Corumbá, among them the *Colégio Imaculada Conceição* (GENIC).

1 This article is part of an investigation at the Master's level called "Salesian female institutions and the education of virtuous, refined, and religiously devout women in the south of former Mato Grosso (1942-1961)". This study was supported by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – Brasil (CAPES) [Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel – Brazil] – Funding code 001.

2 *The Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* are a religious congregation founded in Mornese, Italy, in 1872. In Brazil, their work started in 1883 and, in the state of Mato Grosso, in 1895. The *Colégio da Imaculada Conceição* [Immaculate Conception School], located in Corumbá – MT, was active up to 2021, while the *Colégio Maria Auxiliadora* [Mary Help of Christians school], in Campo Grande – MT, is still active and is run by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* until these days. It is currently located in Campo Grande – MS. We use the abbreviation MT to indicate the schools' location because during the period investigated in this research, both were located in the state of Mato Grosso.

3 The expression 'south of the former Mato Grosso' is used in this research to identify the state of Mato Grosso do Sul before its creation, which occurred in 1977, by means of the Complementary Law nº 31.

To address this theme, the article is organized into three topics. The first presents the trajectory of education institutions run by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* in the south of former Mato Grosso. The second topic discusses educational, cultural and social practices which constituted a female gender *habitus* for the students of those education institutions. Finally, the third topic includes final considerations, presenting the research results.

THE SCHOOLS' TRAJECTORIES: *IMACULADA CONCEIÇÃO* IN CORUMBÁ AND *NOSSA SENHORA AUXILIADORA* IN CAMPO GRANDE IN THE SOUTH OF FORMER MATO GROSSO

This topic aims to introduce the trajectory of the education institutions run by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* that were implemented in the south of former Mato Grosso, in the period corresponding to the implementation and consolidation of Salesian schools in Brazil. According to Riolando Azzi[4], in his work "As Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora no Brasil: cem anos de história" [The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in Brazil: a hundred years of history], the periods of implementation, consolidation and expansion are understood as presented below (Chart 1).

Chart 1 – Movement of implementation, consolidation and expansion of FMA schools in Brazil and in the south of former Mato Grosso.

1892-1917 Implementation	**1917-1942 Consolidation**	**1942-1967 Expansion**
1904 *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*/ Corumbá	1904 *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*/ Corumbá	1904 *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*/ Corumbá
1908 *Colégio Maria Auxiliadora* / Ladário	1926 *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* and Teaching Course / Campo Grande	1926 *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* and Teaching Course / Campo Grande

Source: Centro Salesiano de Documentação e Pesquisa [Document and Research Salesian Center]; Azzi (2002), (2003); Arquivo da Inspetoria Nossa Senhora Aparecida – BAP [Archives of the Our Lady of Aparecida Inspectorate] – Centro-Oeste, Campo Grande – MS.

Organized by the authors (2024).

We observed that three education institutions were implemented by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* in the south of former Mato Grosso (Chart 1). These were the *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*, the *Colégio Maria Auxiliadora*, the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*. The

4 Priest Riolando Azzi, PhD, Professor of Philosophy, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (1989), specialist in the trajectory of the Catholic Church in Brazil.

CC BY

Colégio Maria Auxiliadora was installed in 1908, in the municipality of Ladário and was closed in 1912.

The education institutions *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*/Corumbá and the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*/Campo Grande, founded during the period of implementation and consolidation, persisted over time, maintaining their purpose of educating girls according to the Christian faith. Those institutions were private, denominational schools offering primary, secondary, teacher education, and vocational courses in boarding, day, and semi-boarding formats.

The *Colégio Imaculada Conceição* was founded in 1904 and was the first Salesian female school to educate girls in the south of former Mato Grosso, it was mainly defined as "[...] a private education institution destined to the education of girls from the families of large traders, farmers and independent professionals in Corumbá" (Moraes; Kassar, 2012, p. 110, our translation).

The school operated in rented houses, and in 1908, it was transferred to a building bought with the help of families that believed in the work of Dom Bosco:

> [...] in 1908 the school was transferred to the building at Rua Frei Mariano, bought with the collaboration of wealthy friendly families who generously continued to support Dom Bosco's work (Báez, 1988, p. 69, our translation).

The construction of a new building to shelter the institution was indispensable for the consolidation of the female boarding school since it could provide accommodation to its students, offering enough comfort for those who lived there. Furthermore, the new building was quite modern, which was a crucial factor for the image that the Salesians wanted to build in the education area.



Figure 1 – *Colégio Imaculada Conceição* – Corumbá

Source: *Inspetoria Santa Catarina de Sena* (date not found).

Figure 1 shows the beginning of the construction of the *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*. The architecture of the FMA education institutions revealed what was expected as innovative and modern at the time, that is, "architecture, as a form of writing in space, thus expressed and established an innovative discourse" (Frago; Escolano, 2001, p. 23, our translation). In 1925, the institution purchased another space "[...] by buying neighboring pieces of land, the school premises were enlarged over the years, and special classrooms were created as well as new dormitories for boarding students, playgrounds, and a swimming pool [...]" (Báez, 1988, p. 69, our translation).

With the modernized new space, the number of students interested in that institution grew as pointed out by Andrade (2021, p. 114, our translation) "In 1932, the institution started to offer the commerce and accounting courses, at that moment, the institution was already consolidated in Corumbá society". After 5 years, in 1937, in addition to the courses already offered, the institution started to offer the junior high school course for students in the region of Corumbá.

The *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* founded the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* on February 22, 1926, with the arrival of sisters "Catarina Burzio, Maria Aldona Falquet, Honorina Obliqui, Anita Muniz" (Chronicles of the Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora, 1926).

> According to historical accounts, in September 1925, the apostolic visitor Fr. Renauld, S.J., visited the entire state of Mato Grosso and, upon arriving in Cuiabá, insisted on having an audience with the provincial superior of the *Filhas de Maria Auxliiadora*, Sister Francisca Lang. The objective was to request the founding of a school in the south of the state, specifically in Campo Grande, a city of great progress and, at the same time, in need of a Catholic school (Penteado, 1996, p. 27-28, our translation).

The *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* was founded on February 24, 1926. A celebration was held for the opening of the school, "[...] The ceremony for the installation of the construction work was widely publicized, including in the local newspaper" (Penteado, 1996, p. 31, our translation). The prestige they held in society was remarkable, "[...] the church was full of people from the upper class of Campo Grande" (Penteado, 1996, p. 31, our translation).

Figure 2 shows the first years of the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* construction. About the school architecture the authors Frago and Escolano (2001, p. 26, our translation) pointed out "The school architecture is also a program, a type of discourse that conveys a system of values such as order, discipline and surveillance in its materiality".



Figure 2 – Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora – Campo Grande

Source: Penteado (1996).

Therefore, such representations were imposed by society through the FMA education institutions and symbolized all those systems of values to demonstrate the excellence in education received by girls who attended those schools or that in the future could become students there (Frago; Escolano, 2001).

When the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* started to operate, it offered early childhood education in kindergarten and elementary school. In 1928, the Salesian Sisters opened the Dom Bosco School of Commerce in the building adjacent to the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*, which offered courses in secretarial studies and accounting. In 1930, they inaugurated the *Escola Normal Dom Bosco* [teaching course], in a building adjacent to the Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora, which operated until 1940.

Sá Rosa (1990, p. 89, our translation) contributed with his report about that period:

> In 1931, I came to Campo Grande. The *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*, which had been operating at Rua 26 de Agosto, was transferred to Rua Pedro Celestino, where it is currently located. When I arrived, only the back had been finished. The front of the building was built from 1931 to 1938, when it gained the final design that remains until today.

In 1934, the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* started to operate offering junior high school course and was named Ginásio Feminino Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora [Our Lady Help of Christians Female Junior High School]. In 1943, the second cycle courses, that is, high school, were included. In 1946, the teaching course was reopened and qualified teachers for elementary school, it was linked to the Secondary Education Organic Law Decree nº 4,244/1942.

In 1946, the junior high course, as secondary school was classified as "excellent" by the Ministério da Educação e Cultura (MEC) [Ministry of Education and Culture], as reported by Penteado (1996, p. 61, our translation) "It seems that these holidays were reserved for the surprises that the year had not brought: the junior high was classified as excellent by the Ministério da Educação e Cultura."

Thus, like other FMA schools, the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* aimed to educate young women in Christian morals. As stated in the school's statutes, this purpose was geared towards

> [...] educate the minds and ears of children to make them able to perform the noble task reserved to them in family and society, providing them with civic, intellectual and moral instruction (Estatuto CNSA...,1935, our translation).

Following the model of Salesian catholic education, teaching at the schools run by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* kept the education principles of Dom Bosco Salesian schools, employing the so-called "Preventive System".

The "Jornal do Commercio" (MT) newspaper of 1935 reported that the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora* would offer the following courses:

> Elementary school, lasting four years; Admission to courses: teaching, commerce and junior high**.** The *Escola de Comercio Dom Bosco* [Dom Bosco School of Commerce], the *Escola Normal Dom Bosco* [Dom Bosco Teaching School] and the *Externato Sagrado Coração de Jesus* [Sacred Heart of Jesus boarding school], and the general enrollment chart, showed that 561 students were enrolled in the institution, 52 in the secondary school course, 103 in the teaching course, 92 in the commerce course, and 314 in primary education (Jornal do Commercio, 1935, n.p., our translation).

Gradually, the sisters managed to adequate the school to a modern standard, but without forgetting moral and religious standards that guaranteed the preservation of the young individuals who studied in the institution. "In any case, they preserved traditional moral standards in line with those of the emerging bourgeoisie, which made those schools a safe environment for the preservation of women" (Azzi, 2002, p. 54, our translation).

Female education started in the municipality of Corumbá, at the *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*, and later, at the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*. Both education institutions were consolidated as the most important female education schools in the south of former Mato Grosso. Both institutions offered female education based on moral, civic and religious instruction, in addition to preparation of individualities, and women were educated to play roles inside the home, with their families and in society.

The advent of boarding school, the education project and the curriculum proposal offered in Salesian schools was what changed school instruction for girls in the south of former Mato Grosso. Families trusted to send their daughters to Salesian schools since they were taken care by religious educators and the schools adopted a curriculum with activities that were considered relevant for a Christian girl to learn to become a good housewife, according to

Rampi (2007, p. 28-29, our translation), "One of the boarding school functions was to instruct girls for domestic skills (cutting, sewing, embroidering, cleaning, making artificial flowers, painting, etc.)".

Salesian educators were seen to play a relevant role in the schooling process of their young students since the education institutions managed by the *Filhas de Maria Auxliadora* followed a curriculum with activities promoting moral, religious and civic education of the girls all over the Brazilian territory.

EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS RUN BY THE *FILHAS DE MARIA AUXILIADORA* IN THE SOUTH OF FORMER MATO GROSSO: EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL PRACTICES AND FEMALE GENDER *HABITUS*

To understand the thesis of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, this discussion starts with Bourdieu's critique of objectivism and subjectivism.

According to Sapiro (2017), Bourdieu thought that the theory of practice was anchored in two critiques: the critique of objectivism and the critique of subjectivism. Subjectivist approaches "[...] assume that action is the product of the will of an individual who is aware and able to project himself into future, anticipating the consequences of his actions" (Sapiro, 2017, p. 296, our translation). Bourdieu's critique of subjectivism is that the social agent is not totally free to choose projecting the future.

That author's critique of the objectivist approach is that objectivism transforms social agents into "mechanics of the structure" (Sapiro, 2017, p. 296, our translation). According to Nogueira and Nogueira (2004), for Bourdieu "objectivism tends to conceive practice only as the execution of structural rules set, without investigating the concrete process through which such rules are socially produced and reproduced" (Nogueira; Nogueira, 2004, p. 25, our translation).

Therefore, objectivism does not demonstrate how social agents understand rules, mediation and practice. In objectivism, practice is understood as a direct structure by Sapiro (2017), social agents are only the 'mechanics of structures'.

Bourdieu's thesis defends praxeological knowledge, which seeks to understand the interaction between action plan and subjectivism, and also understand how structures are interiorized in social agents. This process is explained by Bourdieu as "interiorization of exteriority and exteriorization of interiority" (Nogueira; Nogueira, 2004).

According to Brandão (2017, p. 304, our translation), practices are everyday social practices:

> Founded in permanent socialization processes and routine practices, not requiring resourcing to 'rational reasoning' all the time since they incorporate routine and reasonable ways of acting within the social space where they usually circulate (fields, contexts, time frames).

Therefore, actions can be said to be mobilized every day and such practices are structured in the *habitus*. Therefore, Wacquant (2017, p. 214) states that practice is

> [...]the product of a dialectical relationship between a situation and a habitus, understood as a system of durable and transposable dispositions which, integrating all past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions, and make it possible to accomplish infinitely differentiated tasks, thanks to the analogical transfer of schemata acquired in prior practice (Bourdieu 1972/1977, p. 261).
>
> Thus, in the theory of practice, Bourdieu explains *habitus* as the bridge between subjectivism and objectivism, between structure and practice. *Habitus* "[...] is what confers upon practices their relative autonomy with respect to the external determinations of the immediate present (Wacquant, 2017, p. 215).

According to Pierre Bourdieu (2007, p. 191, our translation), *habitus* is

> [...] as a system of socially constituted dispositions, which as structured and structuring structures, create the generator and unifying principle of the set of practices and ideologies characteristic of a group of agents.

To understand the concept of *habitus*, one must understand that *habitus* internalized within education institutions generates practices. Thus, practices adopted by education institutions tend to structure a particular *habitus*. *Habitus* is then the generator principle of durable dispositions, it permutates for a long time, but this does mean that it does not change. According to Bourdieu (2018, p. 75):

> *Habitus* is "structured" by one's past and present circumstances, such as family upbringing and educational experiences. It is "structuring" in that one's habitus helps to shape one's present and future practices. It is a "structure" in that it is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. This "structure" comprises a system of dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices (1990c, p. 53).

Therefore, Pierre Bourdieu's interlocutor and researcher Maria Eulina Pessoa de Carvalho (2004) conceptualizes gender from Bourdieu's thoughts: "[...] as a relational concept and a structure of symbolic domination" (Carvalho, 2004, p. 2, our translation).

Bourdieu explained that "the construction of male or female gender occurs from a format: having only one existence of work in diacritical construction, at the same time theoretical and practical, which is necessary to its production as a body socially differentiated from the opposite gender" (Bourdieu, 2020, p. 46, our translation).

According to Carvalho (2004, p. 1, our translation):

> Gender *habitus* is, then, the result of informal education, of a psychosomatic pedagogical work of domination, inculcation and incorporation, which starts in the child's socialization process and continues through varied and constant education strategies of differentiation, mostly implicit in the practices of various agents and institutions such as family, church, school and means of communication.

It seems essential to consider the concept of gender in relationships that predominated in society in the period of this research, when the ideal woman was shaped to follow the model imposed by social institutions such as school and church. For Bourdieu, practice reveals the dispositions internalized in the *habitus*, which guides social agents' behavior. Regarding the students considered in this study, gender *habitus* was formed from the social and cultural practices that influenced the way they were inserted and reproduced the female lifestyle in society. Thus, education institutions and others not only reinforced that *habitus,* but also perpetuated those practices to keep gender inequalities.

Ortiz (2014), researched educational, cultural and social practices of students in the teaching course at the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*. The curriculum was discussed as an education practice that led to cultural and social practices. According to Ortiz (2014, p. 116, our translation):

> As school and education practices, we understand those in which school subjects and contents expressed in study plans, programs and test scores are included, which join cultural and social practices in the composition of the girls' education, as well as the festivities and Sister's behaviors and actions towards that kind of education, which might keep traces of its materiality in former students' reports and in several documents.

Based on that author's reports, we understand that education practices are all those experienced inside the school and are intertwined with cultural and social practices. Education practices are, for example, school subjects that are linked to humanities and related to the study and development of other idioms, such as Latin, French, English, as well as reading and writing, the contents available in study plans and the norms and rules set within education institutions

Chart 2 shows the subjects taught at the *Colégio Imaculada Conceição* in 1942. Subjects such as Portuguese, Latin, French, English, History, Geography and Choir were linked to humanities and the education of intellectual or ruling elites. Language teaching, according to Chervel and Compère (1999, p. 149, our translation), "[...] integrates the individual into an elite, a nation, a culture, which they share at the same time with their ancestors and their contemporaries."

Chart 2 – Subjects taught in junior high at the Colégio Imaculada Conceição.

	First grade	Second grade	Third grade	Fourth grade
Junior Hight	Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese
	Latin	Latin	Latin	Latin
	French	French	French	French
	English	English	English	English
	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
			Natural Science	Natural Science
	Brazilian history	General History (American History)	General History (Ancient Medieval History)	Brazilian History and General History (Modern and Contemporary History)
	General Geography	General Geography	Brazilian Geography	Brazilian Geography
	Handcrafting	Handcrafting		
	Drawing	Drawing	Drawing	Drawing
	Music	Music	Music	Music
	Choir	Choir	Choir	Choir

Source: Documents of the *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*, list of subjects taught in April, June and July 1942.

Organized by the authors, 2023.

In the school curriculum, subjects such as Latin, French, English, Italian, arts, handcrafting, painting, singing, and piano appeared as the incorporation of cultural capital, aiming to lead the agents to appropriate them by means of educational, cultural and social practices. According to Bourdieu (2015, p. 213-214, our translation):

> [...] all objectified cultural capital, product of history accumulated in books, articles, documents, instruments, etc., which are evidence or the realization of theories or the critique of those theories, problematics, and conceptual systems, appear as an autonomous world that, despite being the product of historical action, has its own laws, transcending individual wills, and remain irreducible to what each agent, or even the set of agents can appropriate of, the same way that language objectified in dictionaries and grammar books continues being irreducible to the actually appropriated language, that is, what is embodied in it by each agent, or even by the set of agents.

Regarding the students at the schools investigated in this study, they were prepared to have an elitist culture, that is, they were prepared for a professional life, but the priority was to prepare them for marrying the future rulers of society. Narratives collected by Penteado (1996) reveal the culture and teaching those students received in their schools:

> As a result of the culture we were exposed to, we learned a bit of Latin, French, English, Italian, arts, handcrafting, painting, singing, playing the piano (things that currently you have only in private classes) (Penteado, 1996, p. 197, our translation).

Tomaz Tadeu da Silva (2005), reported in his research that the curriculum "[...] is not neutral, naive or uninterested in knowledge" [...], it is the "[...] result of a process that is guided by the private interests of ruling classes and groups" (Silva, 2005, p. 46, our translation).

For that author, schools can act ideologically through their curriculum, either regarding humanities literature subjects or technical subjects such as mathematics, physics and others. Also, schools can go far beyond that by acting in an ideologically discriminatory way against subordinate classes, preventing those students from achieving high levels of learning, and leading them to submission and obedience, while students belonging to the ruling classes are taught to command and control (Silva, 2005).

In Salesian female schools, the subjects taught followed the Secondary Education Organic Law nº 4,244/1942. In the curriculum taught in the schools managed by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora*, subjects such as handcrafting and domestic economy were included. In the program of subjects taught at the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*, the following activities were included:

> Macrame: various bars, bags, etc. in twine;
>
> Cutouts in felt, leather or rounded edges and their applications;
>
> Yarn work: twine, fibers, etc.;
>
> Raffia work;
>
> Construction of geometric solids in cardboard;
>
> Making hats and caps for children in crepe paper;
>
> Reproduction of natural leaves and fruits in clay, plaster, wax;
>
> Decoration of clay pots with sand, sealing wax, etc.;
>
> Weaving and folding exercises;
>
> Needlework: basting stitches, backstitches, simple and open hem stitches;
>
> Buttonholes, buttonholes in various sizes, sewing on buttons, laces and hooks;
>
> Pleats, I mean – Double seams: French and English – false hems, etc.;
>
> Crochet – study of elements and applications in lace;
>
> Knitting – main stitches – application in booties, hats, etc. (Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora, year not informed).

The handcrafting subject in those schools aimed at preparing the students to marry or even to assemble their wedding trousseau and that of their future babies. Regarding the activities that those students did during the handcrafting class, the accounts express:

> Darning socks, for example, what a joy that was! There were little plastic balls (or the equivalent of the time) – it was actually an egg – and inside, little strands of silk thread in various shades of fur. You'd put the egg inside the sock (so the hole would be stretched),

> thread the needle, and stitch by stitch, you'd mend the frayed fabric, the hole in the sock (Penteado, 1996, p. 113, our translation)

At that time, it was necessary to prepare the woman for taking care of a home, that is why the domestic economy was considered important. In this subject, they would be taught how to look after a home and "[...] wash, cook, iron, and clean with different techniques and tools" (Andrade, 2021, p. 165, our translation).

Cultural practices were developed in those schools through the students' participation in classes with activities such as music and theater rehearsals, and incentive to reading classic authors. Such practices enable those students to acquire embodied cultural capital, which can only be acquired by the person, their body, and what the person became, being transformed into a *habitus*. Embodied capital can be structured as institutionalized capital (schooling capital/ school titles and diplomas) internalizing the *habitus*, that is, an appreciation scheme by the practices learn in those schools (Bourdieu, 2015).

These elements show the importance of humanities subjects and classic culture in the education of young women who studied in the schools managed by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* in the south of former Mato Grosso. Subjects in the humanities area were considered extremely relevant in the education of secondary school students. Apart from offering literary subjects, schools also incentivized literary creativity, as observed in the report of a former student of the *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*: "Encouraging literary creativity was an ongoing exercise" (Penteado, 1996, p. 55, our translation).

Social practices, such as theater performances, participation in parades, commemorative dates or celebratory events, like the graduation ceremonies for female students, contributed to the formation of social capital that created relationships with society.

According to Bourdieu (2015),

> Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group (Bourdieu, 2015, p. 75).

Thus, social capital is ascribed by the agent's relationships since it is always the others who credit it to the agent.

In the publication "Ecos Juvenis" a note was found about the students' participation in civic festivities. That was the civic commemoration of September 7, which was one of the most important dates in Salesian schools, that is, the Independence Day. The schools made a point of celebrating that date and keep the model of excellence and prestige to society.

> In a grand parade, the students march through the streets of Campo Grande on Independence Day. My daughters, as always, stood out, not only for their uniformity in exercises and marches, but also for the distinction, nobility, and poise characteristic of religious schools, and especially Salesian schools" (Ecos Juvenis, July to December, 1947, p. 23, our translation).

Civic parades were a moment of comparison between the Salesian Sisters' schools and secular schools. When analyzing the note above, it becomes clear that this was a moment to demonstrate to society the assets constituted in Salesian female schools, namely, distinction, social class position, and poise, given that these notions were taught to students in class at all times. Penteado (1996) shows in his accounts that etiquette rules were constantly taught and demanded of the students; the uniform, the students' behavior, language, and posture had to be impeccable, according to his account:

> In the details, in the clichés, this polite behavior, of a well-behaved young lady, was passed on in daily life. At Auxiliadora, there was a special time for these teachings: the rules of politeness, good manners, restraint in gestures, posture, temperance in language — everything was passed on, in a continuous polishing that wore down the rough edges of singularities and idiosyncrasies, and standardized finesse. A small example illustrates this: as it was quite hot, inadvertently or rebelliously, we would roll up the sleeves of our blouses (which were long). Then someone would ask if, by any chance, we intended to "do laundry," assuming that such behavior was typical of laborers and not of a young, well-behaved girl (Penteado, 1996, p. 95, our translation).

The educational, cultural and social practices implemented by education institutions in the south of former Mato Grosso played a significant role in the formation of a female gender *habitus* in those students, since they were seen as the representatives of those institutions before society. Not only did the schools provide knowledge, but they also reinforced norms and rules related to female behavior, thus shaping those students according to the femininity ideals of those times. Therefore, schools acted as socialization agents that perpetuated gender dispositions, influencing both the students' private and public lives and guaranteeing the reproduction of a symbolic system of domination.

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of the education institutions managed by the *Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora* in the south of former Mato Grosso, *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*/Corumbá and *Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora*/Campo Grande, reveals the importance of those institutions in the regional female education during the period under study. Founded during the process of implementation and consolidation of Salesian institutions in Brazil, those schools played a relevant role in the intellectual, moral and religious education of young women, following the principles of Dom Bosco's Preventive System.

Those schools also represented a space of educational modernity as presented in the architecture of their buildings and in the offer of diversified courses, which contributed to their consolidation and prestige in the municipalities of Corumbá and Campo Grande.

By offering a curriculum that included not only formal knowledge, but also the development domestic skills, those institutions reinforced the gender *habitus* imposed by society. Those students were prepared to perform traditional roles of family and home care, within a social

structure that valued female submission, thus, shaping them according to Christian and social values of that time.

The educational practices expressed through the subjects taught and the cultural and social activities promoted, reinforced the ideal of femininity that prepared women for marriage and family care. Such practices were integrated into a curriculum that was not neutral, but rather aligned with the interests of ruling classes, as pointed out by Silva (2005). Alongside cultural practices, those students received a kind of education that embodied cultural and social capital, preparing them for both the professional and the traditional roles of housewives and mothers.

Educational practices such as the teaching of languages, arts and handcrafting, combined with cultural and social practices such as participation in civic and cultural events, were fundamental for the incorporation of a *habitus* that secured those students' social distinction. Such distinction was shown to the community, thus reinforcing those students' and the institutions' position in society. The imposition of etiquette rules, good manner and proper behavior contributed to the conformation of a female gender *habitus* which allowed the reproduction of the dominant social norms and values.

REFERENCES

ANDRADE, Heloíse Vargas de. **Educação salesiana no Sul do Mato Grosso:** em foco a cultura escolar católica do ensino secundário (1931-1961). 2021. 264 f. Thesis (Education Doctorate Program) – Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, Campo Grande, MS, 2021.

AZZI, Riolando. **As Filhas de Maria Auxiliadora no Brasil:** cem anos de História. São Paulo: Salesiana, 2002.

BÁEZ, Renato. **O Profeta do Pantanal**. Comissão dos Ex-alunos Salesianos de Corumbá. São Paulo: Escolas Profissionais Salesianas, 1988.

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **Os três estados do capital cultural**. In: CATANI, Afrânio; NOGUEIRA, Maria Alice. (Org). Pierre Bourdieu. Escritos de Educação. 16. ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2015. p.79-88. (English quote retrieved from: http://www.mom.arq.ufmg.br/mom/02_babel/textos/bourdieu-forms-of-capital.pdf)

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **Conceitos fundamentais**. Trad. Fábio Ribeiro. 3. ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2018. (English quote retrieved from: https://anth1001.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/maton_habitus-selection.pdf)

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **A dominação masculina**. 17. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2020.

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **A economia das trocas simbólicas.** São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2007.

BRANDÃO, Zaia. Razões Práticas: sobre a teoria da ação. In: CATANI, Afrânio. (Org). **Vocabulário Bourdieu.** Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, p. 303-304, 2017.

CARVALHO, Maria Eulina Pessoa de. Gênero é um conceito complexo e de difícil senso comunicação. Considerações a partir de uma experiência de formação docente. **Instrumento:** Revista de Estudos e Pesquisa em Educação. Juiz de Fora, v. 12, n. 2, Jul./Dec. 2010.

CHERVEL, André; COMPÈRE, Marie Madeleine. As humanidades no ensino. **Educação e Pesquisa**, São Paulo, v. 25, n. 2, Jul./Dec. 1999. Retrieved from: https://www.scielo.br/j/ep/a/3HLP8zgn4YYcxp3FNMgQq4x/?lang=pt.

CNSA HISTÓRICO. **Livro de fatos importantes e Crônicas (1926-1959).** Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora. Campo Grande, MT. [s.d.].

ECOS JUVENIS. Órgão das alunas dos Colégios das F. M. Auxiliadora da Inspetoria de Mato Grosso. Jan./Jul. 1947. Campo Grande, Mato Grosso, 1947, p. 23.

FRAGO, Antonio Vñao; ESCOLANO Austín. **Currículo, espaço e subjetividade:** a arquitetura como programa. 2. ed. Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 2001.

GENIC HISTÓRICO, **Livro de histórico e anotações sobre o Colégio Imaculada Conceição.** Corumbá, MT, [s.d].

JORNAL DO COMMERCIO. **Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora**. (ed. n. 01785, 1935). Retrieved from: Jornal do Commercio (MT) – 1923 a 1949 – DocReader Web (bn.br). Access on: January 22, 2023.

MORAES, Thais Palmeira; KASSAR, Monica de Carvalho Magalhães. Notas sobre o acolhimento e o atendimento à criança pobre, abandonada e sem-família em Corumbá (MT): o Colégio Salesiano Imaculada Conceição e a Santa Casa. *In*: Seminário Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas História, Sociedade e Educação no Brasil: História da Educação Brasileira: experiências e peculiaridades, 9, João Pessoa, 2012. **Anais eletrônicos**..., João Pessoa, 2012.

NOGUEIRA, Maria Alice; NOGUEIRA, Cláudio Martins. **Bourdieu e Educação**. 4. ed. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, 2004.

ORTIZ, Fernanda. Ros. **A Escola Normal de moças das elites:** um estudo das práticas escolares, culturais e sociais do Colégio Nossa Senhora Auxiliadora (1946-1961). 2014. 167 f. Dissertation (Education Master's Program) Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, Campo Grande, 2014.

PENTEADO, Yara. **Auxiliadora setenta anos**. Campo Grande: Ruy Barbosa, 1996.

RAMPI, Dorcelina de Fátima. **A formação de professores da escola normal do Colégio de Santa Inês:** A educação salesiana no Brasil inserida na pedagogia católica (1927-1937). 2007. 138 f. Dissertation (Education Master's Program) – Education Graduate Program, Pontifícia Universidade Católica, São Paulo, 2007.

SÁ ROSA, Maria da Glória. **Memória da cultura e da educação em Mato Grosso do Sul.** Campo Grande: Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul, 1990.

SAPIRO, Gisèle. Prática (teoria da). In: CATANI, Afrânio. (Org). **Vocabulário Bourdieu.** Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, p. 296-298, 2017.

SAVIANI, Dermeval. O legado educacional do "Longo Século XX" Brasileiro. *In*: SAVIANI, Dermeval. **O legado educacional no século XX no Brasil.** 3. ed. Campinas, São Paulo: autores associados, 2014. p. 11-54.

SILVA, Tomaz Tadeu da. **Documentos de identidade:** uma introdução às teorias do currículo. 2 ed. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2005.

WACQUANT, Loïc. *Habitus*. In: CATANI, Afrânio. (Org). **Vocabulário Bourdieu.** Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, p. 213-217, 2017. (English quote retrieved from: https://loicwacquant.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/lw-2004-habitus-interencyecosoc.pdf, access in: May 2026)

Roselaine Alves Olmo has a degree in Education by the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (2021), is a specialist in Alphabetization and Literacy by UNniasselvi(2022), MA in Education by the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (2023), Student in the Education Doctorate Program at the Dom Bosco Catholic University (2024-2028). CAPES/ PROSUC Scholarship holder.

E-mail: roseolmo@gmail.com

Celeida Maria Costa de Souza e Silva has a degree in History by the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (1990), a degree in Education by the Centro Universitário FIEO-UNIFIEO (2019), is a specialist in Latin American History by the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (1994), MA in Education by the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (2000), PhD in Education by the State University of Campinas (2009) and Post-Doctorate in Education by the Federal University of Mato Grosso (2019). She is a professor and a researcher at the Dom Bosco Catholic University (UCDB).

E-mail: celeidams@gmail.com

Data availability statement:
All data set that supports the results of this study was publiched in this article.

Submitted on: 05/12/2025
Approved on: 03/15/2026

Editor: Vania Grim Thies